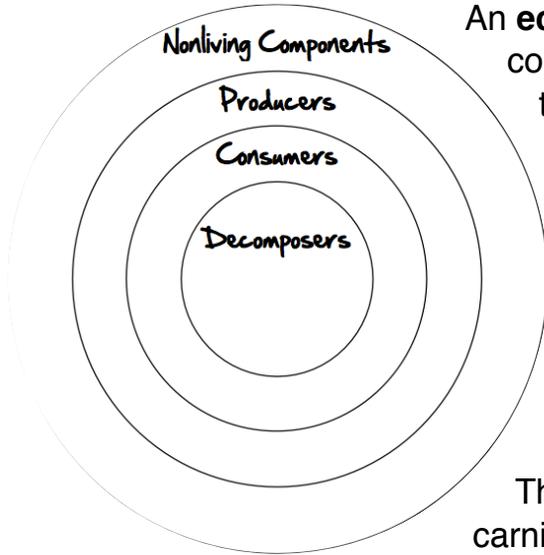


The Forest Ecosystem



An **ecosystem** is a community of living and non-living components in relationship with each other and their environment. A forest is an ecosystem because there are **living organisms interacting with the non-living environment**.

The living components of a forest ecosystem include all plants (**producers**), animals (**consumers**), fungus and microscopic soil organisms (**decomposers**).

There are **three types of consumers**: herbivores, carnivores, and omnivores.

Decomposers include organisms such as fungi, bacteria, earthworms, millipedes, beetles, ants and maggots.

The **non-living components** of the forest ecosystem include water, rocks, sunlight, air, soil and chemicals.

All of these different components and factors combine to create an interconnected, dynamic and rich forest environment. Without one of them, the others could not exist.