

1 Punching above their weight: the ecological and social benefits of pop-up  
2 parks

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11 Abstract

12 Current global enthusiasm for urban greening and bringing nature back into  
13 cities is unprecedented. Evidence is mounting for the socio-ecological benefits  
14 of large, permanent greenspaces, but the potential for pop-up parks (PUPs) –  
15 small, temporary greenspaces – to synergistically enrich urban nature for the  
16 benefit of biodiversity and people is unknown. Here, we firstly highlight the  
17 potential of PUPs to provide biodiversity benefits by drawing on a case study  
18 to show how PUPs may enhance biodiversity in a densely-urbanised area.  
19 Next, we review the evidence linking greenspace design with social outcomes  
20 to consider the potential of PUPs to deliver social and mental restoration  
21 benefits. Finally, we highlight how PUPs can function as socio-ecological  
22 laboratories for conducting experiments that inform urban design, and  
23 propose a research agenda to address the pressing need to understand how  
24 small, temporary greenspaces may be optimally designed to provide socio-  
25 ecological benefits to humans and other species..

26 In a nutshell

- 27 • Pop-up parks have swiftly evolved into a worldwide phenomenon,  
28 driven by the recognition of the value of greenspace for humans and  
29 other species.

- 30 • The food and habitat resources provided by PUP can [boost and](#)  
31 [sustain functionally and taxonomically diverse insect communities.](#)
- 32 • Pop-up parks may help people rekindle their connections with nature,  
33 socialise, spend time outdoors, and experience positive short-term  
34 body and mind states.
- 35 • Pop-up parks provide insight into how small, temporary greenspaces  
36 can complement permanent greenspaces in incorporating nature into  
37 cities.
- 38 • Pop-up parks offer a platform for addressing targeted ecological and  
39 social research questions related to greenspace design.

40 Urban ecosystems are increasingly valued for their environmental and social  
41 outcomes (Hartig and Kahn 2016), with increasing attention being paid to the  
42 design and management of urban greenspaces (Aronson *et al.* 2017). The  
43 socio-ecological benefits of greenspaces are reported to be substantial. Urban  
44 nature can have positive effects on physiological and psychological health  
45 (Shanahan *et al.* 2016), and both physical and mental well-being correlate  
46 with amount, proximity and access to greenspaces (Hartig *et al.* 2014).  
47 Furthermore, greenspaces in urban environments provide vital resources for  
48 biodiversity (Sadler *et al.* 2010; Beninde *et al.* 2015; Lepczyk *et al.* 2017;  
49 Threlfall *et al.* 2017), including for threatened species (Ives *et al.* 2016).  
50 Conserving and increasing biodiversity in cities is an urban sustainability  
51 imperative, chiefly because of the key roles that plants, animals and other  
52 non-human species play in sustaining functional, healthy ecosystems  
53 (Cardinale *et al.* 2012), and delivering ecosystem [services](#) (Mace *et al.* 2012).  
54 For these reasons, there is worldwide enthusiasm for urban greening (Hartig  
55 and Kahn 2016), with particular interest from planning, landscape and health  
56 practitioners seeking to bring nature back into cities. While we acknowledge  
57 the central role of large, permanent greenspaces, this paper draws attention  
58 to the emerging opportunity presented by small-scale, short-lived  
59 greenspaces such as pop-up parks (PUPs) to synergistically enrich urban  
60 nature for the benefit of biodiversity and people.

61 In simplest terms, a PUP is a small, temporary greenspace (Figure 1a-c). Yet  
62 PUPs can vary considerably in size and duration. Some may occupy a few  
63 square meters (e.g. a planter box), while others extend over much larger  
64 areas (e.g. Melbourne's 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> 'A'Beckett Square'; Figure 1b). Pop-up  
65 parks may be extremely short-lived; the first Park(ing) day in 2005  
66 transformed a metered parking space into a PUP for the term of the two-hour  
67 stipulated lease. Ultimately, a PUP's duration will depend on the factors that  
68 determined its creation. For example, a PUP may be used as a test-run for a  
69 permanent greenspace, to reassign the use of location to reflect the changing  
70 seasons, or become the 'meanwhile' use of a site that has been scheduled for  
71 redevelopment (Kelly 2012).

