

## Socio-Eco-Evolutionary Dynamics in Cities

*Running Head: Socio-eco-evolutionary dynamics in cities*

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**Key Terms:** coupled human-natural systems, anthropogenic, socio-ecological systems, urbanization, adaptation, eco-evo

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52 **Key Terms:**, coupled human-natural systems, anthropogenic, socio-ecological systems, urbanization,  
53 adaptation, eco-evo

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60 **Abstract**

61 Cities are uniquely complex systems regulated by interactions and feedbacks between natural  
62 and social processes. Characteristics of human society – including culture, economics,

63 technology, and politics – underlie social patterns and activity, creating a heterogeneous  
64 environment that can influence and be influenced by both ecological and evolutionary  
65 processes. Increasing interest in urban ecology and evolutionary biology has coincided with  
66 growing interest in eco-evolutionary dynamics, which encompasses the interactions and  
67 reciprocal feedbacks between evolution and ecology. Research on both urban evolutionary  
68 biology and eco-evolutionary dynamics frequently focuses on contemporary evolution of species  
69 that have potentially substantial ecological – and even social – significance. Still, little research  
70 fully integrates urban evolutionary biology and eco-evolutionary dynamics, and rarely do  
71 researchers in either of these fields fully consider the role of human social patterns and  
72 processes. Because cities are fundamentally regulated by human activities, are inherently  
73 interconnected, and are frequently undergoing social and economic transformation, they  
74 represent an opportunity for ecologists and evolutionary biologists to study urban “socio-eco-  
75 evolutionary dynamics.” Through this new framework, we encourage researchers of urban  
76 ecology and evolution to fully integrate human social drivers and feedbacks to increase  
77 understanding and conservation of ecosystems, their functions, and their contributions to  
78 people within and outside cities.

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81

## 82 **Introduction**

83 Humans construct and modify their surroundings to support the demands and desires of  
84 society (O’Brien & Laland, 2012). This phenomenon is particularly evident in cities, which are  
85 currently home to over half of the human population, a percentage predicted to rise to 66% by  
86 2050 (UN, 2018). Urban expansion is rapid, with the global city footprint projected to double  
87 between 2015 and 2050, largely due to increased urban and suburban sprawl (Barrington-Leigh  
88 & Millard-Ball, 2020; Huang, Li, Liu, & Seto, 2019; Liu et al., 2020). As urban areas expand, they  
89 are becoming more socially heterogeneous, reflecting an influx of diverse people who bring  
90 myriad cultures from around the world (Qadeer, 1997, 2000; Sandercock, 1998). While humans  
91 and social processes are affecting all the planet’s biomes (Ellis, 2015), it is in urban ecosystems

92 that human density and built habitats are the most pronounced. Cities have thus become  
93 representative of an urban “anthrobiome” – a set of ecosystems created and transformed by the  
94 people and societies that inhabit and depend on them (M Alberti, 2008; Grimm et al., 2008;  
95 Pickett et al., 2001). Cities are unlike any other ecosystems because they are quintessentially  
96 built by and for one species: humans – a highly social, interconnected, and omnipresent  
97 ecosystem engineer (Smith, 2007). As a result, the study of urban ecosystems should involve  
98 novel approaches by urban ecologists and evolutionary biologists to better integrate human  
99 social patterns and processes and build a truly synthetic understanding of the evolutionary  
100 ecology of cities (Figure 1).

101 **Urban ecosystems** (Definition: Box 1) are abiotically and biotically distinct from non-urban  
102 areas in that they feature human-built structures, a high proportion of impervious surface,  
103 reduced vegetation cover, elevated pollution levels, and a disproportionately large number of  
104 exotic species (Grimm et al., 2008; Seto, Sánchez-Rodríguez, & Fragkias, 2010). They are further  
105 characterized by altered patterns of connectivity, resource availability, inter- and intraspecific  
106 interactions, temperature, and habitat structure (Groffman et al., 2014; Walsh et al., 2005).  
107 Unsurprisingly, research has shown that these urban drivers have substantial effects on both  
108 ecological and evolutionary processes (M Alberti, 2016; Donihue & Lambert, 2015; Johnson &  
109 Munshi-South, 2017; Szulkin, Munshi-South, & Charmantier, 2020). In many cases, the biological  
110 community composition, population demographics (Parris, 2016), phenotypic traits (Merckx,  
111 Kaiser, & Van Dyck, 2018), and genetic makeup (Munshi-South, Zolnik, & Harris, 2016) of urban  
112 organisms differ substantially from their non-urban counterparts.

113 The structure and composition of urban ecosystems are predominantly a consequence of  
114 **human society** (Definition: Box 1), which reflects the complex interplay among culture, economy,  
115 politics, and technology (Avolio, Pataki, Trammell, & Endter-Wada, 2018; Collins et al., 2000;  
116 Grove, Locke, & O’Neil-Dunne, 2014; Marzluff, 2008). As a result, urban ecological and  
117 evolutionary processes are intrinsically influenced by social patterns and processes (Figure 2;  
118 Grove et al., 2014; Troy, Grove, & O’Neil-Dunne, 2012). Not only are human activities an  
119 underlying driver of ecological and evolutionary processes in cities, these processes feed back to  
120 affect human health and wellbeing through **nature’s contributions to people** (Definition: Box 1;

121 Díaz et al., 2018), including both ecosystem (Daily, 1997) and “evosystem” (Faith et al., 2010;  
122 Faith, Magallón, Hendry, & Donoghue, 2017; Rudman, Kreitzman, Chan, Schluter, & Rudman,  
123 2017) services and disservices. These processes may further shape and reshape human attitudes  
124 and behaviours towards the environment and biodiversity conservation (Reddy et al., 2017).

125 As cities have grown, so too has interest in the myriad intersections between human life  
126 and the lives of other species. During the last three decades, the field of **urban ecology**  
127 (Definition: Box 1) has made large strides in integrating human social dimensions into the study  
128 of urban ecosystems by fostering new collaborations between natural and social scientists.  
129 These collaborations have uniquely explored how urbanization shapes ecological processes,  
130 promoting the understanding of cities as ecosystems where humans play a fundamental role in  
131 regulating environmental patterns and processes (Alberti, 2008; Liu et al., 2007). Studies on  
132 **urban evolutionary biology** (Definition: Box 1) have also increased in recent years (Johnson &  
133 Munshi-South, 2017; Rivkin et al., 2019; Szulkin et al., 2020). Although some of the earliest work  
134 showing evidence of natural selection focused on urban **adaptive evolution** (Definition: Box 1;  
135 Kettlewell, 1958), recent advances in molecular techniques and a broader understanding of the  
136 role of gene flow and neutral evolution have contributed to a wealth of research on how **non-**  
137 **adaptive evolution** (Definition: Box 1) - including patterns of genetic drift and gene flow -  
138 operates in cities (Miles, Rivkin, Johnson, Munshi-South, & Verrelli, 2019; Rivkin et al., 2019;  
139 Schmidt, Domaratzki, Kinnunen, Bowman, & Garroway, 2020; Szulkin et al., 2020). Increasing  
140 research on urban evolutionary biology has also coincided with the growing field of **eco-**  
141 **evolutionary dynamics** (Definition: Box 1), which aims to understand the interactions and  
142 feedbacks between evolutionary and ecological processes (Fussmann, Loreau, & Abrams, 2007;  
143 Hendry, 2017; Schoener, 2011). Researchers of both urban evolutionary biology and eco-  
144 evolutionary dynamics tend to focus on contemporary evolution in species that can have  
145 important ecological – or even social – feedbacks (Faith et al., 2010, 2017; Rudman et al., 2017);  
146 few, however, have examined the presence and strength of eco-evolutionary dynamics in urban  
147 ecosystems (M Alberti, 2015).

