



Editorial

## One year of Vegetation Ecology and Diversity (VED)

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### Abstract

In this editorial, we announce the journal's return to the Scopus database following the change of its name, and we comment on its performance in the first year under the new name Vegetation Ecology and Diversity (VED), including the number and type of papers published, the authors' nationality, and the turnaround times. Furthermore, we present the Editors' choice article as well as articles that were both most viewed and most cited. We also present new members of the editorial board, a new permanent collection, and we thank the VED reviewers 2025. Finally, we are pleased to announce that we are seeking a linguistic editor.

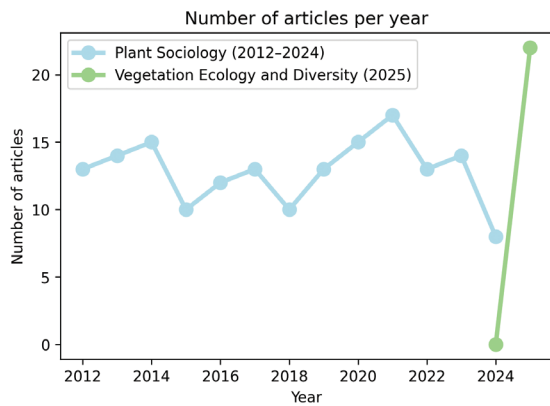
### Keywords

Alien plant invasions, biostatistic analysis and data banks, Habitats Directive, phanerogamic and cryptogamic vegetation survey and classification, plant community conservation and management, plant community traits, plant ecology and synecology, syntaxonomy and nomenclature, vegetation mapping

### Introduction

The first year under the journal's new name has come to an end, and it is time to take stock. First of all, we would like to inform that after a technical standstill period related to the validation of the journal name change, the journal *Vegetation Ecology and Diversity (VED)* is once again fully indexed in Scopus. We have already obtained the monthly *CiteScoreTracker 2025 (2.8)*, while we are still awaiting the annual CiteScore that is expected to be released in June 2026.

With the transition to a fully-online publishing mode, issues of the journal became annual. The issue of 2025 (no. 62) marked a peak in publication output of 22 articles, which is the highest number reached by the journal since 2012 (Figure 1). The 2025 contributions consist of 13 research articles, 7 data papers, 1 editorial, and 1 opinion paper belonging to all *collections available in VED*. Remarkably, one collection is in collaboration with the European Vegetation Survey (EVS), the working group of the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS).



**Figure 1.** Number of articles per year in the journal, highlighting the increase after the change of name from Plant Sociology to Vegetation Ecology and Diversity (VED).

Overall, in 2025, VED published the contributions of 157 authors from 15 countries (Figure 2).

## VED timing

Authors frequently seek information regarding journal processing timelines. To address this interest, Table 1 presents the 2025 turnaround times for Vegetation Ecology and Diversity (VED), compared with those of Plant Sociology. The data indicate an overall reduction in editorial processing durations, suggesting improved efficiency in manuscript handling and review procedures.

## Research articles

Besides the editorial (Bonari et al. 2025), the articles published in 2025 span a broad range of topics, from vegetation classification to ecological analyses (Figure 3).

The studies presented were conducted in different biogeographical regions of Europe. For example, Costa et al. (2025) investigated the Atlantic dune pine forests in the southwest of the Iberian Peninsula, while Zitarelli et al. (2025) focused on the mountain grasslands dominated

by *Stipa dasyvaginata* subsp. *apenninica* in the central Apennines. Other contributions from the Mediterranean region include studies on subdesert vegetation fragments in Sicily, specifically the *Periploca angustifolia* maquis (Gianguzzi et al. 2025), as well as the rediscovery of a relict *Searsia tripartita* maquis in southwestern Sicily (La Mantia et al. 2025). Notably, Ožvat et al. (2025) applied Unmanned Aerial Vehicle-based approaches to classify and monitor wetland vegetation in the Slovak Republic.

