

Kareiva et al. Guiding Questions:

(1) The authors propose that conservation has typically been framed as the science of protecting nature, especially from people. Do you agree with this statement? Do you see problems with it?

(2) The authors suggest that a more productive approach to conservation might be to try to manage the balance of tradeoffs between desirable and undesirable effects of human impacts. What do you think of this approach? How might it be an improvement over simple attempts to protect nature? How might it be problematic?

(3) Related to #2: What do you think of the authors' assertion, "The realities of the human footprint renders discussions about what areas of the world to set aside as wild and protected areas as somewhat irrelevant; more germane is a discussion of what tradeoffs we are willing to accept as a result of domestication of nature."?

(4) The paper only briefly touches on cities, describing them as "the most domesticated landscapes on the planet." What other connections can you draw from the broad point of the paper to urban landscapes? What can we learn from studies of urban individuals, populations, species, and ecosystems that might help us address the goal of balancing desirable and undesirable effects of human impacts?

(5) We could consider two distinct goals of urban-related conservation research – to minimize the broad ecological impact (i.e., ecological footprint) of humans who live in cities, or to minimize the focused ecological impact of cities more locally (e.g., on biodiversity in the area occupied by a city). Can you think of ways we could achieve these goals? Do they conflict with each other (i.e., to accomplish one, do you sacrifice the other)?

(6) Apart from applied and conservation-related motivations for studying urban nature, can you think of any fundamental reasons why urban ecology and evolution research could be valuable? (fundamental research = research where the motivation is the knowledge generated, rather than any more tangible benefit)