

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317447926>

Short-term effects of horse grazing on spider assemblages of a dry meadow (Western France)

Article in *Animal Biodiversity and Conservation* · June 2017

DOI: 10.32800/abc.2018.41.0019

CITATION

1

READS

163

3 authors:



Julien Pétillon

Université de Rennes 1

135 PUBLICATIONS 1,534 CITATIONS

[SEE PROFILE](#)



Alexandre François

Emirates Center for Wildlife Propagation

32 PUBLICATIONS 50 CITATIONS

[SEE PROFILE](#)



Denis Lafage

LOGRAMI

44 PUBLICATIONS 282 CITATIONS

[SEE PROFILE](#)

Some of the authors of this publication are also working on these related projects:



Tropical spider diversity [View project](#)



Contribution à une faune des Caelifera du Maghreb [View project](#)

1 **Short-term effects of horse grazing on spider assemblages of a dry meadow (Western France)**

2

3 Julien Pétillon¹, Alexandre François² & Denis Lafage¹

4

5 ¹ Université de Rennes 1, EA 7316, 263 Avenue du Général Leclerc, CS 74205, 35042 Rennes
6 Cedex, France

7 ² Emirates Center for Wildlife Propagation, PoBox 47, 33250, Missour Maroc

8 * Corresponding author. E-mail: julien.petillon@univ-rennes1.fr

9

10 **Abstract**

11 In this study, the biodiversity impacts of a little studied herbivore, horse, were assessed in a high
12 conservation value habitat of Brittany (Western France), dry meadows. Spiders, a diversified and
13 abundant group of predators, were used as bioindicators. Three complementary sampling techniques
14 were used to assess changes in spider assemblages in both soil and vegetation strata, over time
15 (diachronic comparison of managed unit before vs. after management) and space (synchronic
16 comparison of managed vs. control units). Few effects of grazing, i.e. only one significantly
17 indicative species, were found on assemblage composition (Anosim), and none on abundances, α -
18 and β - diversities (GLM on pitfall trap data). On the contrary, important differences were found
19 between units before management took place. The main effects of grazing management were
20 revealed over time (after one year), and not between managed and control units (CCA on pitfall trap
21 data and χ^2 tests on guilds from each sampling method), showing the relevance of diachronic
22 approach more than synchronic approach in such a management monitoring. Grazing by horses
23 could be relevant to manage meadows because it creates a high spatial heterogeneity, but that would
24 require more (long-term) studies, also including other model groups.

25

26 **Key-words:** Indicators, Management, Synchronic and diachronic approaches, Araneae, Brittany.

27 **Introduction**

28 Management is frequently carried out in grasslands to simulate disturbances naturally occurring in
29 the past, like grazing by large herbivores (Bakker, 1989), or fire (Valkó et al., 2014). The impact of
30 management practises is usually monitored using plant diversity (e.g. Kahmen et al., 2002).
31 However, plant species diversity seems to be a poor predictor for the diversity of other groups, such
32 as arthropods (Kirby, 1992; Morris, 2000; Van Klink et al., 2015). It is therefore necessary to use
33 various groups of organisms to evaluate the potential of a management to conserve overall
34 biodiversity. Grazing affects arthropods both directly and indirectly. Direct effects of grazing
35 concern trampling and accidental predation of insects (as well as scavengers and dung feeders:
36 Lumaret et al., 1992), whereas indirect effects are more complex and mainly encompass vegetation
37 and soil-mediated changes (Van Klink et al., 2015).

38 In general grazing by large herbivores has mostly a negative impact on species richness and
39 abundances of arthropods as it reduces plant cover and biomass. Many large herbivores roughly
40 produce similar effects on the diversity of phytophagous (including flower-visiting) arthropods
41 (Van Klink et al., 2015). Some studies linked changes in arthropod diversity with changes in plant
42 diversity (e.g. Foote & Hornung, 2005), height (Ausden et al., 2005; Ryder et al., 2005) or biomass
43 (Kruess & Tscharntke, 2002), but shifts in functional plant groups are believed to have a higher
44 explanative power (Van Klink et al., 2015).

45 On the contrary, measured indirect effects are likely more dependent on the target taxa or metrics
46 considered, and not consistently reported for all herbivores (Read & Andersen, 2000). As an
47 example, arthropods have been shown to be more diverse and more abundant under ungulate
48 grazing, but with a reduced arthropod biomass overall (González-Megías et al., 2004). The effects
49 on predatory arthropods depends on the intensity of grazing (e.g. Dennis et al., 1998; Dennis et al.,
50 2002; Pétilion et al., 2007; Rosa García et al., 2009; Van Klink et al., 2013). Yet several studies did
51 not find any effect on arthropod diversity, some found some on their species composition (Gardner

et al., 1997; Woodcock et al., 2005; Fadda et al. 2008).

Reported effects of management on arthropod diversity are overall negative, but differ depending on the types of herbivores and grazing intensity, and are likely context-dependent. Conclusions are also dependent on the taxa and metrics used, and thus on the manager's objectives (e.g. Leroy et al., 2014; Török et al., 2016). In this study, the impact of horse grazing on spiders was assessed in a high conservation value habitat in Brittany, dry meadows. Despite its high potential for conservation management (mainly because of an increased plant consumption, higher than e.g. cow at similar stocks: Ménard et al., 2002), the effects of horse on arthropod diversity remains poorly documented (Bell et al., 2001; Joern & Laws 2013). Spiders were used because of their bioindicative values (Maelfait & Baert, 1988; Marc et al., 1999), e.g. to monitor the effects of biological invasions (Pétillon et al., 2005; Mgobozi et al., 2008), success in habitat restoration (Cristofoli et al., 2010; Pétillon et al., 2014) or changes in land use (Schmidt et al., 2005; Prieto-Benítez & Méndez, 2011). A pre-management inventory was performed, so both synchronic and diachronic approaches could be used. Changes in assemblages of both epigeic and vegetation-dwelling spider assemblages were assessed by using (three) complementary sampling methods.

Taxonomic and functional changes in community structure were finally evaluated in the short-term to test the following hypotheses: i) Grazing alters the functional composition of spider community as it will select aeronautic and disturbance-resistant species (Bell et al., 2001) as well as hunting spider species, that are less dependent on the plant physiognomy (e.g. Churchill & Ludwig, 2004). ii) Abundance and alpha diversity are both expected to be lower in the grazed unit compared to the non-grazed unit because of reduced plant biomass and cascading effects (e.g. Kruess & Tschardtke, 2002) whereas β -diversity is expected to be higher in the grazed unit compared to the non-grazed unit due to an increased heterogeneity of vegetation (Loucougaray et al., 2004).

75

76 **Material and Methods**

78 *Study site*

79 The study site is located in Brittany (Western France), 20km south-West of Rennes, near the city of
80 Guichen (47°97'16N, -1°89'20W). The natural reserve ('Vallée du Canut') is a public land of 147
81 ha, part of a larger Natura 2000 site (total of 427 ha) that encompasses meadows, heathlands, forests
82 and a dense network of hedgerows. The dry meadows are located on Cambrian red shales
83 outcropping on the slopes of a small valley ('le Canut' river). The meadows have a N-S slope, with
84 the lower part dominated by bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*). The upper part, where the sampling
85 took place, had (before the introduction of horses) a mean vegetation height of 1.3m (visual
86 estimation), and the following dominant plants: *Dactylus glomerata*, *Rumex* spp., *Stellaria holostea*,
87 *Plantago lanceolata*, *Holcus mollis*, and different species of Apiaceae, *Geranium*, *Ranunculus*,
88 *Centaurea* and *Trifolium*. The sampled area was 4 ha in total, subdivided into two experimental
89 units (further called 'units'), grazed and non-grazed (during the second year of the study). Two
90 horses were then introduced in October 2003 after the first year sampling. Although the impact of
91 grazers on vegetation cover and diversity was obvious (see Fig. S1 in Appendix), data on habitat
92 changes were not used here because our hypotheses relate to changes in spider assemblages using
93 both diachronic and synchronic approaches (effects of time vs. management).

94

95 *Sampling design and methods*

96 In order to sample spiders both at ground level and in the different strata of vegetation, three
97 complementary sampling methods were carried out during the two years of the study: pitfall
98 trapping, hand-collecting and sweep-netting.

99 Traps to catch ground-active spiders consisted of polypropylene cups (diameter: 12 cm, height: 15
100 cm) filled with ethanol 70° and covered with a wooden roof to prevent overflow by rainfall. Four
101 traps arranged in a square grid were set up in each unit, and spaced 10 m apart (Topping &
102 Sunderland, 1992; Churchill & Arthur, 1999; Ward et al., 2001), each trap representing one sample

103 (for a total of 4 replicates per treatment, 16 samples in total). Traps were active 2 times 30 days, 15
104 days in June and September 2003 and 2004 (i.e. the most favorable periods for spiders in this
105 region: e.g. Varet et al., 2013). Numbers of individuals in traps were finally divided by the number
106 of days traps were actually active (Luff, 1975; Curtis, 1980). Hand collections were carried out to
107 sample all visible ground-living spiders, including some less mobile species that would have been
108 few or not sampled by traps (Churchill, 1993). Hand collections were time-standardized (2
109 collectors during 10 min in each unit represent one sample, for a total of 8 samples) and carried out
110 during afternoons 4 times in June and September 2003 and 2004. Vegetation-dwelling spiders were
111 collected using sweep-netting (40 cm diameter) along 2 parallel transects (20m+10m and 45
112 sweeps, which represents one sample altogether), 2 times in each unit (June and September 2003
113 and 2004, for a total of 8 samples).