Two papers focused on bryophytes. Romanov et al. (2025) provided new insights into the distribution, ecology, and syntaxonomy of *Riella macrocarpa* (Riellaceae, Marchantiophyta), whereas Fiaschi et al. (2025) described a newly identified Natura 2000 habitat type associated with moss communities in Italy.

Different vegetation dynamics were also explored. Menegaldo et al. (2025) analysed treeline shifts and forest densification in the European Alps, while Bricca et al. (2025a) examined short-term understory dynamics across forest regeneration stages. Misuri et al. (2025) monitored the invasion of *Opuntia stricta* on an island of the Tuscan Archipelago. Conte et al. (2025) investigated the climatic and environmental variables primarily responsible for triggering oak decline episodes in southern Italy and proposed a first example of regional vulnerability map for this phenomenon.

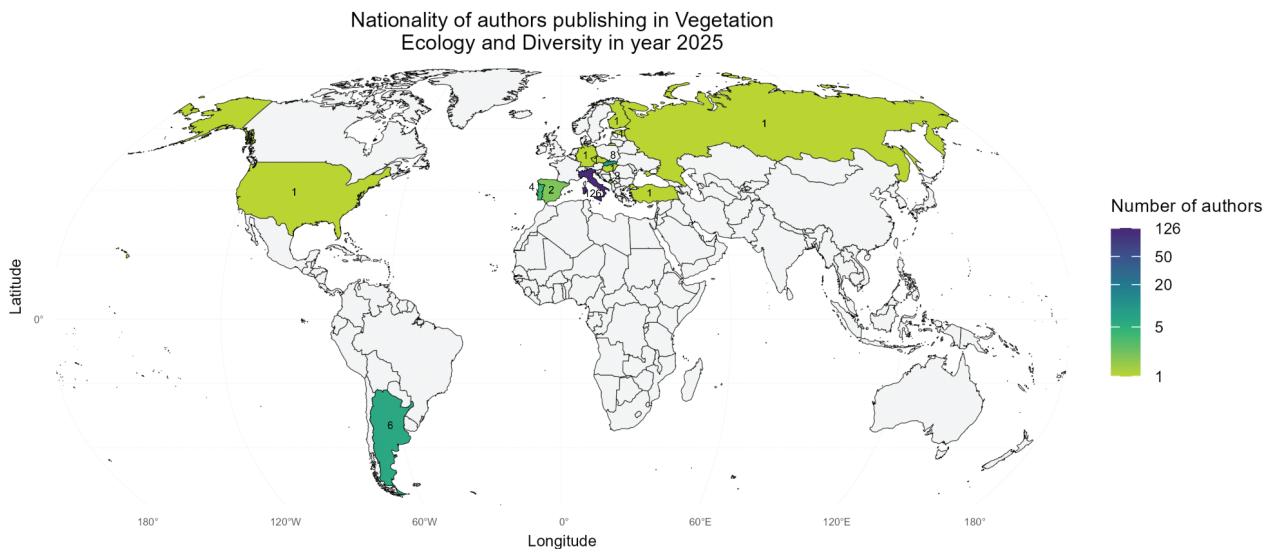
Finally, the well-established series on new national and regional Annex I of 92/42/EEC Habitat records in Italy reached its 157<sup>th</sup> contribution this year, with two additional papers (Rivieccio et al. 2025a, 2025b).

## Data papers

The data papers published in VED in 2025 included three resurvey datasets. Giorgis et al. (2025) resurveyed vegetation plots in the Argentine drylands, while two additional contributions focused on Italian coastal dunes (Acosta et al. 2025; Denaro et al. 2025). Further datasets addressed water-related environments, including salt-affected vegetation of the Tuscan coastal habitats (Gholizadeh et al. 2025) and pond vegetation combined with water

**Table 1.** Turnaround times of Vegetation Ecology and Diversity (VED) in 2025 and of Plant Sociology (2020–2024) expressed in days.

