

Antarctic food web

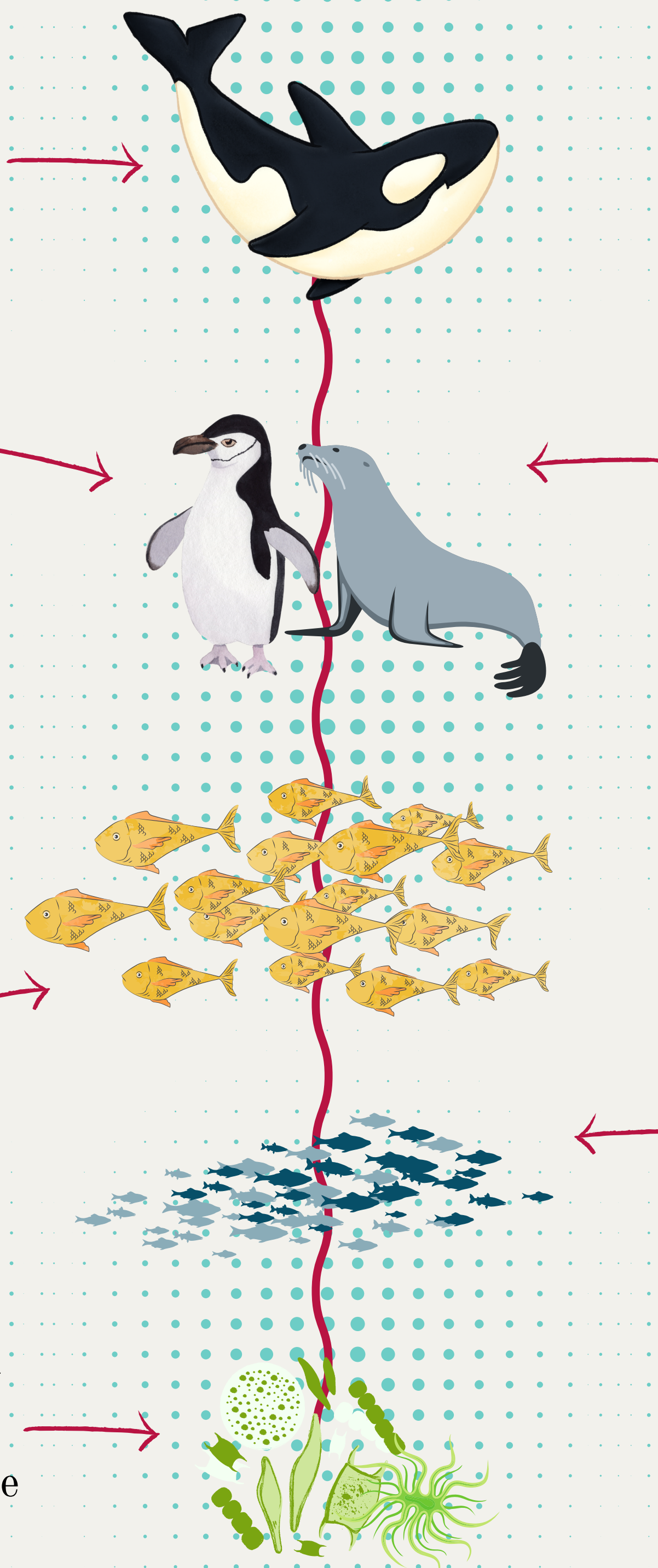
The Antarctic food web is a complex system of interactions between various species, both on land and in the ocean.

Orcas are the largest of all carnivores on earth that feed on a wide variety of foods.

Adélie and chinstrap penguins feed on krill and small fish.

Antarctic toothfish is a predator that feeds on krill and other fish.

At the base of the food web are tiny **phytoplankton**, which are eaten by krill.



Leopard seals are one of the top predators in the Antarctic food web. They feed on krill, fish, squid, and other marine animals. Leopard seals also prey on penguins and other seabirds, as well as other seals.

Secondly is **Krill**. Krill are a critical component of the Antarctic food web, as they provide a major source of food for a wide range of animals, including penguins, seals, and whales.

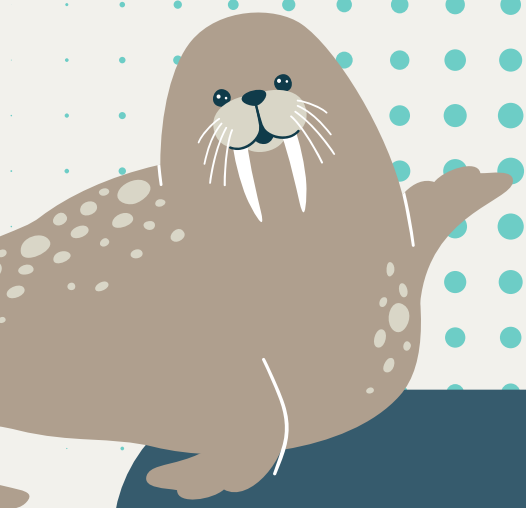


Did you know?



The Antarctic food web is closely linked to climate change, as warming temperatures can affect the growth of phytoplankton and krill.

Overfishing of krill could have major impacts on the Antarctic food web, and so commercial fishing for Antarctic toothfish is regulated to prevent overfishing.



Pollution, particularly from plastics, can impact the Antarctic food web and oil spills can have devastating impacts on the Antarctic food web.



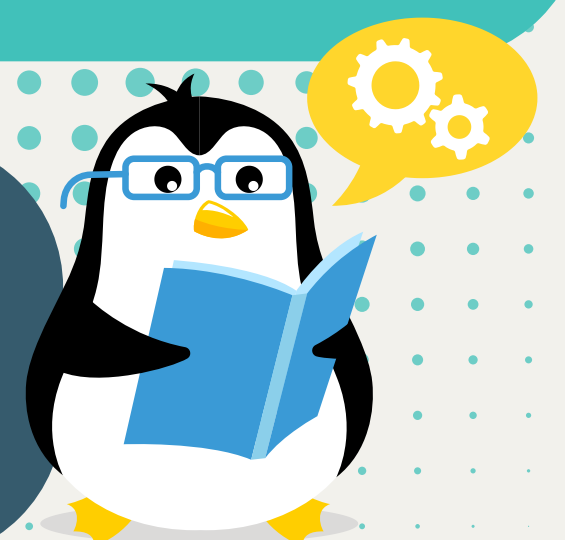
Antarctic species are adapted to living in a harsh environment with long periods of darkness and extreme cold.

Climate change is also causing shifts in the distribution and abundance of species in the Antarctic food web.



Antarctic ecosystems are considered some of the most pristine on Earth.

Scientists continue to study the Antarctic food web to better understand its complexity and the impacts of climate change.



Comprehension questions

Level 1

- What is the geography of Antarctica?
- What is the dominant feature of the Antarctic landscape?
 - What is the average elevation of the continent?
 - What is the most active volcano on the continent?

Level 2

- What are some of the mountain ranges found in Antarctica?
- How many volcanic structures are known to exist in Antarctica?
 - What is the Antarctic Treaty?
 - What is the average annual precipitation in Antarctica?

Level 3

- How have geothermal activities affected Antarctica?
 - What is the Gamburtsev Mountains?
 - What is the Ross Sea Marine Protected Area?
- What are the implications of the Antarctic ice sheet holding 90% of the world's ice?

Level 4

- How have tectonic forces shaped the geography of Antarctica?
- What are some of the challenges of conducting scientific research in Antarctica?