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Book of Abstracts



Tulipa kosovarica

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Oral presentations



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Changes in species and functional composition in not managed (by more than 40 years) *Ostrya carpinifolia* coppiced woods

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In temperate and sub-Mediterranean climate, management is a key factor driving the temporal pattern of species in forest ecosystems, because it alters ecological parameters such as light, temperature, humidity and soil properties. Considering the susceptibility of plants to stress and disturbance, we investigated the species and functional responses of the herbaceous layer of sub-Mediterranean coppiced woods of Umbria-Marche Apennines (central Italy), dominated by *Ostrya carpinifolia* (mature forest stands). Our hypothesis was that species and functional composition of the herbaceous layer exhibits significant shifts after the end of coppice rotation cycle.

We selected 38 plots (20 x 20 m) in *Ostrya carpinifolia* coppiced woods, half of which at the end of the coppicing rotation cycle (20-25 years since the last coppicing), and the other half after its end (more than 40 years). We collected species cover (%) and species categorical traits (storage organ, vegetative propagation, leaf anatomy and persistence, flowering phenology and seed weight), tree, shrub and herb layers cover (%), topographic variables (altitude, aspect and slope angle), outcropping rock and debris cover (%). We calculated the cover-weighted abundance values of trait attributes. The species and traits data sets were analysed using Indicator Species Analysis, Redundancy Analysis and variation partitioning.

We found that species composition was mainly influenced by the membership in one of the two groups of plots (at the end or after the end of coppice rotation cycle) and by the cover percentage of the vegetation layers, which together explained about the 70% of variance.

Woods beyond the end of coppice rotation cycle had more mesophilous and nitrophilous indicator herb species, besides summer green leaves, tap root as storage organ, and heavy seeds as indicator trait states, while woods at the end of coppice rotation cycle had persistent green leaves, rhizome fragmentation and absence of storage organs as indicators.

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