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New Insights on Parasites as Bioindicators

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Message from the Guest Editors

Parasitism is one of the most successful survival strategies for living organisms. Since parasites (helminths, protozoa, and arthropods) are important components of complex systems, they are susceptible to the same environmental processes that affect their hosts. Therefore, although considered neglected biodiversity, parasites are bioindicators of the health of hosts and ecosystems. Anthropogenic environmental degradation (deforestation, urbanization, climate change, and pollutants/contaminants), in addition to favoring greater interaction between parasites–humans–wild and domestic animals, and consequently, the emergence of parasitic zoonoses, can also enhance the pathogenicity of parasites. This process must be analyzed from ecological, evolutionary, and socioeconomic perspectives. In the context of the One Health approach, which assumes that the health of animals, humans, plants, and the environment is connected and interdependent, parasites can provide information about the health and conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems.



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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

The worldwide impact of infectious disease is incalculable. The consequences for human health in terms of morbidity and mortality are obvious and vast but, when infections of animals and plants are also taken into account, it is hard to imagine any other disease that has such a significant impact on our lives—on healthcare systems, on agriculture and on world economics. *Pathogens* is proud to continue to serve the international community by publishing high quality studies that further our understanding of infection and have meaningful consequences for disease intervention.

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