114

115 *Identification and conservation of specimens*

116 Spiders were sorted and stored in tubes with 70% ethanol (University of Rennes 1, France). Adults
117 were identified to species using Roberts (1987), Heimer & Nentwig (1991) and Roberts (1995).

118

119 *Data analysis*

120 Differences in species composition between years and management were visualized by a Venn
121 diagram of shared vs. exclusive species of grazed and un-grazed units before and after the
122 management took place, and tested using an Analysis of Similarity (ANOSIM) completed by
123 IndVal calculations (Dufrêne & Legendre, 1997) on species abundances using individuals sampled
124 using pitfall traps. A Detrended Correspondence Analysis (DCA) was done on individual counts as
125 response variables and year / management as predictors. A Redundancy (RDA) or a Constrained
126 Correspondence (CCA) analysis was then chosen according to the axis length of the DCA, < 3 or $>$
127 4 respectively (Legendre & Gallagher 2001). Here a CCA (first axis of the DCA = 1.40) was
128 performed using vegan R package (Oksanen et al. 2013). Monte Carlo tests with 999 permutations

129 were carried out to test the significance of the two factors and constrained analyses axes. Hunting
130 guilds were defined according to Uetz et al. (1999), and assigned to species according to the
131 families they belong to. Guild composition differences between years and management were
132 studied using χ^2 tests for each sampling method.

133 As the same pitfall trap was operative in 2003 and 2004, abundances and species richness were
134 pair-matched over time and consequently compared using repeated analysis of variance (Pétillon et
135 al., 2010 and Lafage & Pétillon). Tests were performed using spider activity-density and species
136 richness as dependent variables, management (grazed or non-grazed) as a fixed factor and date (pre-
137 vs. post-grazing) as a within subject effect. If the interaction between fixed factors was not
138 significant (in model 1), a second GLM with logit link and negative binomial distribution (model 2,
139 see O'Hara & Kotze, 2010) was used to test significant effects of separated fixed factors, without
140 their interaction. If the interaction was not significant, t-tests were used to detect significant
141 differences between sampling periods. If grazing had an effect on the variable responses, a
142 significant interaction between management and date was expected (i.e. the within subject factor
143 being expressed differentially for the two units due to grazing effects in one of them). For each
144 analysis, the level of statistical significance used was $\alpha=0.05$.

145 β -diversity was estimated through a dissimilarity matrix (corresponding to Sørensen pair-wise
146 dissimilarity), then partitioned into its two components—species turnover (β_t) and nestedness
147 (β_n)—following Baselga (2010) and using the betapart R package (Baselga and Orme 2012). Only
148 data from pitfall traps were used for the β -diversity.

149 All statistical analyses were performed using R 3.2.3 (R Core Team, 2015).

150

151 **Results**

152

153 Totals of 1990 spiders belonging to 55 species and 1040 spiders belonging to 66 species were
154 collected in 2003 and 2004 respectively (see Table S1 in Appendix). Most spiders were sampled

155 using pitfall traps (1801 individuals), followed by sweep-net and hand-collection (702 and 537
156 individuals, respectively).

157

158 There was a slight increase in the number of species shared between the two units from 2003 to
159 2004 (22 to 24 species: Figure 1). Overall, no difference in species composition was found between
160 experimental units in 2003 ($R=-0.02$, $P=0.537$) and 2004 ($R=0.31$, $P=0.056$). Only *Pachygnatha*
161 *degeeri* had a significant IndVal, with a preference for the grazed vs. non-grazed unit (IndVal=4.24
162 vs. 2.49 respectively, $P=0.028$). Furthermore, no significant difference was found in species
163 composition of the non-grazed unit between 2003 and 2004 ($R=0.47$, $P=0.057$). Conversely a
164 significant difference in species composition of the grazed unit was found between 2003 and 2004
165 ($R=0.84$, $P=0.026$), which was confirmed by the CCA (significant effect of year along the axis 1,
166 $F_{1,13}=2.17$, $P<0.001$; Figure 2). CCA was significant ($F_{2,13}=1.76$, $P<0.001$) explaining 34,5% of the
167 observed variance with the first axis being significant ($F_{1,13}=2.29$, $P=0.003$).

168 No significant difference was found in guild frequencies (Table 1) for individuals sampled by pitfall
169 trap (Figure 3), sweep net (Figure 4) or hand collecting (Figure 5).

170

171 A significant interaction between “management” and “date” effects was found for total activity-
172 density ($F_{1,6}=7.33$, $P=0.035$). Total activity-density decreased in the two units (non-grazed: $t=5.56$,
173 $df=3$, $P=0.011$; grazed: $t=8.85$, $df=3$, $P=0.003$) but the decrease was more important in the grazed
174 unit (Figure 6). No significant interaction between “management” and “date” effects was found for
175 total species richness ($F_{1,6}<0.001$, $P>0.999$). No significant effect of year ($F_{1,13}=2.049$, $P=0.387$) or
176 management was found on species richness ($F_{1,13}=2.049$, $P=0.176$).

177

178 β -diversity was nearly constant over time in each unit, yet the nestedness increased in the non-
179 grazed unit (Table 2), whereas its species turnover decreased. Differences among the units were
180 similar in the two years of sampling, i.e. before and after management by grazing took place.

182 **Discussion**183 *Species composition*

184 Among the species that were not shared between the two units in 2004, but were in 2003, most of
185 species were Linyphiids (e.g. *Bathyphantes gracilis* or *Lepthyphantes ericaeus*), a family well
186 known for its long-distance dispersal abilities, at both young and adult stages (e.g. Blandenier,
187 2009; Simonneau et al., 2016). This change is therefore probably due to inter-annual variations in
188 ballooning and/or under-sampling due to their small size. Almost all new shared species in 2004
189 were also Linyphiids (e.g. *Erigone atra*, *Meioneta mollis*, *M. beata* and *Pelecopsis radiculicola*), so
190 hardly attributable to any management effect. Among the species that disappeared after the
191 management took place, some are strongly dependent on vegetation structure (a key factor in
192 shaping spider assemblages: e.g. Hatley & Macmahon, 1980), and were thus likely disfavored by
193 the grazing. This could be the case of several ambush hunters (*Xysticus cristatus*, *X. erraticus* and
194 *X. tortuosus*) and web-builders (e.g. *Enoplognatha ovata*). It is harder to link the disappearance of
195 the other species from the grazed unit to the grazing, because they were not initially in high
196 numbers and/or they are not directly linked to the vegetation. Yet, the appearance of several
197 thermophilous species (either at ground or at vegetation levels: *Myrmarachne formicaria* and
198 *Tegenaria agrestis*, *Cyclosa oculata*, *Dictyna latens* and *Hypsosinga albobittata* respectively;
199 Harvey et al., 2002) can be explained by a more open micro-habitat under grazing (e.g. Gibson et
200 al., 1992). This tendency should yet be verified by a longer-term monitoring.

201 Overall, few, if any (see e.g. the preference of *Pachynatha degeeri*, an ubiquist species, for the
202 grazed meadow), significant change in species composition was observed after the introduction of
203 horse on the dry meadow, which conforms to few other studies on the impact of grazing on spider
204 composition (Pozzi et al., 1998; Dennis et al., 2001; Pétillon et al. 2007). No significant change
205 after the grazing took place was found in spider hunting guilds, although web-builders tend to be

206 reduced in the grazed unit (visible for sweep-net sampling only). Hunting guilds are usually
207 affected by grazing, with several studies showing a decrease in web-builders (Gibson et al., 1992;
208 Kirby, 1992; Bell et al., 2001; Hemm & Höffer, 2012; Ford et al., 2013), mainly explained by a
209 reduced vegetation complexity (Churchill & Ludwig, 2004; Kovac & Mackay, 2009).

210

211 *Structural diversity*

212 A decrease in total activity-density was observed in both units over time, but at a higher rate in the
213 grazed unit. This is likely the result of both deleterious effects of grazing on ground-dwelling
214 spiders (see above) and of inter-specific competition-mediated changes (Wise, 2006; Van Klink et
215 al., 2015). Competition among spider species is indeed higher in simple habitats (Hurd & Fagan,
216 1992; Marshall & Rypstra, 1999). A closer attention to change in abiotic and biotic conditions
217 would be necessary to disentangle direct and indirect effects of habitat change on spider abundance
218 (the local factors are likely more important here, in an extensively managed land: Horváth et al.,
219 2015).

220 Contrary to several previous studies on other large herbivores (e.g., Pozzi & Borcard, 2001; Pétilion
221 et al., 2007), no significant effect of grazing was found on spider species richness. Indeed, as for
222 many other taxa, and as with many other disturbances, grazing by large herbivores is usually
223 reported to be negative on spiders (Bell et al., 2001; see also the meta-analysis of Prieto-Benítez &
224 Méndez, 2011). Mechanisms usually involved in such a richness decrease encompass local habitat
225 simplification (litter and vegetation strata: Dennis et al., 2001) and related food reduction (Kruess &
226 Tschardtke, 2002; for soil functioning: Koppel et al., 1997). Yet, Lafage et al. (2014) recently
227 demonstrated that spiders were not influenced by the plant biomass (both in terms of abundance and
228 species richness). Finally, it is also possible that the effects are too short in time to be visible (but
229 see below).