148 In recent years, interdisciplinary progress has been made showing how social processes  
149 influence ecological dynamics (Band, Cadenasso, Grimmond, Grove, & Pickett, 2005; Liu et al.,

150 2007), how evolutionary dynamics feed back on ecology (Fussmann et al., 2007; Hendry, 2017;  
151 Pelletier, Garant, & Hendry, 2009) and how evolutionary dynamics contribute to society (Faith et  
152 al., 2010; Palumbi, 2001). However, a general framework for addressing the relationships among  
153 all three dimensions – social, ecological, and evolutionary – is still lacking. In particular, little  
154 research fully integrates urban evolutionary biology with eco-evolutionary dynamics (but see  
155 (Brans, Jansen, et al., 2017) and rarely do either of these fields fully consider the role of human  
156 social processes on the eco-evolutionary dynamics in cities (but see Schell et al., *In Revision*). We  
157 argue that cities present an opportunity to integrate the fields of social science, ecology, and  
158 evolutionary biology for the following reasons: 1) urban ecosystems are biotically and abiotically  
159 distinct, potentially resulting in unique effects on ecological and evolutionary dynamics  
160 compared to non-urban systems; 2) social patterns and processes are concentrated in cities,  
161 where they modify the ecological stage on which evolution takes place, thereby affecting urban  
162 eco-evolutionary dynamics; 3) ecological and evolutionary processes in cities are likely to feed  
163 back on humans and society; 4) these feedbacks might be magnified or dampened depending on  
164 the social and urban contexts in which they occur.

165 The goal of this perspective piece is to provide a “**socio-eco-evolutionary dynamics**”  
166 (Definition: Box 1) framework for evolutionary ecologists studying urban ecosystems. We  
167 highlight the importance of integrating social patterns, processes, and responses in research on  
168 urban ecology, evolutionary biology, and eco-evolutionary dynamics. Further, we use examples  
169 from specific study systems and describe how existing frameworks from research in these fields  
170 may be extended to include social dimensions. We close by laying the groundwork for future  
171 research on urban socio-eco-evolutionary dynamics with a set of empirical and theoretical  
172 guidelines and questions.

173

#### 174 **Linking urban social processes with ecology and evolution**

175 Characteristics of human society – demography, culture, governance, economics, and  
176 social organization (Odum, 1943; Tipps, 1973) – not only govern interactions among humans, but  
177 also influence human interactions with nature. Humans have always engaged in socio-ecological  
178 and socio-evolutionary relationships, whether through hunting and gathering, domestication and



179 agriculture, or the use of natural resources to build civilizations and cities (Boivin et al., 2016;  
180 Sullivan, Bird, & Perry, 2017). Through these relationships, humans have not only fragmented  
181 and connected species' populations, but also constructed and modified their ecological niches. A  
182 wealth of research from a diversity of disciplines (e.g., political ecology, cultural anthropology,  
183 sociology) has revealed the ubiquity of complex interactions between human society and nature  
184 through millennia and across geographic regions (Boivin et al., 2016; Ellis, 2015; O'Brien &  
185 Laland, 2012). This research has laid the groundwork for studying the interactions among social,  
186 ecological, and evolutionary dynamics in cities.

187

### 188 *Social drivers of urban ecology*

189 In recent years, urban ecology has emerged as a unified discipline, focusing on the many  
190 ways in which urbanization alters abiotic and biotic conditions that influence species  
191 interactions, patterns, and processes and how those processes feed back to people via changes  
192 in ecosystem services (Collins et al., 2000; Grimm, Grove, Pickett, & Redman, 2000). Intraspecific  
193 (communication, mating behaviour, within-species competition) and interspecific (mutualism,  
194 predation, herbivory, and among-species competition) interactions - including with humans - can  
195 differ significantly between urban and surrounding nonurban habitats (Miles, Breitbart, Wagner,  
196 & Johnson, 2019; Pereira-Peixoto, Pufal, Staab, Feitosa Martins, & Klein, 2016; Rodewald,  
197 Shustack, & Jones, 2011). Urban ecology has increasingly integrated human social patterns and  
198 processes in the study of urban ecosystems (M Alberti, 2008; Grimm et al., 2000; Marzluff, 2008;  
199 Tanner et al., 2014), recognizing that cities comprise a mosaic of natural and built habitats with  
200 varying disturbance across space and time (Pickett, Cadenasso, Childers, McDonnell, & Zhou,  
201 2016; Savage, Hackett, Guénard, Youngsteadt, & Dunn, 2015).

202 Redefining cities as intrinsically **coupled human and natural systems** (also known as  
203 CHANS: Box 2) acknowledges not only that social decisions shape urban ecosystems, but also  
204 that ecological changes motivate important human decisions (Liu et al., 2007). Decisions and  
205 policies made at various social scales - individuals, neighbourhoods, businesses, or municipal and  
206 national governments - can both directly regulate and be regulated by urban decision-making  
207 and its ecological effects (Pickett et al., 2016). For example, planted trees and gardens regulate

208 air filtration and micro-climates, sump ponds act as stormwater reservoirs, and restored soil and  
209 macrophyte communities treat sewage and chemical waste via nutrient uptake and bio- and  
210 phytoremediation (Jabeen, Ahmad, & Iqbal, 2009; Zipperer, Morse, & Gaither, 2011). Parks  
211 provide recreational and cultural amenities that not only benefit people and reshape ecological  
212 processes, but are fundamentally driven by human choices (Ackley, 2014; Bolund & Hunhammar,  
213 1999; Leong, Bertone, Bayless, Dunn, & Trautwein, 2016). The CHANS (Box 2) literature has  
214 provided a useful framework for studying urban ecology, but it has yet to incorporate  
215 evolutionary biology and eco-evolutionary dynamics.

216

### 217 *Social drivers of urban evolution*

218 A large body of research has revealed that the historical rise of aggregated human  
219 communities and subsequent origin of the first cities reflect deep interactions between social  
220 and evolutionary processes. The advent of the agrarian societies predating modern cities is  
221 reflected in the genomes of humans and domesticated species (O'Brien & Laland, 2012). For the  
222 past fifteen thousand years, cultural and agricultural practices have led to strong selection on  
223 numerous species (Driscoll, Macdonald, & O'Brien, 2009; Larson & Fuller, 2014) as well as  
224 coevolutionary relationships with humans (Jackson, 1996; Leach, 2003). For example,  
225 coevolution between humans and crop plants (Perry et al., 2007; Ye, Gao, Wang, Bar-Yosef, &  
226 Keinan, 2017) and between humans and livestock (Tishkoff et al., 2007) is associated with the  
227 advent of agriculture and the abandonment of nomadic hunter-gatherer lifestyles. For example,  
228 genes for lactase that enables dairy consumption (Tishkoff et al., 2007), and amylase that aids  
229 starch consumption (Perry et al., 2007), show geographically-spatial and cultural patterns of  
230 balancing selection for diverse diets.

231 Historical and contemporary evolutionary patterns in species most closely associated  
232 with humans can reflect social, cultural, and even economic trends and trajectories. Indeed,  
233 biologists have learned a great deal about evolutionary processes through researching social-  
234 evolutionary processes such as domestication. Darwin (1859) built his argument of evolution by  
235 natural selection through analogy with artificial selection in the domesticated rock pigeon  
236 (*Columba livia*) and other animals. Today, evidence suggests that some of the pigmentation

237 patterns originally favored by fancy pigeon breeders confer an adaptive advantage for urban  
238 pigeons (Vickrey et al., 2018), demonstrating the influence of past social preferences on the  
239 evolutionary history of a species. Domesticated dogs (*Canis familiaris*), which have undergone  
240 thousands of years of artificial selection, still commonly interbreed with wild coyote (*Canis*  
241 *latrans*; (Mahan, Gipson, & Case, 1978) and wolf (Pilot et al., 2018) populations. Studies have  
242 shown that dogs are often less likely to be neutered and more likely to be abandoned in lower-  
243 income urban areas following widespread economic downturns (Morris & Steffler, 2011). Thus,  
244 the observed introgression of domestic dog alleles into nearby coyote or wolf populations could  
245 potentially be the result of socioeconomic patterns, though this has yet to be directly tested.

246 Some of the classic examples of adaptation by natural selection invoke urban social  
247 processes. Pollution and habitat degradation often accompany major technological innovations  
248 that are later followed by policies mitigating their damage. For example, during the industrial  
249 revolution in the United Kingdom, increasing urban activity deposited a layer of dark soot on the  
250 bark of surrounding trees that selected for rarer melanic variants of the commonly light-coloured  
251 peppered moth (*Biston betularia*), which became more cryptic and less subject to predation  
252 (Cook & Saccheri, 2013; Hof et al., 2016; Kettlewell, 1958). The Clean Air Act, enacted in the UK  
253 in 1956, decreased pollutants, leading to an evolutionary reversal whereby light coloured moths  
254 again increased in frequency (Cook & Saccheri, 2013). In this iconic natural selection case study,  
255 the evolutionary trajectory of urban-adjacent peppered moth populations ostensibly reflected  
256 human societal patterns of socio-economic and technological innovations, their impacts, and  
257 environmental policy.

