

Scaling the species abundance distribution: annotated bibliography

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Borda-de Águia et al. [1] focus on upscaling the SAD by estimating its moments at a smaller scale and then scaling those moments up. They re-iterate, as do many papers, that individuals are aggregated and so scaling the SAD does not preserve its shape—although it would under Poisson spatial process.

Chisholm and Lichstein [2] relate the shape and size of a plot to the m immigration parameter of NTB. In the process they derive scaling for the SAD which they find goes from ZSM at small scale to logseries at large scale. They do not discuss the same nuance as Rosindell and Cornell [11]

Green and Plotkin [3] present a sampling theory for SADs based on random sampling (Poisson) or aggregated sampling (negative binomial). They confirm that random sampling preserves the shape of the SAD while aggregated sampling can interestingly often lead to something close to Fisher-looking.

Harte et al. [4] derive self-similar scaling of SAR and SAD [but see 10, who says they did it wrong for SAD].

Hubbell et al. [5] show power law scaling between nearest neighbor distance and rank of distance (this all in an effort to estimate number and abundance of tree species in Amazonia). Power exponent > 0.5 indicates non-Poisson aggregation. Some of these results might also show up in Harte’s MaxEnt book.

McGill [6] argues that log right-skewed distributions, e.g. Fisher logseries, are sampling artifacts, that taking a small subsample of any large community will result in log right-skew. Does this mostly with simulation without considering spatial aggregation; but he also uses BCI, without much discussing it. Also misses the fact that Poisson sampling (as he does in “Model I”) will preserve the parametric form of the SAD, so skewness might not be the thing to look at, rather the parametric form could be more informative.

Myers et al. [7] use burnt and unburnt plots to look at how disturbance influences turnover. Use spatial and non-spatial rarefaction to conclude that disturbance changes β -diversity patterns but not underlying processes.

O’Dwyer and Cornell [8] provide an analytical solution to spatially explicit neutral theory and the spatial scaling of the SAD. They confirm work by Rosindell and Cornell [11], including the scale collapse of the SAD when speciation rate is small. Could such scale collapse explain near universal success of Fisher at small scale? Also while they confirm the result of Rosindell and Cornell [11] that at largest scale you get a log series, at intermediate, but still quite large, you get something hump-shaped on a log scale. This is also consistent with Rosindell and Cornell [11] result that singletons first increase, then decrease, then increase again. Singletons increasing at largest scale is probably due to point mutation speciation—would be interesting to investigate with protracted speciation model. Most interestingly is that O’Dwyer and Cornell [8] use spatially replicated plots to independently fit parameters of the model and then show that with these independent fits, the spatially explicit NTB does not fit BCI well at all.

Plotkin et al. [9] show that power-law SAR is wrong from scales of 1 m^2 –50 ha (in the process of estimating species richness for tropical trees). Also show that upscaling SADs (various models) to get species estimates generally lead to over-estimate of S at 50 ha scale for Pasoh. Must be assuming poisson spatial process, because no other process is mentioned.

Pueyo [10] re-derives self-similar SAR and SAD, showing a power-law SAD leads to a power-law SAR. He does not consider how SAR will scale with area, we're left to assume it's the same shape everywhere.

Rosindell and Cornell [11] explore scaling of the NTB. They find a tri-phasic accumulation of singleton species—first increasing with area, then decreasing, then increasing again. This pattern depends on the biogeographic range of the species considered—a quantity determined by speciation rate and dispersal kernel. This finding ties in with scale collapses of tri-phasic SAR (Harte and Storch).

Stegen et al. [12] show that β -diversity is driven both by sampling and deterministic interactions with environment—namely heterogeneity and primary productivity. They do this with BBS.

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