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1 **Predation on artificial caterpillars following understorey fires in human-modified**  
2 **Amazonian forests**

3

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26

27

28 **ABSTRACT**

29 Tropical forests are facing several impacts from anthropogenic disturbances, climate change and  
30 extreme climate events, with potentially severe consequences for ecological functions, such as  
31 predation on folivorous invertebrates. Folivory has a major influence on tropical forests by  
32 affecting plant fitness and overall seedling performance. However, we do not know whether  
33 predation of folivorous arthropods by birds, mammals, reptiles and other arthropods is affected  
34 by anthropogenic disturbances such as selective logging and forest fires. We investigated the  
35 impacts of both pre-El Niño human disturbances and the 2015-2016 El Niño understory fires on  
36 the predation of 4,500 artificial caterpillars across 30 Amazonian forest plots. Plots were  
37 distributed in four pre-El Niño forest classes: undisturbed, logged, logged-and-burned and  
38 secondary forests, of which 14 burned in 2015-16. We found a higher predation incidence in  
39 forests that burned during the El Niño in comparison to unburned ones. Moreover, logged-and-  
40 burned forests that burned again in 2015-16 were found to have significantly higher predation  
41 incidence by vertebrates than other forest classes. However, overall predation incidence in pre-El  
42 Niño forest disturbance classes was similar to undisturbed forests. Arthropods were the dominant  
43 predators of artificial caterpillars, accounting for 91.5% of total predation attempts. Our results  
44 highlight the resilience of predation incidence in human-modified forests, although the  
45 mechanisms underpinning this resilience remain unclear.

46

47 **KEYWORDS**

48 Amazon, arthropods, dummy caterpillar, El Niño, forest fires, forest regeneration, herbivory  
49 control, forest degradation

50

51 **1 INTRODUCTION**

52

53 Degraded primary forests, including those affected by human-driven disturbances, such as  
54 selective logging and understorey fires, are rapidly becoming ubiquitous in the tropics (Lewis,  
55 Edwards, & Galbraith, 2015). Between 1995 and 2017, more Amazonian forests were degraded  
56 by human activities than deforested (337,427 km<sup>2</sup> of degradation vs 308,311 km<sup>2</sup> of  
57 deforestation; Matricardi et al., 2020). Amazonia is also undergoing rapid changes in regional  
58 climate – in the past 40 years, the average temperature has increased by 1.5°C (Gloor et al., 2015)  
59 and the dry season has become longer and drier (Fu et al., 2013). Degraded forests have more  
60 open canopies and combined with rising temperatures and changing rainfall regimes this leaves  
61 forests more likely to sustain understorey fires (Holdsworth & Christopher, 1997). During the  
62 2015-16 El Niño, over one million hectares of forests burned in the lower Tapajós region in  
63 eastern Brazilian Amazon, even affecting previously undisturbed forests (Withey et al., 2018).

64 The impacts of human disturbance on species richness and composition in Amazonian  
65 forests have been intensively studied. Selective logging, for example, disproportionately affects  
66 terrestrial insectivorous passerine birds (Hamer et al., 2015; Moura et al., 2016), while  
67 understorey fires negatively impact the abundance of predatory ants (Paolucci et al., 2016).  
68 Understorey fires can also lead to severe structural changes to forests resulting from high tree  
69 mortality (Berenguer et al., 2021; Silva et al., 2018), leading to shifts in vertebrate (Barlow &  
70 Peres, 2004; Moura et al., 2013), invertebrate (França et al., 2020; Silveira et al., 2016) and plant  
71 communities (Berenguer, Malhi, et al., 2018). Although such drastic modifications in community  
72 composition caused by anthropogenic disturbance would likely affect several ecosystem  
73 functions, there is little information about anthropogenic impacts on ecological processes,

74 especially on herbivory control – i.e., predation incidence on folivorous arthropods (Murray et  
75 al., 2020; Schwab et al., 2021).

