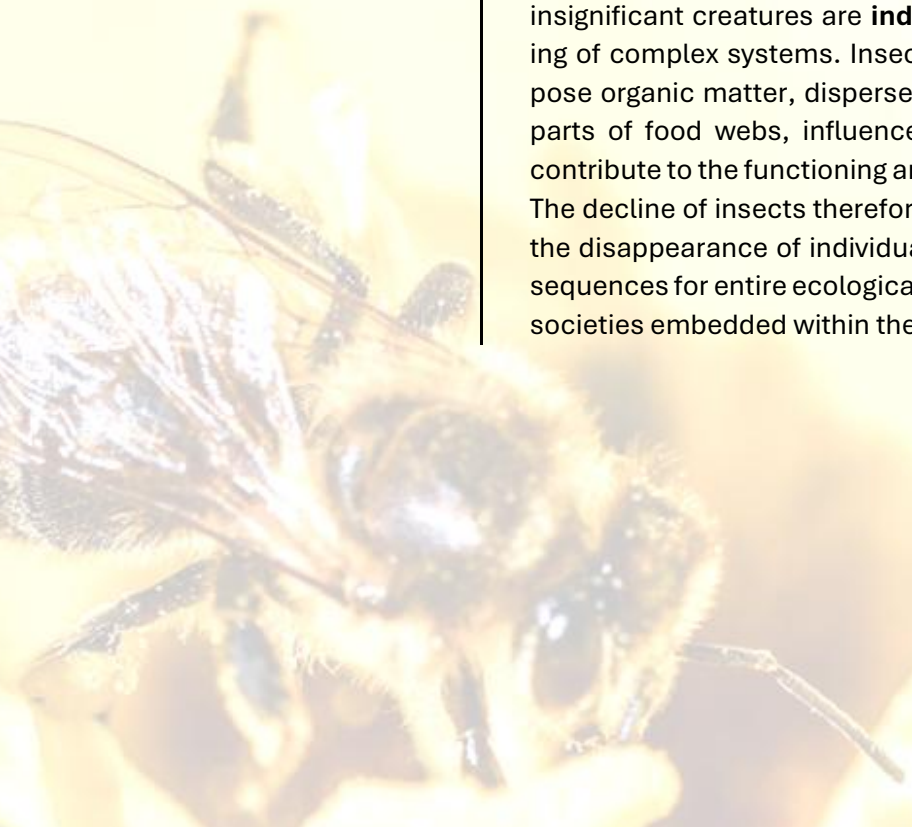
Bugs in Systems

Volume 2 of the
Cultural Zoology Book Series
future volumes:
2028 – horses
2029 – fishes
deadline
March 15, 2027
open source / no APC
culturalzoology@gmail.com

The **Cultural Zoology** book series invites contributions for an edited volume entitled **Bugs in Systems**, exploring the diverse roles, meanings, representations, and relationships of insects and other animals commonly perceived as "bugs" (e.g., spiders) within ecological, biological, cultural, social, technological, and other systems.

The title **Bugs in Systems** deliberately plays on the double meaning of the word **bug**: an insect or other small crawling animal, but also a fault, disturbance, or unexpected problem within a system. This ambiguity points to a central question of the volume. In everyday human experience, bugs are frequently perceived precisely as disturbances: they interrupt our comfort, contaminate our food, invade our homes, spoil our encounters with nature, or disrupt the idyllic image of the landscape. In computing and technology, meanwhile, a "bug" is something that interferes with the proper functioning of a system.

Yet from a biological and ecological perspective, many of the organisms we casually regard as pests, nuisances, or insignificant creatures are **indispensable** to the functioning of complex systems. Insects pollinate plants, decompose organic matter, disperse seeds, constitute essential parts of food webs, influence soils and vegetation, and contribute to the functioning and resilience of ecosystems. The decline of insects therefore does not simply represent the disappearance of individual species: it may have consequences for entire ecological systems and for the human societies embedded within them.



