

THE EDGE EFFECT ON ABUNDANCE AND RICHNESS OF WEB BUILDING SPIDERS

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Abstract: Deforestation and logging are fragmenting existing forests, creating smaller forest patches and abrupt boundaries between opposing habitats. In our study we examined the edge effect on abundance and richness of web-building spiders, because spiders may potentially be useful as bioindicators of the environment in which they are present, a feature valuable in conservation work. Web building spiders were sampled in the forest interior and along a forest edge in the Caxiuanã National Forest. In our study, we did not find significant differences between the two study sites. Several variables that may have contributed to these findings are discussed in the paper.

Key words. *Edge effect; web-building spiders; rain forest; indicator species*