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Review

Species coexistence in temperate, mixed deciduous forests

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Abstract

The response of tree life-history traits to community profiles (horizontal and vertical heterogeneity, disturbances and biotic interactions) determines community assembly rules, which are currently a hot issue in community ecology. Important mechanisms of coexistence differ throughout the developing stages of tree life history. Many processes of niche partitioning and tradeoffs that potentially enable tree coexistence have been reported to be present in temperate forests, although some of these life-history traits are either correlated with each other or are not independent. Not all of the proposed mechanisms explain coexistence equally well; some could predominate in determining the community organization of forest communities. Population studies need to concentrate more on the component species of a target community to detect the ecological assembly rule. These approaches can also address how chance factors contribute to the composition of temperate tree communities, which might be less dependent on chance than are tropical ones.



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Keywords

coexistence; demography; disturbance; habitat heterogeneity; forest stratification; interaction; ontogenetic change; temperate deciduous forest; tradeoff

Keywords

Ecology; Evolution; Plant Science

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