258 Today, many evolutionary biologists explore how species respond to novel selection  
259 pressures in urban environments (M Alberti, 2015; Donihue & Lambert, 2015; Johnson &  
260 Munshi-South, 2017; Szulkin et al., 2020). These selection pressures can vary over fine spatial  
261 and temporal scales (Donihue & Lambert, 2015), providing a more realistic context for studying  
262 in-situ evolution. For example, populations of killifish (*Fundulus heteroclitus*) from four cities  
263 have convergently evolved novel adaptations which confer resistance to toxins in response to  
264 pollution in urban estuaries (Reid et al., 2016; Whitehead, Clark, Reid, Hahn, & Nacci, 2017). In  
265 another example, white clover (*Trifolium repens*) has shown repeated phenotypic convergence in

266 the loss of cyanogenesis in response to urbanization (Case Study: Box 3a; Johnson et al., 2018;  
267 Santangelo, Johnson, & Ness, 2018; Thompson, Renaudin, & Johnson, 2016); There is also  
268 increasing evidence for adaptations to stressors such as urban heat islands (Brans & De Meester,  
269 2018; Diamond, Chick, Perez, Strickler, & Martin, 2018), which are characteristics that are also  
270 reflective of income inequality among urban neighbourhoods (Chakraborty, Hsu, Manya, &  
271 Sheriff, 2019). Researchers have also shown that species might be insulated from selection  
272 pressures in urban environments that exclude their predators (Rebolo-Ifrán, Tella, & Carrete,  
273 2017), though little work has evaluated the evolutionary consequences of such relaxed  
274 pressures.

275 Most urban evolutionary biology research to-date has focused on instances of non-  
276 adaptive evolution showing, for instance, altered patterns of gene flow and genetic drift in cities  
277 (Bullock et al., 2018; Miles, Breitbart, et al., 2019; Schmidt et al., 2020). These genetic patterns  
278 can reflect human decisions to construct barriers and corridors that impact the dispersal and  
279 thus gene flow of both native and human-affiliated species such as pests, disease vectors, and  
280 invasive species (Harris et al., 2016). In particular, overlaying genetic patterns on city maps has  
281 led to a more comprehensive understanding of dispersal and relatedness among populations of  
282 nuisance species (Combs, Puckett, Richardson, Mims, & Munshi-South, 2018), and thus an ability  
283 to predict future spread of pest species and resistance alleles through neighbourhoods (Rost et  
284 al., 2009). There is evidence from genetic analyses of neutral genetic variation that native  
285 species are negatively affected by urban fragmentation (Delaney, Riley, & Fisher, 2010; Van  
286 Rossum, 2008), whereas exotic species can benefit from the deliberate transportation and  
287 establishment by humans who favor them for both private and public gardens and parks (Colla &  
288 Maclvor, 2017; Trusty, Goertzen, Zipperer, & Lockaby, 2007; Zengeya et al., 2017). Because  
289 human decisions and activities structure nearly every aspect of urban ecosystems, studying and  
290 quantifying their consequences and feedbacks will be essential for a holistic understanding of  
291 evolution in cities.

292

293 **Eco-evolutionary dynamics in cities**

294           The field of eco-evolutionary dynamics emerged from growing evidence of reciprocal  
295 feedbacks between ecological and evolutionary processes that are possible when both occur at  
296 similar temporal and spatial scales (Hairston, Ellner, Geber, Yoshida, & Fox, 2005; Hendry &  
297 Kinnison, 1999; Reznick & Ghalambor, 2001; Thompson, 1998). One of the central tenants of  
298 eco-evolutionary dynamics is that evolutionary trait change within species (intraspecific  
299 variation) not only influences population dynamics (e.g., migration, reproduction), but also  
300 interactions between organisms and their surroundings, thereby affecting ecological patterns  
301 and processes like community composition and primary productivity (Des Roches et al., 2018;  
302 Fussmann et al., 2007; Hendry, 2017). These altered ecological conditions can then feed back to  
303 cause further evolutionary change. These feedbacks are at the centre of experiments and  
304 mathematical models of eco-evolutionary dynamics, which have demonstrated their importance  
305 and prevalence in controlled laboratory settings as well as natural and altered habitats (Abrams  
306 & Matsuda, 1997; Bassar et al., 2010; Harmon et al., 2009; Loeuille & Leibold, 2008; Palkovacs &  
307 Post, 2009; Yoshida, Jones, Ellner, Fussmann, & Hairston, 2003). Many of these studies have  
308 underscored the importance of rapid evolution and genetic variation in conservation and  
309 management strategies for species impacted by anthropogenic threats (Allgeier et al., 2020;  
310 Merilä & Hendry, 2013; Nadeau & Urban, 2019; Urban et al., 2016; Wood, Palkovacs, & Kinnison,  
311 2018). Still, relatively little research has explicitly examined the existence and role of eco-  
312 evolutionary feedbacks in cities (but see Brans et al., 2017). Indeed, conservation in cities will  
313 benefit greatly from a better understanding of urban evolution and how it impacts management  
314 success \_.

315           Urban eco-evolutionary feedbacks are particularly relevant because they have the  
316 potential to affect a great number of people through ecosystem and “evosystem” services (or  
317 “natures contributions to people”) and disservices (Bolund & Hunhammar, 1999; Jenerette,  
318 Harlan, Stefanov, & Martin, 2011; Pascual et al., 2014). These feedbacks, which can extend  
319 beyond the boundaries of cities themselves (Jiang, Deng, & Seto, 2013; Kaufmann et al., 2007;  
320 Seto et al., 2010), affect species persistence, abundance, and population demographics, thereby  
321 influencing diverse ecological functions and both beneficial and detrimental ecosystem services  
322 (Faith et al., 2010). Further, eco-evolutionary feedbacks toward humans can be unevenly

323 distributed within and among cities, leading to unequal distribution of services and disservices  
324 across human society (Bolund & Hunhammar, 1999; Jenerette et al., 2011; Pascual et al., 2014).  
325 For example, affluent neighbourhoods can have larger, more diverse (Jenerette et al., 2011;  
326 Oertli & Parris, 2019), and better interconnected green and blue spaces that support more  
327 abundant, genetically variable, and therefore more stable populations of beneficial species such  
328 as pollinators (Gill et al., 2016). However, these neighbourhoods can also have a higher  
329 proportion of non-native species in gardens and monoculture lawns that are manicured and  
330 eradicated of native weeds (Lerman & Warren, 2011; Tallamy, 2020). Green roofs, which are  
331 becoming a common feature of newer buildings, can be genetically depauperate and thus  
332 harmful to local conspecifics and pollinators unless careful consideration is given to the initial  
333 seed stock (Ksiazek-Mikenas, Fant, & Skogen, 2019). Although non-native species might initially  
334 boost diversity and ecosystem function (Wilson & Jamieson, 2019), they can become invasive  
335 through evolutionary processes such as hybridization (Culley & Hardiman, 2009; Rius & Darling,  
336 2014) and introduce novel diseases and pests (Chifflet, Guzmán, Rey, Confalonieri, & Calcaterra,  
337 2018; Eritja et al., 2005; Juliano & Philip Lounibos, 2005; Salyer, Bennett, & Buczkowski, 2014)  
338 that negatively affect native species (Godefroid, 2001; Shochat, Warren, Faeth, McIntyre, &  
339 Hope, 2006; Wania, Kühn, & Klotz, 2006).

