

Unveiling Optimal Urban Nature for Community Wellbeing: Finding Vital Key Indicators from Preceding Urban Studies

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Abstract

The rapid pace of urbanization highlights the imperative of incorporating nature into cities to address well-being, sustainability, and resilience challenges. This study investigates urban nature, encompassing forests, wetlands, and recreational areas, uncovering their positive effects on urban well-being and resilience, substantiated by scientific research. Notably, urban green spaces such as parks are pivotal in reducing stress, enhancing cognitive, and fostering social cohesion. Ensuring equal access to these spaces is crucial for resident well-being. Urban forests, often underrated, regulate temperature, mitigate noise, and enhance emotional well-being, contributing to climate adaptation and comfort. Wetlands are vital connectors between aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, impacting water supply, stormwater management, and pollution reduction while acting as reservoirs and natural cleaners. Recreational areas offer opportunities for relaxation and interaction, necessitating customized planning. This research underscores urban nature's significance in shaping livable, sustainable, and resilient cities. Scientific studies stress their contributions to human well-being and the environment, advocating integration, and preservation. A synthesis of science, urban planning, and community engagement establishes the groundwork for nurturing these resources and harmonizing urban living with nature. Embracing urban nature remains essential for a resilient urban future.

Keywords: Urban Nature, Environment, Wellbeing, Community, Indicator.

Introduction

In the tapestry of modern urban landscapes, a captivating transformation is unfolding—one that seeks to reconnect the bustling cityscapes with the restorative embrace of nature. This

metamorphosis, driven by a growing recognition of the profound benefits that urban nature bestows upon inhabitants, has ignited a fervent exploration into the interplay between urban environments and the natural world. As concrete and steel rise to new heights, so does the aspiration to integrate nature seamlessly into the urban fabric, heralding an era where the presence of green spaces, biodiversity, and natural elements becomes not just a luxury, but a fundamental necessity for human wellbeing, environmental sustainability, and resilient urban design.

The concept of urban nature transcends mere aesthetics; it encapsulates the tangible and intangible connections between urban dwellers and the natural ecosystems that coexist within the city boundaries. These ecosystems manifest as parks, gardens, street trees, urban forests, wetlands, and even green roofs and vertical gardens. They bring a touch of wild serenity to the cacophony of city life, offering spaces for relaxation, recreation, contemplation, and communal gatherings. Beyond their recreational value, these urban green oases harbor numerous ecological services, including improved air quality, reduced heat island effects, stormwater management, carbon sequestration, and habitat provision for diverse species. As urbanization continues its relentless march, cities face multifaceted challenges ranging from environmental degradation and habitat loss to the physical and mental toll of urban living. It is within this context that the significance of urban nature takes center stage. A growing body of research underscores how exposure to nature within urban settings can have transformative impacts on human wellbeing. Studies reveal that spending time in green spaces can alleviate stress, reduce the risk of mental health disorders, enhance cognitive function, and foster a sense of connection to the natural world—an experience crucial for the psychological equilibrium of urban residents.

The benefits of urban nature extend beyond individual health to encompass the communal fabric of cities. Green spaces serve as hubs of social interaction, where people from diverse backgrounds converge, fostering a sense of community and shared identity. Parks and public gardens become platforms for cultural events, outdoor performances, and communal celebrations, knitting the urban populace into a cohesive tapestry of collective experiences. Moreover, urban nature acts as a leveler, bridging socioeconomic divides and offering equal access to revitalizing environments, regardless of one's background or means.

Biodiversity, too, finds its niche amidst the concrete jungle, enriching urban environments with a symphony of life. From resilient native plants to pollinators and small fauna, the presence of biodiversity enhances the stability and adaptive capacity of cities in the face of changing climates and other disruptions. Urban nature can also contribute to education, sparking curiosity and awareness among urban residents about the natural world. Educational programs, botanical gardens, and ecological displays become invaluable tools for cultivating environmental stewardship and sustainable mindsets in urban populations.

In parallel to these human-centric perspectives, the conservation of urban nature carries paramount ecological importance. Amidst urbanization's swift progression, native ecosystems are often overlooked or imperiled. Integrating nature into the urban fabric becomes a beacon of hope for preserving these ecosystems and safeguarding their intricate web of relationships. Such integration is vital for maintaining the resilience of cities in the face of climatic uncertainties and for upholding the ecological balance that sustains the urban environment.

This exploration into the relationship between urban nature and human flourishing stands at the intersection of design, ecology, sociology, and public health. It is a cross-

disciplinary endeavor that calls upon urban planners, architects, ecologists, psychologists, policymakers, and communities at large to collaborate in reimagining the urban landscape. From visionary city planning that integrates green corridors and wildlife habitats to architectural designs that harmonize with nature, the urban nature movement signifies a collective endeavor to weave the threads of nature back into the urban tapestry.

As we delve into this realm of exploration, this study embarks upon a journey to unravel the multifaceted dimensions of urban nature. By delving into the intricate relationships between urban ecosystems and human wellbeing, we seek to unearth insights that resonate with urban planners, policymakers, researchers, and advocates alike. Through a synthesis of empirical research, case studies, and theoretical frameworks, we aspire to contribute to a deeper understanding of how urban nature shapes the urban experience and, in turn, how cities can be designed to embrace and thrive upon the healing touch of the natural world. In doing so, we endeavor to illuminate a path toward more sustainable, livable, and harmonious urban futures that seamlessly blend the vitality of urban life with the resplendence of nature.