72 From their inconspicuous inception in the late twentieth century (Lydon and  
73 Garcia 2015), PUPs have swiftly evolved into a worldwide phenomenon. For  
74 instance, the Park(ing) Day project – an ongoing annual worldwide initiative  
75 where parking spots are transformed into PUPs – has grown into a global  
76 movement, with over 1,500 PUPs created on PARK(ing) Day 2013 (Corey  
77 2014; Figure 2). This and other community-led PUP initiatives have now  
78 morphed into more formal institutionalised programs. A notable example is the  
79 San Francisco Planning Department 'Pavement to Parks' program, an  
80 initiative that transformed under-utilised street space into public plazas and  
81 parks that existed for days or years (Loukaitou-Sideris *et al.* 2012). As of  
82 2014, at least 21 cities in North America were officially supporting or piloting  
83 similar PUPs programs (Corey 2014). Other municipalities around the world  
84 have also embraced PUPs as a strategic component of urban planning. The  
85 City of Greater Dandenong, Australia purposely incorporated PUPs into their  
86 'Revitalising Central Dandenong' renewal project. In London, the Boroughs of  
87 Lambeth and Southwark have taken up the Design Council's 'Knee High  
88 Challenge', a program that specifically aims to use PUPs to increase the  
89 available outside-play-space for children and their parents.

90 Pop-up parks illustrate the concept of 'tactical urbanism', a global approach to  
91 urban planning and design focusing on short-term, low-cost greening  
92 initiatives to add vitality to vacant or under-utilised spaces (Lyndon and Garcia  
93 2015). Pop-up parks are also part of the 'do-it-yourself' urbanism movement

94 (Finn 2014), in which residents take it upon themselves to plan and execute  
95 place-making initiatives to improve unaddressed issues in the public space  
96 realm. Public health scholars, practitioners and policymakers advocating for  
97 innovative approaches to promote urban liveability have included PUPs as  
98 community experiments in public health law and policy; for instance, PUPs  
99 were an important component of a series of public health actions implemented  
100 by the City of Minneapolis as part of a citywide effort to foster violence-free  
101 social environments that were instrumental in catalysing a 60% reduction in  
102 juvenile violent crime (McGowan *et al.* 2015). Given their flexibility to  
103 accommodate people for short time periods, PUPs have been cited as  
104 examples of emerging community amenities (Larson and Guenther 2012),  
105 attracting valuable social and economic activity around the places in which  
106 they are temporally located. Pop-up parks may also be considered an applied  
107 example of ‘urban acupuncture’, an environmentalist philosophy and theory  
108 that uses acupuncture as a metaphor for applying small-scale actions to  
109 address large-scale urban sustainability issues (Lerner 2014).

110 While a strong body of evidence is building for the socio-ecological benefits of  
111 large, permanent greenspaces (Sadler *et al.* 2010), no studies have  
112 investigated the potential socio-ecological benefits of PUPs. Here, we  
113 highlight the potential of PUPs to provide biodiversity benefits, and present  
114 empirical evidence of the potential for PUPs to deliver positive biodiversity  
115 outcomes using a case study conducted in a densely-urbanised area of  
116 Melbourne, Australia. Next, we review the direct or implied evidence from the  
117 literature regarding the potential social benefits of PUPs. Finally, we argue  
118 that a structured research agenda for exploring the socio-ecological benefits  
119 of PUPs and the best designs to achieve those benefits is urgently needed.  
120 Our focus on PUPs recognises the increasing lack of opportunity for decision-  
121 makers and urban planners to create new large, permanent greenspaces. Our  
122 research helps inform how small-scale, short-lived greenspaces such as  
123 PUPs may be optimally designed to provide socio-ecological benefits to  
124 humans and other species.

