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Alien arthropod predators and parasitoids: an ecological approach

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Invasive alien species (IAS) coupled with climate change have been referred to as a “deadly duo”. Until recently research on invasion biology has centred mainly on alien plants and vertebrates, despite the numerical dominance of alien arthropods. Arthropods are the largest group of IAS worldwide and many can play a beneficial role, particularly in controlling insect and mite pests. Indeed, 1590 terrestrial arthropod species have been identified as alien to Europe but only a fraction has been shown to cause either an ecological or economical impact, yet knowledge is severely limited by a paucity of data. The IOBC/WPRS Working Group “Benefits and Risks of Exotic Biological Control Agents” developed the theme of a special issue of *BioControl* to begin to address the limitations in understanding of this important research area. It represents a timely synthesis of current ecological knowledge and research on alien arthropod predators and parasitoids.