76         Due to their hyper abundance (average of 18,439 species/ hectare in tropical forests;  
77 Basset et al., 2012) and diversity in the use of resources, arthropods can influence several  
78 ecosystem processes. For example, folivorous arthropods can create intense pressure on plant  
79 communities (Barreto et al., 2021), causing reductions in leaf area (Morrison & Lindell, 2012)  
80 and negative impacts on plant fitness and biomass (Dirzo, 1984; Van Bael, Brawn, & Robinson,  
81 2003). Top-down control by predatory species such as vertebrates, other arthropods and  
82 parasitoids may help regulate the abundance of folivorous arthropods (Hairston, Smith, &  
83 Slobodkin, 1960; Mäntylä, Klemola, & Laaksonen, 2011). In tropical forests, other arthropods  
84 (Lemessa, Hambäck, & Hylander, 2015; Zvereva, Paolucci, & Kozlov, 2020) and birds (Mäntylä  
85 et al., 2011; Van Bael, Brawn, & Robinson, 2003) are the most important predators of folivorous  
86 arthropods, exerting significant herbivory control (Vidal & Murphy, 2018). However, the  
87 relative importance of predator groups, such as arthropods and birds, is not static – i.e., it can be  
88 altered by changes in forest condition (Dodonov et al., 2016). Previous studies investigating the  
89 impact of forest quality on predation incidence on folivorous arthropods found a decrease in  
90 predation incidence with increasing forest disturbance (Boesing, Nichols, & Metzger, 2017;  
91 Schwab et al., 2021). However, most studies have focused on disturbances that occurred several  
92 years prior to sampling (Boesing, Nichols, & Metzger, 2017; Edwards et al., 2012) and, to the  
93 best of our knowledge, no studies have investigated the impact of recent understorey fires on the  
94 predation of folivorous arthropods.

95         Artificial caterpillars are a frequently-used tool to evaluate the impact of forest  
96 disturbance on predation incidence (Meyer, Koch, & Weisser, 2015; Murray et al., 2020; Roels,

97 Porter, & Lindell, 2018; Roslin et al., 2017; Schwab et al., 2021; Seifert, Lehner, Adams, &  
98 Fiedler, 2015). Even though predation on artificial caterpillars is often lower in comparison to  
99 natural prey (Lövei & Ferrante, 2017; Nagy, Schellhorn, & Zalucki, 2020), the technique is still a  
100 robust way of comparing predation incidence between habitat types (Roels et al., 2018; Schwab  
101 et al., 2021; Tvardikova & Novotny, 2012). Furthermore, this methodology allows the  
102 identification of predators by assessing the types of marks left on the ‘predated’ artificial  
103 caterpillars (Low, Sam, McArthur, Posa, & Hochuli, 2014), which is key to comparing the role  
104 of different predator groups on the control of folivorous arthropods (Ferrante et al., 2021;  
105 Lemessa et al., 2015; Roslin et al., 2017; Sam, Koane, & Novotny, 2015). For example, in  
106 primary rainforests in Costa Rica, arthropods accounted for 86% of all predation incidences on  
107 artificial caterpillars, whilst birds accounted for just 11% (Seifert et al., 2015).

108         Here, we aim to explore how predation incidence on folivorous arthropods varies in  
109 human-modified Amazonian rainforests. Using 4,500 artificial caterpillars, as a proxy of  
110 folivorous arthropods, we assessed the predation incidence within four pre-El Niño human-  
111 modified forest classes: undisturbed, logged, logged-and-burned and secondary forests. During  
112 the 2015–2016 El Niño, almost half of these forests were affected by understory fires. We  
113 examined whether there were differences in the total predation incidence and in predation  
114 incidence by different predator groups (a) among pre-El Niño forest disturbance classes without  
115 recent fires, and (b) between forests affected by understory fires during the recent El Niño (EN)  
116 and those that remained unaffected. Based on the negative impacts of human-driven disturbances  
117 on predator communities – which has been suggested to reduce the top-down control of  
118 folivorous arthropods (Murray et al., 2020) – we expect predation incidence to be lower in pre-

119 EN disturbed forests when compared to undisturbed ones, and for it to be even lower in EN-fire-  
120 affected forests.

121

## 122 2 METHODS

123

### 124 2.1 Study area

125 Our study area is located in the municipalities of Belterra, Mojuí dos Campos and Santarém in  
126 eastern Amazonia (Figure 1). The landscape encompasses around 1 million hectares of  
127 undisturbed and disturbed primary and secondary forests immersed in an agriculture matrix  
128 comprising both large and small private landholdings (Gardner et al., 2013). In 2015 and 2016,  
129 the region experienced an abnormally long dry season associated with a strong El Niño event,  
130 which resulted in multiple understorey fires (see Aragão et al., 2018). Prior to the El Niño, we  
131 installed 30 study plots (250 x 10 m, 0.25 ha), distributed into undisturbed, selective logged  
132 forests (hereafter called ‘logged’), logged-and-burned, and secondary forests (hereafter called  
133 ‘pre-EN forest disturbance classes’, Table S1). Logging took place  $\geq 18$  years prior to sampling,  
134 an estimate derived from a combination of field assessments and a visual inspection of satellite  
135 images between 1988-2010 (Gardner et al., 2013). Plots were located in *terra firme* forests  
136 separated by at least 1.5 km from each other. Between November 2015 and January 2016, i.e.,  
137 during the El Niño, 14 plots burned (hereafter ‘EN-fire-affected plots’), while 16 remained  
138 unburned (Figure 1; Table S1).