125 ■ The biodiversity benefits of pop-up parks

126 A mounting body of evidence highlights the contribution of large, permanent  
127 greenspaces for sustaining biodiversity within urban environments. A recent  
128 meta-analysis of the factors influencing intra-urban biodiversity variation  
129 provided evidence of the positive effect of patch area on the species richness  
130 of numerous insect and vertebrate taxa, and suggested that sites of at least  
131 50 ha are needed to sustain area-sensitive, urban-avoider species (Beninde  
132 *et al.* 2015). Additionally, and arguably much more importantly, the meta-  
133 analysis identified the critical contribution of biotic factors, such as vegetation  
134 structure and plant diversity, that operate in the urban matrix at much smaller  
135 scales and that have the potential to be targeted for management actions.  
136 Similarly, a study examining how a functionally diverse insect community  
137 responded to management-induced vegetation changes in a range of  
138 greenspaces found that, while large greenspaces such as golf courses  
139 sustained more species on average than smaller greenspaces such as  
140 residential gardens, the key driver of insect diversity was a synergistic  
141 combination of vegetation structure and plant diversity (Mata *et al.* 2017).  
142 Working within the same experimental context, Threlfall *et al.* (2017) showed  
143 that plot-level factors such as understory vegetation volume were more  
144 influential drivers of bat, bird, bee, beetle and bug diversity than the density of  
145 trees in the landscape. These studies suggest that localised biotic factors can  
146 be more substantial drivers of greenspace functional and taxonomical  
147 diversity than factors operating at large, landscape scales. In the context of  
148 greenspace design, these biotic factors are key site attributes, which, if  
149 properly managed, could contribute to the provision of food and habitat  
150 resources for a wide range of taxa in small-scale greenspaces. While we do  
151 not presuppose that all findings elucidated in these studies can be  
152 extrapolated directly to PUPs, we believe they highlight the untapped potential  
153 of small-scale greenspaces to deliver positive biodiversity outcomes if  
154 properly designed.

155 Beyond large greenspaces, many greenspace types in the size range of  
156 PUPs, such as flower meadows, pocket parks, residential gardens, and  
157 greenroofs, are playing critical roles in supporting biodiversity in cities  
158 (Aronson *et al.* 2017; Lepczyk *et al.* 2017). Here, our focus is on greenroofs

159 because of the substantial body of evidence produced in recent years  
160 supporting hypotheses linking greenroof design with positive biodiversity  
161 outcomes. For instance, a study across 40 greenroofs by Braaker *et al.* (2017)  
162 provides compelling evidence of the positive relationships between greenroof  
163 design features, such as plant diversity and flower abundance, and  
164 functionally and taxonomically diverse arthropod communities. Like PUPs,  
165 greenroofs are situated at the frontier of applied urban ecological research  
166 and practice (Oberndorfer *et al.* 2007), and face many of the same design  
167 challenges and considerations in order to achieve their full potential as  
168 providers of food and habitat resources for biodiversity in cities. The short  
169 lifespan of PUPs adds an extra element of complexity not shared with  
170 greenroofs. How the short lifespan of PUPs influences the number of species  
171 that successfully establish populations in them, the ecological implications of  
172 PUP removal for these populations, and the extent to which improperly-  
173 designed PUPs could act as ecological traps are appealing and topical  
174 avenues of research.

175 There is a need for experimental evidence that links key features of  
176 greenspace design with specific biodiversity outcomes. Guidelines have been  
177 developed for practitioners wishing to incorporate ecological knowledge into  
178 urban planning, design and development, including design guidelines  
179 expressly targeted at maintaining and introducing habitat (Garrard *et al.* 2018)  
180 and identifying species' critical life-cycle requirements (Weisser & Hauck  
181 2017). Yet at present, the capacity for greenspaces to successfully deliver  
182 meaningful long-term biodiversity benefits is largely unknown. Evidence-  
183 based urban design that carefully considers the causal pathways linking  
184 design to biodiversity benefits will be key to the success of PUPs and other  
185 types of small-scale greenspaces for delivering positive biodiversity  
186 outcomes. Many questions remain, for instance: (1) can PUPs,  
187 notwithstanding their small size and short lifespan, be colonised by, and  
188 provide resources for, species in densely-urbanised areas? and (2) can PUPs  
189 contribute to the functional and taxonomical diversity, albeit temporarily, of the  
190 broader greenspace in which they might be embedded? Aiming to shed some  
191 light on these and other related questions, we present a case study of a small,

192 temporary greenspace that embodies investigation of the biodiversity benefits  
193 of PUPs.

