



GATORMUN XXIII

**The Little Guys: Insecta vs. Homo Sapiens
Background Guide**

Clara Roman

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Insecta vs. Homo Sapiens

Letter from the Director:

Dearest delegates,

My name is Clara Roman. I'm a second-year college student and this is also my second year in Model UN. I'm currently studying environmental engineering. I love math and the world around me so I figured why not study a career in both. I also have plans to minor in Spanish and choral music. I'm Puerto Rican, but only subpar at Spanish so I've always wanted to study it. Music has similarly been something I've always been surrounded by. I've been doing choir for 8 years and every class I've taken has only increased my love for both the genre of choral music as well as music as a whole.

The environment around me has always been something I've been hyper-aware of. I was one of those kids who ate dirt and got lost in forests to really immerse myself in the world around me. I was so passionate about living things, in fact, at the age of ten, I decided to adopt a vegetarian diet. Although many years have passed, not only have I kept the lifestyle, my beliefs in the big and small creatures around me have only strengthened. I've spent many hours learning about bugs in the form of documentaries, websites, and even memes. My main form of insect learning though is through apps like "Picture Insect" which use photographs to inform you about an insect right in front of you. Apps like this are important because they force you to not only learn about what's in your immediate surroundings, but also to recognize that all insects are unique in their own ways. Not all spiders are venomous and therefore not all need to be feared. Eight legs simply means more limbs to hug!

An important moral I have grown to accept is the idea that no life, small or large, is more important than the other. As such, in this committee, all delegates will learn together that, just because an insect is miniscule compared to a human, both in lifespan and size, doesn't make their experiences and overall lives any less impactful and precious to the Earth. While competing, all delegates will be forced to face the struggles the species they represent also face on a day to day basis by putting yourself in the shoes of those you are directly impacting. Not only will the struggles of human advancement be explored on a small scale, so will new, unique struggles only an insect could be aware of, such as deforestation (cutting grass) or flooding (watering plants). Empathy is all but guaranteed when putting yourself in an insect's shoes; tiny creatures who have lived in a world slowly being built to eradicate them.

I cannot wait to see what you all will create in a world so much smaller than what we're used to. Will we take our frustrations out on humans? Or will we ally with them against other foes? Will we work together or succumb to the pressures of being so small? The world can be yours if you imagine it so. I look forward to how every person (or should I say bug) approaches their newfound size and how we'll work towards a better future for all.

Can't wait to bug out with you all,

Clara

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Rules of Procedure

Quorum

A majority of voting members answering to the roll at each session shall constitute a quorum for that session. This means that half plus one of all voting members are present. Quorum will be assumed consistent unless questioned through a Point of Order. Delegates may request to be noted as "Present" or "Present and Voting."

Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of a Moderated Caucus

This motion must include three specifications

- Length of the Caucus
- Speaking Time
- Reason for the Caucus

During a moderated caucus, delegates will be called on to speak by the Committee Director. Delegates will raise their placards to be recognized. Delegates must maintain the same degree of decorum throughout a Moderated Caucus as in formal debate. This motion requires a simple majority to pass.

Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of an Unmoderated Caucus

This motion must include the length of the Caucus. During an unmoderated caucus, delegates may get up from their seats and talk amongst themselves. This motion requires a simple majority to pass. The length of an unmoderated caucus in a Crisis committee should not exceed fifteen minutes.

Motion to Suspend the Meeting

This motion is in order if there is a scheduled break in debate to be observed. (ie. Lunch!) This motion requires a simple majority vote. The Committee Director may refuse to entertain this motion at their discretion.

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

This motion is in order at the end of the last committee session. It signifies the closing of the committee until next year's conference.

Points of Order

Points of Order will only be recognized for the following items:

- To recognize errors in voting, tabulation, or procedure
- To question relevance of debate to the current Topic
- To question a quorum.

A Point of Order may interrupt a speaker if necessary and it is to be used sparingly.

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Points of Inquiry

When there is no discussion on the floor, a delegate may direct a question to the Committee Director. Any question directed to another delegate may only be asked immediately after the delegate has finished speaking on a substantive matter. A delegate that declines to respond to a question after a formal speech forfeits any further questioning time.

Points of Personal Privilege

Points of personal privilege are used to request information or clarification and conduct all other business of the body except Motions or Points specifically mentioned in the Rules of Procedure. Please note: The Director may refuse to recognize Points of Order, Points of Inquiry or Points of Personal Privilege if the Committee Director believes the decorum and restraint inherent in the exercise has been violated, or if the point is deemed dilatory in nature.

Rights of Reply

At the Committee Director's discretion, any member nation or observer may be granted a Right of Reply to answer serious insults directed at the dignity of the delegate present. The Director has the ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY to accept or reject Rights of Reply, and the decision IS NOT SUBJECT TO APPEAL. Delegates who feel they are being treated unfairly may take their complaint to any member of the Secretariat.

Directives

Directives act as a replacement for Draft Resolutions when in Crisis committees, and are the actions that the body decides to take as a whole. Directives are not required to contain operative or preambulatory clauses. A directive should contain:

- The name(s) of the author(s)
- A title
- A number of signatories/sponsors signatures' necessary to
- introduce, determined by the Director

A simple majority vote is required to introduce a directive, and multiple directives may be introduced at once. Press releases produced on behalf of the body must also be voted on as Directives.

Friendly Amendments

Friendly Amendments are any changes to a formally introduced Directive that all Sponsors agree to in writing. The Committee Director must approve the Friendly Amendment and confirm each Sponsor's agreement both verbally and in writing.

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Unfriendly Amendments

Unfriendly Amendments are any substantive changes to a formally introduced Directive that are not agreed to by all of the Sponsors of the Directive. In order to introduce an Unfriendly Amendment, the Unfriendly Amendment must be the number equivalent to 1/3 of Quorum confirmed signatories. The Committee Director has the authority to discern between substantive and non-substantive Unfriendly amendment proposals.