340 Some of the most important eco-evolutionary feedbacks on people living in cities occur  
341 through the spread of organisms and genes that provide “disservices” such as negative effects  
342 on human health and wellbeing (Evans & Wellem, 2002). Again, the burdens of these  
343 detrimental feedbacks are unevenly distributed across the urban landscape. For example,  
344 rodenticide resistance in brown rats disproportionately affects the lower socio-economic  
345 communities that are more burdened by these pests (Case Study Box 3a; Desvars-Larrive et al.,  
346 2017). In some cases, humans have coevolved with urban pests such as mosquitos (Kamdem,  
347 Fouet, Gamez, & White, 2017; Sabeti et al., 2002) and their malaria-causing pathogens (Case  
348 Study Box 3b; Evans & Wellem, 2002). Feedbacks from rapidly evolving pest and pathogen  
349 species may be particularly extreme in cities and neighbourhoods where human hosts are living  
350 in concentrated areas, such as in lower-income public housing and apartment complexes (Booth  
351 et al., 2012; Byers, Lee, Patrick, & Himsforth, 2019; Combs et al., 2018; Koch et al., 2016; Saenz,

352 Booth, Schal, & Vargo, 2012). For example, rampant urban bed bug infestations, again usually in  
353 lower income neighbourhoods, are an outcome of higher human density, frequent tenant and  
354 resident turnover, increased reliance on public transportation, and the common exchange of  
355 second-hand and used goods (Booth et al., 2012). Not only does increased turnover and human-  
356 human contact lead to more frequent colonization of these pests, but it also introduces adaptive  
357 alleles conferring resistance to common pesticides, thereby further facilitating their spread and  
358 persistence (Saenz et al., 2012). Similar transmission of resistance alleles has been documented  
359 in other pest and pathogen species such as head lice (Koch et al., 2016), German cockroaches  
360 (Wada-Katsumata, Silverman, & Schal, 2013) and malaria (Kamdem et al., 2017). Higher  
361 connectivity in urban centres can in some cases promote genetic diversity and persistence in  
362 pest and pathogen populations by facilitating gene flow, such as with black widow spiders (Miles,  
363 Dyer, & Verrelli, 2018). Explicitly assessing the responses of organisms to features of urban  
364 ecosystems such as green space, pollution, waste, and food availability, will improve our  
365 understanding of the interface among social, ecological, and evolutionary dynamics in cities.

366 Relatively little research has compared the strength of eco-evolutionary feedbacks  
367 between urban and non-urban ecosystems (Miles, Breitbart, et al., 2019). In some cases,  
368 feedbacks might be magnified in urban areas: for example, white clover – a common herbaceous  
369 plant in urban and parks lawns – has adaptations that likely contribute to its continued  
370 persistence in lawns and parks (Case Study Box 3c; Johnson et al., 2018; Thompson et al., 2016),  
371 leading to positive feedbacks for beneficial species, such as pollinators and nitrogen-fixing  
372 bacteria (Baude et al., 2016; Larson, Kesheimer, & Potter, 2014). Alternatively, feedbacks from  
373 evolutionary processes may be overshadowed or weakened due to external forces: for example,  
374 *Daphnia* – a genus of ubiquitous freshwater zooplankton – are known to exert strong top-down  
375 control on algae and can adapt to increased temperatures in urban ponds (Case Study Box 3d;  
376 Brans, Jansen, et al., 2017). However, disturbances, such as extreme heat waves or extensive  
377 eutrophication following the build-up of nutrient runoff can compromise *Daphnia's* capacity to  
378 adapt and maintain its algae-controlling ecological function. The loss of this function from the  
379 system can initiate drastic shifts in the pond ecosystem, including the spread of toxic algal  
380 blooms (Ger et al., 2016) that not only limit the diversity and abundance of insects, amphibians,

381 and submerged vegetation, but also present a public health concern to humans and their pets  
382 (Kosten et al., 2012; Thomaz & Cunha, 2010). Feedbacks from species like white clover and  
383 *Daphnia* may be more nuanced, though still broadly important for ecosystem function and  
384 services in cities.

385

### 386 **Towards an urban socio-eco-evolutionary framework**

387 Despite an inherent spatial and temporal heterogeneity of cities, research on urban  
388 ecology and evolutionary biology often defaults to simplistic unidimensional, linear, or  
389 dichotomous urban variables (e.g., urban versus nonurban, proportion of built-up area and other  
390 land cover classes, human population density) that consider urbanization as a continuous  
391 gradient (McPhearson et al., 2016; Moll et al., 2019). Although these aggregate proxies are  
392 capable of capturing some urban variation, they often fail to encapsulate the complexity of  
393 urban systems that are driven by social and ecological interactions (Alberti et al., In Press; Schell  
394 et al., In Revision). Acknowledging and incorporating spatial and temporal heterogeneity in these  
395 interactions will be important for studying urban eco-evolutionary dynamics. For example,  
396 access to food, public transit routes, waste management, and green space usually vary  
397 nonlinearly with urban zoning. Further, historical redlining practices that reflect underlying racist  
398 policies have led to an uneven distribution of infrastructure and social services that structure the  
399 urban ecosystem in many US cities (Grove et al., 2014; Locke et al., 2020; Roman et al.,  
400 2018). Below, we argue that study of socio-eco-evolutionary dynamics in cities requires an  
401 approach that addresses and acknowledges these complex, multivariate, and heterogeneous  
402 stressors. First, we describe how existing phenotypic and genomic approaches for studying eco-  
403 evolutionary dynamics might be extended to include the social patterns and processes intrinsic  
404 to urban ecosystems. Second, we suggest how the coupled human and natural systems  
405 framework – a central tenant of urban ecology – might incorporate evolutionary biology, and by  
406 extension, eco-evolutionary dynamics, to help understand socio-ecological processes and  
407 feedbacks. Finally, we overview the opportunities for studying socio-eco-evolutionary dynamics,  
408 stressing a thorough and systematic identification of the demographic, cultural, political,  
409 economic, and technological drivers that shape and are shaped by urban ecology and evolution.



410

411 *Extending eco-evolutionary dynamics to include human society*

412         The concept of the **evolving metacommunity** (Definition: Box 1) is one example of a  
413 current framework in evolutionary ecology that can be used to study socio-eco-evolutionary  
414 dynamics in urban ecosystems. This framework considers organisms within networks of  
415 interconnected populations and communities (Urban & Skelly, 2006). Biological responses to  
416 environmental changes are therefore governed by a dynamic interplay between local and  
417 regional processes, including species sorting, adaptation, dispersal and gene flow (Urban &  
418 Skelly, 2006). Extending the evolving metacommunity theory to incorporate the effects of  
419 humans and social dimensions will be an important consideration in studying eco-evolutionary  
420 dynamics in urban ecosystems. In these ecosystems, individuals, populations, and communities  
421 are nested in a mosaic of habitats that are interconnected and fragmented by human activity  
422 and infrastructure. While roads, waterways, and built structures isolate and restrict distribution  
423 in some species, they connect and disperse others that are more closely associated with humans  
424 (Miles, Rivkin, et al., 2019).

425         Humans might also be uniquely incorporated into evolving metacommunity models as  
426 species themselves. As with other interacting species, human populations are characterized by  
427 varying abundance and distribution that reflects their interactions with local environments. As  
428 important ecosystem engineers (Smith, 2007), humans can impose selection on other species.  
429 Other species and their adaptations might also feed back to affect human densities, habitat  
430 choices, settlement and movement patterns. At broader spatial scales, urban influences on  
431 surrounding environments extend well beyond the geographic boundary of a city, making the  
432 hierarchical structure of the evolving metacommunity theory also helpful for studying urban eco-  
433 evolutionary dynamics. Including social components like transportation infrastructure,  
434 neighbourhood cohesion, and socioeconomic geography, may allow for more accurate  
435 predictions. For example, a consideration of international travel networks, national quarantine  
436 and customs policies, and trade embargos can help predict the evolution and spread of  
437 pathogenic, invasive, and pest species (Helmus, Mahler, & Losos, 2014; Jones et al., 2008; Miles,  
438 Rivkin, et al., 2019). While challenging, a thorough incorporation of human social patterns and

439 processes into ecological and evolutionary dynamics will lead to novel insights for understanding  
440 urban ecosystems.

441

#### 442 *Extending urban coupled human and natural systems to include evolution*

443 An additional approach to studying socio-eco-evolutionary dynamics in cities is by  
444 extending urban ecology's CHANS models (Box 2; [Liu et al., 2007](#)) to include evolutionary  
445 processes and feedbacks. These models have shown that human socioeconomic and  
446 demographic patterns and processes are reflected in infrastructure and other abiotic and biotic  
447 features of the urban ecosystem (Schneider, Swetschinski, Campbell, & Rudel, 2019; Tessum et al.,  
448 2019). Urban evolution research has simultaneously revealed that these same physical and  
449 biological characteristics can influence both the adaptive (Brans & De Meester, 2018; Whitehead  
450 et al., 2017) and non-adaptive (Combs et al., 2018; Munshi-South, 2012) evolution of urban  
451 species. Indeed, recent work has shown that urban predictor variables that characterize  
452 socioeconomic heterogeneity, such as urban heat islands (Brans & De Meester, 2018), and  
453 environmental pollutants (Isaksson, 2015; Reid et al., 2016; Wirgin et al., 2011), can drive  
454 physiological and life-history adaptations in organisms. Recent work in Baltimore, USA, has  
455 shown that tiger mosquitoes (*Aedes albopictus*) in low-income neighbourhoods tend to have  
456 larger wing and body sizes - traits linked to increased fecundity, survival, and ultimately spread of  
457 disease (Katz, Leisnham, & LaDeau, 2019). The distribution of these human influences is a direct  
458 result of socially-driven urban form underpinned by exacerbating legacies of income inequality  
459 and segregation over decades and centuries (Grove et al., 2018; Roman et al., 2018). Integration  
460 of social processes and their relevant eco-evolutionary feedbacks may therefore serve dual  
461 functions; first, by increasing our understanding of the value of ecological and evolutionary  
462 processes in cities, and second, by providing the applied tools to mitigate urban disturbances on  
463 ecosystems.

