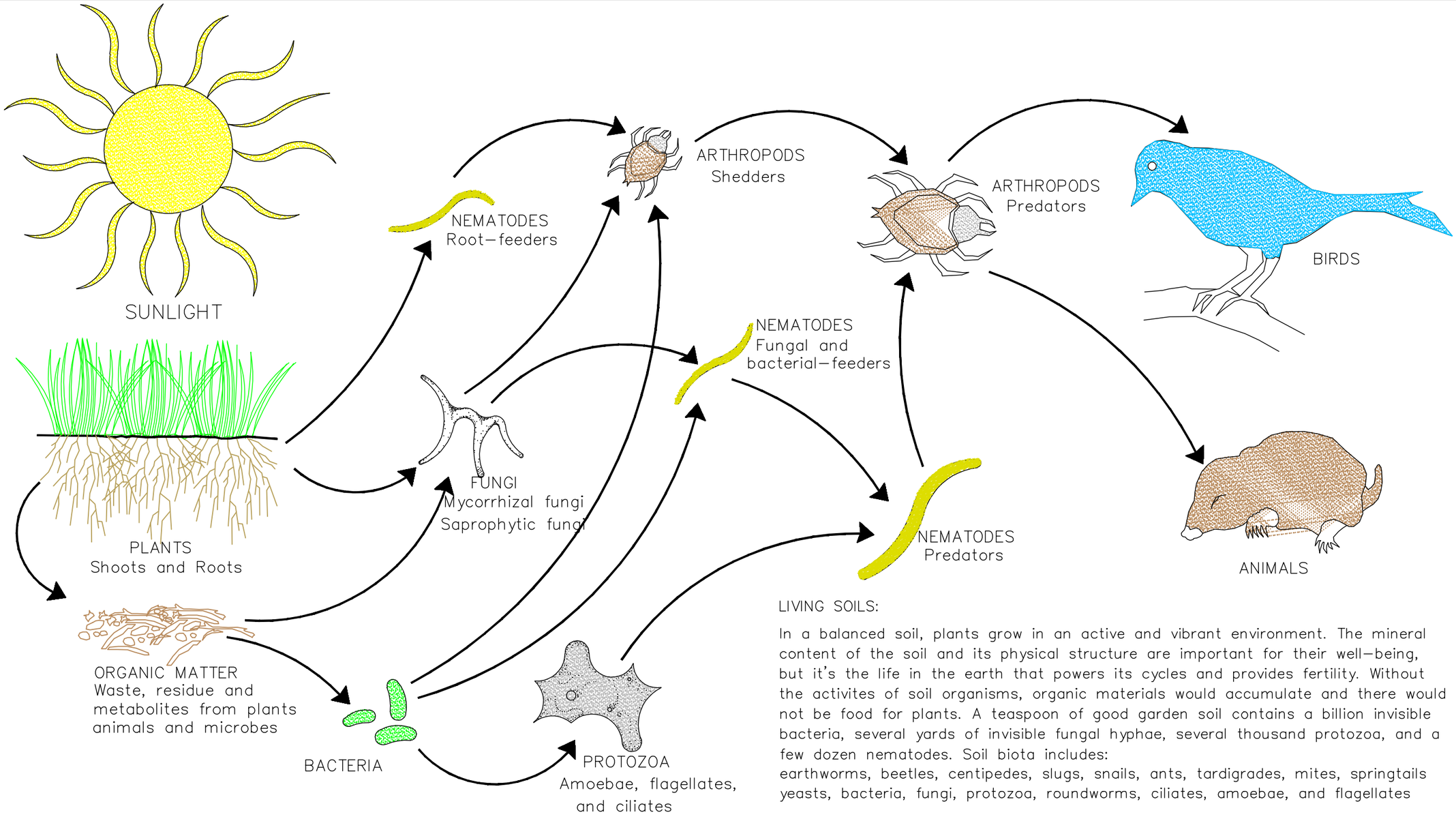

Adding organic matter to soil saves water:

One cubic foot of landscape soil with 1% organic matter holds 1/3 gallon of water.

"LIVING SOILS"

USDA–NRCS

LIVING SOILS:

In a balanced soil, plants grow in an active and vibrant environment. The mineral content of the soil and its physical structure are important for their well–being, but it's the life in the earth that powers its cycles and provides fertility. Without the activites of soil organisms, organic materials would accumulate and there would not be food for plants. A teaspoon of good garden soil contains a billion invisible bacteria, several yards of invisible fungal hyphae, several thousand protozoa, and a few dozen nematodes. Soil biota includes:
earthworms, beetles, centipedes, slugs, snails, ants, tardigrades, mites, springtails yeasts, bacteria, fungi, protozoa, roundworms, ciliates, amoebae, and flagellates

PROS:

- Adding organic matter (composted mulch) to the soil feeds the soil biota that in turn provides nutrients for plants, improves plant health, providing more yield.
- Healthier plants use less water, inorganic fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides & fungicides. Soil biota improves aeration, water percolation, and improves water quality.

CONS:

- Composting on–site increases maintenance;
- Importing and purchasing compost increase cost;
- Some compost are better quality than others, poor quality compost can damage vegetation