230 Our hypothesis on an increased β -diversity was not verified. Two main explanations can be
231 advanced for this lack of result: the effects of grazing are too short to be visible (but arthropods, and
232 especially spiders, are known to quickly react to changes in habitat structure: Pétilon et al., 2014)
233 and/or the effects of grazing are counterbalanced by inter-annual variations. Our second explanation
234 is the most likely, also because it would explain the increased nestedness in the ungrazed unit. Plant
235 heterogeneity is usually higher under grazing treatment (e.g. Gallet & Rozé, 2001; Van Klink et al.,
236 2015), which reinforces the idea that plants and arthropods, here spiders, do react in a different way
237 to management practices (probably due to differences in mobility: Lafage et al., 2015; Lafage &
238 Pétilon, 2016). It has to be stressed that our sampling design did not necessarily encompass the
239 spatial heterogeneity resulting from grazing in general (e.g. for spiders: Bonte et al., 2000), and
240 especially by horses (Loucugaray et al., 2004), and would deserve a higher replication for all the
241 sampling methods to properly assess spider diversity (including beta-diversity, see e.g. Klimek et
242 al., 2008; Báldi et al., 2013).

243

244 *Concluding remarks*

245 In this study, despite the existence of true replicates within each unit, units were confounded with
246 the management treatment, which can be considered as a case of pseudoreplication in the sense of
247 Hurlbert (1984). Comparing stations between different sites are likely to increase the inter-class
248 variance, by the existence of other co-varying factors (Oksanen, 2001). Here, even at a small scale,
249 we showed a high variance between stations, with differences between units before the grazing took
250 place. This underlines the importance of carrying out diachronic approaches, also because the
251 effects of management were sometimes only visible over time, and not when comparing grazed vs.
252 non-grazed units. Spiders, although presenting high dispersal abilities and high mobility (Lafage &
253 Pétilon, 2014) that may hide or lower management effects (Pech et al., 2015), can be considered as
254 a relevant group for monitoring biodiversity consequences of management, bringing

255 complementary information to changes in vegetation structure.

256

257 **Acknowledgements**

258 We are grateful to the land manager Jean-François Lebas (Conseil Général d’Ille-et-Vilaine) for
259 funding and access to the site, Dr. Jesse Eiben and two anonymous referees for useful comments,
260 and the GRETIA (Armorican Entomological Society) for technical support.

261

262 **References**

263 Ausden, M., Hall, M., Pearson, P. & Strudwick, T., 2005. The effects of grazing on tall-herb fen
264 vegetation and molluscs. *Biological Conservation*, 122: 317-326.

265 Bakker, J. P., 1989. *Nature Management by Grazing and Cutting*. Kluwer Academic Publishers,
266 Dordrecht.

267 Báldi, A., Batáry, P. & Kleijn, D., 2013. Effects of grazing and biogeographic regions on grassland
268 biodiversity in Hungary – analysing assemblages of 1200 species. *Agriculture, Ecosystems &*
269 *Environment*, 166: 28–34.

270 Baselga, A., 2010. Partitioning the turnover and nestedness components of beta diversity. *Global*
271 *Ecology and Biogeography*, 19: 134–143.

272 Baselga, A. & Orme, C. D. L., 2012. betapart: an R package for the study of beta diversity.
273 *Methods in Ecology and Evolution*, 3: 808–812.

274 Bell, J. R., Wheeler, C. P. & Cullen, W. R., 2001. The implications of grassland and heathland
275 management for the conservation of spider communities. *Journal of Zoology*, 255: 377-387.

- 276 Blandenier, G. 2009. Ballooning of spiders (Araneae) in Switzerland: general results from an
277 eleven-year survey. *Bulletin of the British Arachnological Society*, 14: 308–316.
- 278 Bonte, D., Maelfait, J.-P. & Hoffmann, M., 2000. The impact of grazing on spider communities in a
279 mesophytic calcareous dune grassland. *Journal of Coastal Conservation*, 6: 135-144.
- 280 Churchill, T. B., 1993. Effects of sampling methodology on the composition of a Tasmanian coastal
281 heathland spider community. *Memoirs of the Queensland Museum*, 33: 475-481.
- 282 Churchill, T. B. & Arthur, J. M., 1999. Measuring spider richness: effects of different sampling
283 methods and spatial and temporal scales. *Journal of Insect Conservation*, 3: 287-295.
- 284 Churchill, T. B. & Ludwig, J. A., 2004. Changes in spider assemblages along grassland and savanna
285 grazing gradients in Northern Australia. *Rangeland Journal*, 26: 3-16.
- 286 Cristofoli, S., Mahy, G., Kekenbosch, R. & Lambeets, K., 2010. Spider communities as evaluation
287 tools for wet heathland restoration. *Ecological Indicators*, 10: 773-780.
- 288 Curtis, D. J., 1980. Pitfalls in spider community studies (Arachnida, Araneae). *Journal of*
289 *Arachnology*, 8: 271-280.
- 290 Dennis, P., Aspinall, R. J. & Gordon, I. J., 2002. Spatial distribution of upland beetles in relation to
291 landform, vegetation and grazing management. *Basic and Applied Ecology*, 3: 183-193.
- 292 Dennis, P., Young, M. R. & Gordon, I. J., 1998. Distribution and abundance of small insects and
293 arachnids in relation to structural heterogeneity of grazed, indigenous grasslands. *Ecological*
294 *Entomology*, 23: 253-264.
- 295 Dennis, P., Young, M. R. & Bentley, C., 2001. The effects of varied grazing management on
296 epigeal spiders, harvestmen and pseudoscorpions of *Nardus stricta* grassland in upland
297 Scotland. *Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment*, 86: 39-57.

298 Dufrêne, M. & Legendre, P., 1997. Species assemblages and indicator species: the need for a
299 flexible asymmetrical approach. *Ecological Monographs*, 67: 345–366.

300 Fadda, S., Henry, F., Orgeas, J., Ponel, P., Buisson, E. & Dutoit, T. 2008. Consequences of the
301 cessation of 3000 years of grazing on dry Mediterranean grasslands ground-active beetle
302 assemblages. *Comptes Rendus Biologies*, 331: 532-546.

303 Foote, A. L. & Hornung, C. L. R. 2005. Odonates as biological indicators of grazing effects on
304 Canadian prairie wetlands. *Ecological Entomology*, 30: 273-283.

305 Ford, H., Garbutt, A., Jones, L. & Jones, D. L., 2013. Grazing management in saltmarsh ecosystems
306 drives invertebrate diversity, abundance and functional group structure. *Insect Conservation*
307 and Diversity, 6: 189-200.

308 Gallet, S. & Rozé, F., 2001. Conservation of heathland by sheep grazing in Brittany (France):
309 Importance of grazing period on dry and mesophilous heathlands. *Ecological Engineering*, 17:
310 333-344.

311 Gardner, S. M., Hartley, S. E., Davies, A. & Palmer S. C. F., 1997. Carabid communities on
312 heather moorlands in northeast Scotland: the consequences of grazing pressure for community
313 diversity. *Biological Conservation*, 81: 275-286.

314 Gibson, C. W. D., Hambler, C. & Brown V. K., 1992. Changes in spider (Araneae) assemblages in
315 relation to succession and grazing management. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 29: 132-142.

316 González-Megías, A., Gómez, J. M. & Sánchez-Piñero, F., 2004. Effects of ungulates on epigeal
317 arthropods in Sierra Nevada Park (southeast Spain). *Biodiversity and Conservation*, 13: 733-
318 752.

319 Hatley, C. L. & Macmahon, J. A., 1980. Spider community organization: seasonal variation and the
320 role of vegetation architecture. *Environmental Entomology*, 9: 632-639.

- 321 Harvey, P. R., Nellist, D. R. & Telfer, M. G., 2002. Provisional atlas of British spiders (Arachnida,
322 Araneae). Biological Records Centre, Huntingdon.
- 323 Heimer, S. & Nentwig, W., 1991. Spinnen mitteleuropas. Verlag Paul Parey, Berlin.
- 324 Hemm, V. & Höffer, H., 2012. Effects of grazing and habitat structure on the epigeic spider fauna
325 in an open xerothermic area in southern Germany. Bulletin of the British Arachnological
326 Society, 15: 260-268.
- 327 Horváth, R., Magura, T., Szinetár, C., Eichardt, J., Kovács, E. & Tóthmérész, B., 2015. In stable,
328 unmanaged grasslands local factors are more important than landscape-level factors in shaping
329 spider assemblages. Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment, 208: 106-113.
- 330 Hurd, L. E. & Fagan, W. F. 1992. Cursorial spiders and succession: age or habitat structure?
331 Oecologia 92: 215–221.
- 332 Joern, A. and Laws, A. N. 2013. Ecological mechanism underlying arthropod species diversity in
333 grasslands. Annual Review of Entomology 58: 19–36.
- 334 Kahmen, S., Poschlod, P. & Schreiber, K.-F., 2002. Conservation management of calcareous
335 grasslands. Changes in plant species composition and response of functional traits during 25
336 years. Biological Conservation, 104: 319–324.
- 337 Klimek, S., Marini, L., Hofmann, M. & Isselstein, J., 2008). Additive partitioning of plant diversity
338 with respect to grassland management regime, fertilisation and abiotic factors. Basic and
339 Applied Ecology, 9: 626-634.
- 340 Kirby, P., 1992. Habitat management for invertebrates: a practical handbook. English Nature
341 Research Report n°89, Peterborough.
- 342 Koppel, J. van de, Riettkerk, M. & Weissing, F. J., 1997. Catastrophic vegetation shifts and soil

343 degradation in terrestrial grazing systems. *Trends in Ecology and Evolution*, 12: 352-356.

