# **Applied Vegetation Science**

## Classification and characterization of anthropogenic plant communities at the ecoregion level

Journal:	Applied Vegetation Science
Manuscript ID	AVS-VEG-03483
Wiley - Manuscript type:	Vegetation Survey
Keywords:	Synanthropic vegetation, manmade habitats, human-made habitats, urban biodiversity, neophytes, archaeophytes, alien plants, habitat classification, semi-supervised classification, Iberian Atlantic ecoregion

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## 1 Classification and characterization of anthropogenic plant communities at

### 2 the ecoregion level

#### 3 Abstract (300 words max.)

- Questions How can we classify the diversity of anthropogenic plant communities at
  the ecoregion level? How are these communities characterized by species origins
  (native plants, archaeophytes, and neophytes), species traits (lifeforms, plant height,
  and flowering phenology) and ecological preferences (temperature, moisture, light,
  nutrients, soil reaction, disturbance frequency, and disturbance severity)?
- Location Iberian Atlantic ecoregion (a.k.a. Cantabrian Mixed Forests); Portugal,
   Spain, and France; south-western Europe.
  - Methods We compiled a vegetation database of 2,508 synanthropic plots and revised
    the regional checklist of anthropogenic vegetation alliances. We used modified
    TWINSPAN and semi-supervised classification to classify the plots into the revised
    alliances. We determined the proportion of natives, archaeophytes, and neophytes.
     We also described the alliances in terms of species traits and ecological requirements.
  - Results We classified 2,081 vegetation plots into 28 anthropogenic alliances representing 9 vegetation classes (Cymbalario-Parietarietea diffusae, Polygono-Poetea annuae, Papaveretea rhoeadis, Digitario sanguinalis-Eragrostietea minoris, Chenopodietea, Sisymbrietea, Bidentetea, Artemisietea vulgaris and Epilobietea

*angustifolii*). The plots included 1,162 plant taxa: 78% natives, 15% archaeophytes, and 7% neophytes. Vegetation groups were organized along a principal axis of variation related to abiotic stress (dry-sunny to moist-shady habitats), and a second

axis related to disturbance (low to high disturbance frequency and severity).

5 Conclusions Ecoregion-level synthesis detected a discrepancy between the number 6 of anthropogenic vegetation units described in the literature (38 alliances) and the 7 number supported by numerical classification (28). The diversity of anthropogenic 8 vegetation can be organized into three groups: trampled, weeds, and ruderals. In the 9 Iberian Atlantic ecoregion, anthropogenic habitats host one third of the ecoregion 10 plant species pool and one fifth of the Iberian flora. Mesic perennial ruderal 11 vegetation is especially rich in native species and can be a biodiversity asset in urban 12 ecosystems. Our ecoregion-level framework can improve the assessment and 13 management of anthropogenic plant communities within biogeographically 14 meaningful regions.

## Keywords (10 max)

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- 16 Synanthropic vegetation, manmade habitats, human-made habitats, urban biodiversity,
- 17 neophytes, archaeophytes, alien plants, habitat classification, semi-supervised classification,
- 18 Iberian Atlantic ecoregion

#### Introduction

2 Anthropogenic vegetation consists of plant communities assembled as a direct consequence 3 of human activities. In general, this vegetation is composed of so-called weeds of arable 4 fields and ruderal plants of human settlements and nearby habitats (Lososová & Simonova 5 2008). Anthropogenic communities make up an important part of the supply of biodiversity 6 in urban and peri-urban areas (Kowarik 2018). In densely populated landscapes, the plant 7 communities that colonize urban vacant lots (Johnson et al. 2017) are a useful natural 8 resource with high ecological and societal potential (Anderson & Minor 2017). 9 Anthropogenic vegetation can also mitigate regional-level extreme climatic events (Stefanon 10 et al. 2014). Furthermore, many synanthropic plants can accumulate heavy metals in their 11 biomass (Kostryukova et al. 2017), making them valuable candidates for nature-based 12 solutions such as bioremediation and restoration of degraded post-industrial landscapes 13 (Song et al. 2019). 14 In temperate Europe, anthropogenic vegetation is a melting pot of floras from different 15 origins. Starting with a pool of native species favored by humans, and constantly enriched 16 by human-assisted arrival of alien (i.e. non-native) species (Pokorná et al. 2018). The 17 introduction of archaeophytes (i.e. alien species arriving before 1.500 CE) likely started in 18 the early Neolithic and peaked in the Bronze Age, with successive waves during periods of 19 accelerated human colonization such as the early Middle Ages (Pokorná et al. 2018). In 20 Europe, synanthropic archaeophytes include many Mediterranean taxa originating from the 21 segetal flora of the Near East (Zohary 1950). Some of these archaeophytes are 'obligate 22 weeds' that do not occur in non-anthropogenic habitats and are assumed to have evolved

