***Introduction to Theoretical Ecology Assignment 3***

Logistic Population Growth with Allee Effects

Some flowering plants require a minimal density to attract pollinators (clustering effects). Below this density, pollinators will not be able to detect the presence of flowers and therefore the plants cannot complete the life cycle. Assuming that the population growth of a flower species *Itea* is directly related to the pollinator visits, its population dynamics can be described using the below differential equation:

The term *A* represents “Allee threshold”, below which the population growth rate is negative and thus the population will decline. This type of population dynamics is known as “Allee effects”.

1. Find the equilibrium population sizes for *Itea* and use the graphical method to determine their stability. (3 pts)

Solution: The equilibrium population sizes are *N\** = 0 (stable), *N\** = *K* (stable), and *N\** = *A* (unstable).

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1. Use local stability analysis to determine the stability of the equilibrium population sizes and confirm your results in question 1. (4 pts)

Solution:

Step 1. Take the derivative of the differential equation with respect to *N* using the product rule:

Step 2. Evaluate the derivative at each equilibrium population size to determine the stability:

1. *N\** = 0: -*r <* 0(stable)
2. *N\** = *K*: *rN(K/A-1)\*(-1/K)* < 0 (stable)
3. *N\** = *A*: *rN(1-A/K)\*1/A* > 0 (unstable)
4. Solve the differential equation numerically and show how different initial conditions may arrive at different equilibrium population sizes. You should provide figures of population trajectories with different initial population sizes as well as the R code you used to generate the results. (3 pts)

Solution:

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