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The volume seeks to explore the tension between **bugs as disturbances and bugs as conditions of systemic functioning**, while also examining the many different systems in which insects participate. We welcome biological and ecological studies alongside cultural, philosophical, ethical, historical, social, and interdisciplinary approaches. Rather than privileging one perspective, the volume aims to bring different forms of knowledge into conversation, recognizing that insects can be studied simultaneously as biological organisms, ecological actors, cultural figures, ethical subjects, economic resources, objects of fear and fascination, and participants in multispecies worlds.

We welcome contributions from a broad range of disciplines and theoretical perspectives. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- insect biology, ecology, behavior, and evolution;
- insect biodiversity, distribution, and conservation;
- insect decline and ecosystem change;
- pollination, bees, and plant–insect interactions;
- insects as components of food webs;
- insects and ecosystem resilience and stability;
- decomposition, nutrient cycling, and soil ecology;
- insect cooperation and collective behavior;
- insects as unwanted animals;
- cultural constructions of the useful/harmful insect;
- fear and disgust toward insects;
- fascination and attraction toward insects;
- insects in education;



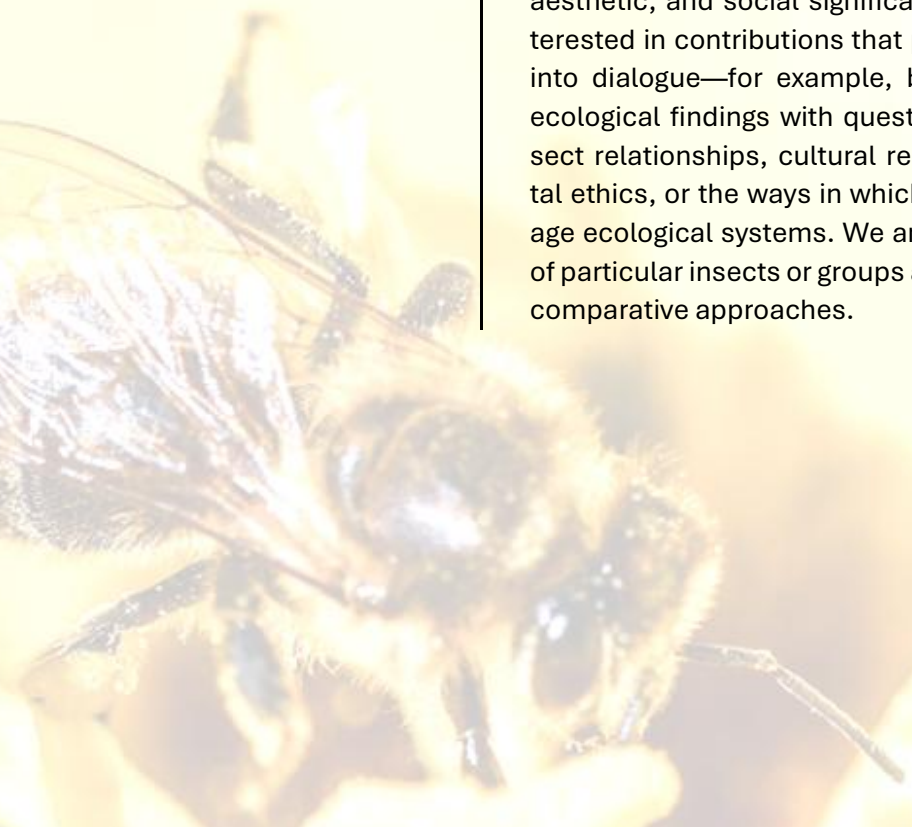
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- insects in literature, film, and visual arts;
- insects in folklore, mythology, and popular culture;
- insects in perception of nature and landscape;
- insects in agriculture and food production;
- pest control, and insect elimination;
- insects as food;
- insects in urban environments;
- insects and multispecies communities;
- insects and multispecies communities;
- insect agency and forms of non-human life;
- bugs, errors, disruptions, and systems thinking;
- management and conservation of insects;
- insects and environmental justice;
- historical changes in human–insect relationships;
- philosophical approaches to insects;
- interdisciplinary approaches to insect studies.