139

### 140 2.2 Data collection

141 Predation experiments were conducted between April 10 and June 15 2019, corresponding to the  
142 middle-end of the wet season. All artificial caterpillars were green, made from odourless non-  
143 toxic coloured plasticine (Lewis Newplast™) mixing an equal portion of dark and light green to  
144 create medium green coloured caterpillars (Low et al., 2014; Roslin et al., 2017). Artificial  
145 caterpillars (hereafter ‘caterpillars’) were crafted to mimic cryptic Lepidoptera larvae in colour,  
146 shape (i.e., looping position), and size (i.e.,  $2.5 \times 30$  mm), thus resembling one of the most  
147 globally abundant folivorous groups (Zvereva et al., 2019). Caterpillars were sufficiently  
148 malleable to record predation marks. We fixed the caterpillars to the vegetation by passing a wire  
149 longitudinally through them (Figure 2a). When placing caterpillars in the field, we removed all  
150 handling marks to avoid misidentifying them with predator’s marks.

151 We established five  $20 \times 5$  m sub-plots within each of the 30 forest plots. We placed 30  
152 caterpillars in each sub-plot, totalling 150 caterpillars per forest and 4,500 caterpillars across the  
153 experiment. All caterpillars were installed on understorey vegetation branches, between 1.0 – 4.5  
154 m from the ground, separated by at least 1 m from each other. Although predation incidence is  
155 often reported as being higher in the canopy (Loiselle & Farji-Brener, 2002), we only evaluated  
156 predation in the understorey due to the difficulties of placing caterpillars in the tall canopy (i.e.,  
157 30-50 m). All branches were chosen to prevent the caterpillars from being obscured by  
158 vegetation. The position of the caterpillars was marked with a tag on another branch of the same  
159 plant. This approach facilitated recovery while limiting the risk to obstruct or influence predator  
160 behaviour. After 14 days of field exposure, a single observer (LCR) recovered all caterpillars and  
161 assessed whether they had been predated, attributing predation marks to different predator  
162 groups.

163 The identification of predation marks on recovered caterpillars was based on the beak,  
164 mandibular tooth or radula marks guided by images available in the literature (Low et al., 2014;  
165 Tvardikova & Novotny, 2012) and an online identification guide (available at  
166 <https://tvardikova.weebly.com/downloads.html>). We also complemented our arthropod bite mark  
167 assessment through direct observations – i.e., when we saw real attacks on caterpillars (Figure  
168 S2). All predation marks were attributed to one of four predator groups: arthropods, birds,  
169 reptiles and mammals (Roels et al., 2018). Arthropod predators include ants, wasps, beetles and  
170 isopods (Howe, Lövei, & Nachman, 2009), while mammalian predators include marsupials and  
171 rodents (Low et al., 2014). Multiple marks made by the same type of predator on a single  
172 caterpillar were categorized as a single predation event. Of the 4,500 installed caterpillars, 28  
173 were unrecovered because they were either crushed by a falling tree or lost due to the  
174 disappearance of the flag.

175

## 176 **2.3 Data analysis**

177 We analysed two response variables: (a) total predation incidence, measured as presence/absence  
178 of predation marks on caterpillars, and (b) predation incidence by different predator groups,  
179 separated into two categories: arthropods and vertebrates (i.e., birds, mammals and reptiles).

180

### 181 **2.3.1 Predation incidence across pre-EN forest disturbance classes and EN-fire-affected plots**

182 In our first model (Model 1), we assessed the effects of pre-EN forest disturbance on total  
183 predation incidence, removing plots that burned during the 2015-16 El Niño (n = 16). Our  
184 second model (Model 2) explored the impact of the El Niño understorey fires on total predation  
185 incidence including all forest plots (n = 30).

186

### 187 2.3.2 Effects of different predator groups across pre-EN forest disturbance classes and EN- 188 fire-affected plots

189 In this set of analyses, we evaluated the differences in predation incidence caused by arthropod  
190 (Model 3) and vertebrate predators (Model 4). These two response variables were analysed  
191 across the pre-EN forest disturbance classes but did not include plots that burned in 2015-16 (n =  
192 16). Our last two models assessed the impact of the 2015-16 El Niño understorey fires on the  
193 same response variables, thus leading to a model including arthropods (Model 5) and another  
194 including only the vertebrate predators (Model 6). Models 5 and 6 included all sampled plots (n  
195 = 30). Given that we were testing the difference in predation incidence between arthropods and  
196 vertebrates, Models 3-6 only included caterpillars with predation marks.