344 Kovac, K.-J. & Mackay, D. A., 2009. An experimental study of the impacts of cattle on spider
345 communities of artesian springs in South Australia. *Journal of Insect Conservation*, 13: 57-65.

346 Kruess, A. & Tscharntke, T., 2002. Grazing intensity and the diversity of grasshoppers, butterflies,
347 and trap-nesting bees and wasps. *Conservation Biology*, 16: 1570-1580.

348 Lafage, D., Maugenest, S., Bouzillé, J.-B. & Pétillon, J., 2015. Disentangling the influence of local
349 and landscape factors on alpha and beta diversities: opposite response of plants and ground-
350 dwelling arthropods in wet meadows. *Ecological Research*, 30: 1025-1035.

351 Lafage, D. & Pétillon, J., 2014. Impact of cutting date on carabids and spiders in a wet meadow.
352 *Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment*, 185: 1-8.

353 Lafage, D. & Pétillon, J., 2016. Relative importance of management and natural flooding on spider,
354 carabid and plant assemblages in extensively used grasslands along the Loire. *Basic and*
355 *Applied Ecology*, 17: 535-545.

356 Lafage, D., Secondi, J., Georges, A., Bouzillé, J.-B. & Pétillon, J., 2014. Satellite-derived
357 vegetation indices as surrogate of species richness and abundance of ground beetles in
358 temperate floodplains. *Insect Conservation and Diversity*, 7: 327-333.

359 Legendre, P. & Gallagher, E.D. 2001. Ecologically meaningful transformation for ordination of
360 species data. *Oecologia*, 129: 271-280.

361 Leroy, B., Le Viol, I. & Pétillon, J., 2014. Complementarity of rarity, specialisation and functional
362 diversity metrics to assess responses to environmental changes, using an example of spider
363 communities in salt marshes. *Ecological Indicators*, 46: 351-357.

364 Loucugaray, G., Bonis, A. & Bouzillé, J.-B., 2004. Effects of grazing by horses and/or cattle on

365 the diversity of coastal grasslands in western France. *Biological Conservation*, 116: 59-71.

366 Luff, M. L., 1975. Some features affecting the efficiency of pitfall traps. *Oecologia*, 19: 345-357.

367 Lumaret, J.-P., Kadiri, N. & Bertrand, M., 1992. Changes in resources: consequences for the
368 dynamics of dung beetle communities. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 29: 349-356.

369 Maelfait, J.-P. & Baert, L., 1988. Les araignées sont-elles de bons indicateurs écologiques ?
370 *Bulletin de la Société scientifique de Bretagne*, 59: 155-160.

371 Marc, P., Canard, A. & Ysnel, F., 1999. Spiders (Araneae) useful for pest limitation and
372 bioindication. *Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment*, 74: 1-46.

373 Marshall, S. D. & Rypstra, A. L. 1999. Spider competition in structurally simple ecosystems.
374 *Journal of Arachnology*, 27: 343–350.

375 Ménard, C., Duncan, P., Fleurance, G., Georges, J.-Y. & Lila, M., 2002. Comparative foraging and
376 nutrition of horses and cattle in European wetlands. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 39: 120-133.

377 Mgobozi, M. P., Somers, M. G. & Dippenaar-Schoeman, A. S., 2008. Spider responses to alien
378 plant invasion: the effect of short- and long-term *Chromolaena odorata* invasion and
379 management. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 45: 1189–1197.

380 Morris, M. G. 2000. The effects of structure and its dynamics on the ecology and conservation of
381 arthropods in British grasslands. *Biological Conservation*, 95: 129–142.

382 O'Hara, R.B. & Kotze D.J., 2010. Do not log-transform count data. *Methods in Ecology and*
383 *Evolution*, 1: 118–122.

384 Oksanen, L., 2001. Logic of experiments in ecology: is pseudoreplication a pseudoissue? *Oikos*, 94:
385 27-38.

386 Oksanen, J., Blanchet, F. G., Kindt, R., Legendre, P., Minchin, P. R., O'Hara, R. B., Simpson, G.L.,
387 Solymos, P., Henry, M.H., Wagner, S. and Wagner, H. (2013). vegan: Community Ecology
388 Package. Retrieved from <http://cran.r-project.org/package=vegan>

389 Pech, P., Dolanský, J., Hrdlička, R. & Lepš, J., 2015. Differential response of communities of
390 plants, snails, ants and spiders to long-term mowing in a small-scale experiment. Community
391 Ecology, 16: 115-125.

392 Pétilion, J., Georges, A., Canard, A. & Ysnel, F., 2007. Impact of cutting and sheep-grazing on
393 ground-active spiders and ground beetles in some intertidal salt marshes (Western France).
394 Animal Biodiversity and Conservation, 30: 201-209.

395 Pétilion, J., Lambeets, K., Montaigne, W., Maelfait, J.-P. & Bonte, D. 2010. Habitat structure
396 modified by an invasive grass enhances inundation withstanding in a salt-marsh wolf spider.
397 Biological Invasions, 12: 3212-3226.

398 Pétilion, J., Potier, S., Carpentier, A. & Garbutt, A., 2014. Evaluating the success of managed
399 realignment for the restoration of salt marshes: lessons from invertebrate communities.
400 Ecological Engineering, 69: 70-75.

401 Pétilion, J., Ysnel, F., Canard, A. & Lefeuvre, J.-C., 2005. Impact of an invasive plant (*Elymus*
402 *athericus*) on the conservation value of tidal salt marshes in western France and implications
403 for management: responses of spider populations. Biological Conservation, 126: 103-117.

404 Pozzi, S. & Borcard, D., 2001. Effects of dry grassland management on spider (Arachnida:
405 Araneae) communities on the Swiss occidental plateau. Ecoscience, 8: 32-44.

406 Pozzi, S., Gonseth, Y. & Hänggi, A., 1998. Evaluation de l'entretien de prairies sèches du plateau
407 occidental suisse par le biais de leurs peuplements arachnologiques (Arachnida: Araneae).
408 Revue suisse de Zoologie, 105: 465-485.

409 Prieto-Benítez, S. & Méndez, M. 2011. Effects of land management on the abundance and richness
 410 of spiders (Araneae): A meta-analysis. *Biological Conservation*, 144: 683-691.

411 R Core Team. (2015). R: A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing. Vienna, Austria:
 412 R Foundation for Statistical Computing. Retrieved from <http://www.r-project.org>

413 Read, J. L. & Andersen, A. N., 2000. The value of ants as early warning bioindicators: responses to
 414 pulsed cattle grazing at an Australian arid zone locality. *Journal of Arid Environments*, 45: 231-
 415 251.

416 Roberts M. J., 1987. *The Spiders of Great Britain and Ireland*. Harley Books, Colchester.

417 Roberts M. J., 1995. *Spiders of Britain and Northern Europe*. HarperCollins Publishers, London.

418 Rosa García, R., Jáuregui, B. M., Garcíá, U., Osoro, K. & Celaya, R., 2009. Effects of livestock
 419 breed and grazing pressure on ground-dwelling arthropods in Cantabrian heathlands.
 420 *Ecological Entomology*, 34: 466-475.

421 Ryder, C., Moran, J., Mc Donnell, R. & Gormally, M., 2005. Conservation implications of grazing
 422 practices on the plant and dipteran communities of a turlough in Co. Mayo, Ireland.
 423 *Biodiversity and Conservation*, 14: 187-204.

424 Schmidt, M. H, Roschewitz, I., Thies, C. & Tscharnke T., 2005. Differential effects of landscape
 425 and management on diversity and density of ground-dwelling farmland spiders. *Journal of*
 426 *Applied Ecology*, 42: 281-287.

427 Simonneau, M., Courtial, C. & Pétillon, J., 2016. Phenological and meteorological determinants of
 428 spider ballooning in an agricultural landscape. *Comptes Rendus Biologies*, 339: 408-416.

429 Topping, C. J. & Sunderland, K. D., 1992. Limitations to the use of pitfall traps in ecological
 430 studies exemplified by a study of spiders in a field of winter wheat. *Journal of Applied*

431 Ecology, 29: 485-491.

432 Török, P., Valkó, O., Deák, B., Kelemen, A., Tóth, E. & Tóthmérész, B., 2016. Managing for
433 species composition or diversity? Pastoral and free grazing systems in alkali steppes.
434 Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment, 234: 23-30.

435 Uetz, G. W., Halaj, J. & Cady, A. B., 1999. Guild structure of spiders in major crops. Journal of
436 Arachnology, 27: 270–280.

437 Valkó, O., Török, P., Deák, B. & Tóthmérész, B., 2014: Prospects and limitations of prescribed
438 burning as a management tool in European grasslands. Basic and Applied Ecology, 15: 26-33.

439 Van Klink, R., Rickert, C., Vermeulen, R., Vorst, O., WallisDeVries, M.F. & Bakker, J.P. 2013.
440 Grazed vegetation mosaics do not maximize arthropod diversity: evidence from salt marshes.
441 Biological Conservation, 164: 150–157.