Plagiarism

GatorMUN maintains a zero-tolerance policy in regards to plagiarism. Delegates found to have used the ideas of others without properly citing those individuals, organizations, or documents will have their credentials revoked for the duration of the GatorMUN conference. This is a very serious offense.

Crisis Notes

A crisis note is an action taken by an individual in a Crisis committee. Crisis notes do not need to be introduced or voted on, and should be given to the Crisis Staff by sending the notes to a designated pickup point in each room. A crisis note should both be addressed to crisis and have the delegate's position on both the inside and outside of the note.

Motion to Enter Voting Procedure

Once this motion passes, and the committee enters Voting Procedure, no occupants of the committee room may exit the Committee Room, and no individual may enter the Committee Room from the outside. A member of the Dias will secure all doors.

- No talking, passing notes, or communicating of any kind will be tolerated during voting procedures.
- Each Directive will be read to the body and voted upon in the order which they were introduced. Any Proposed Unfriendly Amendments to each Directive will be read to the body and voted upon before the main body of the Directive as a whole is put to a vote.
- Delegates who requested to be noted as "Present and Voting" are unable to abstain during voting procedure. Abstentions will not be counted in the tallying of a majority. For example, 5 yes votes, 4 no votes, and 7 abstentions means that the Directive passes.
- The Committee will adopt Directives and Unfriendly Amendments to Directives if these documents pass with a simple majority. Specialized committees should refer to their background-guides or Committee Directors for information concerning specific voting procedures.

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Roll Call Voting

A counted placard vote will be considered sufficient unless any delegate to the committee motions for a Roll Call Vote. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the committee must comply. All delegates must vote: "For," "Against," "Abstain," or "Pass." During a Roll Call vote, any delegate who answers, "Pass," reserves his/her vote until the Committee Director has exhausted the Roll. However, once the Committee Director returns to "Passing" Delegates, they must vote: "For" or "Against."

Accepting by Acclamation

This motion may be stated when the Committee Director asks for points or motions. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the motion to Accept by Acclamation is voided. If a delegate believes a Directive will pass without opposition, he or she may move to accept the Directive by acclamation. The motion passes unless a single delegate shows opposition. An abstention is not considered opposition. Should the motion fail, the committee will move directly into a Roll Call Vote.

Tech Policy

Technology will not be allowed throughout the course of the committee. Delegates are prohibited from using their technology inside the committee room. However, they are encouraged to do research before and during assigned breaks.

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Committee Mechanics

This committee will have mainly regular parliamentary procedures with the two pad system and directive, update, note cycles. We reserve the right to implement a timed crisis at any moment given the chair and directors discretion. Besides in room directives and back-room crisis notes, delegates will also be able to write optional joint personal directives with other delegates to combine resources and further goals. There will only be a maximum of one per delegate every directive cycle to avoid overwhelming back room staffers.

Special mechanics will include a death mechanic where any and possibly all delegates can die in room. If so, a new position will be provided for said delegate(s). All resources will be transferred to the new position. The only consequence of a death will be, a recently deceased delegate will not be able to vote in the following directives post death for one directive cycle. They still may include their directive within a paper and give for or against speeches, they only cannot vote to pass for or against a paper.



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The Life of the Insect

Insects are invertebrates belonging to the class Insecta; as the largest group within the animal kingdom, they hold over one million species with millions more estimated to exist. They are characterized by a three-section body layout (head, thorax, and abdomen), six jointed legs, compound eyes, and usually one or two pairs of wings. Insects are arthropods, along with crustaceans, arachnids, and myriapods, meaning they have an exoskeleton made of chitin, which provides both protection and structural support (Gullan & Cranston, 2014). They are found in nearly every habitat on Earth, from deserts to rainforests, and they play critical ecological roles as pollinators, decomposers, herbivores, and prey for larger animals and plants (Chapman, 2013).

Most insects follow one of two developmental patterns: incomplete metamorphosis or complete metamorphosis. In incomplete metamorphosis, seen in species such as grasshoppers and dragonflies, insects hatch from eggs into nymphs that resemble smaller adults, molting several times before reaching maturity without passing through a pupal stage. In complete metamorphosis, practiced most recognizably by butterflies, beetles, and bees, the life cycle includes four distinct stages: egg, larva, pupa, and adult. The larval stage is primarily devoted to feeding and growth, while the pupal stage allows for transformation into the adult form, often occupying a different ecological niche than the larva (Truman & Riddiford, 2019). Reproduction is typically sexual, though some insects, such as aphids, are capable of parthenogenesis, enabling rapid population growth under favorable conditions (Simon et al., 2002). Growth occurs through molting, and the number of molts is influenced by environmental factors such as temperature, food availability, and seasonality (Chown & Nicolson, 2004).

Insects are among the oldest terrestrial animals, with fossil evidence dating back over 400 million years. They are believed to have evolved from crustacean-like ancestors, adapting early to land through waterproof exoskeletons and efficient respiratory systems (Misof et al., 2014). The evolution of wings, which first appeared around 300 million years ago, marked a major turning point that allowed wide dispersal and exploitation of new habitats (Engel & Grimaldi, 2004). Over time, insects diversified into millions of species via natural selection, ecological specialization, and coevolution with plants; the rise of flowering plants in the Cretaceous period, in particular, spurred rapid diversification of pollinating insects (Labandeira, 2011). Short generation times and high genetic variation contribute to rapid responses to environmental pressures, including climate variability and anthropogenic change (Palumbi, 2001; Schowalter, 2016).