Research Objective

The objective of the research study is to identify and synthesize key indicators of optimal urban nature, drawn from preceding urban studies, in order to provide actionable insights for enhancing community well-being through urban planning and development.

Methodology

The research methodology applied in this study adheres to a systematic and meticulously structured approach, purposefully designed to unravel the intricate interplay between urban nature and the well-being of urban communities. With precision and rigor as its guiding principles, this methodology is poised to deliver robust and compelling insights. Central to this research is the overarching objective of conducting a comprehensive review and synthesis of pertinent journal articles. This deliberate undertaking seeks to unearth the multifaceted relationship between urban nature and the holistic welfare of urban communities. This objective is rooted in a recognition of the intricate dynamics that exist within this relationship, driving the quest for a comprehensive and enlightening analysis. To initiate this exploration, extensive searches were conducted across reputable academic databases, including respected platforms such as ScienceDirect and Google Scholar. The selection of keywords was thoughtfully crafted to align closely with the central themes of "urban nature," "urban environment," "urban community," and "well-being." This strategic approach was essential in ensuring the identification of a curated body of scholarly works that delve deeply into the nuanced influence of urban nature on diverse dimensions of community well-being. The search strategy was meticulously tailored to locate articles that meticulously probe the impact of urban nature on various facets of community well-being. The articles identified through this meticulous curation then underwent an exacting process of review and analysis. This comprehensive scrutiny involved extracting and scrutinizing critical details, encompassing research objectives, methodologies, key findings, and implications emanating from each study. The extracted data from each article were methodically synthesized, an intricate process that aimed to discern patterns, identify emerging trends, and uncover common themes that encapsulate the impact of urban nature on community well-being. This meticulous synthesis of information serves as the cornerstone for the subsequent phases of analysis and discussion. The ensuing discussion aims to delve into the intricate mechanisms

through which urban nature exerts its influence on community well-being. This exploration is a comprehensive one, encompassing a gamut of effects that urban nature engenders within the urban context. By harmonizing the insights distilled from a diverse array of journal articles, this research endeavors to offer invaluable guidance to decision-makers, urban planners, and community stakeholders. The ultimate aspiration of this study is to furnish actionable recommendations, providing a blueprint for cultivating urban nature that nurtures community well-being, unity, and contentment. This research, enriched by its exhaustive analysis, seeks to illuminate strategic avenues through which urban nature can be harnessed to construct inclusive, harmonious, and thriving urban communities. In summation, this research methodology represents an articulate and robust framework for examining the profound interactions between urban nature and community well-being. Rooted in systematic analysis, meticulous synthesis, and insightful discussion, this research aspires to shed light on the strategic deployment of urban nature as a potent catalyst in the creation of urban environments that inspire inclusivity, harmony, and vitality.

Finding and Discussion

Table 1.0, along with the ensuing discussion, offers a succinct yet thorough amalgamation and assessment of previous research. This analysis delves into the complex interaction between urban nature and urban community well-being, illuminating their dynamic correlation

Table 1.0
Key indicators of Urban Nature towards nurturing community Wellbeing

Authors/ Sources	Title	Indicators
Keeler et. al 2019	Social-ecological and technological factors moderate the value of urban nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban air quality • Carbon sequestration • Coastal protection • Urban heat and heat extremes mitigation • Stormwater and wastewater management • Urban water supply • Riverine flood impact reduction • Recreation opportunities • Mental health • Urban agriculture
Liu, et al (2021)	Impact of leisure environmental supply on new urban pathology: a case study of Guangzhou and Zhuhai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leisure environment • Recreational space
Ngesan et al (2013)	Urban community perception on nighttime leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park Design • Comforts • Conveniences

	activities in improving public park design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Nighttime leisure
Givoni (1991)	Impact of planted areas on urban environmental quality: A review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main design details of private planted areas • Principal planning features of public urban green areas
Bolund & Hunhammar (1999)	Ecosystem services in urban areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air filtration • Microclimate regulation • Noise reduction • Rainwater drainage • Sewage treatment • Recreational and cultural values
Chiesura (2004)	A. The role of urban parks for the sustainable city	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motives for nature • Emotional dimension and perceived benefits • Public satisfaction with the amount of green areas in cities
Zlender et al (2017)	Accessibility and use of peri-urban green space for inner-city dwellers: A comparative study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General use • The leisure and recreational • The perception • Socio-demographic

Urbanization is an inexorable global phenomenon, with more people living in urban areas than ever before. This rapid urban growth poses challenges to the quality of life, environmental sustainability, and well-being of urban residents. In response to these challenges, researchers and urban planners have increasingly turned their attention to the role of urban ecosystems and recreational spaces in shaping cities that are not only sustainable but also conducive to the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of their inhabitants. This article critically examines a collection of studies and their insights on urban ecosystem services, recreational spaces, and their impact on modern cities. The discussions revolve around the works of Keeler et al (2019); Liu, et al (2021); Chiesura (2004); Ngesan, et al (2013); Givoni (1991); Bolund & Hunhammar (1999), along with (Zlender & Thompson, 2017). The aim is to delve into the critical dimensions of these studies, assess their contributions, and explore the implications for urban planning, design, and management.