194 ■ The 'Grasslands' case study

195 'Grasslands' was an art-science collaboration that temporally greened the  
196 State Library of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia by installing native grasses  
197 (Panel 1). We were interested in examining whether the short duration of the  
198 PUP would provide adequate time for an insect community to become  
199 established and, if so, whether this would lead to an increase in the site's  
200 overall insect diversity or just mirror the insect diversity of the site's permanent  
201 vegetation. We hypothesised that the site's gamma diversity would increase  
202 as a result of the unique insect species living in the PUP vegetation, and  
203 tested this across five functional and six taxonomical groups. A detailed  
204 description of our experimental design, data collection methodology and data  
205 analysis framework is given in Panel 1 and WebPanel 1.

206 Over the PUP's lifespan, we detected 90 insect species at the site, of which  
207 20 were unique to the permanent vegetation, 41 unique to the PUP  
208 vegetation, and 29 shared between the two vegetation types. For each  
209 functional and taxonomical group, and for all groups combined, we estimated  
210 the contribution of the PUP to the site's overall insect diversity, expressed as  
211 a per cent change in species richness when compared to insects detected in  
212 the permanent vegetation only (WebPanel 6). Our results reveal that the PUP  
213 provided habitat for a diverse insect community and substantially increased  
214 the species richness of all insect functional (Figure 5) and taxonomic  
215 (WebFigure 1) groups. For example, there were, on average, approximately  
216 two and half times more pollinator and over three times more parasitoid  
217 species in the site when species in the PUP were taken into account  
218 (WebPanel 6). Likewise, there were, on average, three and a half times more  
219 beetle and one and a half more hemipteran bug species in the site when  
220 species in the PUP were taken into account (WebPanel 6). Taken together,  
221 our findings highlight the potential of PUPs to boost and sustain functionally  
222 and taxonomically diverse insect communities. In this case example such  
223 increases are likely a consequence of the supplementary food and habitat

224 resources provided by the PUP's plant species, as well as increased  
225 vegetation complexity and proportion of native species.

226 'Grasslands' is an example of a pop-up park that supports fundamental  
227 advances in our understanding of the potential of small-scale, temporary  
228 urban greenspaces to provide biodiversity benefits. We should sound a note  
229 of caution, however, as our study has thrown up questions in need of further  
230 investigation. Most importantly, we lack the evidence to ascertain whether the  
231 insect species documented in the PUP: (1) colonised the temporary  
232 vegetation while dispersing from surrounding greenspace patches; (2) were  
233 actively attracted by the new resources provided by the PUP; or (3) were  
234 simply incubated outside the study site, tagging along with the soil and plants  
235 that were used to assemble the PUP. We are confident that our research will  
236 serve as a base for future studies looking to disentangle the mechanisms that  
237 enable PUPs to attract biodiversity to urban environments. We were unable to  
238 further assess whether some insect species might have been attracted initially  
239 to the PUP to eventually 'spill over' to the permanent vegetation, and  
240 therefore become part of the site's community once the temporary vegetation  
241 was removed. We are currently designing a follow-up field experiment to  
242 address this knowledge gap. Despite these limitations, the opportunities  
243 offered by the 'Grasslands' case study suggest that PUPs around the world  
244 are uniquely placed to contribute to our understanding of how to optimally  
245 design greenspaces to bring biodiversity back into our cities.