197 To test the effect of pre-EN forest disturbance classes and El Niño understorey fires on  
198 predation incidence, we used generalized linear mixed-effects models with a binomial response  
199 with logit link function and response variable as presence/absence data. All models had forest  
200 class as a fixed effect and plot as a random effect, and were built with the ‘glmer’ function of the  
201 ‘lme4’ package (Bates et al., 2018). We tested the significance and selected the optimum models  
202 running likelihood ratio tests in the ‘ordinal’ package with the ‘drop1’ function using the Chi-  
203 square distribution. Models 2 and 6 had differences in the least-square means of predation in  
204 each forest class (including pre-EN forest disturbed classes and EN-fire-affected plots) tested  
205 with ‘emmeans’ with  $\pm$  95% confidence interval (Lenth, Singmann, Love, Buerkner, & Herve,  
206 2020). The predation incidence in undisturbed forests served as a baseline for comparison to all  
207 other models. All analyses were performed in R 3.5.1 (R Core Team, 2018).

208

### 209       **3 RESULTS**

210

211 We recovered 99.4% of the caterpillars ( $n = 4,472$ ) of which 2,858 (64.9%) exhibited predation  
212 marks after 14 days exposed. We were unable to identify the predator group for only one  
213 caterpillar – although we suspect it was a bird (Figure S1), which was subsequently removed  
214 from all analyses. Predation marks were mainly made by arthropods ( $n = 2,615$ , 91.5%; Figure 2  
215 h-j), followed by birds ( $n = 247$ , 8.6%; Figure 2 b-d), mammals ( $n = 158$ , 5.5%; Figure 2 e-g)  
216 and reptiles ( $n = 2$ , 0.06%). Only 7% ( $n = 200$ ) of the attacked caterpillars had marks belonging  
217 to more than one predator group. The percentages were measured based on the total number of  
218 caterpillars that exhibited predation marks ( $n = 2,858$ ), not on the total number of marks,  
219 therefore, the total number of marks does not represent 100%.

220

#### 221       **3.1 Effects of pre-EN forest disturbance classes and El Niño understorey fires on total** 222       **predation incidence**

223 Among the plots that did not burn in 2015-16, there were no significant differences in predation  
224 incidence between pre-EN forest disturbance classes (Figure 3; Table S2). When including EN-  
225 fire-affected plots, we found that predation incidence was significantly higher in pre-EN  
226 undisturbed forests that experienced fires in 2015-16 (Figure 3; Table S2; Table S3).

227

#### 228       **3.2 Effects of pre-EN forest disturbance classes and El Niño understorey fires on the** 229       **predation by different groups**

230 Predation incidence by arthropods was higher than by vertebrates in all forest classes,  
231 irrespective of fire occurrence in 2015-16 (Figure 4). Predation incidence by arthropods was not

232 affected by either the pre-EN forest disturbance classes or El Niño-associated fires (Figure 4a;  
233 Table S2). We also found no difference in predation incidence by vertebrates across the different  
234 pre-EN forest disturbance classes (Figure 4b; Table S2). When analysing the effects of the recent  
235 El Niño fires, we found that logged-and-burned forests that burned again in 2015-16 presented  
236 significantly higher predation incidence by vertebrates than both undisturbed and logged-and-  
237 burned forests that were not affected by fires in 2015-16 (Figure 4b; Table S4).

238

## 239 **4 DISCUSSION**

240

241 We found no differences in predation incidence among pre-EN forest disturbance classes.  
242 Although we demonstrate that predation incidence on artificial caterpillars may increase in the  
243 aftermath of Amazonian understorey fires, this evidence is not strong – e.g., most EN-fire-  
244 affected forests exhibited similar predation incidence to those of unburned forests. The range of  
245 predation incidence was more variable within pre-EN disturbed forests in comparison with pre-  
246 EN undisturbed ones, and in EN-fire-affected forests when compared to unburned ones. Our  
247 results also suggest that predation incidence on artificial caterpillars in undisturbed and human-  
248 modified Amazonian forests is predominantly driven by arthropods.

249

### 250 **4.1 Predation incidence across pre-EN forest disturbance classes**

251 We expected predation incidence to be strongly impacted by pre-EN forest disturbance, being  
252 lower in disturbed forests when compared to undisturbed ones, given that human-driven  
253 disturbances can negatively impact predator communities (Moura et al., 2013; Symes, Edwards,  
254 Miettinen, Rheindt, & Carrasco, 2018). Surprisingly, our results showed no effect of pre-EN

255 forest disturbance on predation. However, it is important to recognise that our study plots are  
256 distributed within a large forested matrix, which can act as a source for species colonisation  
257 (Tschardt et al., 2012). As such, in more fragmented landscapes, with small and isolated  
258 fragments, where forest faunas are more impoverished, predation incidence on folivorous  
259 arthropods may be less resistant to anthropogenic impacts (Fáveri, Vasconcelos, & Dirzo, 2008;  
260 Lees & Peres, 2006).

