Impact of forest thinning on Thai forests

Invertebrates – such as insects – are responsible for many extremely important ecological processes, not least pollination. As such, if for some reason insect diversity is reduced, impacts can be felt throughout an ecosystem. J. Ghazoul studied the impact of logging and forest fragmentation on the pollination and seed production of two tree species in Thailand. The number of flower visits to the trees by pollinating bees was not affected by logging disturbance. However, pollinators did spend longer periods of time foraging in the canopies of isolated trees which were more prevalent in logged areas where tree density had been reduced. Consequently, at the logged site, few cross-pollinations occurred and fruit yield from the trees was considerably lower than at nearby un-logged sites where distances between flowering trees were smaller. A reduced fruit set has long-term implications for the recovery of tree populations in disturbed areas, and local population genetic structure is likely to be affected as reduced breeding between genetically independent trees.


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