#### 246 ■ Potential social benefits of pop-up parks

247 Multiple threads of compelling evidence from epidemiological, experimental  
248 and survey studies have repeatedly substantiated the link between large,  
249 permanent greenspaces and a wide range of social benefits, including  
250 improvements in physical health and mental well-being, increased social  
251 contact and cohesion, improved child cognitive development, reduction of  
252 aggression, violence and crime, opportunities for education, and fostering and  
253 reforging connections with nature (Tzoulas *et al.* 2007; Hartig *et al.* 2014;  
254 Dadvand *et al.* 2015; Soga *et al.* 2016; Davern *et al.* 2017; Hand *et al.* 2017).  
255 Indeed, the provision of greenspace for positive social outcomes has



256 underpinned the creation of large, permanent parks in the densest areas of  
257 cities since the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Hartig and Kahn 2016), with some early  
258 examples like the Alameda de Hércules (Seville, Spain) dating back to the  
259 1500s. This reasoning now sits at the core of global sustainability initiatives  
260 such as the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (Griggs *et al.*  
261 2013) and New Urban Agenda (UN 2017), and is guiding local government  
262 policy around the World (City of Melbourne 2017; ICLEI 2017).

263 An intriguing question remains about whether the social benefits linked to  
264 large, permanent greenspaces may also be provided by PUPs. Pop-up parks  
265 might be less likely, for example, to provide health benefits derived from  
266 physical activities such as walking and running, or those associated with long-  
267 term exposure to phytoncides and reduced air pollution. However, we suggest  
268 that PUPs may help people rekindle their connections with nature, socialise,  
269 spend time outdoors, and experience positive short-term body and mind  
270 states, including mental restoration and concentration. With an emphasis on  
271 the social interaction and mental restoration potential of PUPs, our attention is  
272 directed to evidence provided by small-scale, permanent greenspaces such  
273 as pocket parks. For instance, a groundbreaking study investigating the  
274 interactions between city-dwellers and nine pocket parks in a dense urban  
275 setting found that the primary reasons people visited the parks were for  
276 socialising and mental restitution (Peschardt *et al.* 2012). Related studies  
277 focusing on the design of pocket parks highlight the key role of particular  
278 design elements in stimulating social interactions and mental restoration, from  
279 varying the amount and arrangement of both natural (e.g. vegetation, flowers  
280 and water) and human-made (e.g. seating arrangements) elements (Nordh  
281 and Ostby 2013; Peschardt *et al.* 2016). Additionally, a recent study  
282 examining patterns of PUP use through a robust direct observation instrument  
283 showed that PUPs triggered beneficial changes in time-allocation patterns  
284 among users, including a reduction in screen-time and an increase in overall  
285 time spent outdoors (Salvo *et al.* 2017). We believe this the first, and thus far  
286 only, published work to provide empirical evidence of the social benefits of  
287 PUPs.

288 The question of how to best study the social benefits of PUPs remains to be  
289 fully explored. The instantaneous and short-term responses elicited by PUPs  
290 in people may require new methodological tools to complement or go beyond  
291 the physio- and psychological methods that have been traditionally used to  
292 assess responses to greenspace design (Chang *et al.* 2016; Wolf *et al.* 2017).  
293 An exciting alternative, and one that is currently being used to study the  
294 emotional states of urban residents in environmental psychology projects  
295 such as WeSense and Mappiness, would be to couple the experience-  
296 sampling method (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson 2014) with mobile  
297 technologies and social media information systems capable of collecting real-  
298 time, spatially-explicit data. Although financial and time limitations precluded  
299 us from using this methodology in the 'Grasslands' case study, we believe this  
300 novel approach has great potential for elucidating people's responses to  
301 PUPs through space and time.

#### 302 ■ Pop-up parks as socio-ecological laboratories

303 Pop-up parks could offer a controlled environment for studying many urban  
304 design questions that have, to date, seemed intractable. Pop-up parks can be  
305 considered as socio-ecological laboratories; unique testing grounds to  
306 conduct designed experiments capable of informing urban design (Felson *et*  
307 *al.* 2013). As illustrated by the 'Grasslands' case study, adding food and  
308 habitat resources can lead to quantifiable biodiversity outcomes, which may  
309 be used to inform evidence-based conservation actions in all urban  
310 greenspaces. Experimentally controlling design features and the duration and  
311 spatial configuration of PUPs will be particularly valuable for elucidating  
312 evidence of causal pathways and interactions between greenspace design  
313 and socio-ecological benefits.