442 Van Klink, R., van der Plas, F., van Noordwijk, C. G. E; WallisDeVries, M. F. & Olff, H., 2015.
443 Effects of large herbivores on grassland arthropod diversity. Biological Reviews, 90: 347-366.

444 Varet, M., Burel, F., Lafage, D. & Pétilion, J., 2013. Age-dependent colonization of urban habitats:
445 a diachronic approach using carabid beetles and spiders. Animal Biology, 63: 257-269.

446 Ward, D. F., New, T. R. & Yen, A. L., 2001. Effects of pitfall trap spacing on the abundance,
447 richness and composition of invertebrate catches. Journal of Insect Conservation, 5: 47-53.

448 Wise, D. H., 2006. Cannibalism, food limitation, intraspecific competition, and the regulation of
449 spider populations. Annual Review of Entomology, 51: 441–465.

450 Woodcock, B. A., Pywell, R. F., Roy, D. B., Rose, R. J. & Bell, D., 2005. Grazing management of
451 calcareous grasslands and its implications for the conservation of beetle communities.
452 Biological Conservation, 125: 193-202.

453 Table 1. Chi² tests on hunting guilds (2df).

454

Comparison		Pitfall trap	Sweep net	Hand collection
2003/2004	Non grazed	$\chi^2=7.52$, P=0.023	$\chi^2=14.97$, P<0.001	$\chi^2=14.79$, P<0.001
	Grazed	$\chi^2=37.35$, P<0.001	$\chi^2=39.04$, P<0.001	$\chi^2=8.77$, P=0.012
Non grazed/grazed	2003	$\chi^2=5.94$, P=0.051	$\chi^2=1.02$, P=0.600	$\chi^2=0.89$, P=0.639
	2004	$\chi^2=4.76$, P=0.092	$\chi^2=3.94$, P=0.139	$\chi^2=0.16$, P=0.921

455

456

457 Table 2. Partition of Beta-diversity into species turnover and nestedness in both grazed and non-
 458 grazed units, before (2003) and after (2004) the management took place (data from pitfall traps, β_t :
 459 β turnover, β_n : β nestedness).

460

Year	Unit	β (Sørensen)	β_t	β_n
2003	Grazed	0.561	0.449	0.112
	Non-grazed	0.461	0.429	0.033
2004	Grazed	0.539	0.458	0.082
	Non-grazed	0.431	0.282	0.148

461

462 **Figure captions**

463

464 Figure 1. Venn diagram of exclusive vs. shared species of the grazed and non-grazed units, before
465 (2003) and after (2004) the management took place.

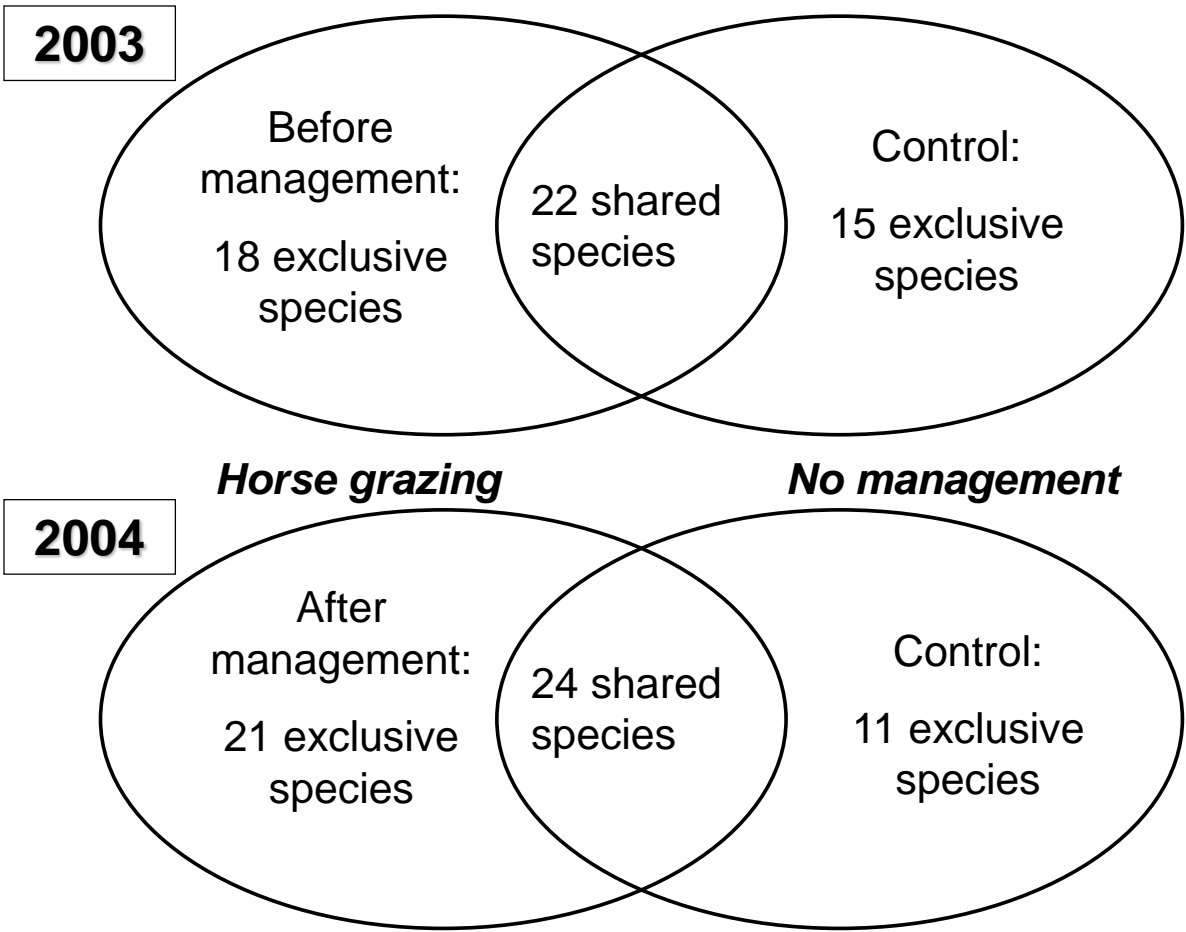
466 Figure 2. Projection of significant variables from the CCA on spider species. Pitfall traps are
467 represented by circles and species by crosses.

468 Figure 3. Percentage activity density of each hunting guild sampled by pitfall trapping in 2003 and
469 2004. (AH: Ambush hunters; GR: Ground runners; WB: Web-builders).

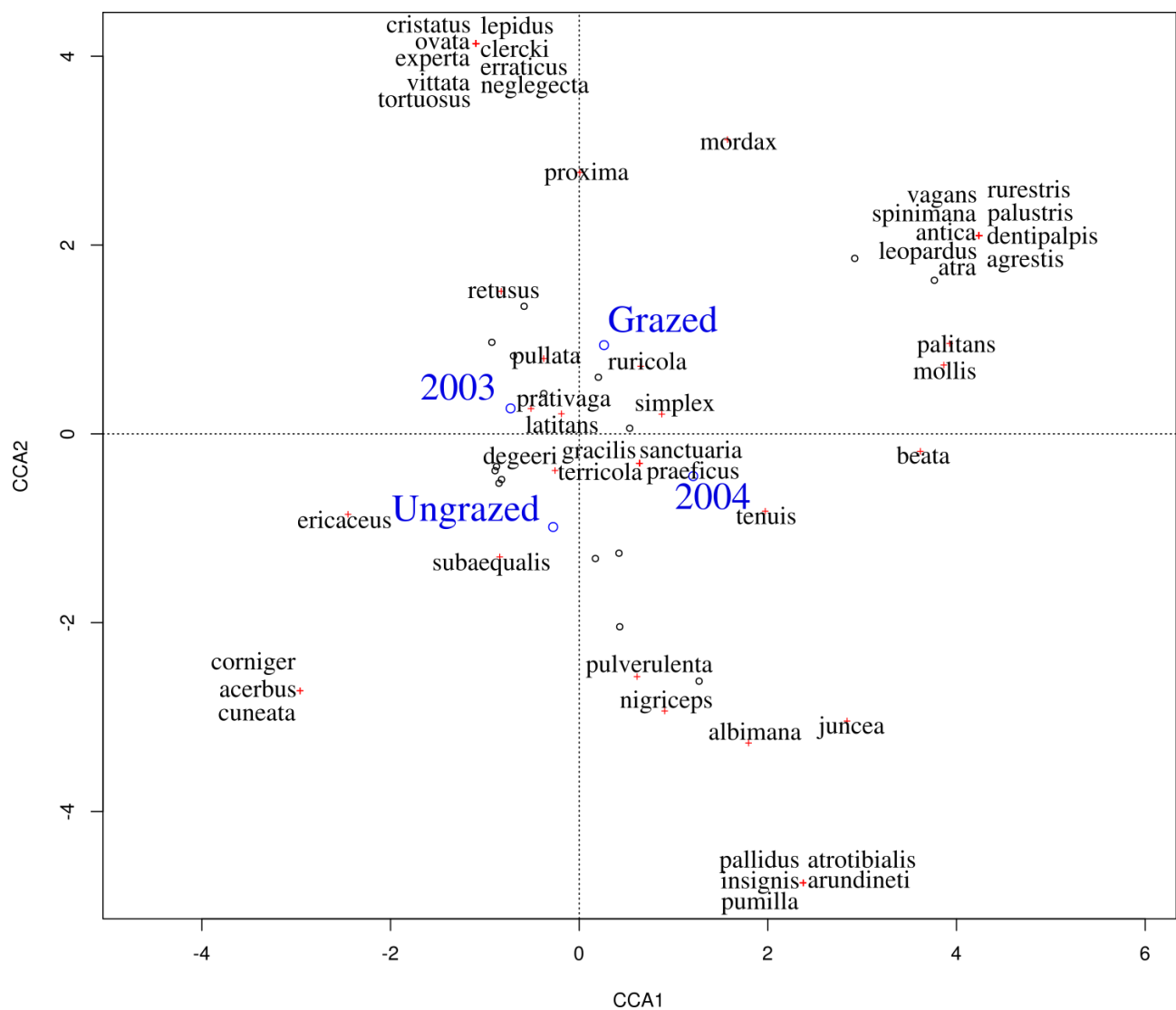
470 Figure 4. Percentage abundance of each hunting guild sampled by sweep netting in 2003 and 2004.
471 (AH: Ambush hunters; GR: Ground runners; WB: Web-builders).

