



Special Symposium Issue
The Dynamics of Tree Populations in Tropical Forest

Journal of Tropical Ecology

VOLUME 3 PART 4 NOVEMBER 1987

Published for INTECOL and the ICSU Press by
Cambridge University Press

Journal of Tropical Ecology



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(Published for INTECOL and the ICSU Press by Cambridge University Press).

Subscriptions: The *Journal of Tropical Ecology* (ISSN 0266-4674) is published quarterly. The subscription price of Volume 3 is £49 (USA and Canada US \$99) for institutions; £19.50 (USA and Canada US \$39) for individuals; £9.50 for individuals in developing countries; airmail £11 extra; single parts available at £13 (USA and Canada US \$27.50) each plus postage. Four parts form a volume. Orders, which must be accompanied by payment, may be sent to a bookseller, subscription agent or direct to the publishers: Cambridge University Press, The Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 2RU. Orders from the USA and Canada should be sent to the Cambridge University Press, 32 East 57th Street, New York, NY 10022, USA. Copies of the journal for subscribers in the USA and Canada are sent by air to New York to arrive with minimum delay. Second class postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: send address changes in USA and Canada to *Journal of Tropical Ecology*, Cambridge University Press, 32 East 57th Street, New York, NY 10022.

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Proceedings of the 7th Aberdeen/Hull Symposium
held at the Department of Plant Science, University of Aberdeen
22-24 September 1984

The dynamics of tree populations in tropical forest

edited by M. D. SWAINE *and* DIANA LIEBERMAN

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The organizers wish to thank the following for the financial assistance which made this meeting possible:

The Nuffield Foundation
 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
 The British Council
 University of Aberdeen

NOTE ON THE CALCULATION OF MORTALITY RATES

The mortality rates used in this volume describe the progressive loss of trees from an initial population. The simplest way in which this can happen is that a constant proportion of the surviving population dies in each time interval, which gives rise to an exponential (logarithmic) decline in numbers with time. Log model annual mortality rates (m) are calculated by

$$m = 100(\log_e n_0 - \log_e n_1)/t$$

where n_0 is the number of trees at the first enumeration; n_1 is the number surviving at the second enumeration, t years later.

The arithmetically simpler version $m = 100 (n_0 - n_1)/tn_0$ implies that the

proportion of survivors dying in each time interval is not constant, but increasing, and is unsuitable because the calculated rate is not independent of the interval, t , between enumerations.

The log model is used to calculate mortality rates throughout this volume, including the calculation of population 'half-life' ($t_{0.5}$) - the number of years for the initial population to fall to 50%:

$$t_{0.5} = \log_e 0.5 / 0.01m$$

Abbreviations used in this issue: dbh - diameter at breast height (breast height = 1.3 m); gbh - girth at breast height.

Climatic diagrams follow the conventions of Walter (1973, p. 20).

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