261

#### 262 **4.2 Predation incidence in EN-fire-affected forests**

263 Given that forest fires drive shifts in the community composition of predatory arthropods and  
264 vertebrates by altering habitat availability (Barlow, Peres, Henriques, Stouffer, & Wunderle,  
265 2006; Kelly et al., 2020; Paolucci et al., 2016; Silveira et al., 2016), we expected a lower  
266 predation incidence in EN-fire-affected forests. However, predation incidence remained similar  
267 between most EN-fire-affected and unaffected sites, only becoming significantly higher in  
268 previously undisturbed forests that burned in 2015-16. We cannot pinpoint the exact mechanism  
269 behind these findings – one possibility is that the increased density of vegetation in the  
270 understorey of recently burned forests - as a result of light gaps created by tree mortality,  
271 enhances environmental complexity, thus facilitating some arboreal arthropod and vertebrate  
272 predators to find their prey (Jimenez-Soto, Morris, Letourneau, & Philpott, 2019; Yang et al.,  
273 2018). This would be particularly important in pre-EN undisturbed forests, as these forests retain  
274 a more open understorey than forests that have been affected by logging or fire in the recent past  
275 (Berenguer et al., 2014). Another possibility for the higher predation incidence in previously  
276 undisturbed forests that burned in 2015-16 is the dominance of pioneer plant species with lower  
277 amounts of secondary compounds (Barton & Koricheva, 2010; Boege & Marquis, 2006; Silva et

278 al., 2018) in the understorey of recently burned forests may provide a local and ephemeral  
279 increase in resources for folivorous arthropods. Pioneer species would have been common in pre-  
280 EN disturbed forests, but not in undisturbed ones (Berenguer, Gardner, et al., 2018), thus  
281 providing new resources in these forests.

282

### 283 **4.3 The role of different predator groups**

284 Studies across the globe, including tropical forests, have found a high incidence of arthropod  
285 predation on artificial caterpillars (Fáveri et al., 2008; Loiselle & Farji-Brener, 2002; Roslin et  
286 al., 2017; Witwicka, Frydryszak, Anto, & Czarnoleski, 2019; Zvereva et al., 2020). Arthropod  
287 predation can account for up to 98% of the total predation attempts on artificial caterpillars in  
288 undisturbed rainforests after 48 hours of exposure (Seifert, Schulze, Dreschke, Frötscher, &  
289 Fiedler, 2016), a figure similar to ours (91% on average, after 14 days). This high predation  
290 incidence by arthropods is expected due to their high diversity and abundance in tropical regions  
291 (Novotny et al., 2006; Sam, Koane, & Novotny, 2015). Our results show that the predation  
292 incidence exerted by arthropods can be maintained at high levels even after forest disturbance.  
293 However, we do not know whether this finding is due to resilience to disturbance of the  
294 arthropod predator community or due to high functional redundancy in the system (e.g., Nunes et  
295 al., 2021). In other words, even if some species of arthropod predators disappear after fires,  
296 others that perform the same function (i.e., predation of folivorous arthropods) may maintain  
297 predation incidence comparable to unburned forests (Perez-Alvarez, Grab, Polyakov, & Poveda,  
298 2021).

299       Among vertebrates, predation incidence upon artificial caterpillars varies widely. In the  
300 case of birds, from 1% to 52% in tropical forests (Molleman, Rimmel, & Sam, 2016; Sam et al.,

301 2015). After 14 days of exposure, our results of 8.6% are within the lower end of this range.  
302 Mammals predated 5.5% of the caterpillars, a figure slightly higher than that previously  
303 reported— i.e., <1% to 4% (Schwab et al., 2021; Seifert et al., 2015). Predation of caterpillars by  
304 reptiles is generally rare (Murray et al., 2020; Schwab et al., 2021), with some studies not  
305 registering any (Roels et al., 2018; Roslin et al., 2017; Zvereva et al., 2020). We found only two  
306 caterpillars predated by reptiles, out of the 2,858 which presented predation marks.