464

#### 465 *Opportunities for studying socio-eco-evolutionary dynamics*

466 To fully understand urban eco-evolutionary dynamics, we need to explicitly identify the  
467 mechanisms by which human society influences ecology, evolution, and their feedbacks. Urban

468 ecosystems are constantly changing as a result of social decisions and processes such as public  
469 policies and private landownership. Humans also interact dynamically within their communities  
470 through multiple networks like economic markets and public institutions. For example, urban  
471 residents depend on large-scale built infrastructures (e.g., as electric power, water supply, food  
472 distribution, and transportation networks) that sustain resource flows within and across cities  
473 (Childers et al., 2015). These interactions contribute to unique physical (e.g., sprawl), social (e.g.,  
474 cultural and economic segregation), and economic (e.g., land values and use) properties of cities  
475 that can affect ecological and evolutionary processes on broad scales.

476 Urban ecosystems are subject to multiple drivers of human-driven environmental change  
477 such that they often experience extreme climatic conditions across multiple axes. How different  
478 environmental conditions interact with one another and affect urban organisms is highly variable  
479 and poorly understood. Consequently, the responses of organisms to urbanization often cannot  
480 be predicted based on studies of any environmental condition in isolation. For example,  
481 researchers showed that bird life-history traits were better predicted by a simple model that  
482 tested the effect of urban vs non-urban habitats compared to models that included four  
483 separate environmental variables that were each correlated with urbanization (temperature,  
484 humidity, artificial light, and noise). The better fit of the simple model suggests that additional  
485 unmeasured variables account for the differences in life-history along urban rural gradients, and  
486 thus many ecology, social and evolutionary factors likely need to be included to accurately  
487 predict traits changes associated with urbanization (Sprau, Mouchet, & Dingemans, 2017).

488 Landscape transformation, infrastructure development, and complex social and political  
489 networks vary considerably across regions, causing heterogeneity within and among cities that  
490 can influence ecological and evolutionary processes ([Alberti et al., In Press](#)). For example,  
491 variation in land use patterns reflect a complex interplay among homeowners' choices, real  
492 estate markets, local businesses, and policy makers (M Alberti, 2008). These interactions can  
493 affect the arrangement and proportion of built and natural land cover, thereby influencing  
494 organisms and their habitats. Quantifying socio-economic variables can help with the  
495 construction and parameterization of urban eco-evolutionary dynamics models (McPhearson et  
496 al., 2016). These variables include the distribution of transportation networks (i.e., accessible

497 from municipal resources), built infrastructure (i.e., from urban planning), and land use (i.e.,  
498 from GIS and satellite imagery), as well as attributes of human demographics and society (i.e.,  
499 from census and other survey data). Participatory science (also called citizen or community  
500 science) efforts in particular present an important opportunity both for collecting large-scale  
501 eco-evolutionary (Cooper, Dickinson, Phillips, & Bonney, 2007) and socioecological data (Crain,  
502 Cooper, & Dickinson, 2014) and for promoting science to the general public using surveys,  
503 audiovisual data-collection apps (e.g., SpiderSpotter, Bloomin'Algae, iNaturalist, eBird, iSpot),  
504 and other technological platforms (Krasny, Russ, Tidball, & Elmqvist, 2014).

505 The relative predictability of urban sprawl also provides an important avenue for  
506 initiating longitudinal studies that collect baseline data and track the development and  
507 restoration of landscapes through time (Etterson et al., 2016). In particular, researchers can  
508 measure social, ecological, and evolutionary parameters at pre-, intermediate- and post-  
509 urbanization time points and at different levels of biological organization, contrasting urbanized,  
510 urbanizing, and non-urbanizing sites, within and across cities. These research strategies can  
511 enable reconstruction of population genetic and phenotypic diversity and change, as well as  
512 community composition and species diversity over time. Socio-demographic and socio-economic  
513 changes can be monitored in parallel to determine potential drivers of eco-evolutionary change  
514 in cities.

515 Identifying the underlying sources of phenotypic variation is crucial for assessing the  
516 relationships and feedbacks among social, ecological, and evolutionary processes in urban  
517 ecosystems. Most traits are the product of both genetic and environmental factors. As a result,  
518 purely phenotypic studies can confound the inference of eco-evolutionary dynamics if they do  
519 not account for the joint effects of plasticity and genetics on phenotypic variation and fitness  
520 (Brans, Jansen, et al., 2017; Govaert, Pantel, & De Meester, 2016). The inference of urban  
521 evolution in instances of polygenic inheritance, in particular, necessitates standardized common  
522 garden or reciprocal transplant experiments to evaluate both the heritability as well as the  
523 fitness consequences of supposed urban traits (Thompson et al., 2016). For example,  
524 researchers used reciprocal transplants with common ragweed to identify local adaptation and  
525 divergent selection between populations in urban and non-urban habitats (Gorton, Moeller, &

526 Tiffin, 2018). Studies like these can be replicated across multiple urban gradients and sampling  
527 plots within and among different cities and neighbourhoods to test the ubiquity and  
528 convergence of evolutionary trajectories. Variance partitioning metrics (Govaert, 2018; Govaert  
529 et al., 2016; Lajoie & Vellend, 2015) can further help disentangle the relative contributions of  
530 plasticity and genetics underlying intraspecific trait variation, community ecology, and ecosystem  
531 processes (Brans, Govaert, et al., 2017; Stoks, Govaert, Pauwels, Jansen, & Meester, 2016). Such  
532 analyses will be essential for understanding socio-eco-evolutionary dynamics.

533

### 534 **Looking forward: future studies in socio-eco-evolutionary dynamics**

535 Urban ecosystems are fundamentally regulated, transformed, and interconnected by  
536 human activity. Thus, integrating human social patterns and processes in urban evolution studies  
537 not only presents an opportunity for novel research, but is also imperative for accurately  
538 understanding contemporary ecological and evolutionary dynamics in cities. As we move  
539 forward, we argue that more fully integrating evolutionary ecology research with the social  
540 sciences to address socio-eco-evolutionary questions is critical because:

- 541 1. Accurate predictions about urban coupled human and natural systems (CHANS) will  
542 require understanding the role of evolution in socio-ecological systems over various  
543 timescales.
- 544 2. A complete understanding of urban eco-evolutionary dynamics will require an explicit  
545 consideration of social patterns and processes.
- 546 3. The world is increasingly urbanized and the effects of cities extend beyond their borders.  
547 Hence, understanding ecological responses to global change will depend on our ability to  
548 address #1 & 2

549

### 550 **Conclusion**

551 Studies of cities as coupled human and natural systems (CHANS) and of eco-evolutionary  
552 dynamics have already provided insights into how urban ecosystems are likely to change over  
553 time. We now have the opportunity to leverage these existing bodies of work to create an  
554 integrative framework that more fully resembles the simultaneous social, ecological, and

555 evolutionary dynamics in urban ecosystems. We encourage a new collaboration among social  
556 scientists, ecologists, and evolutionary biologists to develop more sophisticated questions,  
557 increasingly accurate models of urban systems, and garner a greater understanding of dynamics  
558 both within and beyond city boundaries. Understanding urban evolutionary biology will have  
559 vast implications for socio-ecological policies such as those relating to biodiversity management  
560 and ecological restoration as well as human health, wellbeing, and equity. Additionally, we  
561 suggest specific, important, and timely questions that can be addressed with an integrated socio-  
562 eco-evolutionary framework (Questions: Box 4).

563 Cities provide exciting systems to expand our knowledge of eco-evolutionary dynamics  
564 and their social causes and consequences. Studying the social dimensions of eco-evolutionary  
565 dynamics in cities will improve our understanding of the complexity of urban biological  
566 communities, which will be increasingly crucial for conserving and maximizing ecosystem  
567 functions and contributions to people within and outside cities. Urban socio-eco-evolutionary  
568 dynamics research provides a unique opportunity to study evolving metacommunities, the  
569 interplay between local and regional responses, and the presence and strength of eco-  
570 evolutionary feedbacks across multiple taxonomic groups. Just as urban ecology grew to  
571 consider the social complexity of cities and eco-evolutionary dynamics integrated the rapid pace  
572 of evolution, socio-eco-evolutionary research must recognize the dynamism resulting from the  
573 interplay of social, ecological, and evolutionary dimensions within urban systems.