Keeler et al (2019) provide a comprehensive overview of urban ecosystem services, ranging from air quality improvement to mental health enhancement. While acknowledging the intrinsic value of urban nature, they emphasize the need for a nuanced understanding that considers trade-offs, co-benefits, and potential harms associated with nature-based solutions. This perspective raises questions about how urban planners and policymakers evaluate the multifaceted contributions of urban ecosystems. The call for greater research

into nature-based solutions that prioritize vulnerable populations highlights the need to address environmental justice concerns. As urban areas become increasingly diverse and socially stratified, the distribution of green spaces and their associated benefits becomes an ethical imperative. This study prompts urban planners to engage in a critical reflection on how to balance the needs of different demographic groups in the pursuit of equitable and sustainable urban environments. Furthermore, the proposed shift in emphasis from mitigation-focused research to a broader exploration of nature's contributions to recreation, social cohesion, and well-being challenges the conventional paradigms of urban planning. This reframing underscores the importance of holistic approaches that recognize the interconnectedness of environmental, social, and psychological dimensions in shaping urban experiences.

The study by Liu, et al (2021) delves into the diverse aspects of recreational spaces, highlighting their various functions, user groups, and scopes. This typology of recreational spaces emphasizes the need to consider the specific needs and preferences of local residents versus tourists, as well as the range of functions these spaces serve. The classification into commercial, self-sustaining, and public recreation spaces provides a framework for urban planners to strategically allocate resources and design features that cater to different leisure demands. Public parks emerge as crucial components of recreational spaces, representing not only green areas but also opportunities for interaction with nature and fellow urbanites. This aligns with Chiesura's (2004) assertion that urban parks contribute to emotional well-being, perceived benefits, and the satisfaction of green area availability. However, this perspective raises questions about the allocation of resources for maintaining and expanding public parks, especially in densely populated urban environments where land is at a premium.

Chiesura (2004) investigates the multifaceted roles of urban parks, focusing on nature, emotional dimensions, perceived benefits, and public satisfaction. The study's emphasis on understanding why people visit parks and the feelings they experience therein underscores the complex interplay between urban spaces and human emotions. The identification of various motivations for park visits, such as relaxation, escape from urban life, and inspiration, underscores the diverse needs that parks fulfill. The emotional dimension discussed in Chiesura's study points to the need for urban planning that prioritizes the creation of spaces that evoke positive emotions, facilitate relaxation, and promote mental well-being. As cities become increasingly stressful environments, urban planners are challenged to balance the development of green spaces that cater to a range of emotional needs while remaining accessible and inclusive for all segments of the population.

Ngesan, et al (2013) delve into the nocturnal perception of urban parks, focusing on factors like comfort, convenience, safety, and leisure activities. This study sheds light on the often-overlooked nighttime urban experiences and underscores the significance of creating safe, well-lit, and accommodating spaces for nocturnal leisure activities. The indicators identified in this study, such as cleanliness, accessibility, and safety measures, serve as guiding principles for urban planners and designers aiming to enhance nighttime leisure experiences. The emphasis on the physical setting of urban parks during nighttime and the positive impacts of such experiences on physical, mental, and social health underline the potential of nocturnal leisure to mitigate the stressors of urban life. Urban planners are challenged to design environments that foster safe and enjoyable nighttime leisure activities, providing urban residents with opportunities to unwind, socialize, and connect with their surroundings during off-peak hours.

Givoni (1991); Bolund & Hunhammar (1999) provide insights into the design and planning considerations for both private planted areas and public urban green spaces. Givoni's focus on the design details of private planted areas highlights the potential of vegetation to improve indoor and outdoor comfort, while Bolund and Hunhammar's exploration of ecosystem services underscores the significance of urban green spaces in regulating microclimates, reducing noise, and enhancing overall quality of life. Both studies underscore the importance of strategic planning that integrates natural elements into urban environments. This involves considerations of plant types, orientation, accessibility, and distribution of green spaces. As cities grow denser and more built-up, urban planners are faced with the challenge of preserving and expanding green spaces while optimizing their benefits for residents' physical and psychological well-being.

Zlender & Thompson (2017) delve into the preferences of inner-city inhabitants for peri-urban landscapes for leisure activities. This study highlights the importance of easily accessible green spaces that offer opportunities for outdoor activities while providing a reprieve from the urban hustle and bustle. The popularity of green corridors and beaches underscores the desire for natural elements and managed paths that facilitate outdoor recreation. Urban planners must address questions of accessibility, connectivity, and inclusivity in peri-urban green spaces. As urban dwellers seek opportunities for outdoor activities, ensuring that these spaces are well-connected through transportation networks becomes crucial. Additionally, considering factors like safety, cleanliness, and diverse offerings can enhance the appeal and utilization of peri-urban leisure environments.