314 We are now presented with an exciting opportunity for ecologists, social  
315 scientists and urban design and planning professionals to come together to  
316 identify an interdisciplinary research agenda for exploring the socio-ecological  
317 benefits of PUPs. As a starting point, we can seek to understand how PUPs  
318 can be used to build the evidence-base for biodiversity and social benefits  
319 derived directly from contact with nature in cities, to address the degree by

320 which these benefits potentially differ from those in permanent greenspaces,  
321 and to explore particular design characteristics of PUPs that are most  
322 important for promoting benefits to humans and other species. Moreover,  
323 given that they are currently being considered as an alternative urban  
324 greening solution across a wide range of cities around the world, PUPs  
325 present a unique opportunity to test potential differences arising from  
326 dissimilar biogeographical and cultural contexts. Importantly, the synergies  
327 and trade-offs of designing for multiple, sometimes contrasting, objectives,  
328 and the impermanency of POPs could be deliberately assessed. By providing  
329 an experimental socio-ecological framework, PUPs offer a platform for  
330 addressing targeted research questions and resolving other key gaps in urban  
331 greenspace design.

### 332 ■ Conclusions

333 PUPs are swiftly evolving into a global urban phenomenon, but the  
334 opportunity this provides to benefit biodiversity and people in cities remains  
335 unharnessed. In this paper, we have summarised current understanding of  
336 the socio-ecological benefits of PUPs and presented evidence that brings us  
337 closer to understanding the untapped potential of small-scale, short-lived  
338 greenspaces to deliver biodiversity benefits in densely-populated urban areas.  
339 In addition, we have highlighted the potential social benefits that PUPs may  
340 deliver to urban residents. Pop-up parks should not be considered substitutes  
341 for existing large, permanent greenspaces. Instead, we advocate for the  
342 synergistic role that small, temporary greenspaces can play in urban  
343 environments by proposing PUPs as an additional and complementary  
344 opportunity to bring nature back into cities. Given the rapid rate at which the  
345 world is urbanising, PUPs and other small-scale greenspaces provide  
346 important opportunities for people living in dense urban areas to engage with  
347 nature. Looking to the future, the question that remains to be fully explored is  
348 how best to design PUPs to meet this challenge.

### 349 ■ Acknowledgments

350 We wish to extend our gratitude to Editor-in-Chief Sue Silver, as well as to the  
351 Associate Editor, four anonymous reviewers and Dr Dave Duncan for

352 providing insightful comments that greatly contributed to improve early  
353 versions of this paper. This research was conducted as part of the Australian  
354 Research Council Linkage Project LP160100324. Additional  
355 acknowledgements can be found in WebPanel 7.

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467

468 Panel 1. ‘Grasslands’ case study experimental design

469

470 Our study site was the forecourt green space of the State Library of Victoria,  
471 Melbourne, Australia (Figure 3). At the time of our study, the site’s permanent  
472 vegetation was structured by a series of ornamental bed islands, which when  
473 taken together created a cover of approximately 100 m<sup>2</sup> of non-native plant  
474 species (WebPanel 4; Figure 3). These islands were interspersed among a  
475 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> lawn, which was not included as part of the study. For six weeks  
476 during the Austral spring of 2014, a pop-up park called ‘Grasslands’ was  
477 placed amidst the site’s permanent vegetation, overlaid on top of the library’s  
478 forecourt steps (Figures 1c & 3). ‘Grasslands’ was the brainchild of artist  
479 Linda Tegg, who conceived it to recreate the native grasslands that used to  
480 be widespread throughout temperate southeastern Australia, using historical  
481 data found within the library. ‘Grasslands’ was distinctly modular, its basic  
482 units being 52 x 26.5 x 12 cm planter crates and 1/8 m<sup>3</sup> planter bags. In total,

483 it was structured by 971 crates and 100 bags, providing a total vegetated area  
484 of 130 m<sup>2</sup> (Figure 3). Its plant community, which was grown in a greenhouse  
485 before being moved on site, included 56 native species, representing 25  
486 families (WebPanel 4).

