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## **Saproxylic invertebrate fauna in urban green areas of the city of Palermo (Italy)**

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Saproxylic invertebrates are species which are involved in or dependent on wood decay. They play an important role in decomposition processes and thus are essential for the proper functioning of the nutrient cycle in natural ecosystems. They are associated with both living and dead trees.

Saproxylic invertebrates live in almost all natural environments but their numbers are constantly declining due to habitat destruction or degradation. However, urban environments and city parks host important populations of these specialised and often rare species.

An annotated checklist of the saproxylic invertebrate faunal assemblages of the urban green areas of the city of Palermo will be presented in this communication. Ecological and biological information on each species will also be provided together with a thorough evaluation of the current urban green areas situation in the city of Palermo.

These urban environments are of great importance in the conservation of the saproxylic invertebrates as they often represent extensions to their natural habitats. Such niches offer not only a shelter where such species can proliferate but serve as manageable places where native species interact with allochthonous flora.

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