

Organic Matter!



Image courtesy of <https://www.agvise.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/ompic.jpg>

Parts of Soil Organic Matter



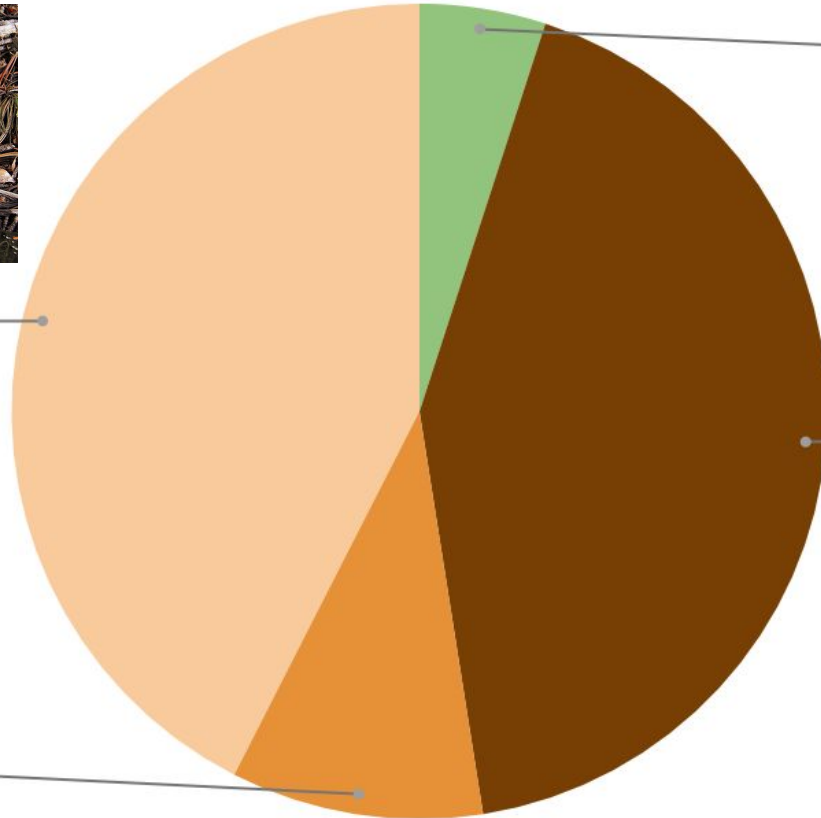
Decomposing OM

42.5%



Living Organisms

10.0%



Fresh Residues

5.0%



Stabilized OM (Humus)

42.5%



Decomposing organic matter

Makes up 42.5% of organic matter and is dead material being broken down into mineral forms of nutrients and carbon dioxide (CO₂), which is used by plants in the conversion of sunlight to energy (photosynthesis)



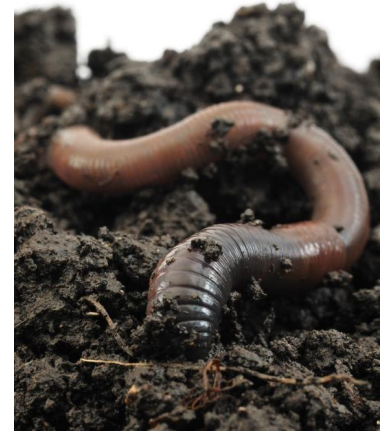
Stable organic matter (humus)

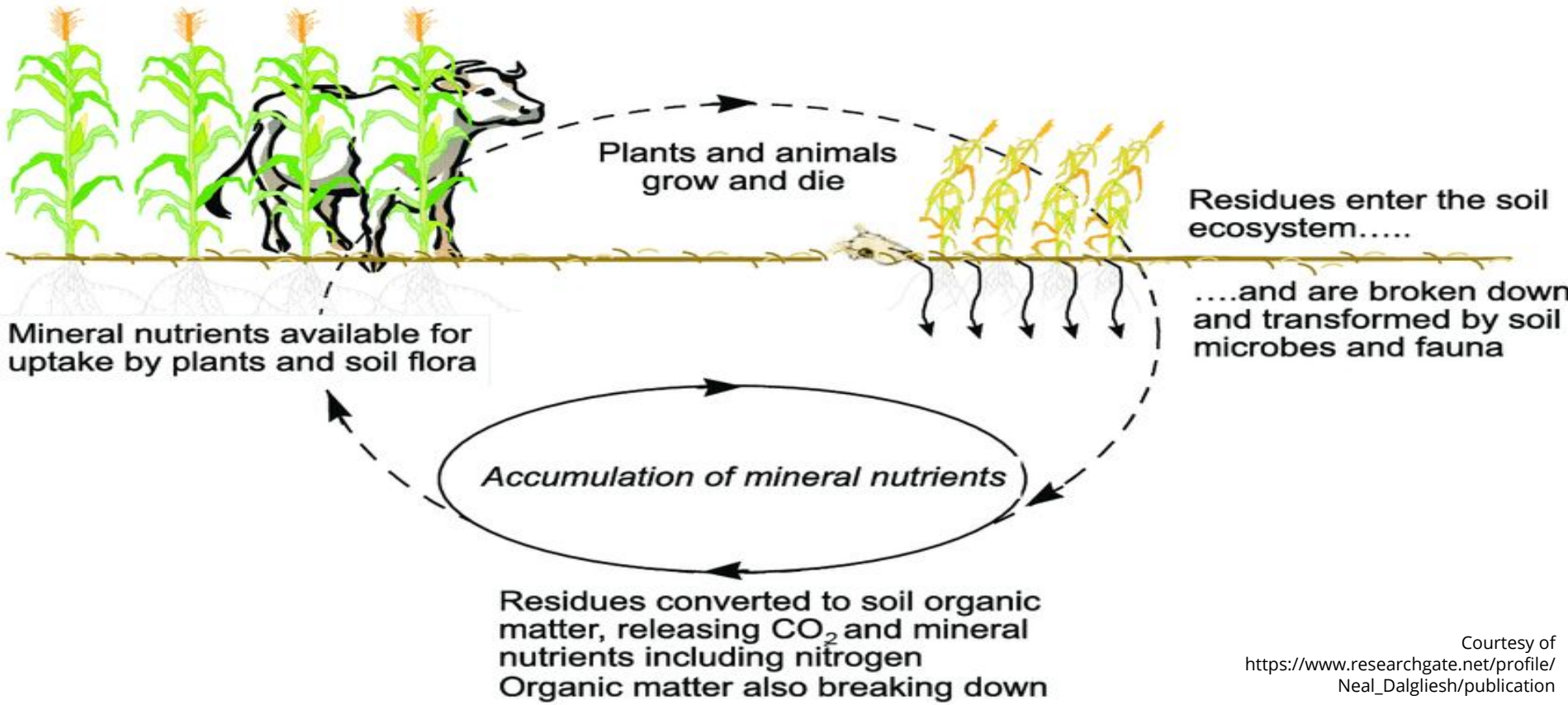
Makes up 42.5% of organic matter and is the end product of decomposing organic matter. It is a living biomass (renewable organic matter).



Fresh residues and small living organisms

Makes up 15% of organic matter and is the fresh leaf matter or animal returning it's nutrients to the soil. This is not considered soil organic matter until it has begun decomposition.





Where does organic matter come from?

- The organic matter in soil comes from plants and animals. Leaf litter (flora) and woody material fall to the forest floor, and when animals (fauna) pass away and decompose they return their matter to the soil.