The critical examination of the discussed studies reveals the intricate relationship between urban ecosystems, recreational spaces, and the well-being of urban inhabitants. These studies collectively underscore the importance of integrating nature-based solutions into urban planning, design, and management strategies. The value of urban nature extends beyond mere environmental benefits; it encompasses emotional well-being, social cohesion, and public satisfaction. To navigate the challenges of urbanization, urban planners must adopt a multidimensional approach that considers diverse user needs, equity considerations, and the evolving dynamics of urban environments. This approach necessitates a paradigm shift from a focus solely on mitigating environmental issues to a more holistic understanding of urban ecosystems as contributors to holistic urban well-being. In conclusion, the intersection of urban ecosystems and recreational spaces offers a canvas for urban planners and designers to craft cities that prioritize both the physical and emotional well-being of their residents. As cities continue to evolve, the integration of nature and leisure into urban landscapes becomes not only a luxury but a necessity for fostering healthy, vibrant, and sustainable urban environments.

Table 2.0 illustrates the main findings extracted from the reviewed articles, which emphasize diverse facets encompassing urban ecosystems, nature-oriented services, recreational venues, urban parks, and inclinations towards leisure pursuits within urban settings.

Table 2.0

Principal Discovery & Analysis in the Preceding Article Regarding Urban Nature

Key finding	Interpretation	Author(s)
Urban ecosystem services and value of nature	It emphasizes the importance of considering both direct benefits and potential negative impacts when assessing the value of nature-based solutions in urban environments. The call for greater research into nature-based solutions that directly benefit vulnerable populations indicates a need for a more holistic understanding of the value of urban nature beyond immediate environmental benefits.	Keeler, et. al (2019)
Recreational spaces and leisure environments	Categorize recreational spaces based on service objects, functions, and scope, highlighting the diversity of spaces that cater to different leisure activities. Focus on public parks, shopping malls, cultural facilities, and sports venues underscores the variety of options available for urban dwellers to engage in leisure activities and interact with their surroundings.	Liu et al (2021)
Roles of urban parks for sustainable cities	The multifaceted roles of urban parks in sustainable cities. These roles encompass not only providing a connection to nature but also contributing to emotional well-being and perceived benefits. The exploration of visitors' motives and feelings in parks reveals the significance of urban green spaces for various activities and experiences. Emphasizes the importance of both quantitative and qualitative assessments of the impact of parks on public satisfaction and overall city well-being.	Chiesura (2004)
Variables affecting nighttime leisure perception	The variables that influence nighttime leisure perception in urban public parks. Identify factors related to comfort, convenience, safety, and the experience of nighttime leisure activities. This analysis highlights the need for a comprehensive approach to park design, maintenance, and management to ensure that nighttime leisure activities are enjoyable, safe, and contribute positively to physical and mental well-being.	Ngesan, et al (2013)

Urban green areas and quality of life	Ecosystem services generated by urban green areas and their impact on the quality of life in cities. Exploration of services such as air filtration, microclimate regulation, noise reduction, and recreational values demonstrates the myriad benefits that green spaces offer to urban populations. This perspective calls for integrating these ecosystem services into land use planning to create healthier and more sustainable urban environments.	Bolund & Hunhammar (1999)
Preferences for peri-urban landscapes	Preferences of inner-city inhabitants for different peri-urban landscapes for leisure activities. Findings indicate a preference for green corridors and beaches, particularly for walking and outdoor activities. Accessibility, natural features, and proximity to the city center emerge as key factors influencing urban dwellers' choices for leisure spaces. This research highlights the importance of designing and maintaining easily accessible green spaces that cater to diverse leisure preferences.	Zlender & Thompson (2017)

The Theme, Conceptual Definition, and Indicator Analysis

In this segment, a methodical and meticulous procedure has been meticulously employed to systematically group indicators that exhibit significant correlations as observed in previous research endeavors. These indicators have undergone a rigorous categorization process, informed by shared attributes, leading to the emergence of discernible themes. Each thematic grouping represents a cohesive conceptual framework that serves to unveil the underlying principles governing the indicators it encompasses. This methodological approach has been deliberately chosen to enhance clarity and facilitate a deeper comprehension of the intricate interrelationships that exist among the identified indicators. By organizing these indicators into coherent themes, this approach serves a dual purpose: it not only elucidates the intrinsic value of each indicator in isolation but also reveals intricate patterns that come to the fore when considering them collectively. This deliberate endeavor aligns with the overarching goal of this research, which is to unearth the complex dynamics at play within the urban nature and its influence on community well-being. Through a meticulous process of analysis, the thematic arrangement of these indicators not only provides a panoramic view but also establishes a vantage point from which to embark on an in-depth exploration of the thematic underpinnings. This exploration delves into the heart of each theme, meticulously examining its core constituents and articulating their collective significance. This methodical exposition significantly enriches the scholarly discourse, contributing to a deeper understanding of the intricate interplay of variables and their implications within the unique context of this research study. At its core, the urban nature functions as a dynamic and multifaceted canvas upon which the well-being of urban communities is intricately painted. The symphony of green spaces, ecological diversity, and natural elements harmonizes with

the urban landscape to orchestrate an environment that has far-reaching implications for the holistic welfare of residents. By systematically unraveling the nuanced relationships that underlie the indicators grouped within distinct themes, this research contributes not only to the academic domain but also informs urban planning, policymaking, and community initiatives. Ultimately, this section stands as a testament to the meticulous methodology employed throughout this study. It resonates with the rigor that permeates the research, serving as a cornerstone for the subsequent exploration and analysis. The thematic revelations, artfully expounded within this section, lay the groundwork for a more profound appreciation of the complex and symbiotic relationship between urban nature and the well-being of urban communities. Table 3.0 shows the summary of theme, conceptual definition and indicator significantly related from previous research study.

