

## Questions

Based on the previous weeks readings and this chapter, what unique sets of environmental conditions influence plant diversity patterns in cities?

Many environmental conditions of cities mentioned in the reading seem to favor invasive species (for example: edge effects [151], certain soil conditions [154], and high disturbance [152]). What role do cities play in invasive plant introduction and spread?

Why don't native species thrive in urban environments (107)? How can we encourage a more native urban flora, and is this a good conservation goal?

What role do cities play in global biotic homogenization (genetic, taxonomic or functional)? (157)

What is the conservation value of urban lawns and gardens? How can we increase the conservation potential of these areas?

How does socioeconomic status and cultural background influence vegetation cover, and vice versa?

"...discrepancies in income and urban plant diversity (and thus of desirability of particular neighborhoods) can be seen as a political and social inequity for which there should be political and social remedies" (113). Do you agree with this statement? How can ecologists work with local activists and policy makers to better target poorer areas for conservation opportunities?

Does it matter that urban residents' interactions with wild plants in cities might be mostly with invasive plants?

Nonnative species may provide ecosystem functions and social benefits in urban areas where other plants cannot grow (112). Is the provisioning of free ecosystem services by invasive plants really "free"? Do the benefits they provide in urban areas outweigh the costs to native plants and ecosystems?

Why are urban-rural gradient studies useful for studying this kind of system? Can you see any potential limitations or problems with this approach to investigating patterns of urbanization?