487 We collected insects and spiders from both the site's permanent and pop-up  
488 park vegetation across five consecutive weeks (Figure 3). We employed an  
489 entomological net (50 cm diameter), using five sweeps per each cubic metre  
490 of aboveground vegetation, therefore guaranteeing that survey effort was  
491 proportional to the vegetated volume. In order to minimise collector bias, all  
492 sweep-netting was conducted by a single researcher. Insect samples were  
493 sorted into morphospecies and identified to a level of taxonomical resolution  
494 that allowed each morphospecies to be assigned into: (1) functional groups,  
495 including pollinators, herbivores, predators, parasitoids and detritivores  
496 (Figure 4); and (2) taxonomic groups, including spiders (Araneae), beetles  
497 (Coleoptera), flies (Diptera), bugs (Hemiptera), ants, bees and wasps  
498 (Hymenoptera), and butterflies and moths (Lepidoptera). A full list of the  
499 insect and spider species observed during the study is provided in WebPanel  
500 5. We used these data to build two datasets: one recording species site  
501 occupancy only at the site's permanent vegetation (henceforth *base*), and a  
502 second one recording species site occupancy at both the permanent and pop-  
503 up vegetation (henceforth *full*). In both cases, the weekly samples constituted  
504 the units of inference – that is, the temporal sample units in which we  
505 collected data to draw inferences on species site occupancy (Figure 3).

506 We analysed our data using a variation of the hierarchical community model  
507 provided by Mata et al. (2017). A key advantage of our modelling approach is  
508 that each species is treated as a random effect, therefore allowing for species  
509 richness to be estimated with its full associated posterior distribution (Kéry  
510 and Royle 2016). We conducted our analysis through the following four steps:  
511 (1) we analysed the *base* dataset to obtain a baseline species richness  
512 estimate for the whole community and each functional and taxonomical group  
513 – this is, the site's gamma diversity across the study period when only species  
514 observed in the permanent vegetation were considered ( $\gamma_{base}$ ); (2) we  
515 analysed the *full* dataset to obtain combined species richness estimates – that  
516 is, the site's gamma diversity when species observed in both the permanent



517 and pop-up vegetation were considered ( $\gamma_{full}$ ); and (3) we compared the  
518 species richness posterior distributions for the whole community and each  
519 functional and taxonomical group estimated in (1) and (2) to assess the effect  
520 that the pop-up park had, if any, on the site's gamma diversity – our  
521 hypothesis being that  $\gamma_{full} > \gamma_{base}$ . As our data provided strong evidence to  
522 support this hypothesis, we proceeded then to (4) calculate the number of  
523 unique species contributed exclusively by the pop-up park during the duration  
524 of the 'Grasslands' installation. Findings are presented and discussed in the  
525 main text. In the web-only material we provide the full description of our  
526 statistical model and its Bayesian inference implementation (WebPanel 1), as  
527 well as the R scripts (WebPanel 2) and data (WebPanel 3) necessary to  
528 reproduce all analyses.

#### 529 Figure legends

530 Figure 1. Three examples of pop-up parks. (a) A PARK(ing) Day pop-up park  
531 in Arlington, USA (Photo courtesy of County Environmental Services); (b) the  
532 RMIT University City Campus A'Beckett Urban Square pop-up park in  
533 Melbourne, Australia (Photo courtesy of John Gollings); and (c) the  
534 'Grasslands' pop-up park in the forecourt greenspace of the State Library of  
535 Victoria, Melbourne, Australia (Photo courtesy of Matthew Stanton).

