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| **Sun**I am the ***sun***. ***Everything***on earth depends on me. And in my hands I hold the web of life. | **Water**I am ***water***. ***All living things***need me tosurvive. Most ***plants*** and ***animals*** in the saltmarsh are adapted to salt water. Twice a day,the high tide fills the slough and marsh withsalty bay water. This area is sometimes calledan estuary because salt and fresh water mixhere. |
| **Air**I am ***air***. I am made up of oxygen and nitrogen. I am very important to ***all living things***. Fish like ***salmon***, which do not breathe air directly, get oxygen from the water. It is important to keep me clean because pollution in the air is harmful to all creatures. | **Soil**I am **soil**. I am very important to ***all living******things*.** ***Plants***use the nutrients in me to grow. ***Animals***get their nutrients from plants. When living things die, they decompose and return their nutrients to me. |
| **Zooplankton**I am ***zooplankton***. I like to eat ***detritus****,****phytoplankton***and other ***zooplankton***. I am eaten by lots of different animals, including juvenile ***salmon, worms***, and ***snails***. I can be found in the slough. | **Phytoplankton**I am ***phytoplankton***. I use ***sunlight***to produce my own food. Many different organisms like to eat me, including ***aquatic worms, zooplankton, snails,***and some juvenile ***salmon***. Youcan find me in the slough. |
| **Detritus**I am ***detritus***--dead plant material. When Iwas a live plant, I used ***sunlight***to producemy own food. When I died, I decomposed into a material that feeds lots of other animals. ***Zooplankton, phytoplankton, amphipods, aquatic worms,***and ***clams***depend on me for food. | **Mallard Duck**I am a Mallard duck. Some of the foods I liketo eat are ***detritus, worms, phytoplankton****,*and ***zooplankton***. **P*eople***eat me. I live in the *waters* of lakes, ponds, sloughs, and rivers. |

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| **Lug Worm**I am an ***aquatic worm*** that lives in a U-shaped tunnel that I dig. I eat mostly ***detritus*** and leave what I don’t digest as castings next to my burrow entrance.Birds and fish eat me, including ***starry flounders*** when they see part of my body sticking out of my burrow. | **Sedge** I am a ***sedge***. I use ***sunlight*** to make my own food.***Canada geese*** and ***brown bears*** eat me and ***voles*** and other birds eat my seeds.  |
| **Goose-tongue**I am ***goose-tongue***. I use ***sunlight*** to make my own food.***Canada geese, mallard ducks***, and other birds eat me and I’m an edible plant that ***people*** harvest and eat. | **Western Sandpiper**I am a ***western sandpiper***. I probe in the mud for small marine worms and ***Macoma clams*** that are close to the surface. I also eat the ***slime***, or biofilm, on the mud or sand which is loaded with nutritious microbes. |
| **Aquatic Insect**I am an **aquatic insect**. **Salmon** eat me in various stages of my life. | **Brown Bear**I am a ***brown bear***. I eat ***salmon, voles***, and ***sedges***.I am at the top of the food chain so no one eats me except ***humans*** who hunt me. |
| **Northern Harrier**I am a ***Northern Harrier***. I eat ***voles***.I’m at the top of the food chain but ***crows*** sometimes eat my eggs. | **Northwestern Crow**I am a ***Northwestern crow***. I eat just about anything, including ***amphipods***, marine worms, eggs of birds like the ***Northern Harrier***, scavenging dead things, and seeds from plants like ***sedge*** and ***goose-tongue***.Hawks and owls eat me.  |

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| **Vole**I am a ***vole***. I eat ***sedge*** seeds.***Northern Harriers*** and ***brown bears*** eat me. | **Salmon**I am a ***salmon***. As a smolt adjusting to living in salt water, I eat ***phytoplankton, zooplankton, amphipods***, and ***aquatic insects***. When I return to the estuary and stream from the ocean as an adult, ***brown bears*** and ***people*** eat me. |
| **Starry Flounder**I am a ***starry flounder***. I stay close to shore during summer where it’s sandy or muddy. I feed on ***zooplankton, amphipods***, and **lug worms**.I’m well-camouflaged and can bury myself in the sand, but ***people*** sometimes catch me and eat me as do marine mammals.  | **Bacteria**I am **bacteria**. I colonize **detritus** and consume dead organic matter, then break it down into the minerals needed by producers like **phytoplankton, sedges,** and **goose-tongue** to make their own food. The ***animals that eat detritus*** also eat me. |
|  **Slime**I may be slime but I’m important in the mudflat food web. I’m really a mix of tiny ***bacteria*** who create the slime as their biofilm habitat as a thin layer on top of sand and mud surfaces in salt marshes. Shorebirds like the **western sandpiper** slurp up biofilms and eat me.  |  **Human Being**I am at the top of the food chain so no animals prey on me (although brown bears sometimes attack me as prey).I eat ***mallards, salmon, starry flounders***, and the meat of ***brown bears***. |