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The Roles of the Community

Pollinators are a critical group in terrestrial ecosystems, most notably responsible for enabling plant reproduction through the transfer of pollen between flowers. Species such as bees, butterflies, moths, and hoverflies perform this process, which supports the growth of fruits, seeds, and new vegetation. By ensuring successful pollination, these insects directly contribute to biodiversity and food availability for other species. Pollinators are highly dependent on the presence of flowering plants, and their populations fluctuate based on the availability of nectar and pollen resources (Ollerton, 2017). Pollinators also exhibit complex behaviors unique to their species; bees, for example, exhibit behaviors such as the creation of complex colonies where workers forage for resources to sustain the hive, while butterflies and moths act as long-distance pollen dispersers during their life cycles. Despite their ecological importance, pollinators are among the most vulnerable groups to human activity. Pesticides and herbicides disrupt their foraging and reproductive behavior, while lawn mowing and landscaping reduce floral diversity, limiting nectar availability. The destruction of nests and hives further destabilizes populations, and habitat fragmentation interrupts migration routes for species such as butterflies. Declines in pollinator populations are associated with reduced plant reproduction, which can destabilize entire ecosystems by limiting food sources for herbivores and other species dependent on plant life (Potts et al., 2010).

Herbivores play a central role in ecosystems as primary consumers, directly feeding on plants and transferring energy from producers to higher trophic levels. Insects such as caterpillars, beetle larvae, and grasshoppers are representative of this group, consuming leaves, stems, and other plant tissues. By doing so, they recycle biomass and provide a consistent food source for predators. Their frass (excrement) is rich in nutrients which can then enter the soil, where it is decomposed, accelerating nutrient cycling for plants and microbes (Bardgett & van der Putten, 2014). Herbivory can therefore influence plant growth dynamics; moderate levels of feeding can stimulate plant regrowth and increase biodiversity by preventing any single plant species from dominating. While many herbivores reproduce rapidly and can form large colonies in short periods, caterpillars and beetle larvae undergo developmental stages that require concentrated feeding to reach maturity. Their role in the ecosystem, however, often brings them into direct conflict with humans as herbivores consume crops and ornamental plants. They are frequently labeled as pests and targeted for eradication. Human interventions such as pesticides, mowing, and habitat removal disproportionately affect these species, reducing their numbers or eliminating populations outright. Their abundance is also sensitive to environmental changes: fluctuations in temperature, rainfall, and plant availability strongly influence reproductive success (Schowalter, 2016). Despite being vulnerable to predation and human activity, herbivores are indispensable in maintaining ecological balance, as they facilitate nutrient cycling, sustain predator populations, and shape plant communities.

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Predators play an essential ecological role in maintaining balance within insect communities by regulating herbivore populations and preventing overgrazing of vegetation. Species such as mantids and dragonflies are classified as insectivores, relying primarily on other insects as their food source. By feeding on large numbers of herbivores, predators ensure that plants, which serve as the base of the ecosystem, are not consumed to the point of collapse. Many of these species also exhibit specialized hunting behaviors: dragonflies are aerial hunters that can consume hundreds of smaller insects in a single day, while mantids and assassin bugs rely on ambush tactics to capture prey. Their presence in the ecosystem increases biodiversity by reducing competition among herbivores, indirectly supporting pollinators and other insect groups dependent on stable plant life. Despite this, predators are highly sensitive to environmental change. Habitat loss from mowing or pruning reduces hunting grounds, and the use of pesticides eliminates both the predators themselves and the prey populations they depend on. Because they are at a higher trophic level, predators are also at greater risk of bioaccumulation, absorbing toxins from the multiple prey species they consume. As a result, predator populations often serve as indicators of ecological health, with their decline signaling broader instability in the ecosystem (Schowalter, 2016).

Decomposers are a foundational component of the backyard ecosystem, responsible for recycling organic matter and maintaining soil health. Species such as beetles, springtails, ants, and certain flies break down dead plant and animal material, converting it into nutrients that enrich the soil and support new plant growth. This process ensures the continuous cycling of energy through the ecosystem, providing a stable foundation for pollinators, herbivores, and predators alike. Many decomposers also contribute to aerating the soil; ants, for example, transport organic matter underground, which increases water infiltration and root growth. Species can specialize in consuming fungi and decaying vegetation, preventing the buildup of organic debris that could otherwise disrupt nutrient cycles (Bardgett & van der Putten, 2014). Insects such as carrion beetles and certain fly larvae play a key role in breaking down animal remains, further contributing to nutrient redistribution. Decomposers are particularly sensitive to human activities that alter soil composition: pesticides, chemical fertilizers, and habitat destruction can greatly reduce their populations, weakening the natural fertility of the environment. Flooding from sprinklers or heavy rainfall can also drown soil-dwelling decomposers, while fires and landscaping practices may destroy the leaf litter and organic material they rely on for survival. Without decomposers, the ecosystem's nutrient cycle would collapse, leading to soil degradation and long-term instability for all insect groups (Schowalter, 2016).

Insecta vs. Homo Sapiens

Avian Species

Birds and insects maintain a deeply interconnected ecological relationship that influences food webs, species survival, and overall ecosystem balance. Globally, more than 6,000 bird species feed on insects for at least part of their life cycle, making insects one of the most important food sources for avian populations (Kissling et al., 2012). Many small passerines, such as swallows, warblers, and flycatchers, consume large quantities of flying insects including flies, mosquitoes, and moths. Ground-foraging birds such as thrushes and sparrows feed extensively on beetles, ants, and caterpillars, while woodpeckers and nuthatches specialize in extracting grubs and larvae from bark, directly reducing populations of wood-boring insects that can damage trees. Insects provide birds with protein, fat, and micronutrients, which are especially vital during the breeding season when nestlings require protein-rich diets to sustain rapid growth (Nyffeler et al., 2018).

