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## Biological Conservation

Volume 96, Issue 3, December 2000, Pages 363-369

# Effects of management burning on prairie insect species richness within a system of small, highly fragmented reserves

Ron Panzer <sup>a</sup> ... Mark Schwartz <sup>b</sup>

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[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0006-3207\(00\)00065-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0006-3207(00)00065-3)

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## Abstract

A growing number of entomologists are expressing concern that insect species are being extirpated from fire-managed (F-M) reserves and are urging that management burning be substantially reduced. In accord with this view, the fire attrition hypothesis predicts that fire-excluded (F-E) sites will support greater species richness, greater mean population densities, and an inordinately large number of species that are absent from F-M sites. Comparative studies of remnant-dependent (r-d) species among F-M and F-E systems in northern Illinois, northwest Indiana, and southeast Wisconsin failed to support these predictions. Our results suggest that the fire-attrition model, based on prevailing burn practices, may be applicable to few if any species. We conclude that prevailing rotational, cool season burning practices have generally been compatible with the conservation of insect biodiversity within the highly fragmented prairie reserve

system in the Chicago region.



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## Keywords

Insect conservation; Managment burning; Prairie Management; Leafhoppers; Butterflies

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