472 Figure 5. Percentage abundance of each hunting guild sampled by hand collecting in 2003 and
473 2004. (AH: Ambush hunters; GR: Ground runners; WB: Web-builders).

474 Figure 6. Activity-density of spiders in the grazed and non-grazed units in 2003 and 2004 (data
475 from pitfall traps).



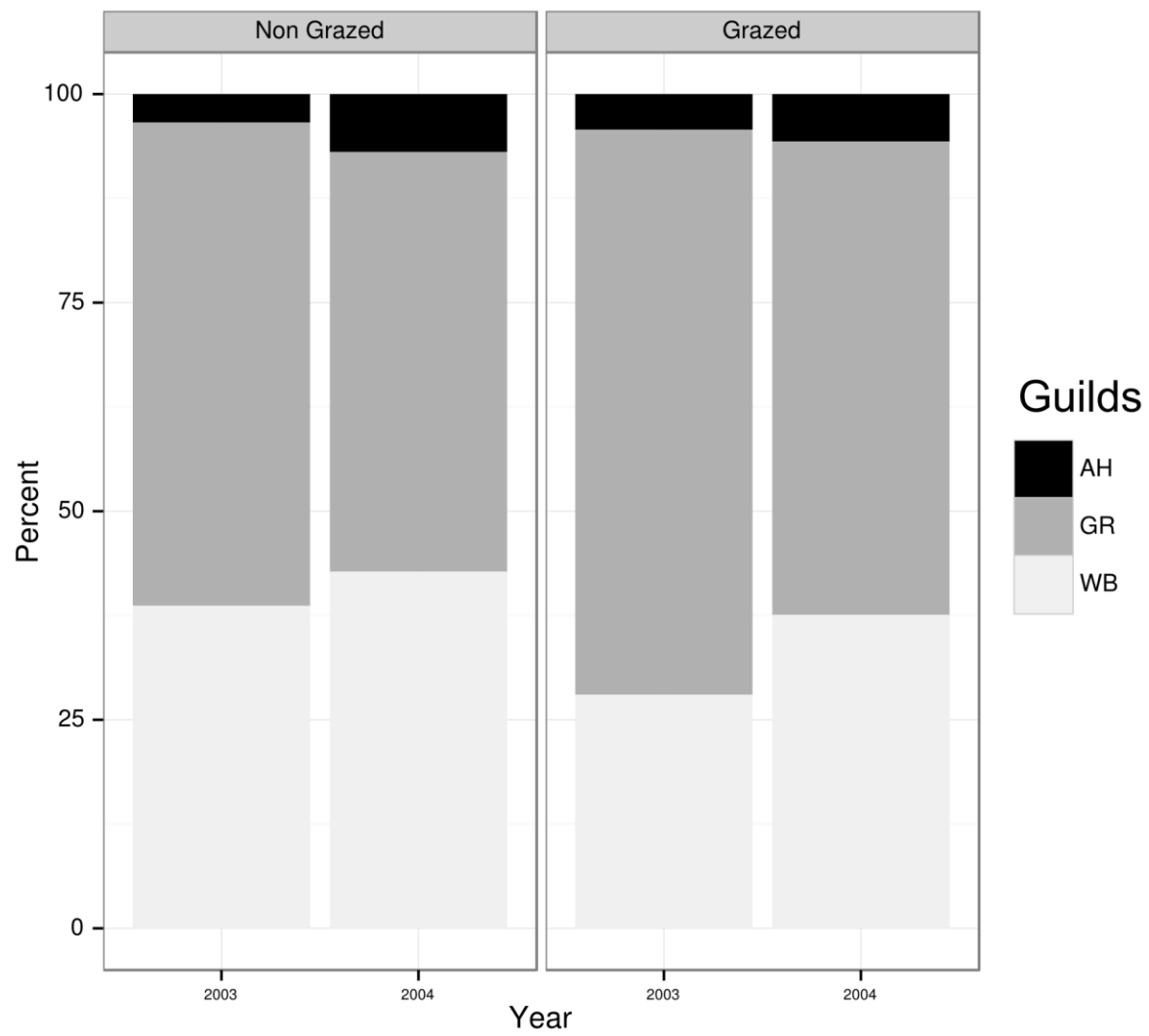
478 **Figure 1: Pétillon et al.**



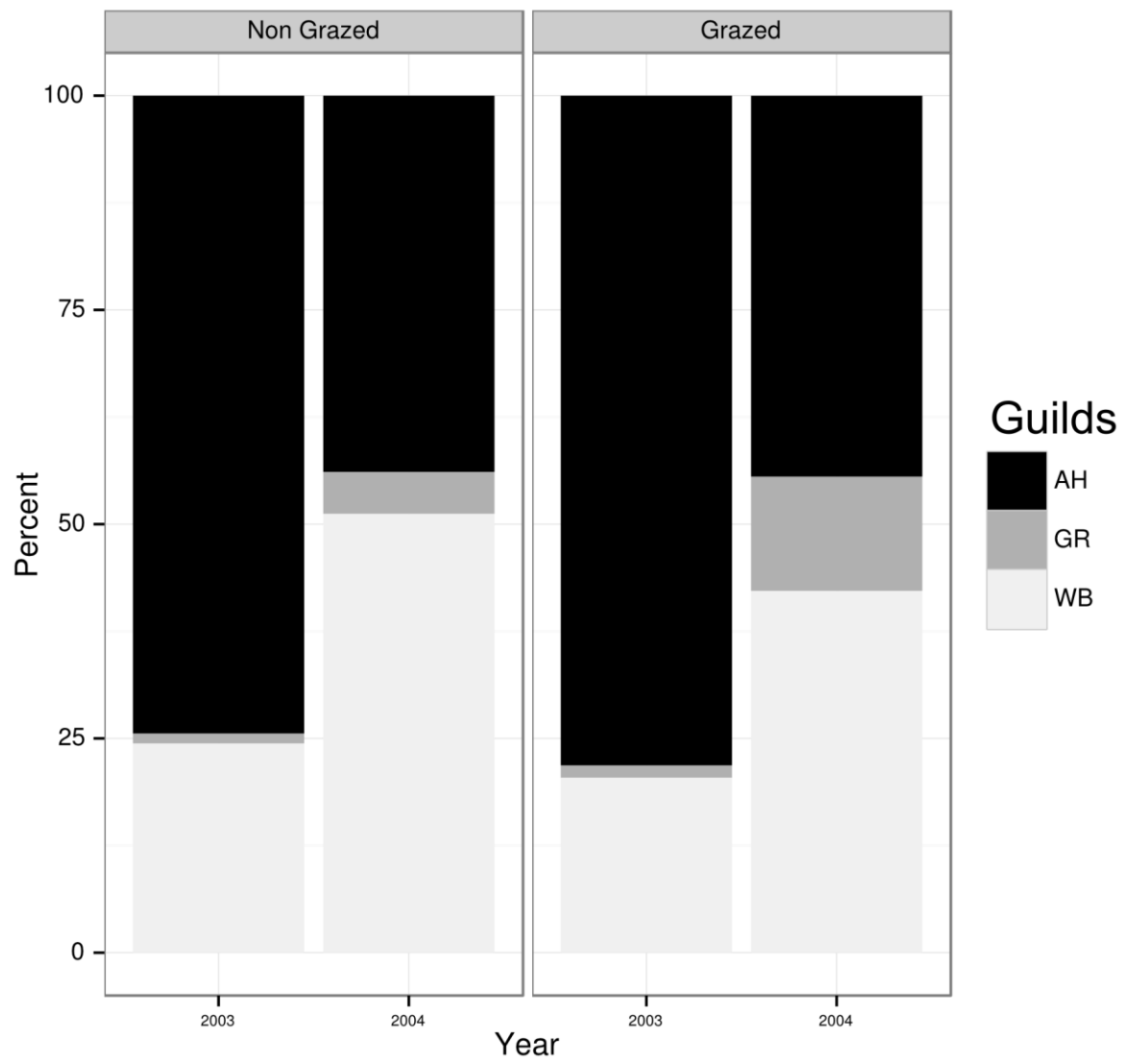