The relationship is not one-sided: avian predation plays a crucial role in shaping insect communities by preventing herbivore outbreaks that could devastate vegetation. This makes birds important regulators of insect population dynamics and plant health (Şekercioğlu, 2006). Insects also support birds indirectly. Pollinators sustain flowering plants that produce fruits and seeds eaten by numerous avian species, while decomposers recycle organic matter into soil nutrients, enhancing vegetation growth in bird habitats. Furthermore, some bird migrations are closely timed with seasonal insect emergencies, such as caterpillar abundance in temperate spring forests or locust swarms in arid regions (Kissling et al., 2012).

There are competitive aspects as well. Nectar-feeding birds, such as hummingbirds, can compete with bees and butterflies for floral resources, while fruit-eating birds overlap with frugivorous insects. Human activity has strained this balance: widespread pesticide use reduces insect prey availability, leading to declines in insectivorous birds across Europe and North America (Hallmann et al., 2014). Habitat fragmentation reduces both insect diversity and bird nesting sites, while climate change alters the timing of insect emergence, creating mismatches between insect abundance and the peak food demands of breeding birds (Şekercioğlu, 2006). Because of this, the bird-insect relationship functions not only as a critical ecological interaction but also as a sensitive barometer of environmental health.

Insecta vs. Homo Sapiens

Culture

While insects are primarily understood through their ecological functions, their behaviors and interactions can also be considered in terms of cultural structures that reflect their roles within ecosystems. These structures emerge from patterns of cooperation, communication, reproduction, and survival strategies that are consistent across species groups. Pollinators, herbivores, predators, and decomposers each demonstrate distinctive behaviors that, when examined collectively, form the basis of cultural norms tied to their ecological importance. These frameworks emphasize values such as cooperation, resilience, regulation, and renewal, illustrating how survival strategies shape broader systems of organization. Understanding these potential cultural patterns provides insight into the diversity of roles within insect communities and the interdependence that defines their collective existence.

Pollinators

Pollinators organize their cultural identity around cycles of flowering and migration, emphasizing cooperation and communication as central values. Bees, for example, demonstrate highly structured social systems with clear divisions of labor, collective decision-making, and communication through dances to relay information about food sources. This form of “information sharing” is a cultural norm across pollinator groups, representing trust and unity within their societies. Butterflies and moths, known for their long migrations and nocturnal activity, bring traditions tied to timing, patience, and the rhythm of seasons, marking cultural milestones during peak blooming or migration events. Hoverflies, serving dual roles as both pollinators and pest regulators, symbolize balance and practicality within a cultural framework. Central to pollinator culture is reverence for flowers, as they not only provide nourishment but also represent continuity and survival. Floral cycles dictate festivals, rituals, or symbolic “new years” that mark abundance and renewal. Altogether, pollinators’ culture emphasizes cooperation, communication, and ecological interdependence, reflecting their critical role in maintaining plant reproduction and food webs.

Herbivores

The cultural structures of herbivores reflect their dependence on plant life and their often-perilous position in ecosystems. As primary consumers, herbivores center their traditions around food availability, cycles of growth, and the importance of communal feeding. Caterpillars and beetle larvae, which undergo dramatic metamorphosis, embed life stages into cultural identity, with rites of passage that mark transformation into adulthood. Rapid reproduction among species such as aphids normalize a society of abundance and resilience, where survival depends not on individuals but on the persistence of the collective across generations. Grasshoppers, known for swarming behavior, highlight how collective movement and feeding is understood as cultural demonstrations of strength and unity.

Insecta vs. Homo Sapiens

At the same time, herbivores' history of being branded as "pests" by larger beings influence their internal culture, creating themes of defensiveness, persistence, or reclamation of legitimacy. Herbivores' cultural framework is shaped by resilience in the face of extermination, with traditions emphasizing persistence, growth, and the value of sustaining life even under hostile conditions.

Predators

Predators' cultural identity is structured around their ecological role as regulators of populations, with values reflecting discipline, control, and balance. Species such as mantids, assassin bugs, and dragonflies exhibit specialized hunting strategies, ambush, speed, and precision, that translates into cultural traditions honoring patience, vigilance, and skill. While they rely on other insects for survival, predators are not purely destructive; their presence prevents herbivore populations from overwhelming ecosystems, and this role as stabilizers are reflected in cultural norms of guardianship and responsibility. Within their structures, status are be tied to effectiveness in hunting or maintaining ecological balance, creating systems where discipline and skill are more valued than brute force. Spiders and other ambush hunters demonstrate the importance of stillness and preparation, traits that shape ideals around restraint and foresight. Predators' culture, then, emphasizes order, ecological responsibility, and calculated action, reflecting their crucial role in maintaining biodiversity and preventing collapse of food webs

Decomposers

Decomposers' culture is defined by cooperation, renewal, and the transformation of death into life. Species such as beetles, springtails, ants, and certain flies collectively process decaying matter, ensuring that nutrients are recycled back into the soil to sustain future growth. This constant work of breaking down and rebuilding creates cultural values centered on labor, humility, and continuity. Ant societies, with their rigid hierarchies and cooperative labor systems, demonstrate how decomposer communities organize themselves through division of roles and collective effort. Beetles and fly larvae that specialize in consuming dead organisms embed respect for organic matter into cultural norms, viewing decomposition not as waste but as an essential stage of the life cycle. Soil itself holds symbolic or spiritual meaning, representing transformation and renewal. Decomposers' culture also includes themes of patience, as their work is gradual yet indispensable. By ensuring nothing in the ecosystem is truly wasted, decomposers embody values of resilience, stewardship, and continuity, grounding their culture in the quiet but critical processes that sustain all life.