Table 3.0
Theme, conceptual definition and indicator significantly related from previous research study.

Theme	Conceptual Definition	Indicator Significantly Related from Previous Research Study	Author(s)
a) Parks i) Recreational Area (parks, gardens, street trees, green roofs, vertical gardens)	Parks are designated areas of land that are set aside for public recreation, leisure, and enjoyment. They typically feature open spaces, pathways, and often include amenities such as playgrounds, sports facilities, picnic areas, and sometimes cultural or historical landmarks. Parks serve as vital green lungs within urban environments, providing opportunities for relaxation, social interaction, physical activity, and a connection with nature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation opportunity • Carbon sequestration • Leisure environment • Recreational space • Comfort • Safety • Nighttime leisure • Recreational and cultural values • Motives for nature • Emotional dimension and perceived benefits • Public satisfaction with the amount of green areas in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chiesura, et. al, (2004) • Ziender, et. al, (2017) • Bolund, et. al, (1999) • Givoni, et. al, (1991) • Ngesan, et, al. (2013) • Liu, et, al. (2021)

b) Gardens	<p>Gardens refer to intentionally cultivated spaces that showcase a variety of plants, flowers, and sometimes trees. They can vary in size and style, ranging from ornamental gardens with aesthetically pleasing layouts to botanical gardens that focus on displaying a wide array of plant species, including rare and exotic ones. Gardens contribute to the visual appeal of urban areas, offer educational opportunities, and can also provide habitats for local wildlife.</p>	<p>cities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General use • The leisure • The perception • Socio-demographic • Principal planning features of public urban green areas • Convenience
c) Street trees	<p>Street trees are trees planted along sidewalks, roads, and streets within urban areas. They serve various purposes, such as providing shade, reducing urban heat island effects, improving air quality by absorbing pollutants, and contributing to the</p>	

overall aesthetics of streetscapes. Street trees also play a role in promoting walkability and creating more pleasant urban environments.

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- d) Green roofs Green roofs, also known as living roofs, are rooftops that are partially or completely covered with vegetation and planting materials. They offer a way to introduce green spaces in urban areas where ground space may be limited. Green roofs provide benefits such as insulation, reduction of stormwater runoff, improvement of air quality, and the creation of habitats for insects and birds.

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- e) Vertical gardens Vertical gardens, also called living walls or green walls, are structures covered with vegetation that grow vertically on building facades or other vertical surfaces. They can vary from simple
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trellises with climbing plants to intricate systems that incorporate soil and irrigation. Vertical gardens contribute to urban aesthetics, air quality improvement, and thermal regulation, while also utilizing otherwise unused space for greenery.

ii) Urban forests

Urban forests are complex ecosystems composed of trees, plants, and wildlife within urban and suburban areas. They encompass various types of green spaces, including parks, street trees, wooded areas, and natural reserves. Urban forests offer a range of ecological benefits, such as carbon sequestration, habitat provision, temperature regulation, and stormwater management, while also contributing to the overall health and wellbeing of urban residents.

- Urban agriculture
- Riverine flood
- Impact reduction
- Urban heat and heat extremes mitigation
- Coastal protection
- Urban air quality
- Noise reduction
- Microclimate regulation

- Keeler, et. al, (2019)
- Bolund, et. al, (1999)

iii) Wetlands

Wetlands are areas

- Urban water

- Keeler, et. al,

where water supply (2019)
 covers the soil, • Stormwater • Bolund, et. al,
 either permanently and (1999)
 or seasonally. They wastewater management
 can include marshes, swamps, • Rainwater
 marshes, swamps, bogs, and ponds, drainage,
 and are • Sewage
 characterized by treatment
 their unique hydrology and
 diverse plant and animal species. In
 urban environments,
 wetlands play a critical role in
 filtering and purifying water,
 preventing flooding,
 supporting biodiversity, and
 providing opportunities for
 educational and recreational
 activities.

Recreational areas

Recreational areas are designed havens that serve as a respite from the urban bustle, providing individuals and communities with spaces to engage in leisure, outdoor activities, and rejuvenation. These dedicated spaces encompass a variety of environments, ranging from expansive parks and tranquil playgrounds to dynamic sports fields and winding hiking trails. The significance of recreational areas lies not only in their physical attributes but also in their contribution to the overall well-being of urban inhabitants.

Chiesura et al (2004) offer a comprehensive exploration of the factors shaping recreational areas. They highlight three key facets: motives for engaging with nature, the emotional dimension of park experiences, and public satisfaction with green spaces in urban settings. The examination of user motives unveils the diverse reasons people visit recreational areas. Whether it's for sports, relaxation, social interaction, or seeking inspiration, these motives underscore the multifunctionality of these spaces in catering to varied human needs. The emotional dimension and perceived benefits experienced within recreational areas underscore their role in enhancing mental well-being. Urban environments often entail stress and detachment from nature. Hence, these green spaces provide a sanctuary where

individuals can experience feelings of unity with nature, freedom, and happiness. Recognizing the emotional experiences and benefits within these areas contributes to their deliberate design for holistic human development. Public satisfaction, as assessed by the availability and quality of green spaces in cities, is a critical aspect of urban planning. The level of satisfaction with recreational areas reflects the success of municipal efforts in catering to residents' leisure and well-being needs. As urban populations grow, the availability and accessibility of such spaces become imperative for fostering a sense of community and ensuring equitable distribution of recreational resources.