Year	Plant Sociology (2020–2024)	VED (2025)
<b>Assigning Editor</b>		
time from submission date to assign Subject/Guest Editor	1.9 days	2.1 days
<b>Inviting Reviewer</b>		
time from submission date to invite first reviewer on Review round 1	7.3 days	5.5 days
<b>Reviewer Decision</b>		
time from submission date to reviewers' decision_date on Review round 1	28.2 days	20.1 days
<b>First editorial decision</b>		
time from submission date to Subject/Guest Editor decision on Review round 1	34.5 days	25 days
<b>Manuscript acceptance</b>		
time from submission date to acceptance date	79.6 days	47 days
<b>Publication</b>		
time from submission date to publication date	119.8 days	76.1 days



**Figure 2.** Map showing the proportion of nationalities in relation to contributions to Vegetation Ecology and Diversity (VED) in 2025. Authors include all types (e.g., leading, corresponding, coauthors) and their name is unique (i.e., it has been counted once if present multiple times).

physico-chemical data in Italy (Cannucci et al. 2025). Finally, two more datasets focused on the occurrence of plant species. One reported on alien species along mountain roads in the central Apennines (Santoianni et al. 2025), while the other documented tree, shrub and liana taxa in an urban area (de Francesco et al. 2025).

## Opinion papers

The opinion paper we published deals with the ITV-net: leveraging intraspecific trait variability to bridge vegetation science and trait-based research in Italy (Bricca et al. 2025b). It introduces the related permanent collection entitled “[Bridging vegetation and trait-based ecological research](#)”.

## Editors' choice

The VED editorial board voted the article “[Fragments of sub-desert vegetation in the Mediterranean Region: the \*Periploca angustifolia\* maquis \(\*Periplocion angustifoliae\*, \*Quercetalia ilicis\*\) in Sicily](#)” by Gianguzzi et al. as the 2025 choice.

The paper presents the results of a phytogeographic and phytosociological study on the maquis vegetation dominated by *Periploca angustifolia* occurring along the southern coast of mainland Sicily. Along with providing an updated overview of the species' distribution and ecology, and the description of a new association (*Asparago albi-Periplocetum angustifoliae*) the relevance of the study lies in the fact that this finding supports the hypothesis of connection routes contracted with North Africa during the drying of the Mediterranean in the Messinian period. We extend our congratulations to all the authors.

## Paper achievements

On December 31<sup>st</sup> 2025, the most viewed paper was “[MARA Vegetation Database: Monitoring Alien species along mountain Roads in the central Apennines](#)” by Santoianni and colleagues, while the most cited was “[ReSurveyDunes—a data resource of resurveyed coastal dune vegetation plots in Italy](#)” by Acosta and colleagues. We congratulate all the authors.

## Editorial board novelties

From an editorial perspective, some changes have occurred following the recent revision of the Italian Association of Vegetation Science (SISV) statute.

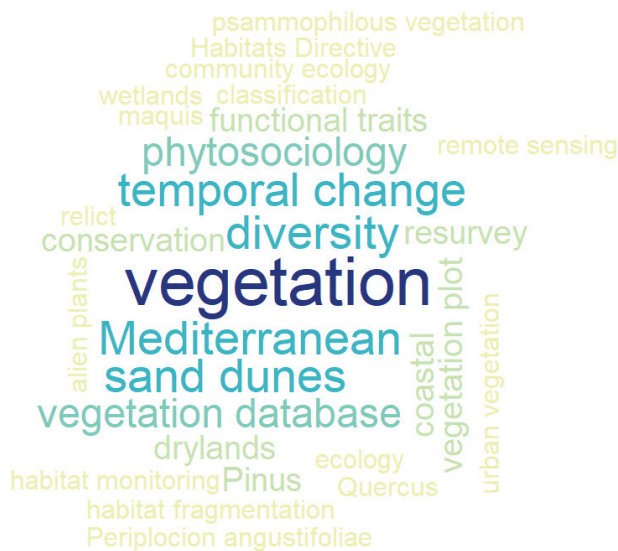
First, on behalf of the entire Editorial Board, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to Associate Editors Daniele Viciani and Gianluigi Bacchetta for the outstanding work they have carried out over the years, as they step down from their roles after 5 and 13 years, respectively.