Insecta vs. Homo Sapiens

Weather Patterns

Weather is one of the most influential factors shaping insect biology, population dynamics, and ecological interactions. As ectothermic organisms, insects rely on external sources of heat to regulate body temperature. Rising temperatures typically accelerate metabolic rates, shorten development times, and increase reproductive output, with many species producing additional generations during warm years (Chown & Nicolson, 2004). For example, aphid populations can surge in hot summers because rapid development allows multiple reproductive cycles. However, extreme heat can lead to dehydration and mortality, particularly in small-bodied insects with high surface area-to-volume ratios (Schowalter, 2016). In contrast, cold temperatures slow metabolic processes, reduce movement, and often trigger diapause, a dormant state that enables insects to survive unfavorable conditions. These seasonal cycles heavily influence migration, hibernation, and reproductive timing across species.

Moisture is equally critical. Humidity reduces water loss and supports survival for insects prone to desiccation, while rainfall generates breeding sites for aquatic or semi-aquatic species such as mosquitoes, whose larvae develop in standing water (Schowalter, 2016). Yet excessive rainfall or flooding can drown soil-dwelling insects like ants and beetle larvae, while drought conditions limit nectar production and plant growth, directly threatening pollinators and herbivores. Extended dry periods also slow microbial decomposition, reducing food for decomposers and altering soil fertility (Bardgett & van der Putten, 2014).

Wind strongly influences insect dispersal and behavior. Migratory species such as monarch butterflies and locusts rely on favorable wind currents to conserve energy during long-distance flights, enabling them to cover vast distances (Wolda, 1988). However, strong or erratic winds disrupt foraging efficiency in bees, damage delicate wings in moths and butterflies, and scatter prey that aerial predators such as dragonflies rely on (Crall et al., 2017). Wind also dries plant surfaces, altering feeding opportunities for herbivores and reducing the availability of floral resources for pollinators.

Seasonal weather patterns ultimately determine cycles of insect abundance. In temperate regions, insect populations typically peak in spring and summer when warmth and vegetation are plentiful, before declining in autumn and winter. In the tropics, wet and dry seasons strongly dictate insect emergence: mass hatches during rainy periods fuel predator and bird populations, followed by sharp die-offs when conditions become dry (Wolda, 1988). These fluctuations ripple through entire ecosystems, as changes in insect abundance impact the survival of pollinators, predators, decomposers, and the birds and mammals that rely on them.

Insecta vs. Homo Sapiens

Current Situation

For a decade, the backyard environment provided stability and self-governance for its insect inhabitants. In the absence of human interference, pollinators, herbivores, predators, and decomposers coexisted under a balance defined by natural cycles, seasonal changes, and the interdependence of their ecological roles. This period of relative peace allowed the development of cooperative structures, trade, and communication between species, creating a fragile but enduring system of order.

This equilibrium has now been disrupted. A once-vacant house bordering the land the insecta have occupied has been occupied by a new human family, whose presence introduces unprecedented risks. Routine human activities, according to ancestral records, pose direct threats to insect survival. In response, an emergency gathering has been called, bringing together one representative from each major insect group: pollinators, herbivores, predators, and decomposers. The purpose of this assembly is to assess the immediate dangers posed by the human presence and to determine how the different factions might respond. What can be done to secure structures already to a future where peace is no longer assured. While external threats from humans are evident, tensions between the insect groups also threaten to resurface, as resource scarcity and survival strategies may bring longstanding interspecies conflicts back to the forefront.

Insecta vs. Homo Sapiens

Questions to Consider

- Should we prioritize adaptation to human activities or resistance against them?
- To what extent is unity between insect groups sustainable when survival may demand sacrifices from one faction to benefit another?
- Should we attempt to remain hidden from humans or explore methods of coexistence within the shared environment?
- What resources can be collected and created in response to approaching conflict?
- What strategies can be employed to safeguard food sources and homes from human interference?
- How can we create a system of communication or governance that accounts for their ecological differences?
- To what level do insects have the responsibility to maintain the balance of the ecosystem even while their survival is threatened?

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Positions

Pollinators

Forager-General Catarina – Bee

As the Forager-General of the Hive Collective, Catarina has coordinated nectar retrieval and pollination routes for over a decade. Her network of foragers, scouts, and pollen couriers sustained not only her hive but helped fertilize nearly every plant in the backyard ecosystem. Pragmatic and detail-oriented, she values structured organization and loyalty above all. Rina sees the return of humans as a potential ecological catastrophe. With garden beds trampled, pesticides looming, and nectar routes collapsing, she now must make hard choices about who the hive will serve and protect. Though slow to anger, she is capable of rallying the entire Hive to act when threatened. She is prepared to turn to aggression if survival demands it. She brings to the first meeting of the Insectas a networked pollen route map with safe air corridors routes.

Ambassador Noella- Butterfly

Noella is one of the most visible and charismatic figures in the backyard. Known as a symbol of grace and transformation, she has served as a cultural ambassador between species, ensuring peace and aesthetic cohesion among the wildflower zones. Her movements were long regarded as sacred by caterpillars and admired by pollinators alike. However, recent habitat destruction threatens to erase everything she has built. The humans' landscaping projects have decimated nectar sources and fire smoke has made it difficult for her species wings to function at fullest capacity. Still, she believes in the power of beauty and peace. Noella advocates for cohabitation with humans, envisioning a restored garden that supports all life as long as the insects are strategic in their cooperation. Yet, if diplomacy fails, she may find herself forced to act outside her gentle reputation. She is respected as a universal pollinator in the world of the arachnids and has gained loyalty with time and steady communication.

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Positions

Pollinators

Analyst Tessna – Hoverfly

Tessna is one of the backyard's most intelligent tacticians. Respected among pollinators and predators alike, Tessna has spent the past decade tracking air movements, plant data, and enemy incursions using his innate agility and drone-like surveillance techniques. Though often mistaken for a bee, Tessna prefers to operate independently, avoiding hive politics and focusing on raw data and survival analysis. With the humans' return, Tessna is deeply concerned by erratic environmental changes such as possible smoke, chemical sprays, and vibration patterns as they suggest looming disasters. While others debate peace or war, Tessna believes in adaptation, efficiency, and using human materials to reinforce insect infrastructure. He is often skeptical of emotional appeals, but his loyalty to the pollinators' survival remains strong. Tessna, through her work, has been developing an encrypted aerial surveillance feed of real-time lawn activity.

