

# Traitors intro

December 23, 2022

BROAD outline ...

1. Open with phenological diversity (lots of it across spp. most of it unexplained, cite Laube, Flynn etc. work)
  - (a) Timing plant phenological events (budburst) define species' temporal niche = the partitioning of resources across species over time (Gotelli & Granves 1996 - ch5).
  - (b) Differences along this niche axis contribute to community assembly, defining the abiotic environment experienced during growth and biotic interactions – competitive landscape and pressures from herbivory.
  - (c) Studies of woody plants show diversity in species temporal niche e.g spring budburst and variability to environmental cues (Laube2014, Flynn2018)
  - (d) Changes in climate are altering spp temporal niche, however, with earlier spring growth having cascading effects to ecological communities and spp interactions
  - (e) But still have a limited mechanistic understanding of how specific spp will respond
2. Set up early vs. late phenology and frost versus competition (could maybe mention invaders within this)? Try to basically set up the idea of traits, without saying traits.
  - (a) The timing of bb in woody spp appear to range from early spring species — bb prior to canopy closure — and later canopy spp.
  - (b) Early in the spring = greater abiotic pressures, such as risk of false spring events and frost = affects early budbursting spp = potential loss of tissue
  - (c) Late spp have greater selection from biotic pressures = less light available and competition for resources
  - (d) Differences in bb phenology within communities = important in shaping community dynamics including competition & herbivory.
  - (e) But also the potential invasibility of a community, invasive spp tend to be early bb with the potential to fill vacant niche space early in the season.
3. Now get to phenology (as day of year/early-late) x traits and how that connects to 2.
  - (a) Considerable work on the functional traits related to species growth strategies and competitive abilities — few studies include phenology
  - (b) Leaf economic spectrum: spp fall along gradients of acquisitive (fast) growth to more conservative (slow) growth
  - (c) Decades of research linking functional traits to species responses to abiotic and biotic factors and community assembly
  - (d) Strategies that favour fast growth should promote early bb, often associated with traits related to species responses to abiotic factors (eg frost risk, light capture)

- 38 (e) Spp that are better competitors with conservative growth bb later - associate this with traits  
 39 that biotic factors, like competition
- 40 (f) But whether other there are associations between other functional traits and the cues re-  
 41 sponses that define species temporal niche is unknown.
- 42 4. Set up hypotheses...
- 43 (a) We predict that spp with traits associated with acquisitive growth (high SLA, high LNC,  
 44 short heights, small seeds) will have will have cue requirements associated with earlier  
 45 budburst
- 46 (b) Spp that are better competitors with conservative growth, with low SLA and LNC, tall  
 47 heights, and large seeds, will have phenological response associated with later budburst
- 48 5. Get into complexity of cues after hypotheses
- 49 (a) Previous studies have shown 3 cues are most important for spp responses:
- 50 i. Chilling - the period of cold temperatures from late fall to late winter, releases buds  
 51 from dormancy
- 52 ii. Forcing - the occurrence of warm temperatures in spring that initiate bud development
- 53 iii. Photoperiod - daylength
- 54 (b) field obs of phenology are highly variable — but under controlled environments and set cues,  
 55 bb is highly predictable
- 56 (c) traits themselves can be highly variable, both across and within spp - Violle paper ‘viva la  
 57 variability’
- 58 (d) trait ecology’s goal = predict sp-level characteristics by traits alone — how well we can do  
 59 this to highly variable and species specific traits like phenology is unclear
- 60 (e) Potential to use phenological data from controlled environment studies to identifying the  
 61 relationship between sp cue responses and traits
- 62 6. Here’s what we do here.
- 63 (a) we test for associations between plant phenological responses to environmental cues and  
 64 common functional traits
- 65 (b) use available trait data from trait databases with bb data from controlled environment  
 66 studies of woody plant species from the OSPREE database.
- 67 (c) We focus on the effects of forcing, chilling, and photoperiod cues and four easy to measure  
 68 traits — SLA, LNC, height, & seed mass
- 69 (d) Our model attributes phenological variation (day of bb) to species’ trait values while in-  
 70 cluding residual variation from species (partial-pooling).
- 71 (e) When traits explain a significant portion of the variation, spp will explain only a small  
 72 amount — may be able to predict spp growth strategies and phenological responses from  
 73 trait values.
- 74 (f) Potential to use phenological data from controlled environment studies to identifying the  
 75 relationship between sp cue responses and traits
- 76 7. Our model ...
- 77 (a) Our model attributes phenological variation (day of bb) to species’ trait values while in-  
 78 cluding residual variation from species (partial-pooling).

79 (b) When traits explain a significant portion of the variation, spp will explain only a small  
80 amount — may be able to predict spp growth strategies and phenological responses from  
81 trait values.

82 Need to fit in into intro, not sure where:

- 83 1. Cues address phenological variability
- 84 2. Be sure to clearly set up acquisitive vs. conservative

85 Stuff we had, but could cut:

- 86 1. details of phenological responses - ectodormancy transition to endodormancy – Cutting this, too  
87 much other content
- 88 2. detailed definition of forcing, chilling, photoperiod

89 Fig 1: i) Can you confirm the slopes (when trait effect = 0) are constant across the top conceptual  
90 panels? If not, we should make them that way I think to minimize what changes across them?  
91 DLDec15: Yes they are, the betaChill slope is always -2, betaForceSp = 5 and betaPhotoSp = 1 for  
92 each plot

93 ii) Make sure the figure in the Supp that is similar has the same y axis scale - DLDec15: I will fix that  
94 in the next draft for sure