Second, the SISV President, Romeo Di Pietro, and the SISV Secretary-Treasurer, Edy Fantinato, join the Editorial Board ex officio as Associate Editors, strengthening the journal editorial tasks.

## A new topical collection



**Plant–animal interactions in plant community assembly and dynamics** (Edy Fantinato, Gabriella Buffa, Marco Stefano Caccianiga, Peter Glasnović, Judit Sonkoly)



**Figure 3.** Word cloud of keywords used in Vegetation Ecology and Diversity (VED) in 2025. Only those with higher frequency are depicted.

Plant–animal interactions are fundamental processes in plant community assembly and dynamics. Through pollination, seed dispersal, and herbivory, animals influence plant performance from individual to community levels, determining the spatial organisation, coexistence, and diversity of plant species across biomes. Plant–animal interactions mediate key demographic, spatial, and trophic processes but remain insufficiently integrated into vegetation ecology, which has traditionally focused on abiotic drivers and plant–plant interactions. Integrating plant–animal interactions into plant community research is therefore necessary to account for the biotic mechanisms underlying community structure and diversity.

This Topical Collection promotes a process-based perspective in vegetation ecology by recognising animals as integral components of plant communities. Contributions addressing mutualistic and antagonistic interactions, including pollination, zoochory, and vertebrate and invertebrate herbivory, are encouraged, with a focus on their effects on plant community structure, diversity, and dynamics.

The Collection provides a forum for research on biotic interaction networks, multitrophic relationships, and indirect effects within plant communities, using observational, experimental, modelling, and synthesis approaches. Contributions may examine interaction organisation, spatial and temporal variation, and consequences for plant community structure and diversity across spatial scales. Studies linking plant–animal interactions to vegetation conservation, management, and restoration are particularly encouraged.

Additionally, these are our active collections to which your research can be submitted:



### Diversity, dynamics, conservation, and restoration of European Vegetation



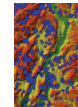
### Bridging vegetation and trait-based ecological research



### Towards 2030: efforts in habitat recording and the reporting cycle of the Habitats Directive - A scientific collection for habitat conservation



### Vegetation classification: from classic to numeric approaches



### Vegetation databases: enhancing data integration and accessibility for ecological research



### Advances in vegetation analysis through remote sensing technology



### Role and impact of alien species in plant communities and habitat types



### Conservation and biodiversity of bryophytes in the ecosystems, and community variability



### Species and community variability in vegetation dynamics and plant diversity conservation

## Reviewers

We wish to thank the 46 reviewers from 13 countries for their great contribution during 2025. The development of the journal largely depends on them.

## Discounts

We wish to remind you that, in order to support early-career researchers with limited financial resources, [fee waivers](#) and [discounts](#) provided by SISV society remain available.

## Social media

Developments of the journal and the latest publications are also shared on our [BlueSky](#) and [Facebook](#) social media channels. We encourage all scientists interested to follow these pages and to share articles in order to further enhance the visibility of VED.

## Newsletter

We invite you to subscribe to the VED newsletter to stay up to date with the latest publications. Simply enter your email address in the dedicated space on the left-hand side of the journal [homepage](#).

## Linguistic editor

We are seeking a linguistic editor. If you are an English language native speaker interested in this role, please contact the Editor-in-Chief.

Last but not least, we recall that Vegetation Ecology and Diversity (VED) is an open-access society-owned journal of the Italian Society of Vegetation Science. By publishing

in VED, authors indirectly support membership and networking activities (Chytrý et al. 2023).

## Acknowledgements

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## Additional information

### Conflict of interest

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

### Ethical statement

No ethical statement was reported.

### Use of AI

No use of AI was reported.

### Funding

No funding was reported.

### Author contributions

Conceptualization: GB. Data curation: GB, IA. Formal analysis: GB. Methodology: GB, IA. Visualization: GB, IA. Writing – original draft: GB. Writing – review and editing: IA, SB, RDP, EF, FFG, DG, BJA, AK.

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