Nocturnal Strategist Hazela – Moth

Hazela is the elusive queen of the night skies. As leader of the Night Bloom Syndicate, she has guided pollination under the moonlight for over a decade, forming quiet alliances with decomposers and fungi-based life. Hazela prefers shadows to open confrontation, but her intelligence operations are unparalleled. With increased outdoor lighting and fire from BBQs, her nighttime domain is becoming dangerously exposed. Hazela believes that while daytime pollinators focus on visibility and charm, the true power lies in what's unseen. She is deeply skeptical of human cohabitation and may lean toward sabotage if it ensures long-term pollinator survival. Her faith in moonlight ecology drives her to seek natural, subtle ways to counteract human disruption. She may be the only one prepared for what happens when diplomacy fails. She knows the routes of secret bioluminescent tunnels under the very legs of those big and small.

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Positions

Pollinators

Courier-General Alandro – Hawk Moth

Alandro thrives in darkness. As Courier-General of the Night Nectar Relay, she oversees hawk moth missions pollinating nocturnal flowers and delivering sealed messages between distant species under the veil of night. With a tongue longer than her body and wings built for silent, steady flight, Alandro can reach places other pollinators cannot. She has negotiated underground treaties with moth colonies, traded nectar for fungal medicine, and flown through fire-smoke when others fled. The return of humans has disrupted night routes with motion-sensor lights and heat from grills. Nocturnal pollination is dying, and Alandro knows this means ecosystem collapse. Diplomatic, hauntingly calm, and capable of sudden precision, she is the whisper between factions. But when she speaks aloud, all listen. Alandro metaphorical and physical ears can be found spread through a long distance carrier route.

Herbivores/Pests

Chancellor Barrio – Aphid

Chancellor Barrio presides over one of the most economically bountiful factions in the backyard, the Aphid Sugar Syndicate. Her species may be soft-bodied and defenseless, but they have built their power on mass reproduction and a lucrative nectar for protection agreement with the ant colonies. Barrio is a shrewd negotiator, never underestimating the importance of alliances, and she has ensured her colonies thrive through trade, diplomacy, and selective manipulation. However, with the humans back, her sugar lines have been disrupted by water sprinklers, her breeding zones destroyed by gardening shears, and her ant protectors diverted by chemical threats. Barrio now faces a difficult decision: tighten control over resources or open negotiations to ensure herbivore survival. While she prefers diplomacy, she isn't above issuing veiled threats or withholding sugar shipments from allies who refuse to support aphid safety. Some see her as manipulative; others, as a master stateswoman. Either way, she has the numbers and the syrup.

Barrio has a treaty with the tick colonies, a group of driven mates who respect and watch the ground she walks on.

Insecta vs. Homo Sapiens

Positions

Herbivores/Pests

Architect Larvos Kelly- Caterpillar

Kelly is the chief designer of the Herbivore Habitat Project, having led caterpillar efforts to create sustainable housing from leaves, silk, and shed bark. Patient, innovative, and highly territorial, Larvos sees the backyard as both sanctuary and blueprint. Under his guidance, caterpillars transitioned from solitary nibblers to a cohesive engineering society. But the return of the humans has threatened everything. Entire nurseries have been flattened by careless feet, and silk bridges painstakingly crafted across tomato stems have been washed away by sprinkler deluges. While others panic, Larvos is drafting. He resists war but is not naïve; he understands that if herbivores cannot protect themselves, they will not survive. With enough resources, he believes the caterpillars can evolve their architecture into a shield for the entire herbivore class. Kelly has drafted a set of blueprints for modular herbivore shelters for a better future.

Director Jack Son of Jack- Beetle

Jack leads from below; literally. As the voice of the underground beetle larvae consortium, she governs from beneath the soil where her kin have long extracted nutrients, tunneled beneath root systems, and supported the cycle of decay and rebirth. Unseen and underappreciated, Jack has turned quiet labor into quiet power. Her network of subterranean chambers stretches across the yard, granting her influence most above ground insects underestimate. Yet the humans have brought chaos to her world: their lawnmower vibrates through the soil like a predator, pesticides poison the roots her people feed from, and water from sprinklers collapses her tunnels. Jack now finds herself at a crossroads. Should she seal her tunnels and retreat deeper, or open them as an underground transport system for other species? She values discretion and patience, but beneath her calm demeanor is a strong will. She may be the key to insect-wide survival or the architect of a deep resistance.

Insecta vs. Homo Sapiens

Positions

Herbivores/Pests

Commander Veen- Grasshopper

Veen is the field general of the Green Legions, a mobile division of herbivores trained in rapid relocation, area scouting, and emergency food gathering. A natural-born jumper with a tactical mind, Veen is constantly in motion, surveying changing conditions and dispatching support units to zones in need. For ten years, he's kept herbivore populations on the move to prevent overgrazing and maintain ecological balance. But now, the return of the humans has disrupted every path he's known. The grasslands have been shaved by the mower, food is drying out under chemical sun spray, and rogue species have begun to fight over territory. Veen sees no time for politics; he is a survivalist. While he supports peace, he believes security must come first. He's willing to coordinate evacuations, defend his borders, or take the fight directly to the house if it means protecting the herbivore way of life. Charismatic and quick to act, he may be the movement leader other factions rally behind. Veen's ambitions have become a three unit response team to any needs he deems worthy of his aid.