Ziender et al (2017) introduce a comprehensive approach to assessing recreational areas, integrating various aspects of user behavior and perceptions. Their study delves into the general use and accessibility of green spaces within the city, as well as the specific behavior of individuals in terms of leisure and recreation. This multifaceted approach acknowledges that recreational areas serve different functions for diverse user groups, ranging from individuals seeking solitude to those engaging in group activities. Moreover, the examination of perceptions and attitudes toward frequently visited green spaces adds depth to the understanding of urban recreational preferences. This analysis unravels the factors that attract people to specific parks, highlighting elements like aesthetics, safety, and amenities. By dissecting the socio-demographic factors influencing preferences, urban planners can tailor recreational areas to the unique needs of different demographic segments.

Expanding the discourse on recreational areas, Bolund et al (1999) introduce the concept of recreational and cultural values. While often overlooked, the presence of fauna, such as birds and fish, and the exposure to natural spaces play a pivotal role in recreational experiences. This consideration aligns with the growing emphasis on preserving biodiversity and creating opportunities for urban dwellers to interact with nature. The scientific value of ecosystems further underscores the intricate relationship between recreational areas and the broader environment. Green spaces contribute not only to leisure but also to education and awareness about ecological systems. Integrating this scientific value into recreational planning enriches the overall experience and serves as a bridge between urban life and nature.

Givoni (1991); Bolund et al (1999) delve into the planning and design principles that underpin the creation of public urban green areas. Givoni emphasizes the principal planning features that dictate the quality of these spaces, including their total size, distribution, accessibility, and integration with residential areas. These considerations resonate with the importance of well-connected green spaces that cater to the varying needs of urban inhabitants. Furthermore, Bolund et al.'s exploration of services like rainwater drainage and microclimate regulation emphasizes the functional aspects of recreational areas. Beyond being leisure spaces, these areas can serve as tools for managing urban challenges like stormwater runoff and temperature regulation. By incorporating these ecosystem services into the planning process, urban designers can create multifunctional recreational spaces that simultaneously address environmental concerns.

Ngesan et al (2013) expand the discussion to encompass the often-overlooked dimension of nighttime leisure in urban parks. The study recognizes the importance of factors like comfort, convenience, and safety in shaping these experiences. This research highlights the potential of urban parks to offer safe and enjoyable nocturnal spaces for individuals and families. Understanding the nuances of nighttime leisure experiences can inform urban planning decisions, such as lighting design, security measures, and the availability of

amenities. Moreover, recognizing the positive impact of night-time leisure on physical and mental health underscores the need for inclusivity in recreational area planning, extending benefits beyond daylight hours.

Liu et al (2021) present a typology of recreational spaces that encompasses service objects, recreational functions, and scopes. This comprehensive classification reflects the evolving landscape of recreational areas, catering to various user groups and leisure pursuits. The distinction between spaces for residents, tourists, and the broader community emphasizes the multifaceted nature of urban leisure. Additionally, the consideration of recreational functions, such as commercial, self-sustaining, and public, underscores the economic and social diversity of these spaces. The integration of these functions into urban planning can generate revenue, create self-sustaining ecosystems, and foster social interactions that enrich community life.

Recreational areas are integral to the urban fabric, serving as havens of relaxation, interaction, and well-being. The critical examination of various studies reveals the multifaceted nature of these spaces. From understanding user motives and emotions to assessing ecosystem services and nocturnal experiences, each facet contributes to the holistic understanding and strategic planning of recreational areas. Urban planners and designers stand at the crossroads of a dynamic urban landscape, where recreational areas play a pivotal role in shaping vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive cities. By integrating insights from these studies, urban planners can create environments that foster both leisure and well-being, catering to the diverse needs of modern urban populations. As cities continue to evolve, the multifunctionality of recreational areas will be instrumental in creating urban spaces that reflect the essence of a thriving, interconnected community.

Forest

A forest, as defined by its predominantly tree-covered expanse, stands as a testament to the intricate dance between nature's elements. These expansive landscapes play a pivotal role in shaping ecosystems, fostering biodiversity, and mitigating urban challenges. Urban forests, while often overshadowed by the concrete jungle, offer a myriad of benefits that extend beyond their aesthetic allure. This discussion critically delves into the multifaceted nature of urban forests, drawing insights from research to illuminate their role in urban environments.

Keeler et al (2019) underscore the diverse contributions of urban forests, emphasizing their pivotal role in urban agriculture, riverine flood impact reduction, urban heat mitigation, coastal protection, and air quality enhancement. Urban agriculture, an emerging trend, finds fertile ground within the canopy of these forests, offering opportunities for community engagement, food production, and sustainable practices. Moreover, their capacity to mitigate riverine flood impacts by absorbing excess water contributes to urban resilience, curbing potential damage in times of heavy rainfall. The cooling effect of urban forests, a result of their role in heat extremes mitigation, is a scientific example of their environmental prowess. The phenomenon of transpiration, where trees release water vapor, effectively reduces surrounding temperatures. This process, validated by Hough (1989), is pivotal in countering the urban heat island effect, where built environments trap heat and elevate temperatures. Urban forests act as green saviors, offering pockets of respite amidst sweltering urban landscapes.