574

#### 575 **Acknowledgements**

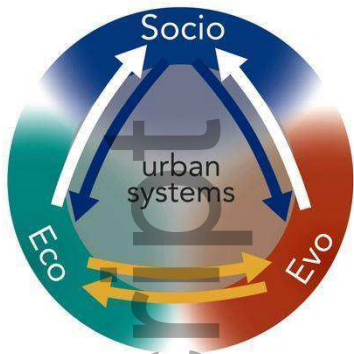
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578 Ecosystem Feedbacks (DEB 1840663) in Seattle, WA in 2019. The lead author (SD) was also partially  
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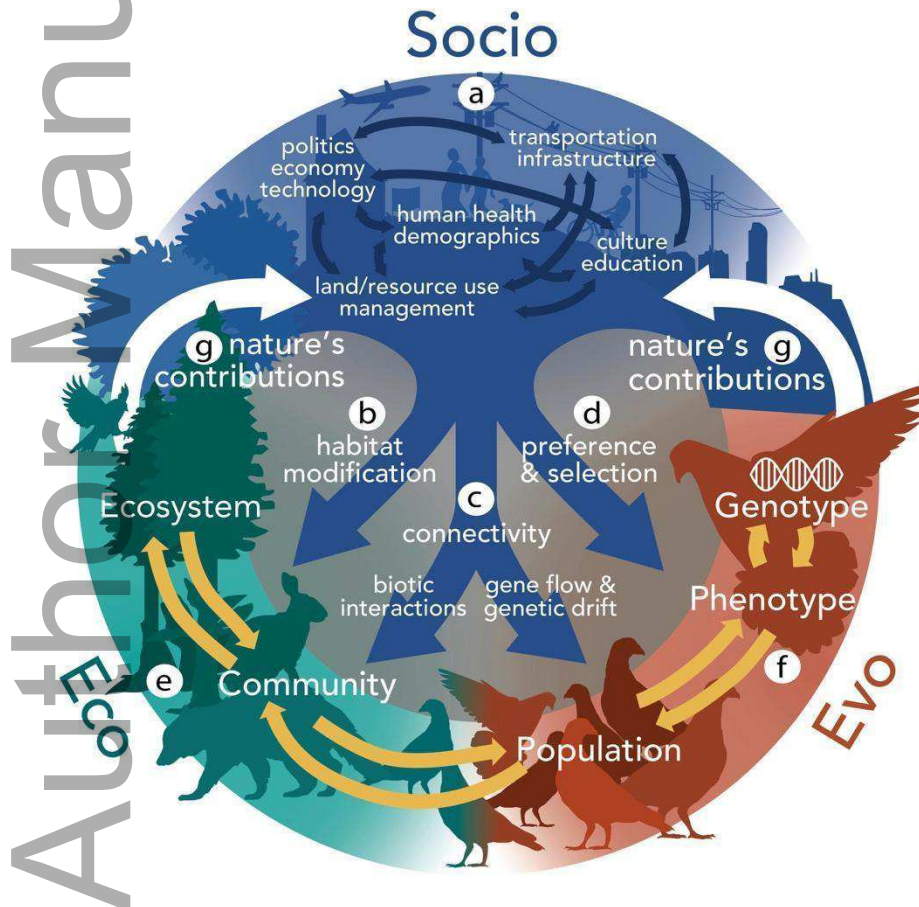
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**Figure 1:** Urban ecosystems provide an opportunity to study contemporary evolution and ecological change inherent in eco-evolutionary dynamics (yellow arrows). Because they are fundamentally anthropogenic, eco-evolutionary dynamics in urban ecosystems are strongly linked to human society. Characteristics of human society likely drive (blue arrows) and are impacted by (white arrows) ecological and evolutionary change.

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**Figure 2:** Detailed dynamics among social, ecological, and evolutionary patterns and processes in urban systems. Social patterns and processes (a) encompass a diversity of political, economic and technological drivers that are interrelated with transportation and infrastructure, culture and education, human

599 population demographics, and land/resource use and management. Social drivers affect (b) ecology  
 600 through habitat modification; (c) ecology (biotic interactions) and evolution (gene flow and genetic drift)  
 601 through altering connectivity among habitats; and (d) ecology and evolution through selection for  
 602 preferred genotypes and phenotypes. Ecological (e) and evolutionary (f) dynamics are linked through  
 603 feedbacks between ecosystems, communities, populations, genotypes and phenotypes. Ecological and  
 604 evolutionary feedbacks toward society take the form of nature's contributions to people (g) including  
 605 ecosystem services and disservices.

606 **Boxes**

607

Box 1: Definitions	
<b>Urban Ecosystem</b>	An ecosystem whose biological and physical characteristics are primarily engineered, modified, and constructed by humans. In urban ecosystems, <b>human society</b> influences the relationships among organisms and between organisms and the physical environment. Urban ecosystems are characteristic examples of CHANS (Box 2).
<b>Human Society</b>	A group of human beings inhabiting and interacting within a common region, sharing and participating in the same culture (Tischler, 2006) or self-sufficient system that usually persists longer than the life-span of its individual members (Aberle, Cohen, Davis, Levy, & Sutton, 1950).
<b>Urban Ecology</b>	The interdisciplinary study of organismal and ecosystem patterns and processes within and among cities and their relationships with human activities. Urban ecology has increasingly incorporated the study of ecological interactions with <b>human society</b> in cities through frameworks such as CHANS (Box 2).
<b>Urban Evolutionary Biology</b>	The study of how urban form and processes shape adaptive (via natural selection) and non-adaptive (via mutation, gene flow, and genetic drift) evolutionary dynamics that occur within or because of cities.
<b>Eco-evolutionary dynamics</b>	The interactions and feedbacks between ecological and evolutionary processes; both the ecological variation that affects evolution <i>and</i> the feedbacks of



	<p>evolutionary change on ecological processes. Ecological and evolutionary feedbacks typically center on contemporary <b>adaptive evolution</b> of ecologically-relevant traits that alter how organisms interact and function in their ecosystems, for example, influencing their productivity, excretion, or resource consumption (Hendry, 2017).</p>
<p><b>Socio-eco-evolutionary dynamics</b></p>	<p>A framework for the integration of social, ecological, and evolutionary patterns and processes that explicitly features the interactions and feedbacks among <b>human society</b>, ecology, and both <b>adaptive</b> and <b>non-adaptive evolution</b>. This framework incorporates human social characteristics, such as economics, culture, and policy, into the study of <b>eco-evolutionary dynamics</b> in <b>urban ecosystems</b> (Figure 1,2).</p>
<p><b>Adaptive evolution</b></p>	<p>The process by which natural selection acts on heritable phenotypic trait variation in a population leading to the increased survival and reproduction (fitness) of individuals with certain trait values.</p>
<p><b>Non-adaptive evolution</b></p>	<p>Evolutionary change that is not driven by natural selection, including chance mutation, neutral genetic drift (random changes in the frequency of alleles in a population that is more pronounced in small, isolated populations) and gene flow (the transfer of genetic information among populations due to migration of individuals, gametes, and other propagules).</p>
<p><b>Nature's contributions to people (NCP)</b></p>	<p>The essential and often non-replaceable material and assistance (i.e., food, energy, other resources), non-material (i.e., cultural, educational, inspirational) and regulating services (i.e. habitat, climate, and resource maintenance, hazard protection) provided by nature that benefit human existence and wellbeing. The concept of NCP encompasses and extends the former <i>ecosystem services</i> (Díaz et al., 2018). Though the new NCP framework does not specifically allude to detrimental feedbacks on humans, authors have also acknowledged <i>ecosystem disservices</i>, particularly in <b>urban ecosystems</b> (Shackleton et al., 2016). Authors have also recognized <i>ecosystem services</i> – benefits to humans resulting from evolutionary change (Faith et al., 2010, 2017; Rudman et al., 2017). The concept of NCP is central to <b>socio-eco-evolutionary dynamics</b>, as it describes the feedbacks from ecology and evolution toward human society (Figure 2).</p>

**Evolving metacommunity framework**

A framework describing the spatial context of **eco-evolutionary dynamics** that considers sets of local communities linked by the dispersal of multiple species (a metacommunity) and the change in species interactions with the environment and each other via evolution. This framework integrates community ecology and evolution in local patches with regional dispersal and gene flow among regional patches to understand eco-evolutionary interactions at multiple scales (Urban et al., 2008).