536 Figure 2. Location of pop-up parks occurring as part of Park(ing) Day 2013.  
537 Each green circle represents a pop-up park. Source: <http://parkingday.org>

538 Figure 3 (within Panel 1). Schematic representation of the 'Grasslands' case  
539 study experimental design. Within the study site we collected samples from  
540 the permanent and pop-up park vegetation during five consecutive weeks  
541 (Week 1: 23-Oct-14; Week 2: 30-Oct-4; Week 3: 7-Nov-14; Week 4: 12-Nov-  
542 14; Week 5: 23-Nov-14). This yielded ten samples, five each from the  
543 permanent (PV $\alpha$ 1... PV $\alpha$ 5) and pop-up park (PUP $\alpha$ 1...PUP $\alpha$ 5) vegetation, which  
544 we used to build a base ( $\gamma_{base}$ ) and full ( $\gamma_{full}$ ) datasets as described in the text.

545 Figure 4 (within Panel 1). Representative species or taxa of each insect  
546 functional group documented and studied as part of the 'Grasslands' pop-up  
547 park case study (from left to right): the pollinator hoverfly *Melangyna viridiceps*

548 (Macquart, 1847); the herbivorous lygaeid heteropteran bug *Nysius vinitor*  
549 Bergroth, 1891; the predaceous formicine ant *Nylanderia rosae* (Forel, 1902);  
550 a parasitoid pteromalid wasp; and the detritivorous lawn fly *Hydrellia tritici*  
551 Coquillett, 1903. All photos from the 'Grasslands' installation.

552 Figure 5. Estimated species richness occurring in the State Library of Victoria  
553 with (dark grey rectangles) and without (light grey rectangles) the contribution  
554 of the 'Grasslands' pop-up park for each insect functional group (Pol:  
555 pollinators; Her: herbivores; Pre: predators; Par: parasitoids; Det: detritivores)  
556 and for all groups combined. Black solid lines within each rectangle indicate  
557 the mean response. Rectangles represent the 95% Credible Interval  
558 associated with each mean response.

559 Web-only material

560 WebPanel 1. 'Grassland' case study: statistical model description and  
561 inference implementation

562 WebPanel 2. 'Grassland' case study: R software code script

563 WebPanel 3. 'Grassland' case study: dataset

564 WebPanel 4. 'Grassland' case study: plant species list

565 WebPanel 5. 'Grassland' case study: insect and spider species list

566 WebPanel 6. 'Grassland' case study: model species richness estimates

567 WebPanel 7. Extended acknowledgments

568 We are grateful to Linda Tegg, John Delpratt, Linda Wheeler and the City of  
569 Melbourne for providing assistance and support to research the State Library of  
570 Victoria 'Grasslands' installation. We thank Matthew Stanton for providing the  
571 'Grasslands' photo; Laura De Souza at Peter Elliott Architecture and Urban  
572 Design for providing John Gollings' photo of RMIT University's A'Beckett  
573 Urban Square; Alejandra Morán-Ordóñez for developing Figure 2; and Allison  
574 Ferrar, Alan Andersen, Dan Bickel, Ken Walker, Linda Semeraro, Mali  
575 Malipatil, Melinda Moir and Nick Porch for plant and insect species  
576 identification. LM is supported by the Clean Air and Urban Landscapes Hub of

577 the National Environmental Science Program (NESP–CAUL), GEG by the  
578 Threatened Species Recovery Hub of the National Environmental Science  
579 Program, CM by a RMIT University Vice-Chancellor’s Senior Research  
580 Fellowship, and FF and SAB by Australian Research Council Future  
581 Fellowships. We would also like to acknowledge the support of funding from  
582 RMIT University’s Strategic Projects in Urban Research (SPUR) Fund, and  
583 the Australian Research Council – Centre of Excellence for Environmental  
584 Decisions (CEED).

585 WebFigure 1. Estimated species richness occurring in the State Library of  
586 Victoria with (dark grey rectangles) and without (light grey rectangles) the  
587 contribution of the ‘Grasslands’ pop-up park for each insect taxonomical  
588 group. Black solid lines within each rectangle indicate the mean response.  
589 Rectangles represent the 95% Credible Interval associated with each mean  
590 response.