307

#### 308 **4.4 Caveats**

309 Artificial caterpillars are an effective method to infer predation incidence across habitats and  
310 among predator groups (Howe et al., 2009; Lövei & Ferrante, 2017; Roslin et al., 2017; Schwab  
311 et al., 2021). Through the standardization of this methodology, it is possible to compare  
312 predation incidence and predator composition among areas (Lövei & Ferrante, 2017). However,  
313 we highlight that our results should be carefully interpreted as these caterpillars are a simple  
314 visual approximation of real prey (Howe et al., 2009; Murray et al., 2020). Important factors  
315 such as posture and mobility (Lövei & Ferrante, 2017; Suzuki & Sakurai, 2015), olfaction  
316 (Hughes, Price, & Banks, 2010; Mäntylä et al., 2011; Sam et al., 2015), colour (Ghim & Hodos,  
317 2006), leaf damage (Sam, Koane & Novotny, 2015) and plant chemical responses are not  
318 manifested in artificial models (Amo, Jansen, van Dam, Dicke, & Visser, 2013; Heil & Kost,  
319 2006; Pearse et al., 2020). Furthermore, the colour and shape of our caterpillars are likely biased  
320 towards soliciting interactions from generalist predators (Boesing et al., 2017). Therefore, the  
321 study design may fail to record specialized interactions (Zvereva et al., 2019, 2020). Moreover,  
322 natural prey abundance can also be an important driver of predation incidence – e.g., higher prey  
323 abundances lead to predator satiation, which may affect the attack incidence on artificial

324 caterpillars. Finally, given that we sampled EN-fire-affected forests three years after they burnt,  
325 we may have failed to detect any immediate post-fire changes in predation incidence – e.g.,  
326 perhaps three years was enough time for predation to be re-established in pre-EN-forest classes.

327

#### 328 **4.5 Conclusion**

329 Our experimental study highlights that artificial caterpillar predation is (a) of a comparable  
330 magnitude in undisturbed, logged, logged-and-burned, and secondary Amazonian forests; (b) not  
331 largely impacted by recent understorey fires; and (c) mainly performed by arthropods.

332 Understanding the control of folivorous arthropods in human-disturbed forests represents an  
333 important step for predicting the future of tropical forests, as herbivory control directly affects  
334 forest regeneration.

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347 **FIGURE LEGENDS**

348

349 **FIGURE 1** (a) Our study region in relation to the Brazilian Amazon. (b) The location of our  
350 study plots.

351

352 **FIGURE 2** Examples of artificial caterpillars used in our experiment. (a) Caterpillar placed on a  
353 twig. Caterpillars with (b – d) bird, (e - f) mammal, and (h - j) arthropod predation marks.

354

355 **FIGURE 3** Predation incidence on artificial caterpillars over 14 days exposure across different  
356 pre-EN forest disturbance classes. Forests include those affected by fires during the 2015-16 El  
357 Niño (red) and those that remained unaffected (blue). Different letters indicate significant  
358 differences among forest classes following pairwise comparisons (Table S3). Pre-EN forest  
359 disturbance classes: UF - undisturbed forests, LF - logged forests, LBF - logged-and-burned  
360 forests, and SF - secondary forests. Horizontal bars indicate medians, boxes comprise the upper  
361 and lower quartile of data distribution, whiskers indicate the minimum and maximum values and  
362 circles indicate outliers (i.e., values 1.5 times distant from the first and third quartiles).

363

364 **FIGURE 4** Predation incidence on artificial caterpillars over 14 days exposure across different  
365 pre-EN forest disturbance classes. Forests include those affected by fires during the 2015-16 El  
366 Niño (red) and those that remained unaffected (blue). Predation incidence was divided into two  
367 groups: (a) caused by arthropods, (b) caused by vertebrates (birds, mammals, and reptiles).  
368 Different letters indicate significant differences among forest classes following pairwise  
369 comparisons (Table S4). Pre-EN forest disturbance classes: UF - undisturbed forests, LF - logged

370 forests, LBF - logged-and-burned forests, and SF - secondary forests. Horizontal bars indicate  
371 medians, boxes comprise the upper and lower quartile of data distribution, whiskers indicate the  
372 minimum and maximum values and circles indicate outliers (i.e., values 1.5 times distant from  
373 the first and third quartiles).