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together with human agriculture (Zohary 1950). Since many archaeophytes started their expansion into temperate areas during the Mid-Holocene warm period, it is difficult to disentangle to what extent this expansion was favored by human activities and/or ongoing climatic changes (Cayless & Tipping 2002; Cordova & Lehmann 2003). The synanthropic flora of Europe has been further enriched by neophytes, alien taxa that arrived after the expansion of intercontinental trade in the Modern Age (after 1.500 CE) (Brun 2009). Synanthropic neophytes therefore include many American, African, and Asian taxa that arrived in Europe because of the global trade networks established by western European colonialism (Lenzner et al. 2022). In the last century, the European anthropogenic vegetation has shown a decrease in species richness and diversity (Pyšek et al. 2004), as rare synanthropic species have become rarer, and neophytes have increased their abundance at the expense of natives and archaeophytes (Lososová & Simonova 2008). Despite the potential of anthropogenic vegetation as a biodiversity asset in human-made 14 landscapes, and its ecological interest as an assemblage of species pools from different biogeographical origins, human-made vegetation is largely absent from ecosystem management. A comprehensive management will require a solid definition, classification, and description of anthropogenic plant communities. However, the classification of anthropogenic vegetation is subject to particularities making it a special case compared to the classification of non-anthropogenic communities. In human-made habitats, the traditional understanding of community assembly based on sequential filtering (dispersal, abiotic, and biotic) must incorporate an additional filtering based on human preferences and actions (Swan et al. 2021). Human landscapes are a mosaic of land uses (Pauleit & Breuste 2011),

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having specific effects on plant community assembly, and driven by sociological rather than traditional ecological factors (Johnson et al. 2017). In addition to these potentially confounding factors, human-assisted dispersal means that anthropogenic floras are relatively homogeneous across large biogeographical scales. However, traditional phytosociology has tended to classify them with a level of detail similar to the one dedicated to nonanthropogenic vegetation, leading to an inflation of anthropogenic syntaxa (Loidi 2023). Another issue is defining anthropogenic vegetation, especially in a continent such as Europe where human impact on the landscape has been widespread since ancient times. The two major vegetation/habitat classifications coexisting in Europe today, phytosociological classification (Mucina et al. 2016) and the EUNIS habitat classification (Chytrý et al. 2020), have non-overlapping definitions of which plant communities fall within the 'anthropogenic' or 'manmade' categories. These issues are further muddled by the fact that most classification studies of anthropogenic vegetation have focused either on a restricted political unit (Nemec et al. 2011; Tabasevic, Jovanovic, et al. 2021) or in a subset of the vegetation, such as segetal (Zohary 1950), ruderal (Zaliberova 1995) or trampled (Golovanov et al. 2023) vegetation. There is a need for a numerical classification and synthesis of the full spectrum of anthropogenic vegetation, and an appropriate scale to conduct such study is the ecological region (ecoregion, hereafter), since these biogeographical units are assumed to encompass areas with a similar biogeographic history and recurrent local ecosystems (Bailey 2004). The Iberian Atlantic ecoregion (a.k.a. Cantabrian Mixed Forests ecoregion; NW Iberian Peninsula) has a long history of human habitation dating back to the Cantabrian Upper Paleolithic (Straus 2005). This, together with its transitional position at the border between

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the temperate and Mediterranean climatic zones of Europe (Loidi 2017), suggests a long regional history for archaeophyte-rich anthropogenic plant communities, supporting the current diverse anthropogenic vegetation with both temperate and Mediterranean floristic elements (Díaz González 2020). Moreover, historical trade links with America and Asia, together with the warm and humid temperate climate, have made the region a hotspot for biological invasions (Fernández de Castro et al. 2018; Lázaro-Lobo et al. 2024). Recent postindustrial land-use changes have left large areas with abandoned industrial sites (i.e. brownfields) whose management and restoration requires an understanding of the anthropogenic communities able to colonize them (Gallego et al. 2016; Matanzas et al. 2021). Although there is a long tradition of studying weed and ruderal communities in the ecoregion (Aedo et al. 1988; Fernández González et al. 1988; Penas Merino, Díaz González, García González, et al. 1988; Penas Merino, Díaz González, Pérez Morales, et al. 1988) there is a current need for an ecoregion-level synthesis that revises and updates the classification in accord with recent developments in European vegetation science (Mucina et al. 2016) and habitat classification (Chytrý et al. 2020). In this article, we have performed such a synthesis with the following two objectives: (1) to provide an updated classification of anthropogenic plant communities in the Iberian Atlantic ecoregion; and (2) to characterize the diversity of anthropogenic vegetation in terms of species pools (natives, archaeophytes, neophytes); species traits (life form, plant height, flowering phenology); and ecological requirements (temperature, moisture, light, nutrients, soil reaction, disturbance frequency, and disturbance severity).

