

# Re: Language Oriented Programming

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  - *Date:* Wed, 3 Aug 2005 02:46:04 +0200
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Isaac,

> Is there any chance of informed discussion when we are simply guessing  
> that the statements we make are correct?

Sure, as long as they are informed guesses.

> My rather bad-tempered point was that if "you don't know the ratio of  
> robust to fragile" then why oh why are you claiming that "most  
> ecosystems can afford to lose one species".

There's a background rate of species extinction which I've seen quoted at one to ten per year in prehistoric times, and I've not come across a study of an extinction event or ecosystem collapse which attributes the cause to loss of a single species.

Logically, it's also part of what we mean by "ecosystem"; an ecosystem is a stable community of species, plus environment. Typically, the identity and continued existence of a community does not crucially depend on any single member of that community.

> Is there some specific situation where you can say that you know "when  
> one module fails (even a small one) typically the whole thing fails"?

I'll retract "typically". Read "too bloody often" in its place.

You said: "When one module fails (even a small one) typically the whole thing continues on as though nothing happened (aka log the error)."

If that was true, Ariane would certainly be *\*atypical\**, in that the computation which caused the exception was no longer relevant when the program blew up. If it had logged the error and continued, rather than shut the whole subsystem down, nothing would have happened.

Laurent

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## Re: Language Oriented Programming

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