Amidst the cacophony of urban life, urban forests emerge as natural sanctuaries that contribute to noise reduction. Bolund et al (1999) spotlight the pivotal role of soft ground and

vegetation in decreasing noise levels. The dense vegetation within forests provides a natural buffer, absorbing and diffusing sound waves. This acoustic benefit not only contributes to a more serene urban experience but also reflects the intricate balance between nature and urbanity. Microclimate regulation stands as another layer of the urban forest's contribution, backed by the process of transpiration. As Keeler et al (2019) highlight, the water released through transpiration has a cooling effect on the environment. Research by Hough (1989) reaffirms this process, elucidating how urban trees, with their transpiration prowess, effectively lower summer temperatures. This mechanism not only counteracts heat-induced discomfort but also bolsters urban planners' efforts to combat the adverse effects of climate change.

The complex ecosystem of urban forests unveils a web of interdependencies, where each component plays a role in shaping the urban environment. Beyond their tangible benefits, these green expanses offer intangible but no less significant contributions to urban well-being. The tranquility that emanates from the rustling leaves, the visual respite they provide, and the sense of connection to nature all contribute to the mental and emotional well-being of urban inhabitants. Scientific studies indicate that exposure to natural environments, such as urban forests, is linked to reduced stress levels and improved mental health. Urban forests, with their rich tapestry of flora and fauna, offer a haven for those seeking solace from the pressures of urban life.

As urbanization surges, the strategic integration of urban forests becomes essential. The research discussed here emphasizes the need to consider urban forests as multifunctional landscapes. Beyond their ecological significance, these spaces serve as avenues for recreation, cultural activities, and community bonding. The integration of amenities like walking trails, picnic spots, and educational centers within urban forests amplifies their role as communal spaces. Strategic planning must prioritize the preservation of existing urban forests and the establishment of new ones. Zoning regulations that protect green spaces and promote afforestation are instrumental in maintaining the delicate balance between built environments and natural havens. Collaborative efforts between urban planners, environmental experts, and local communities are pivotal in ensuring that urban forests remain resilient and responsive to evolving urban needs.

Urban forests stand as a testament to the resilience of nature within urban landscapes. The critical exploration of their multifaceted contributions, as supported by scientific research, underscores their pivotal role in mitigating urban challenges and enhancing well-being. From reducing noise pollution to regulating microclimates, these forests offer practical solutions to the challenges posed by urbanization. As urban populations continue to grow, the value of urban forests as oases of tranquility and providers of ecosystem services becomes increasingly apparent. Strategic urban planning that prioritizes the integration and preservation of these green expanses is essential for fostering livable, sustainable cities. The synergy between scientific insights and community engagement holds the key to nurturing these natural treasures and ensuring that they remain integral to the urban fabric. In a world where urbanization accelerates, urban forests offer a vital bridge between humanity and the natural world, contributing to a harmonious coexistence between the two.

Wetlands

A wetland, a distinctive blend of water and terrestrial elements, serves as an ecological bridge between aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. Its unique hydrological characteristics and

biodiversity make wetlands vital components of natural landscapes. In this discourse, we delve into the intricate dynamics of wetlands within urban environments, exploring their role in water supply, stormwater and wastewater management, and their broader contributions to urban resilience. Defined as water-saturated areas, wetlands play an essential role in urban water supply and management. Keeler et al (2019) emphasize the significance of wetlands in ensuring access to clean and sustainable water sources. Rainwater harvesting, desalination plants, and water treatment facilities underscore the multifaceted nature of urban water supply systems. Wetlands, as natural reservoirs, play a pivotal role in replenishing groundwater levels, thus contributing to the longevity of water resources. Wetlands contribute to stormwater and wastewater management, offering a natural solution to the challenges of urban water runoff. The urban landscape, characterized by impervious surfaces, amplifies the risks of flooding during heavy rainfall. Bolund et al (1999) argue that wetlands serve as effective stormwater buffers, absorbing excess water and curbing the intensity of runoff. Furthermore, wetlands' role in decentralized wastewater treatment is a testament to their capacity to filter pollutants and purify water before it re-enters natural water bodies.

The concept of wetlands as ecological filters gains prominence in urban contexts. Bolund et al (1999) highlight the role of wetlands in air filtration, an aspect often overlooked. Vegetation within wetlands absorbs pollutants, contributing to air quality improvement. Scientifically, the process of phytoremediation involves the use of plants to cleanse soil and water from contaminants. This phenomenon, adapted to urban wetlands, underscores their capacity to contribute to the holistic improvement of urban environments. A scientific example of this lies in the ability of certain wetland plant species to absorb heavy metals and toxins, mitigating their impact on surrounding ecosystems. This natural detoxification process not only enhances water quality but also underscores the intricate relationships between wetlands and broader environmental health.

