

Editor's Summary

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United they fall

Plants and their pollinators and seed dispersers form complex networks of interdependences. These networks have a well-defined architecture that strongly affects biodiversity maintenance. Using a phylogenetic approach, Rezende *et al.* show that past evolutionary history of plants and animals partly explains the network patterns. Closely related species tend to play similar roles in the network. As a result, coextinction cascades following a species extinction affect taxonomically related species, resulting in a non-random pruning of the evolutionary tree. From a conservation standpoint, this means that cascades of coextinction may spread across related species, further increasing the erosion of taxonomic diversity.