480

481 **Figure 2: Pétillon et al.**

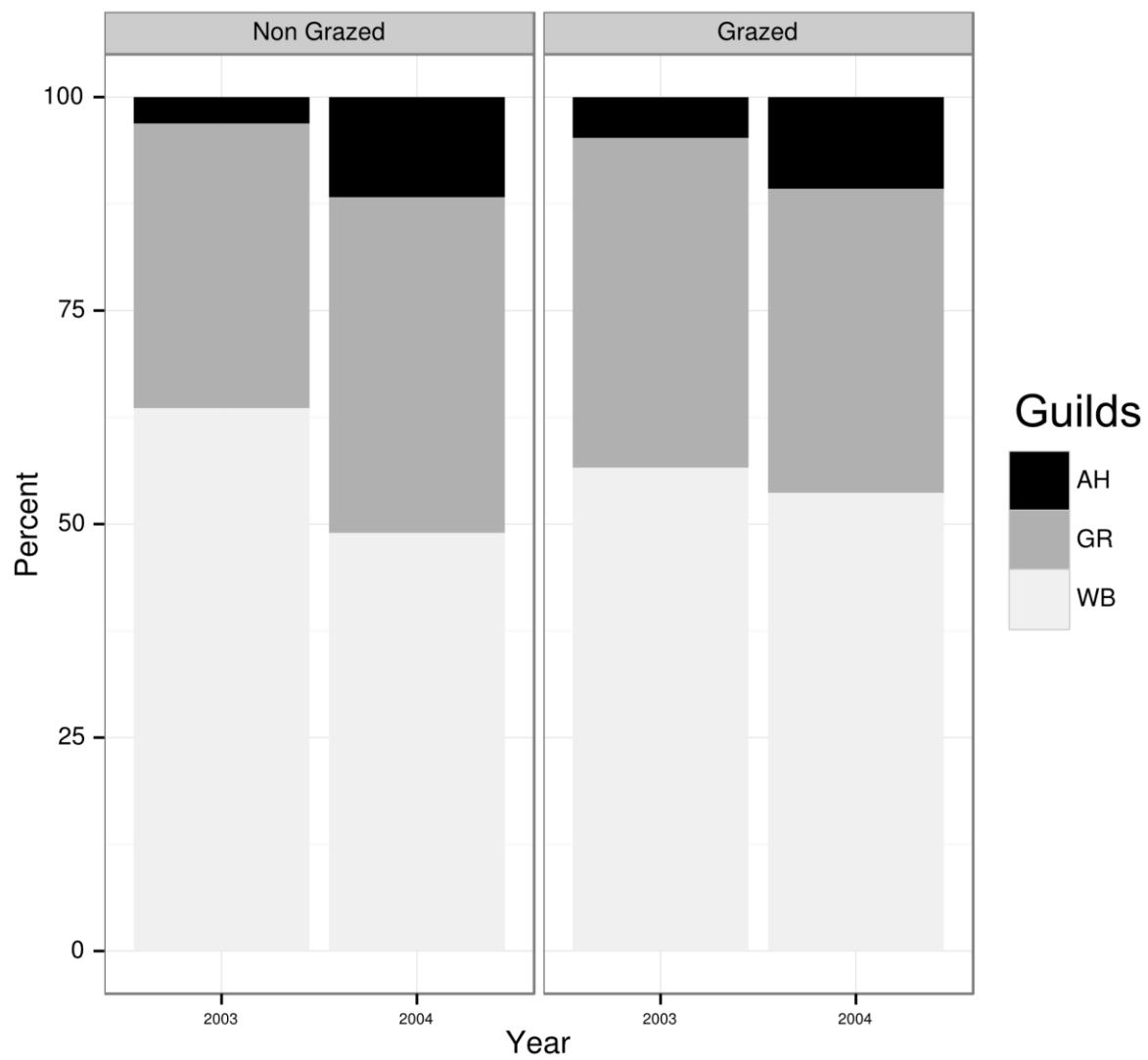
482



483 **Figure 3: Pétillon et al.**



484 **Figure 4: Pétillon et al.**



485

486 **Figure 5: Pétillon et al.**

487

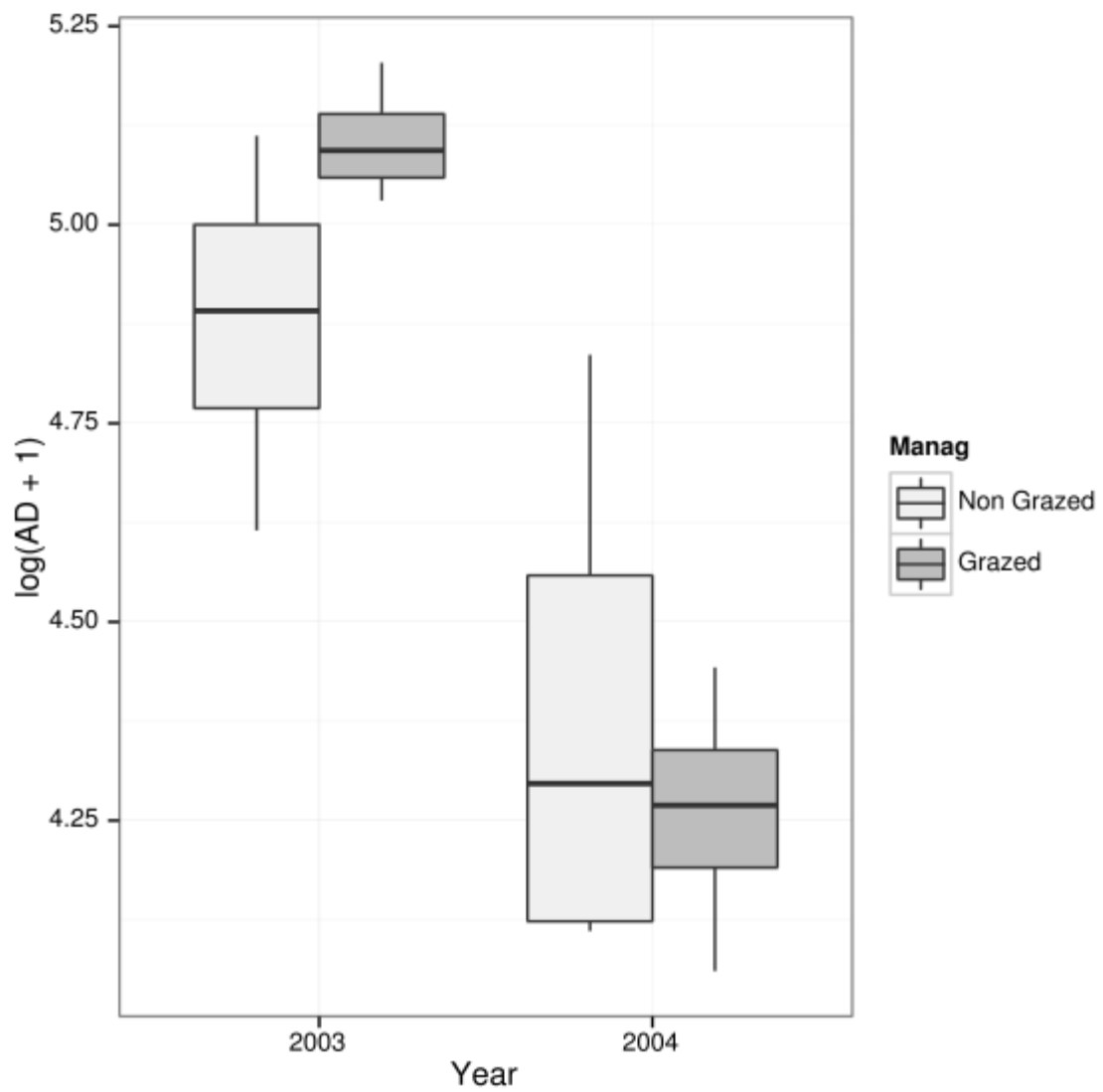


Figure 6: Pétillon et al.

507 Table S1. Taxonomic list of the species collected in grazed and non-grazed units (2003-2004), all
508 sampling methods confounded.

