

Questions

1. Dunn and Fitzpatrick state that estimates of tropical arthropods have “a range in recent studies from 2.8 million (which would essentially mean most species are already named) to 10 million (meaning 80% of species are unnamed)”. Is it economical to spend the money to get better estimates with a group this large? i.e an exhaustive study of a hectare in the tropics?
2. Since we do not have a confident estimate of the number of species for insects, it is likely that species will (and are) going extinct before they have been discovered. What are some problems associated dealing with unseen extinctions? And how can we convince the public to care about a species that they will never see?
3. Insects are one of the most diverse animals groups on the planet. This being said, do you agree with Dunn and Fitzpatrick on pg. 233 when they say “One productive way forward may be to try and know some groups , be they butterflies, dung beetles, or ants as well as we can.” But we knew from vertebrate and plant groups that this is not ideal. Must we already resign ourselves to this suboptimal method? If saving the number of species is the true goal, shouldn't we want to put more focus into saving the group that will make up the largest percentage of extinctions?
4. If we lost 2000 species of insects, would that be the same as losing 2000 species of vertebrates? Because there are more insects, and 2000 is a much smaller percentage of the whole, does that mean a single species becomes less important?
5. What did you think of this paper? Are the results clear? Does this provide insight into how climate change affects insects as a whole?
6. Can we replicate this study for different insect orders? For different locations?