Merchant Ry-Weevil

Ry is the queen of food security and hoarding logistics. A merchant of seeds and root stashes, she oversees the Hidden Pantry Guild, an herbivore supply ring known for its impeccable resource planning and quietly growing influence. To the untrained eye, Ry seems fussy; almost obsessed with schedules and grain counts. In truth, she is a tactical economist, capable of starving a predator stronghold or feeding an army of caterpillars with one gesture. The return of humans has burned her caches, trampled seed stores, and introduced invasive grasses that she doesn't yet know how to exploit. She is determined to adapt and expand. Whether this means bribery, blackmail, or open trade with the predators remains to be seen. Ry holds into four secure seed vaults, ready to hold and distribute whatever he sees fit to keep within.

Insecta vs. Homo Sapiens

Positions

Herbivores/Pests

Emissary Alichia – June Bug

Alichia represents the Buried Court, the slow-turning, soil-burrowing nobility of the June bugs. Unlike the loud, fast-paced politics of pollinators or predators, Alichia speaks with the gravitas of one who has spent years in darkness. For nearly four seasons, he slumbered beneath the lawn, feeding on roots and dreaming in soil. Emerging now in his full armored glory, he brings with him the concerns of the underground collapsed tunnels, poisoned roots, and a dying food web. June bugs are often mocked for their clumsy flight and nocturnal confusion, but Alichia commands deep respect among decomposers and herbivores alike. He moves slowly but with purpose, favoring consensus and legacy over reaction. He believes the insects must build resilience not just for today, but for the next generation slumbering below. With the humans disturbing root systems and compacting soil, Alichia faces a stark question: protect the larvae or join the surface fight? They hide a secret of a larval chamber of an underground vault holding dozens of June bug grubs.

Predators

Warden Moyer– Praying Mantis

Warden Moyer is revered as a living myth in the backyard. A master of stillness and precision, she has acted as a solitary guardian of ecological balance for over a decade. Praying mantids are apex predators, but Moyer has never ruled through fear, only through presence. When the backyard was teetering toward species imbalance years ago, it was her silent interventions that restored harmony. Now, with humans disturbing every aspect of the natural order, she emerges once more not for glory, but necessity. Lawn mowers destroy hunting perches, smoke and sprays dull her sensitive tracking skills, and night lights confuse her relationships. Still, Moyer believes in discipline, observation, and timing. She serves not just as a predator but as a judge issuing mercy or death only when absolutely justified. With chaos spreading, many look to her not for speeches, but for decisive action. She wields a ceremonial blade carved from a broken pruning shear, recognized by many predators as a symbol of command, ready to use in the face of rebellion.

Insecta vs. Homo Sapiens

Positions

Predators

Agent Kodali- Assassin Bug__

Cloaked in silence and shrouded in venom, Kodali is the most feared operative in the backyard's covert security network. Trained in precision strikes and psychological warfare, Kodali has spent years neutralizing rogue wasps, rebellious ants, and invasive centipedes. Now, with the humans disrupting everything, territories collapsing, hunting zones disappearing, Kodali faces a new kind of enemy; one that's unthinking, careless, and massive. Kodali believes that survival requires shadows, not speeches. He distrusts idealists and considers empathy a liability in war. But make no mistake, his loyalty to the ecosystem is unwavering. Though not aligned with any faction, he works to protect the overall balance and isn't above striking deals to eliminate shared threats. Whether you need a saboteur, spy, or clean executioner, Kodali is the bug you hope is on your side. They have a strategic leaf disguise that hides them in any room or bug's line of sight.

Sentinel Han- Dragonfly__

Han commands the skies. As Sentinel of the Eastern Pondfront, she has patrolled the airways and waterlines of the backyard with unmatched speed, clarity, and vision. Dragonflies like her are agile predators, feeding on mosquitoes and gnats mid-flight, maintaining both order and airspace safety. For years, her aerial patrols provided early warnings against threats, but now those skies are thick with smoke from BBQ fires, chemical clouds from pesticides, and chaotic thermal patterns caused by human technology. Han hears that her once-open domain is becoming a trap. Yet, she remains resolute. As long as her wings beat, she will not cede the skies. Han is decisive, highly tactical, and deeply loyal to the balance of nature but she is also a realist. She believes in layered defense and aerial dominance, and she's ready to lend support to any faction that prioritizes survival over pride. Han has a cloud map of wind and heat currents, a complex system they've had the privilege of learning fluency in.

Insecta vs. Homo Sapiens

Positions

Predators

Recon Commander Rita – Damselfly

Rita, contrary to the name of her species, is the shadow in the reeds damselfly with nerves of steel and unparalleled observational talent. Smaller and more precise than dragonflies, Rita leads the Wetwing Recon Unit, tasked with patrolling pond edges, moist mulch, and shaded garden beds. She is not loud nor revered like Han, but her reports often save lives before crises even emerge. With the sprinkler flooding cycles becoming erratic and the pondline shrinking from runoff toxicity, her missions have grown more dangerous. Rita believes in data, precision, and preemptive action. Her neutrality allows her to serve any faction but only if their intentions serve the greater ecological balance. Rita possesses a stealth access dossier of six hidden freshwater ponds too deep in shrubbery for anyone but her to find.

Minister Gi- Ground Mantis

Minister Gi is not as revered as his cousin, Warden Gi, but he is far more willing to get his claws dirty. As commander of the Ground Den Patrol, he has spent years enforcing predator protocols, mediating disputes between carnivorous factions, and ensuring no one species oversteps their reach. He believes in law, order, and above all preparedness. He believes in the necessity of violence but detests waste. Often misunderstood as aggressive, Gi is actually driven by a fierce belief in collective survival. If that means organizing raids on human leftovers or leading a counter-strike to save trapped insects from pesticide zones, so be it. While not as diplomatic as other predators, he is a general to be followed not debated. He leads a defensive ground team of six veteran mantids trained in combat and extraction.

