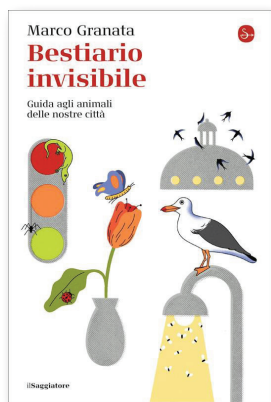


BOOK REVIEWS, NOTES AND COMMENTS

Edited by
Federica Napolitani Cheyne



WILD ROME
La vita selvatica della città eterna
Photos by Roberto Isotti, Alberto Cambone
Text by Micòle Ricci, Roberto Isotti
Paintings by Fulco Pratesi
HA Editore; 2021. 176 p.
ISBN 978-88-946261-0-0
€ 29,00.
[*Wild Rome. The wildlife of the eternal city*]



BESTIARIO INVISIBILE
guida agli animali delle nostre città
Marco Granata
Milano: Il Saggiatore; 2022.
317 p.
ISBN 978-88-428-3003-0
€ 22,00
[*Invisible bestiary: field guide to the animals of our cities*]

Introduced by Roberto Isotti, zoologist and conservation photographer, forwarded by scientific journalist Marco Cattaneo, with textual inserts by zoologist Bruno Cignini (for decades in charge of the animal communities of the Rome metropolitan area, chief officer at the Municipality of Rome) this artistic book provides a collection of lovely photos, depicting most of the commonest animal species observed in the Rome metropolitan areas, ranging from birds to snakes, insects, crabs, porcupines, dormice, hedgehogs, foxes, squirrels, spiders, bats, toads, turtles, salamanders and so on.

Photographs, one or two for each species, are provided by a condensed, short legend: which contains, in admirable few lines, the most relevant information regarding urban zoo-anthropological and zoo-geographical characteristics of the species, with some notes on their biology.

The book therefore provides a delightful picture of animal species having colonized metropolitan areas, while providing basic information on their ethology and conservation status. To readers of the biomedical field, this information may result crucial, given the recognized problems caused by zoonotic risk by (reciprocal)

transmission between wild species inhabiting inner central zones of cities and the crowded human population. The recently emerged concept of One Health [1, 2], according to which terrestrial ecosystems represent an *unicum* and therefore the correct and efficacious safeguarding of human health, has to take into account any contact with nonhuman species.

Signed by biologist Granata, the second volume *Invisible bestiary: field guide to the animals of our cities* provides a much higher amount of information concerning urban-living species, with particular focus on insects (the first hundred pages are completely devoted to them) and deal with home-inhabiting species, including spiders. Also, birds and reptiles are considered vacuously, and some amphibians and mammalian species as well. It is worth noticing that rarely considered free-living nonhuman beings, as wild rabbits, dormice, slow worms, green lizards, tenches, badgers, etc. are briefly mentioned. This latter represents an original and positive element of this volume, since most books on urban communities do not enclose animals difficult to be encountered, yet the possibility that any species may become a vector of disease is often unpredictable.

Overall, this volume follows a fluid narrative style, a kind of personal exploration by the author that accompany the reader throughout the animal communities inhabiting urban areas. Its weakness, possibly for officers of public health, may be some lack of systematicity in the way the various species are illustrated. In other words, this book does not represent an urban-life encyclopedia, nor a classical textbook for studying urban fauna. Nevertheless, its readability and the well-defined draws, allow to easily recognize wild urban species. The fact that it includes, as already mentioned, quite rare animals, makes this book a recommended reading for veterinarians, zoo-anthropologists, animal behaviour experts and urban planners as well. In a mature perspective of One Health, it represents a good cultural and operational framework for monitoring the likelihood of physical (or close) contact between *Homo sapiens* and the wide variety of animal species living in cities, large metropolitan areas but also towns, villages and very small settlement centers [3].

Links, already promising, between zoo-anthropology and preventive medicine should be further stabilized and strengthened.

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2. Humboldt-Dachroeden S, Mantovani A. Assessing environmental factors within the One Health approach. *Medicina*. 2021;57(3):240. doi: 10.3390/medicina57030240
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