One of the remarkable roles of wetlands lies in their contribution to rainwater drainage. Bolund et al (1999) elucidate how wetlands act as porous sponges, absorbing rainwater and facilitating its gradual release. This mechanism stands in contrast to the rapid runoff typical of urban landscapes characterized by concrete and asphalt. The scientific principle at play here is the hydraulic conductivity of wetland soils, allowing them to absorb and transport water. Scientifically, studies have demonstrated the ability of wetlands to reduce the intensity and frequency of urban flooding. In urban planning, the integration of wetlands as natural stormwater management systems has gained traction. These wetland-based solutions, backed by research, offer effective alternatives to traditional stormwater infrastructure, curbing flood risks and enhancing urban resilience.

The role of wetlands in sewage treatment holds profound significance. Bolund et al (1999) point to wetlands' capacity to slow down the flow of sewage water, allowing particles to settle out. This natural sedimentation process, facilitated by wetland vegetation, contributes to the purification of water bodies. Scientifically, the interaction between wetland plants and microbial communities leads to the breakdown of organic matter, further enhancing water quality. Wetland-based sewage treatment systems find scientific validation in their ability to remove pollutants through biological and physical processes. *Phragmites australis*, a wetland plant, has been studied for its ability to absorb nutrients and pollutants from wastewater, effectively contributing to water purification.

The exploration of wetlands within urban environments reveals a tapestry of interrelated services that contribute to urban well-being and resilience. Beyond their

aesthetic allure, wetlands stand as formidable allies in water supply, stormwater management, and pollution reduction. Scientific research underscores the multifunctional nature of wetlands, validating their capacity to mitigate urban challenges and enhance environmental health. Strategic urban planning must consider the conservation and integration of wetlands within urban landscapes. Zoning regulations that prioritize wetland preservation and restoration are pivotal in maintaining the delicate balance between urbanization and ecological well-being. Collaborative efforts between researchers, policymakers, and local communities play a central role in nurturing these aquatic ecosystems and safeguarding their invaluable contributions. In the context of rapid urbanization, urban wetlands offer a harmonious synthesis of ecological vitality and urban functionality. Their role as natural filters, rainwater regulators, and sewage treatment centers underscores their resilience and adaptability. As cities strive for sustainability, wetlands emerge as essential partners in fostering a harmonious coexistence between human activities and the natural world.

Conclusion

In the symphony of urban development, a transformative crescendo is sounding—an impassioned movement to weave the urban tapestry with the threads of nature. This compelling evolution stems from a profound realization: urban nature is not a mere embellishment but a fundamental imperative, a necessity that breathes life into the concrete corridors of our cities. As urban landscapes reach for the sky, the urgency to integrate green spaces, biodiversity, and natural elements grows, signifying a pivotal shift towards holistic wellbeing, ecological vitality, and urban resilience. The notion of urban nature transcends aesthetics, embodying the intricate connections between city dwellers and the ecosystems that coexist within urban boundaries. Parks, forests, wetlands, and verdant rooftops converge to offer more than just scenic reprieve. They provide havens for contemplation, recreation, and communal bonding. Yet, their significance extends far beyond leisure. These pockets of green bestow vital ecological services—air purification, temperature regulation, water management, and habitat provision for diverse species. As our cities grapple with environmental degradation and the strain of urban living, the role of urban nature emerges as pivotal.

Research emphatically underscores the transformative impact of urban nature on human wellbeing. These green spaces are not just escapes; they are vital to mental health, stress reduction, cognitive function, and a sense of connection to the natural world—anchors for urban residents in an otherwise turbulent sea of urbanity. Moreover, these spaces catalyze a sense of unity among diverse populations, transcending social divides and providing equitable access to revitalizing environments. Biodiversity, too, finds a home amid the city's rhythm, bolstering urban resilience in the face of climatic shifts. From native flora to pollinators, urban nature is a symphony of life, enhancing cities' stability and adaptability. Urban greenery is also an educational canvas, nurturing curiosity, and stewardship for the environment, nurturing a greener mindset within urban populations.

The conservation of urban nature isn't merely a luxury; it's a pressing ecological mandate. As concrete conquers land, native ecosystems stand threatened. The integration of nature into urban planning becomes the crux of preserving these delicate ecosystems and maintaining urban balance. The preservation of biodiversity and the equilibrium of ecosystems are non-negotiable components of urban vitality. This exploration unearths the

amalgamation of design, ecology, sociology, and health, a collaborative endeavor that calls upon diverse disciplines to reimagine urban landscapes. From integrating green corridors to designing harmonious structures, the urban nature movement champions a shared aspiration to reconnect the urban with the natural.

In the tapestry of this exploration, this study endeavors to illuminate the intricate facets of urban nature. By delving into the interplay between urban ecosystems and human wellbeing, we aim to provide insights that resonate with urban planners, policymakers, researchers, and advocates. Through research synthesis, case studies, and theoretical frameworks, we hope to deepen the understanding of how urban nature shapes urban experiences, guiding the design of cities that flourish through the symbiotic embrace of urban life and the natural world. This journey aspires to pave the way towards more sustainable, harmonious urban futures where nature's vitality thrives amidst the rhythms of urbanity. The time to weave nature's threads back into the urban tapestry is now, and the symphony it creates is one of resilient harmony.

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