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**Box 2: Coupled Human and Natural Systems (CHANS)**

Coupled human and natural systems (CHANS) are increasingly pervasive as human activities now influence most natural processes. Researchers recognize CHANS by explicitly acknowledging linked reciprocal interactions between human and natural systems - often characterized by flows of material, energy, and information (Liu et al., 2007; McDonnell & Pickett, 1993). A critical, yet under-recognized component of CHANS is their unexpected feedbacks. These include nonlinear responses and threshold conditions in which system components transition into alternative states, as well as time lags between a stressor and its effects and/or recognition of these effects and the subsequent decisions. Also characteristic of CHANS are emergent properties in which simultaneous changes across multiple variables produce new environmental contexts that cannot be adequately characterized by any single variable or be identified in the human or natural systems alone (Alberti et al., In Press). Given their complex and heterogeneous nature, cities typify CHANS. Urban ecologists have increasingly relied on CHANS conceptual frameworks to understand human-nature connections and dynamics embedded within cities. Doing so has allowed urban ecologists to move from simply studying ecology that occurs within cities to understanding the ecology *of* cities (Grimm et al., 2008, 2000; Pickett et al., 2001). Cities are exemplary CHANS because they are characterized by substantial complexity in ecological, hydrological, and geophysical structure and function across scales as well as complex social hierarchies – from individuals to households, neighbourhoods, municipalities, regions, and nations – with feedbacks occurring within and among various ecological and social scales (Grimm et al., 2008, 2000; Pickett et al., 2001). Because of this complexity, cities and their components cannot simply be understood by measuring human population sizes or densities but require a more comprehensive

assessment of biophysical and social conditions.

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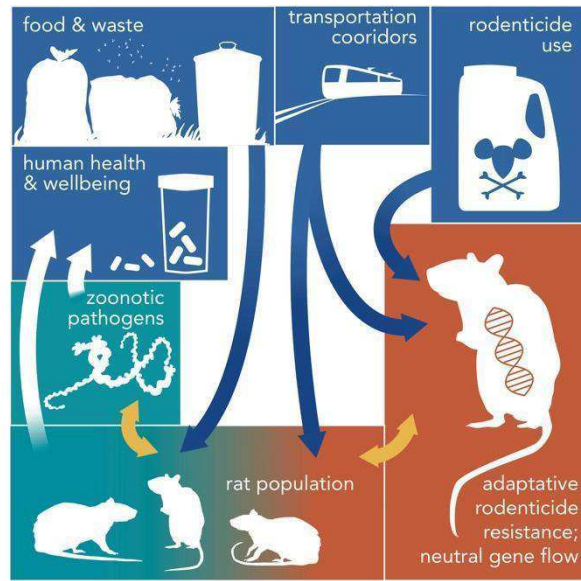
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### Box 3: Urban Socio-Eco-Evo Dynamics Case Studies

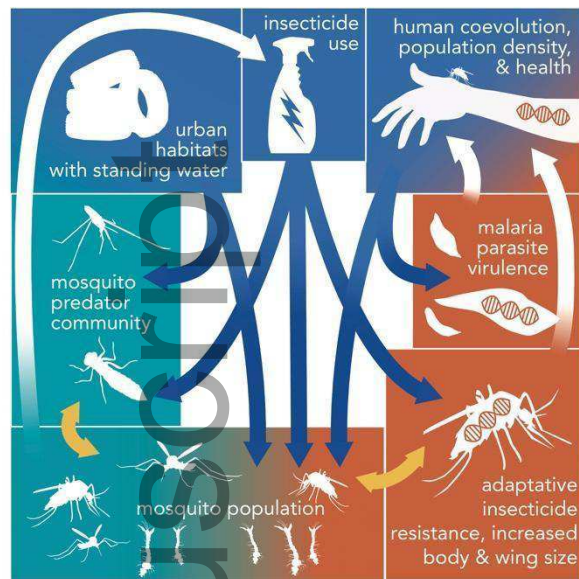
#### a): Social determinants of rat ecology, evolution, disease transmission, and pest management

Brown, or “Norway” rats (*Rattus norvegicus*) have coinhabited with humans for centuries by exploiting food and built structures (Byers et al., 2019; Gardner-Santana et al., 2009). Brown rats show adaptive resistance to rodenticide commonly used in urban habitats (Desvars-Larrive et al., 2017) and significant genetic differentiation at the city block scale where high traffic roadways limit gene flow across neighbourhoods (Combs, Byers, Himsworth, & Munshi-South, 2019; Combs et al., 2018; Gardner-Santana et al., 2009; Kajdacs et al., 2013). Garbage management may also influence the population genetic structure of rats such that individuals in resource-rich microhabitats are less likely to disperse and thus aggregate with more closely related kin within small areas (Gardner-Santana et al., 2009). Unsecured food waste, dilapidated structures, and overgrown vegetation all promote increases in rat infestation in urban areas (Murray et al., 2018; M. G. Walsh, 2014) to societal and economic neglect, low-income communities can have the highest aggregation of attractants for brown rats (Byers et al., 2019; Kajdacs et al., 2013; Murray et al., 2018; Peterson et al., 2020). These dynamics intrinsically link wealth inequality and rat urban ecology. Brown rats are notorious reservoirs of multiple zoonotic pathogens that have myriad negative health implications for humans (Gardner-Santana et al., 2009, p.; Kajdacs et al., 2013;

Richardson et al., 2017). Brown rats' role as carriers of pathogens underscores the urgent public health priority for socio-eco-evo investigations that inform sustained and efficient pest management practices (Byers et al., 2019; Combs et al., 2019). Recent findings show how rats capitalize on urban centers and can thus inform pest management strategies (Combs et al., 2019). Disenfranchised communities with reduced quality infrastructure should feasibly receive the most targeted and sustained pest control efforts (Peterson et al., 2020). However, many of these communities are socially and economically neglected, receiving insufficient waste management and public services that would alleviate the conditions that attract brown rats. In combination, these studies demonstrate how social determinants shape ecological conditions that promote rat colonization and adaptation, resulting in negative feedbacks to society in one of the few, fully articulated examples of socio-eco-evolutionary dynamics in cities.



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b) Social landscape drivers and pesticides impact mosquito evolution and disease in cities

Mosquitoes (including *Aedes aegypti* and *Culex pipiens*) are ubiquitous across the globe, and are prominent vectors for human disease (e.g., Zika virus, Malaria, Dengue fever, West Nile virus; (Kalluri, Gilruth, Rogers, & Szczur, 2007; Rochlin, Turbow, Gomez, Ninivaggi, & Campbell, 2011)). Pest management in cities is especially urgent because mosquitoes show accelerated larval growth and increased survivorship in urban environments, due to greater densities of suitable breeding locations (small volumes of standing water), urban heat

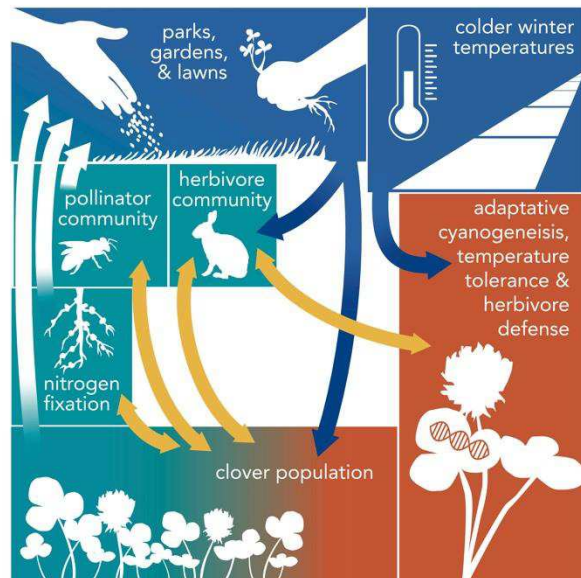
islands, and reductions in predators due to insecticides and unsuitable habitat (Li, Dicke, Harvey, & Gols, 2014; Wilke et al., 2019). Insecticide application has also promoted resistance, aggravating pest management. Hence, mosquitoes generally tend to experience fitness benefits in cities, increasing the risk of pathogen transmission among humans (Kamdern et al., 2017; Medeiros-Sousa, Fernandes, Ceretti-Junior, Wilke, & Marrelli, 2017). Variation in urban infrastructure, driven by socioeconomics and urban planning, can be linked directly to the ecology and evolution of mosquito species. Low-income cities and neighbourhoods have greater relative proportions of impervious surface cover, leading to more surfaces holding standing water (Ayala & Estrugo, 2014; Rochlin et al., 2011). Accordingly, impoverished neighbourhoods have larger mosquitoes in better condition, with increased survivorship and reproduction (Katz et al., 2019). Recent empirical work further shows that urban residents in low-income neighbourhoods have greater risk of mosquito-borne diseases, specifically West Nile virus in Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, Maryland (LaDeau, Leisham, Biehler, & Bodner, 2013) and malaria in cities across sub-Saharan Africa (De Silva & Marshall, 2012). Social drivers and may additionally affect the rate of coevolutionary change between mosquito-borne diseases (e.g., *Plasmodium*) and human resistance to those diseases (Ayala & Estrugo, 2014). For example, sickle-cell anemia, a disease characterized by malformed red blood cells, is typically lethal in people who inherit two copies of an allele with a mutation inhibiting hemoglobin production (Allison, 1954). However, heterozygotes (with just one sickle-cell allele) have increased resistance to malaria, leading to the higher prevalence of the allele in urban, suburban, and rural areas where malaria is common (Evans & Wellems, 2002). As countries in malaria-affected