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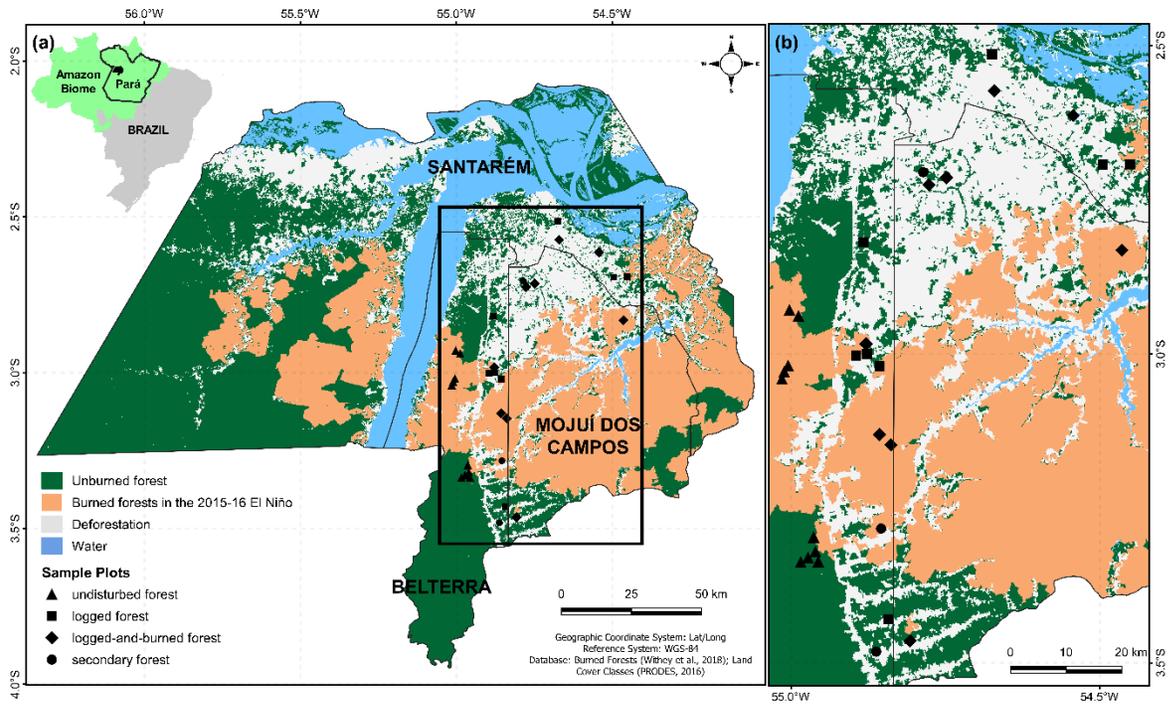
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393 **FIGURES**

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395 **FIGURE 1**

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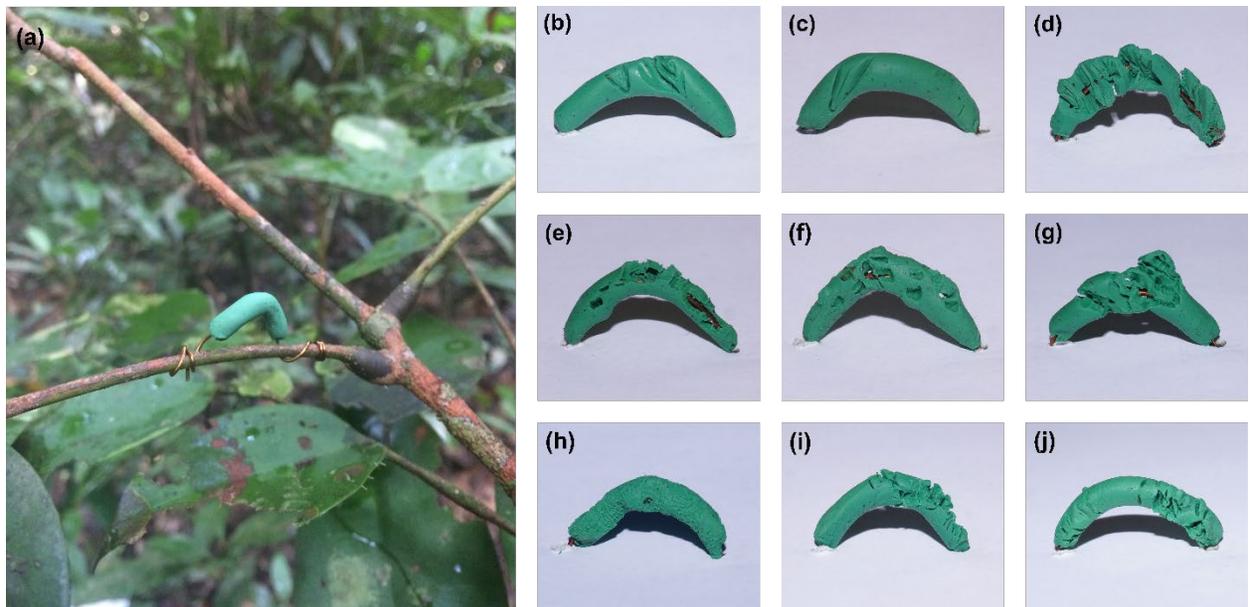
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407 **FIGURE 2**