The volume welcomes contributions ranging from empirical and theoretical studies of insect biology and ecology to analyses of their cultural, philosophical, ethical, political, aesthetic, and social significance. We are particularly interested in contributions that place different perspectives into dialogue—for example, by connecting biological or ecological findings with questions concerning human–insect relationships, cultural representations, environmental ethics, or the ways in which societies define and manage ecological systems. We are interested both in studies of particular insects or groups and in broader theoretical or comparative approaches.



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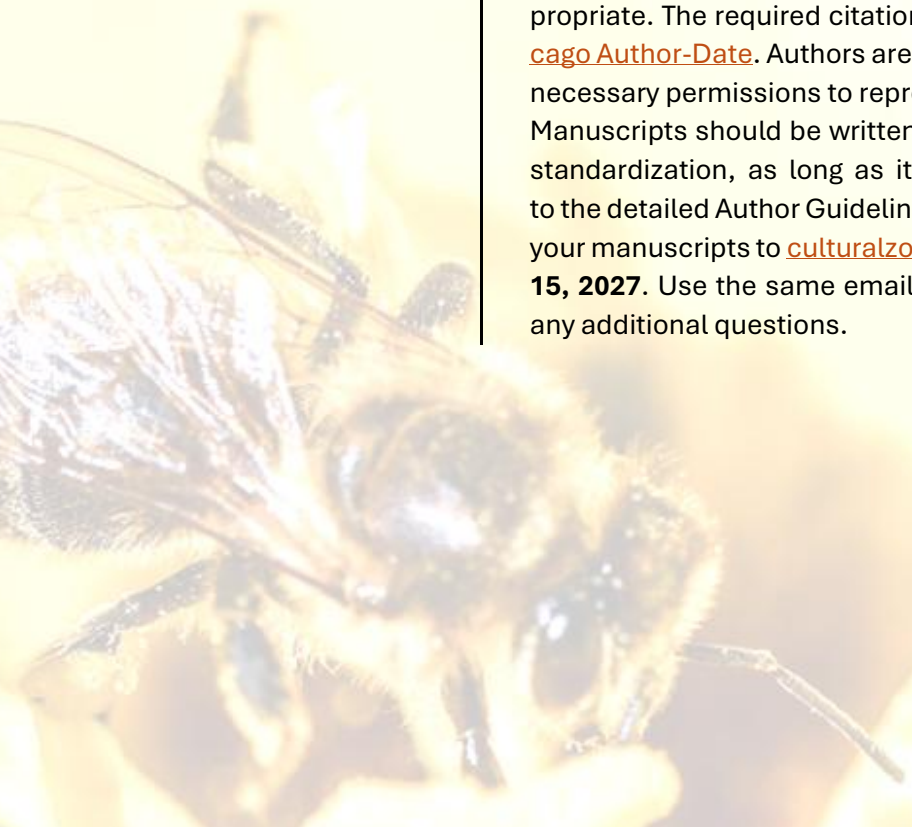
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Each volume of the book series corresponds to the central topic of the annual conference, Days of animal STudies (Split, Croatia, October 20–23, 2027). This enables participants of the conference to publish their papers prior to the conference, as well as enables those who are unable to participate to contribute to the discussion through their written papers. However, the two projects are only loosely connected—participation in the conference is not a condition for publishing a paper, and vice versa.

The Cultural Zoology book series only accepts previously unpublished manuscripts that are not under consideration elsewhere and are free of plagiarism. All manuscripts undergo double-blind peer review by at least two independent international reviewers. The book series is published in open access. No article processing charges (APCs) or submission fees are required.

Full papers should be 6,000–12,000 words long, while abstracts should be 100–250 words long and include 5–10 keywords. Main text should be divided into sections as appropriate. The required citation style for references is Chicago Author-Date. Authors are responsible for obtaining all necessary permissions to reproduce copyrighted material. Manuscripts should be written in academic English of any standardization, as long as it is consistent. Please refer to the detailed Author Guidelines at the following link. Send your manuscripts to culturalzoology@gmail.com by **March 15, 2027**. Use the same email address to contact us with any additional questions.



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