



SURE Research Publication Service

1) Reference of your publication:

Kowarik, I. (2017). Urban wilderness: supply, demand, and access. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening* (early online)

2) Hyperlink to the publication:

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1618866717301747>

3) Abstract:

The concept of urban wilderness feels like a paradox since natural and urban environments have long been viewed as antithetical. Today, however, wilderness is high on the urban agenda as a response to different challenges: biodiversity and human experiences of nature are being lost in increasingly dense cities, while at the same time a plethora of wild areas are developing in cities that are undergoing post-industrial transformation. Yet there is confusion around the definitions and the anticipated functions of urban wilderness and how humans can be incorporated therein. A unifying framework is proposed here that envisions urban wilderness as a social-ecological system; three major components are identified and linked: (i) the supply of wilderness areas along gradients of naturalness and ecological novelty, leading to a differentiation of ancient vs. novel wilderness, and the identification of wilderness components within cultural ecosystems; (ii) the demand for wilderness in urban societies, which differs among sociocultural groups as a function of underlying values and experiences; (iii) the access to urban wilderness, which can be improved both in terms of providing opportunities for encountering urban wilderness (e.g., by conserving, rewilding wilderness areas) and enhancing the orientation of urban people towards wilderness (e.g.,



through information, environmental education, citizen science). Evidence from urban wilderness projects in Europe demonstrates that multi-targeted approaches to conserving and managing existing novel urban ecosystems offer manifold opportunities to combine biodiversity conservation and wilderness experience in cities.

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