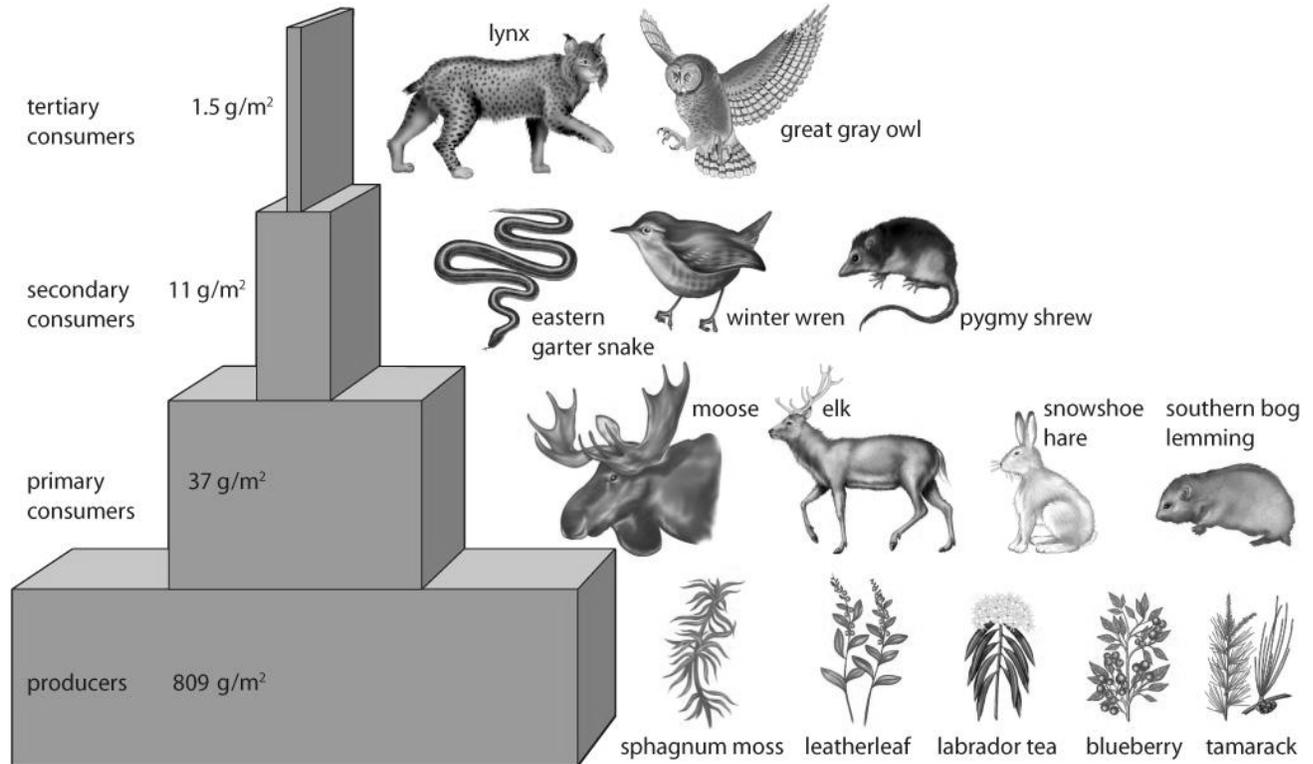
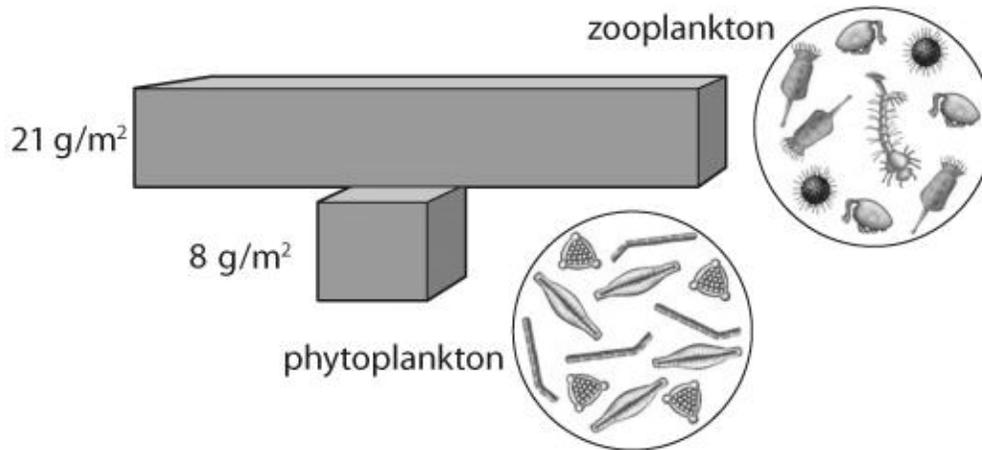


Pyramid of Biomass



A pyramid of biomass shows the relative dry mass, in grams per square metre, of living or once living organisms in an ecosystem.

- A pyramid of biomass overcomes the limitations that cause an inversion of a pyramid of numbers.
- In most ecosystems, there is less biomass at higher trophic levels than at lower trophic levels.
- This illustrates a decrease in available energy at each successive trophic level.

Inverted Pyramid of Biomass

In an inverted pyramid of biomass, there is less biomass at the first trophic level than at the second trophic level.

- In some aquatic ecosystems, the biomass of zooplankton at the second trophic level is greater than the biomass of the phytoplankton being fed on at the first trophic level.
- This inversion occurs because the phytoplankton is eaten as quickly as it is able to reproduce. Nevertheless, enough energy is being transferred to the zooplankton to keep the ecosystem from collapsing.