1. Record Nr. UNINA9910789716703321

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Titolo	Parasites in ecological communities : from interactions to ecosystems / / Melanie J. Hatcher, Alison M. Dunn [[electronic resource]]
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge : , : Cambridge University Press, , 2011
ISBN	1-139-12412-9 1-107-21937-X 1-283-29830-9 1-139-12219-3 9786613298300 0-511-98735-8 1-139-11645-2 1-139-12711-X 1-139-11428-X 1-139-11209-0
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (xv, 445 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Collana	Ecology, biodiversity, and conservation
Classificazione	SCI020000
Disciplina	577.8/57
Soggetti	Parasites - Ecology Parasites - Behavior Host-parasite relationships Parasitology Biotic communities
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 05 Oct 2015).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [393]-438) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Machine generated contents note: Part I. Introduction; Part II. Parasites and Competitors: 1. Introduction; 2. One host-one parasite systems; 3. Apparent competition; 4. Parasite-mediated competition; 5. Parasite-modified competition; 6. Examples from conservation and management; 7. Competition between parasites; 8. Conclusions; Part III. Parasites and Predators: 9. Introduction; 10. Parasites of prey with specialist predators; 11. Parasites of prey with generalist predators; 12. Parasites of predator; 13. Parasites of predator and prey; 14. Applications: predator control and harvesting; 15. Conclusions; Part IV.

Parasites and Intraguild Predation: 16. Introduction; 17. Ecological significance of IGP; 18. IGP as a unifying framework for competition and predation; 19. Parasites intrinsic to IGP; 20. Parasites extrinsic to IGP; 21. Models of parasitism extrinsic to IGP; 22. IGP and the evolution of host-parasite relationships; 23. Conclusions; Part V. Plant Pathogens and Parasitic Plants: 24. Introduction: parasitism of plants; 25. Soil borne pathogens; 26. Plant defence strategies; 27. Parasitic plants; 28. Endophytes; 29. Conclusions; Part VI. Parasites and Invasions: 30. Introduction; 31. Parasite introduction and acquisition; 32. Loss of parasites by invaders: enemy release; 33. Invasions and host-parasite co-evolution; 34. The impact of parasitism on biological invasion; 35. Conclusions; Part VII. Ecosystem Parasitology: 36. Introduction; 37. Trophic cascades; 38. Parasite dynamics in multihost communities; 39. Biodiversity and disease; 40. Parasites in the food web; 41. Bioenergetic implications of parasitism; 42. Ecosystem engineering; 43. Ecosystem health; 44. Evolutionary considerations; 45. Conclusions; Part VIII. Emerging Diseases in Humans and Wildlife: 46. Introduction; 47. The process of disease emergence; 48. The evolution of emergence; 49. Phylogenetic and temporal patterns of emergence; 50. Environmental change and emergence; 51. Conservation and control; 52. Conclusions; Part IX. Where Do We Go From Here?; References; Index.

Sommario/riassunto

Interactions between competitors, predators and their prey have traditionally been viewed as the foundation of community structure. Parasites - long ignored in community ecology - are now recognized as playing an important part in influencing species interactions and consequently affecting ecosystem function. Parasitism can interact with other ecological drivers, resulting in both detrimental and beneficial effects on biodiversity and ecosystem health. Species interactions involving parasites are also key to understanding many biological invasions and emerging infectious diseases. This book bridges the gap between community ecology and epidemiology to create a wide-ranging examination of how parasites and pathogens affect all aspects of ecological communities, enabling the new generation of ecologists to include parasites as a key consideration in their studies. This comprehensive guide to a newly emerging field is of relevance to academics, practitioners and graduates in biodiversity, conservation and population management, and animal and human health.