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Bark Beetle Influence on Diversity of Leaf Litter Communities

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Bark beetles kill trees and transfer bluestain fungi. Bluestain fungi attracts termites, which can affect decomposer community structure. We tested the hypothesis that leaf litter communities below bark beetle attacked wood would differ from those below unattacked wood. Diversity was higher in BB attacked communities, and where termites were present, but there was no difference in community structure. Thus, bark beetles can influence decomposition processes through indirect interactions with termites.