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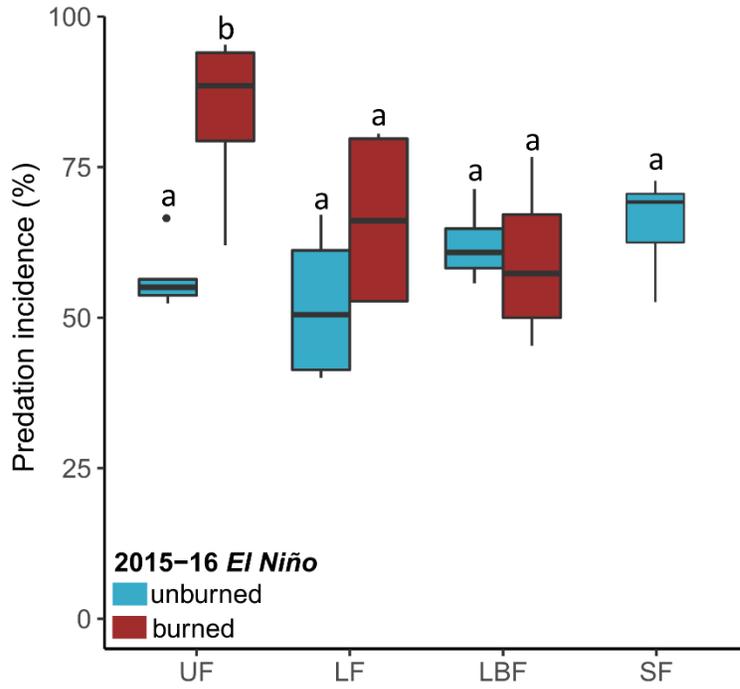
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423 **FIGURE 3**

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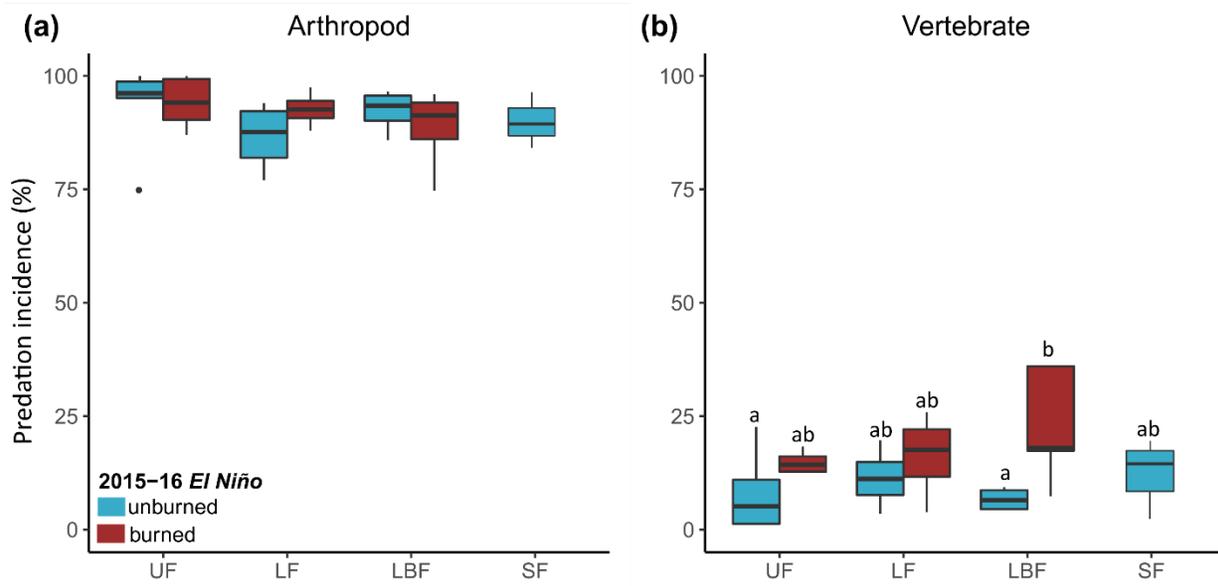
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436 **FIGURE 4**

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452

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474 **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

475

476 The corresponding author confirms on behalf of all authors that there have been no involvements  
477 that might raise the question of bias in the work reported or in the conclusions, implications, or  
478 opinions stated.

479

480 **AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION**

481

482 LCR, EB and ACL conceived the original idea of this study. LCR and EB conceived the study  
483 design, conducted the experiment and organized the database. LCR and EB conducted the data  
484 analyses with input from JB and FF. LCR wrote the manuscript, with significant contributions of  
485 all co-authors. All authors discussed the results and revised the manuscript before submission.

486

487 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

488

489 Additional supporting information may be found online in the Supporting Information section.

490

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