509

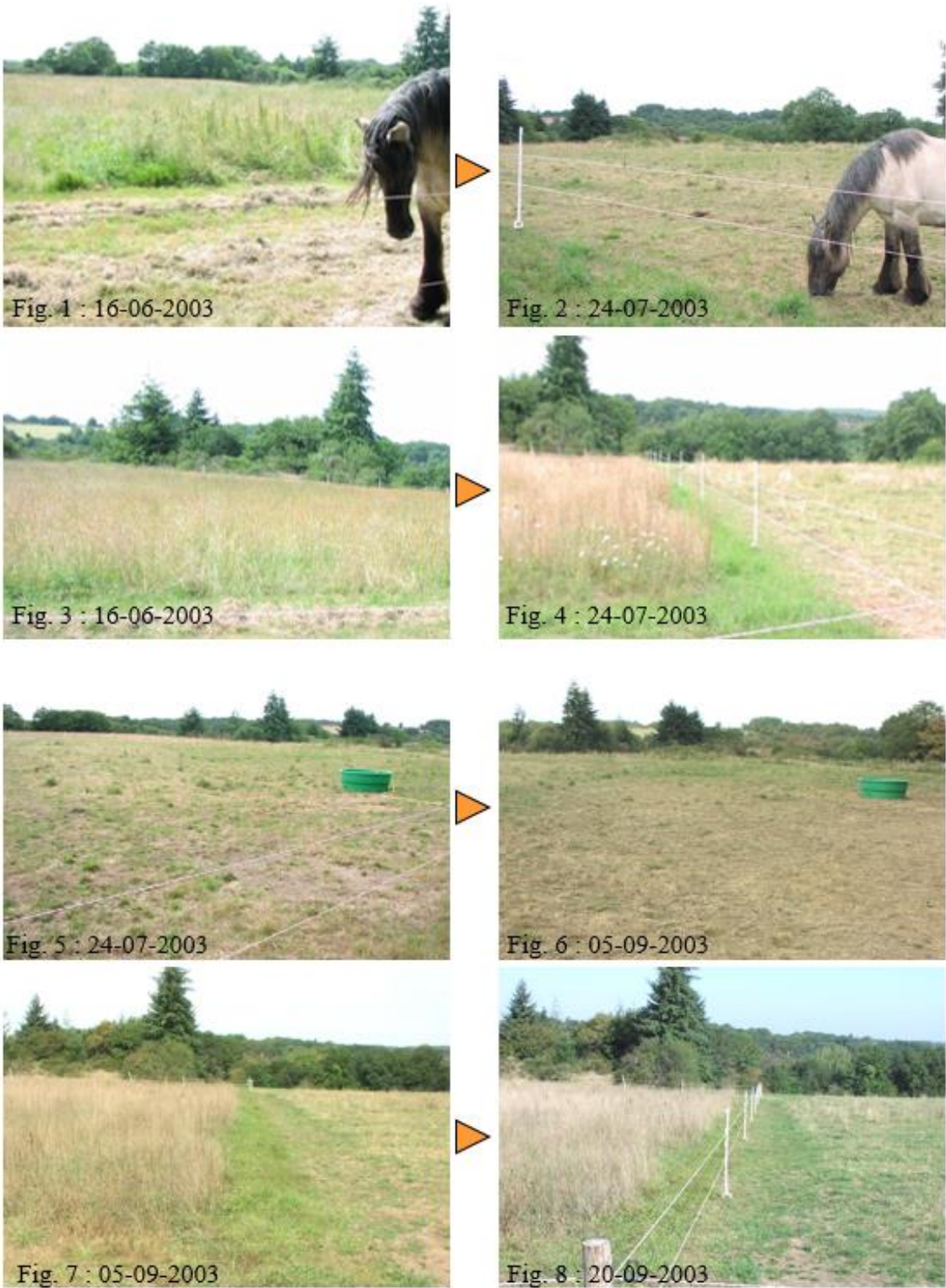
Species	2003 Non Grazed	2004 Non Grazed	2004 Grazed
<i>Agalenatea redii</i> (Scopoli, 1763)	1		3
<i>Agroeca proxima</i> (O. Pickard-Cambridge, 1871)	1		
<i>Agroeca</i> sp.			1
<i>Agyneta affinis</i> (Kulczyński, 1898)			1
<i>Agyneta mollis</i> (O. Pickard-Cambridge, 1871)			3
<i>Agyneta rurestris</i> (C. L. Koch, 1836)	1		
<i>Alopecosa cuneata</i> (Clerck, 1757)	3		
<i>Alopecosa pulverulenta</i> (Clerck, 1757)	2		2
<i>Alopecosa</i> sp.	22	9	2
<i>Anelosimus vittatus</i> (C. L. Koch, 1836)	9	1	
<i>Araneus diadematus</i> Clerck, 1757		4	
<i>Araneus quadratus</i> Clerck, 1757			
<i>Arctosa leopardus</i> (Sundevall, 1833)			
<i>Argiope bruennichi</i> (Scopoli, 1772)			1
<i>Aulonia albimana</i> (Walckenaer, 1805)	2	3	11
<i>Bathypantes approximatus</i> (O. Pickard-Cambridge, 1871)			
<i>Bathypantes gracilis</i> (Blackwall, 1841)	2	3	
<i>Brigittea latens</i> (Fabricius, 1775)			
<i>Cercidia prominens</i> (Westring, 1851)	2		
<i>Clubiona neglecta</i> O. Pickard-Cambridge, 1862		1	
<i>Clubiona</i> sp.	11		2
<i>Cyclosa oculata</i> (Walckenaer, 1802)			
<i>Drassodes</i> sp.			
<i>Drassyllus praeficus</i> (L. Koch, 1866)	1		
<i>Drassyllus praeficus</i> (L. Koch, 1866)		1	
<i>Enoplognatha mordax</i> (Thorell, 1875)		1	
<i>Enoplognatha ovata</i> (Clerck, 1757)		2	
<i>Enoplognatha</i> sp.		1	3
<i>Eratigena agrestis</i> (Walckenaer, 1802)			
<i>Erigone atra</i> Blackwall, 1833		2	2
<i>Erigone dentipalpis</i> (Wider, 1834)			
<i>Ero cambridgei</i> Kulczyński, 1911		1	
Genus sp.	35	397	119
<i>Heliophanus</i> sp.	1	1	
<i>Hypsosinga albobittata</i> (Westring, 1851)			
<i>Larinioides cornutus</i> (Clerck, 1757)	2		2
<i>Lepthyphantes</i> sp.	2	19	
<i>Mangora acalypha</i> (Walckenaer, 1802)	28	26	

<i>Micrargus subaequalis</i> (Westring, 1851)	7	5	5	1
<i>Myrmarachne formicaria</i> (De Geer, 1778)				1
<i>Neoscona adianta</i> (Walckenaer, 1802)		1	15	1
<i>Neottiura bimaculata</i> (Linnaeus, 1767)			3	
<i>Neriere clathrata</i> (Sundevall, 1830)	1			
<i>Oedothorax fuscus</i> (Blackwall, 1834)		1		
<i>Oedothorax retusus</i> (Westring, 1851)	3	3		1
<i>Ozyptila sanctuaria</i> (O. Pickard-Cambridge, 1871)		1	1	
<i>Ozyptila simplex</i> (O. Pickard-Cambridge, 1862)	7	24	19	14
<i>Ozyptila</i> sp.	11		1	5
<i>Pachygnatha clercki</i> Sundevall, 1823		4		
<i>Pachygnatha degeeri</i> Sundevall, 1830	252	239	151	133
<i>Palliduphantes ericaeus</i> (Blackwall, 1853)	8	4		
<i>Palliduphantes insignis</i> (O. Pickard-Cambridge, 1913)			1	
<i>Palliduphantes pallidus</i> (O. Pickard-Cambridge, 1871)	1		1	
<i>Pardosa nigriceps</i> (Thorell, 1856)	5	1	7	4
<i>Pardosa palustris</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)				8
<i>Pardosa prativaga</i> (L. Koch, 1870)	19	20	7	8
<i>Pardosa proxima</i> (C. L. Koch, 1847)	2	6		2
<i>Pardosa pullata</i> (Clerck, 1757)	74	117	32	41
<i>Pardosa</i> sp.	131	69	1	1
<i>Pardosa vittata</i> (Keyserling, 1863)		1	2	10
<i>Pelecopsis radiculicola</i> (L. Koch, 1872)			2	1
<i>Pirata</i> sp.	8	6		
<i>Piratula latitans</i> (Blackwall, 1841)	54	69	37	31
<i>Pisaura mirabilis</i> (Clerck, 1757)	3	3	2	1
<i>Pocadicnemis juncea</i> Locket & Millidge, 1953	1	1	6	2
<i>Pocadicnemis pumila</i> (Blackwall, 1841)			1	
<i>Prinerigone vagans</i> (Audouin, 1826)				1
<i>Robertus arundineti</i> (O. Pickard-Cambridge, 1871)			1	
<i>Scotina celans</i> (Blackwall, 1841)			1	
<i>Sintula corniger</i> (Blackwall, 1856)	1			
<i>Stemonyphantes lineatus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	1		1	
<i>Tallusia experta</i> (O. Pickard-Cambridge, 1871)		1		
<i>Tapinopa longidens</i> (Wider, 1834)				1
<i>Tenuiphantes tenuis</i> (Blackwall, 1852)	3	3	9	8
<i>Tibellus oblongus</i> (Walckenaer, 1802)			3	
<i>Tibellus</i> sp.	14	17	13	12
<i>Trochosa ruricola</i> (De Geer, 1778)	3	3	1	4
<i>Trochosa</i> sp.	5	2	7	
<i>Trochosa terricola</i> Thorell, 1856	4	6	6	4
<i>Walckenaeria acuminata</i> Blackwall, 1833	1			
<i>Walckenaeria antica</i> (Wider, 1834)		1	1	1
<i>Walckenaeria atrotibialis</i> (O. Pickard-Cambridge, 1878)			2	
<i>Xysticus acerbus</i> Thorell, 1872	2			
<i>Xysticus cristatus</i> (Clerck, 1757)		2		

<i>Xysticus erraticus</i> (Blackwall, 1834)		2		
<i>Xysticus ferrugineus</i> Menge, 1876	1			
<i>Xysticus</i> sp.	115	25		
<i>Xysticus tortuosus</i> Simon, 1932		1		
<i>Zelotes</i> sp.			3	1
<i>Zora armillata</i> Simon, 1878		3		1
<i>Zora</i> sp.	3	11	18	3
<i>Zora spinimana</i> (Sundevall, 1833)		1	6	1

511 Fig. S1. Change in grazed vs. ungrazed vegetation over time.

512



513