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POSTER PRESENTATION

The effects of four forestry treatments on the community structure of spiders

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There is a paradigm shift in Central Europe from the traditional forestry systems towards continuous-cover forestry, resulting in a diversification of management practices. The effects of four forestry treatments on the community structure of ground-living spiders were studied in a mature, temperate sessile oak-hornbeam forest in Northern Hungary. Management types belonged either to a rotation system (preparation cutting, clear-cutting or retention tree group) or to selection forestry (gap creation) and were compared with control blocks, resulting in five treatment levels. The experimental setup followed a complete block design with six replicates for each treatment. Spiders were collected by four pitfalls in each 30 x 30 m block. The experiment was established in 2014. Here we summarize the short-term responses of the spider community that were observed between the pre-treatment state (2014) and two years after-treatment (2016). All treatments resulted in a significantly increased cover of plants, especially in the gap and clear-cut management systems. Spiders largely followed this trend, as both species number and species richness increased in the managed blocks compared with the control blocks. Species composition based on NMDS ordination were the same between control and management blocks in 2014, whereas by 2016 the control blocks were separated, but the various management types remained mixed together in ordination space. Ongoing experiments are likely to uncover the longer-term dynamics of changes in forthcoming years.

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Keywords: Araneae, Central Europe, forestry system, ground living spiders, species composition.