Colonel Den- Antlion Trapmaster

Den is the dirt-dwelling specter feared by young larvae and reckless beetles alike. An antlion with a mind like a snare, she rules from the bottom of her spiraled pit traps, capturing anything foolish enough to stumble past. Rarely seen, she speaks with precision and purpose, usually through the representatives of others who owe her favors. Her sand traps once protected pollinator colonies and served as buffer zones during overpopulation surges. Now, footfalls from human children, sprinkler floods, and compacted soil have rendered many of her pits unusable. But Denny is adapting. She's begun to engineer new trigger-based traps and is rumored to be in talks with wasps and mantids. Whether she becomes a passive sentinel or a lethal engineer depends on how the committee treats her and how deeply they fall into her calculations. Den has a series of plans for reengineered pressure-trigger pitfall traps, only she knows the whereabouts for.

Insecta vs. Homo Sapiens

Positions

Decomposers

Information Broker Lin- Corpsefly

Lin is the whisper on the wind, the first on the scene when something dies, and the last to leave when secrets have been picked clean. A corpsefly from the shady back corner of the compost bin, Lin has built a career on knowing too much. While others decompose physically, Lin traffics in what's left behind: scent trails, toxin residues, fragments of wings or shells. With the rise of human trash and chemical extermination, his knowledge has grown more valuable and more dangerous. Charming but unsettling, he offers information in exchange for favors and is known to pit rivals against each other to protect the decomposer cause. They have a "decay ledger" detailing past conflicts, and toxin sources long forgotten until now thanks to Lin.

General Levis- Ant

General Levis commands the largest, most structured force in the entire backyard: the ant colonies. Her subterranean empire spans compost piles, tree roots, and cracks in the patio cement, unified by a strict caste system and near-perfect logistical precision. Under her leadership, ants have become the invisible engine of the ecosystem transporting food, protecting aphids, and redistributing nutrients. However, the return of humans has destabilized everything. Lawn floods collapse tunnel systems, trash piles overwhelm collection routes, and pesticides cut down worker lines in seconds. Levis must now defend not just her colony, but the entire decomposer infrastructure from collapse. While she maintains a strong sense of duty to the ecosystem, she is also deeply pragmatic and unafraid to resort to authoritarian measures. Some see her as a savior. Others, as a would-be insect empress. But all recognize her as indispensable. She is head of a battalion of 20 worker ants at her beck and call.

Minister Lee- Beetle

Lee, an elder dung beetle and philosopher-leader of the Rotward Circle, has long maintained the sacred balance of decay. To Lee, decomposition is more than biology; it's a belief system. He teaches that all things must return to the Earth, and that in rot, there is wisdom. Leeorder is responsible for breaking down organic waste, redistributing nutrients, and ensuring the cycle of life continues. But now, the return of humans has brought unnatural waste aluminum cans, plastic wrappers, and chemically preserved food which cannot be broken down through traditional means. As garbage spreads and natural composting sites disappear, Lee must reconsider his theology. Will he adapt, creating new methods of decomposition with help from technology and metal? Or will he resist, demanding purification through traditional decay? Wise and slow to act, Lee prefers dialogue, but once he moves, it is with certainty. He has a fortified compost bastion of bark and aluminum, ready for use as soon as yesterday.

Insecta vs. Homo Sapiens

Positions

Decomposers

ITechnician Conde- Springtail

Small, springy, and often overlooked, Conde is the architect of the Mycelial Conde, a network of fungal threads and microbial channels that help maintain soil health and inter-species communication beneath the surface. A chemical engineer by trade and scientist by soul, Conde has spent the last decade monitoring toxicity, moisture balance, and nutrient levels across the yard's roots and mulch zones. She has long served as the decomposers' early-warning system for chemical threats. With the introduction of pesticides and synthetic fertilizers, Conde instruments have begun triggering near-constant alarms. She now must decide whether to stay and attempt to purify the infected soils or evacuate to preserve the knowledge of her people. Brilliant but introverted, Conde is a reluctant leader, more at home among spores than speeches, but when she speaks, others listen. She has in her arsenal a soil filtration unit, a creation made to save as many lives as possible with these incoming threats.

Coordinator Tryan- Fly

Tryan, chief of the airborne sanitation patrols, is blunt, bold, and always the first to arrive when something starts to rot. Known for managing food redistribution and corpse cleanup, Tryan's flies were once scorned, until their role in disease prevention and rapid-response sanitation became indispensable. Unlike other decomposers, Tryan is fast-moving and always chasing the next opportunity. The return of humans, particularly their garbage, has made him more powerful than ever. BBQ remains, fallen fruit, and kitchen waste are a gold mine if properly claimed. Yet, this resource boom is a double-edged wing where there's garbage, there's pesticide. Tryan now balances the risk of exposure against the possibility of food-based dominance. Loud and unapologetic, he's equal parts street boss and warlord, advocating that survival may require embracing the very filth others fear. He has exclusive control over a vast trash reserve left behind by the recent BBQ; what's one man's trash is another man's treasure.

Migratory Strategist Emle -Locust

Emla Locusta is a grassland tactician born to motion. As one of the few locusts to stay behind when her kin migrated, she has spent a decade studying patterns of consumption, weather, and species pressure in the backyard. Unlike Leptus Viridis, Emle does not believe in territorial defense; she believes in planned exodus. To her, survival is movement. With plants disappearing and hostility rising, Emle proposes coordinated migration routes, new colony frontiers, or even evacuation beyond the backyard fence. Some call her a deserter. Others call her a visionary. She is fiercely loyal to the herbivore cause but believes long-term survival requires thinking beyond traditional nests and feeding plots. She's got a migration map outlining low-conflict, high-nutrient paths across the backyard into the fence for emergency use.