areas continue to urbanize, the close coevolutionary association among humans, mosquitos, and *Plasmodium* species may become an increasingly urban issue.

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*c) Clover evolution, repeated loss of cyanogenesis, and urban lawns*

The ecology and evolution of white clover (*Trifolium repens*), a perennial, herbaceous plant common in lawns and other human-modified habitats, has been well studied in an urban context. Clover exhibits a Mendelian polymorphism for hydrogen cyanide production (cyanogenesis), which both defends against herbivores and reduces freezing tolerance. White clover repeatedly evolve decreased cyanogenesis in cities, due to putative selection from colder nighttime winter temperatures (Johnson et al., 2018; Santangelo et al., 2018; Thompson et al., 2016).



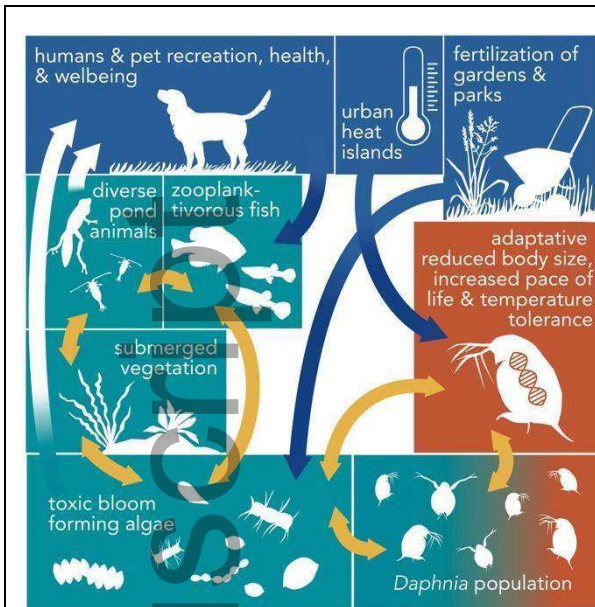
White clover's adaptations might in part lead to their high population densities in cities, where they feed back on the urban ecosystem and society. In particular, clover's mutualistic rhizobial bacteria influence increase soil nitrogen (Hennig & Ghazoul, 2011) and its flowers provide a nectar resource for pollinators (Hicks et al., 2016; Larson et al., 2014; Theodorou et al., 2017). Still, despite its presence in many lawn seed mixes (Bormann, Balmori, & Geballe, 2011), white clover is often considered a weed and removed by homeowners, negatively affecting pollinator communities (Baude et al., 2016; Larson et al.,

2014), the ecosystem-level effects of clover's presence in seed mixes is largely unknown. Because of its strong association with humans, its importance for nutrient cycling and pollinators, and its evolution in cities, the urban white clover system presents an opportunity to study socio-eco-evolutionary dynamics. In particular, research could explore how land use and conversion, homeowner cultural habits, and household income predict clover presence in lawns and thus spatial heterogeneity in pollinator resource availability. If clover is removed, policies could encourage the planting of native species to support its ecosystem functions.

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d) *Daphnia* evolution, eutrophication, urban heat islands, and trophic cascades

*Daphnia* are common zooplankton species in urban, rural, and natural freshwater ponds and lakes across the globe. They vary in several intraspecific life history, behavioural, and physiological traits that can elicit strong ecosystem-level effects. *D. magna* show reduced body size, higher heat tolerance, faster pace-of-life, and altered stress physiology in urban populations compared to rural populations, which are most likely adaptations to warmer temperatures (Brans & De Meester, 2018; Brans, Jansen, et al., 2017).



Smaller average body size in urban zooplankton communities including *Daphnia* can have cascading effects on the pond ecosystem (Gianuca, Pantel, & De Meester, 2016). While increased *Daphnia* thermal tolerance allows them to persist and suppress algae populations, smaller body size diminishes their capacity to do so (Gianuca et al., 2016). Reduced top-down effects from primary consumers can result in disappearance of emergent and submerged vegetation, eutrophication, and decline in amphibians, invertebrates, and overall pond biodiversity (Blaustein et al., 2011; Huisman

et al., 2018; Landsberg, 2002; Paerl & Otten, 2013). Algal blooms will likely increase with climate change and urbanization (Paerl & Huisman, 2009; Teurlincx et al., 2019; Waajen, Faassen, & Lürding, 2014) causing toxic conditions that are harmful for humans and pets (Huisman et al., 2018; Reid et al., 2019). Persistence of *D. magna* in urban and natural ponds is thus crucial for human health and wellbeing. Yet certain actions taken by humans can directly lead to their demise (Paerl & Huisman, 2009; Teurlincx et al., 2019; Waajen et al., 2014). For example, fertilizer runoff and removal of submerged vegetation can result in anoxic conditions, fatal to *D. magna* and other zooplankton (Peretyatko, Teissier, De Backer, & Triest, 2009). Further, stocking of zooplanktivorous fish can reduce *Daphnia* abundance and thus their ability to control algae populations (Peretyatko et al., 2009). Shifts toward eutrophic pond ecosystems can negatively impact human psychological well-being, hydrological balance, climate mitigation, nutrient retention, and bio- and phytoremediation of toxicants from the environment (Reid et al., 2019). Thus, human management, monitoring, and mitigation of local environmental conditions like warming and nutrient runoff are crucial for the maintenance of urban pond ecosystems (Paerl & Otten, 2013; Peretyatko et al., 2009).

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#### Box 4: Outstanding questions that could be addressed using a socio-eco-evolutionary framework

Integrating insights from social sciences, ecology, and evolutionary biology can help us address critical questions about urban systems. This understanding will likely feed back to improve our knowledge and predictions about how ecosystems respond to global change. Here, we propose ten key questions to inform an integrated socio-eco-evolutionary framework.

1. How can incorporating methods from the social sciences improve our understanding of eco-evolutionary dynamics?
2. How do socio-eco-evolutionary dynamics scale with the spatial redistribution and generation lengths of humans and associated organisms across space and time?
3. What is the relevance and magnitude of evolutionary feedbacks to ecological and social patterns and processes in different urban contexts?
4. Can we predict the ways that interspecific interactions will influence eco-evolutionary dynamics in cities and the ways in which social drivers will modify these dynamics and patterns?
5. How important are local dynamics and species identity to eco-evolutionary dynamics in cities? What are the components of a cohesive theory that is relevant to all or most urban systems, and when do local ecology, culture and politics idiosyncratically shape outcomes?
6. How can eco-evolutionary dynamics feed back to influence social processes in cities? In what ways

can social systems change in response to evolutionary changes that are induced by urbanization?

7. How can this multidimensional framework help us better understand the resilience of urban ecosystems to pulse disturbances, such as extreme weather events, and ramping disturbances, such as climate change?
8. What elements of human social constructs (e.g. socioeconomic, cultural, religious, philosophical, political, aesthetic, etc.) are likely to impact socio-eco-evolutionary dynamics?
9. Under what circumstances are eco-evolutionary processes stronger or weaker in urban compared to non-urban areas?
10. How do socio-eco-evolutionary changes in cities affect the influences of cities on surrounding landscapes?

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