

## **Rainforest Food Webs Video Script**

Hey what happens to all the energy from the sun that plants convert into food? Well, it feeds not just the tree, but a huge network of other life forms as well. The sun's energy stored in plants is the beginning of a rainforest food web that connects all the life forms in the forest.

The food that plants store becomes food for herbivorous animals. Leaves become food for insects, possums and tree-kangaroos. Their fruit becomes food for birds and musky-rat-kangaroos. Even their roots become food for some beetle larvae.

These animals then become food for larger or more aggressive predators. Insects are eaten by carnivores like birds and skinks, and these in turn are eaten by pythons, quolls, owls and raptors. These final predators are called the top order predators.

When these animals finally die, the recycling team becomes part of the food web. Scavenging animals, fungi, insects and micro-organisms break down their remains and turn them into nutrients for the living forest.

Many plants benefit from the animals that eat them, it's a two-way relationship. Animals are mobile, they can move around. The plants rely on them to pollinate their flowers to produce the next generation of plants. In other places in the world flowers are pollinated mostly by bees. But Australian rainforest plants rely on many different insects including wasps, beetles and moths. Even birds and bats pollinate many rainforest plants.

Plants also rely on animals to distribute their seeds far away from the parent plant. The cassowary eats fruit and the seed is passed undamaged through its stomach. Now it's ready to grow in its own pile of special cassowary poo compost.

How the rainforest works is really quite amazing!