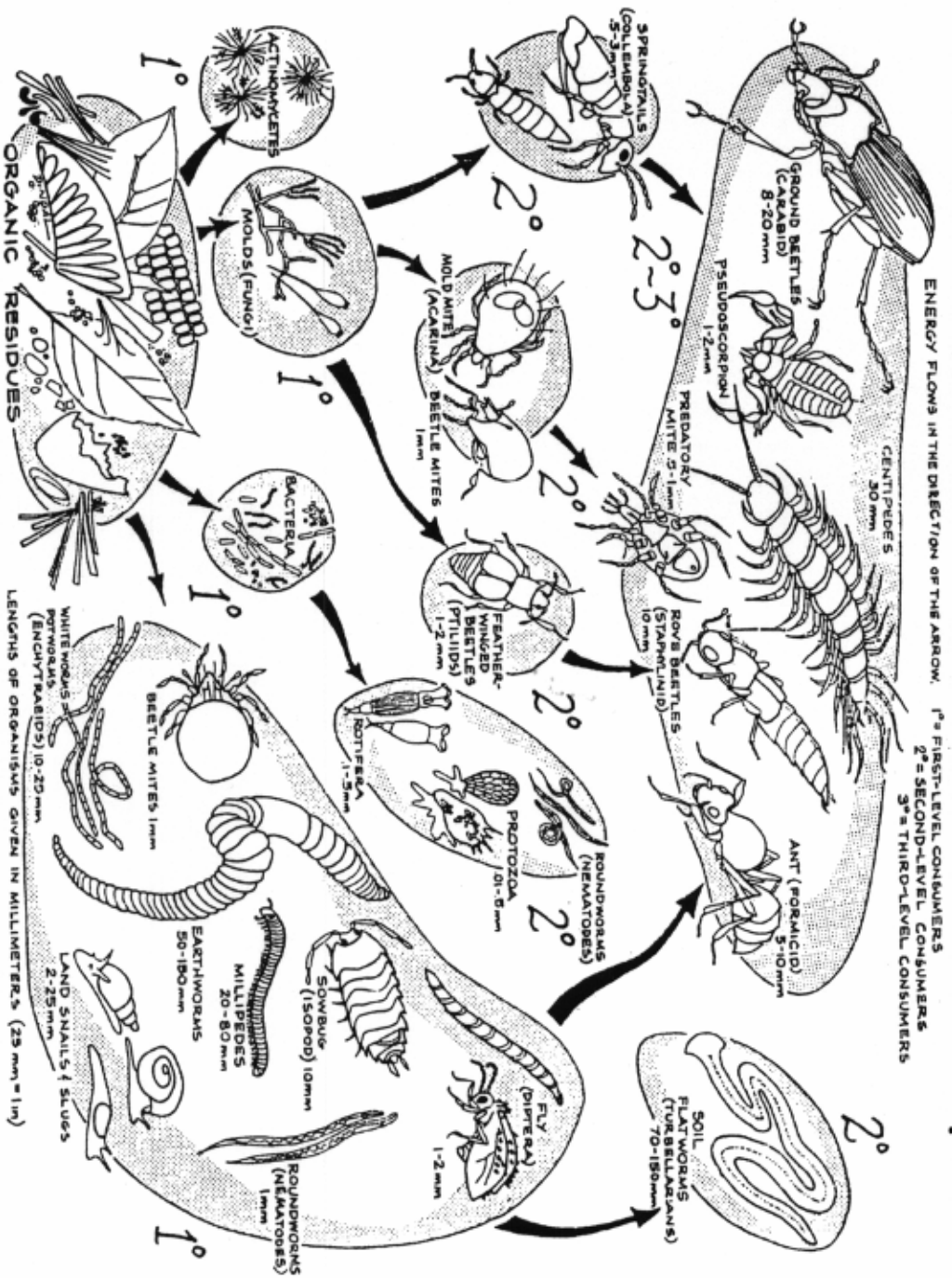


Food Web of the Compost Pile



Many types of organisms in a worm bin break down organic materials to simpler forms that can be recycled into other kinds of living tissue. A food web shows relationships between organisms, based upon who eats whom. Dead organic materials are first eaten by organisms like molds and bacteria. These are known as first-level (1°) consumers. Earthworms, beetle mites, sowbugs, enchytraeids, and flies also consume waste directly. First-level consumers are eaten by second-level (2°) consumers such as springtails, mold mites, and protozoa. Third-level (3°) consumers are flesh-eaters, or predators, which eat 1° and 2° consumers. Predators in a worm bin might include centipedes, rove beetles, ants, and predatory mites.

Worm formation

Source: *Worms Eat Our Garbage*
Adapted with permission from Dr. Daniel Dindal.
(See Related Resources for more information.)