#### Methods

- 2 Data curation and taxonomic criteria
- We performed all data management and analysis with R version 4.3.1 (R Core Team 2023),
- 4 using the R package *tidyverse* (Wickham et al. 2019) for data processing and visualization.
- 5 We homogenized all taxon names using Euro+Med (Euro+Med 2006) or Plants of the World
- 6 Online (POWO 2023) for taxa not in Euro+Med. For the nomenclature of syntaxa, we
- 7 followed Mucina et al. (2016) for alliances and higher ranks, and Rivas-Martínez et al. (2001)
- 8 for associations. The original datasets, as well as R code for analysis and creation of the
- 9 manuscript, are stored in a GitHub repository available at Zenodo (see 'Data availability
- 10 statement').
- 11 Study ecoregion
- We studied the anthropogenic plant communities of the Iberian Atlantic ecoregion
- (Fernández Prieto et al. 2020), i.e. the territories with a temperate climate in the north-
- western part of the Iberian Peninsula (NW Portugal, N Spain, SW France). Our study
- ecoregion broadly corresponds to the Cantabrian Mixed Forests ecoregion sensu Olson et al.
- 16 (2001), to the Iberian part of the European Atlantic province sensu Rivas-Martínez et al.
- 17 (2017) and to the Iberian section of the Atlantic biogeographical region of the European
- 18 Environmental Agency (https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/figures/biogeographical-
- regions-in-europe-2).
- 20 Definition of anthropogenic vegetation

- 1 To circumscribe our study vegetation, we followed the definition of anthropogenic vegetation
- 2 in the revised classification of the vegetation of Europe by Mucina *et al.* (2016). In our study
- 3 area, this potentially includes the vegetation classes *Polygono-Poetea annuae*, *Papaveretea*
- 4 rhoeadis, Digitario sanguinalis-Eragrostietea minoris, Chenopodietea, Sisymbrietea,
- 5 Bidentetea, Artemisietea vulgaris, and Epilobietea angustifolii. For the sake of completeness,
- 6 we also considered the class Cymbalario-Parietarietea diffusae included by Mucina et al.
- 7 (2016) in the vegetation of rock crevices and screes, since this class encompasses the
- 8 vegetation of human-made walls.
- 9 Checklist of anthropogenic syntaxa
- To assist in our classification, we prepared a checklist of anthropogenic syntaxa that could
- be present in our study ecoregion (Appendix S1), based on regional syntaxonomical
- 12 checklists (Izco et al. 2000; Díaz González 2020; Durán Gómez 2020) and recent revisions
- at the European level (Mucina et al. 2016; Preislerová et al. 2022). This syntaxonomical
- 14 checklist included 38 anthropogenic vegetation alliances that could be present in the Iberian
- 15 Atlantic ecoregion according to the literature.
- 16 Vegetation data selection
- 17 We retrieved Iberian Atlantic anthropogenic vegetation plots from the Iberian and
- Macaronesian Vegetation Information System (SIVIM) (Font et al. 2012). To identify plots
- as anthropogenic, we selected those plots that had been assigned by the original authors of
- 20 the plot into any anthropogenic syntaxa in our syntaxonomical checklist. However, since not
- all plots in SIVIM have an assigned syntaxon, we also retrieved additional plots using the

- expert system created by Chytrý et al. (2020) to classify vegetation plots into EUNIS pan-
- 2 European habitat types. We retrieved plots that had been assigned to any habitat related to
- 3 the anthropogenic vegetation classes we had previously defined: all habitats in the level 1
- 4 code V Vegetated man-made habitats, plus level 3 codes R55 Lowland moist or wet tall-herb
- 5 and fern fringe and R57 Herbaceous forest clearing vegetation. It must be noted that habitats
- 6 R55 and R57 include communities that are classified as R Grasslands and lands dominated
- 7 by forbs, mosses or lichens by EUNIS but as Anthropogenic vegetation by Mucina et al.
- 8 (2016). The extraction of data from SIVIM produced an initial pool of 3,160 vegetation plots,
- 9 to which we added 89 vegetation plots of urban or peri-urban plant communities sampled by
- us or extracted from local literature not included in SIVIM (Zabaleta Mendizábal 1990; Uría
- 11 Arizaga 2020).
- 12 Vegetation data cleaning
- We performed an exploratory data analysis of these 3,249 plots using modified Two-Way
- 14 Indicator Species Analysis (TWINSPAN) (Roleček et al. 2009) with the R package
- 15 twinspanR (Zelený 2021), 3 pseudospecies cut levels (0, 15, 25), a minimum group size of
- 16 10 plots, and Sørensen's average dissimilarity. During this analysis we identified 741 outlier
- plots which did not belong to either the target anthropogenic vegetation or to the geographical
- area of the ecoregion. The majority of these plots corresponded to coastal plant communities
- and had been misclassified by the expert system. We removed these plots, leaving a dataset
- of 2,508 vegetation plots for data analysis: 2,419 plots from SIVIM, originally recorded in
- 89 publications (**Appendix S2**); plus 89 plots added by us.
- 22 Training dataset for semi-supervised classification and validation of alliances

- To create a training dataset for the semi-supervised classification (see below), we started by 1 2 keeping only those plots (n = 2,201) that had been assigned by the original authors of the plot 3 to any of the 38 anthropogenic alliances defined in our syntaxonomical checklist (i.e., we 4 removed the plots without syntaxa, that had been retrieved solely by the expert system). We 5 further cleaned this subset using a preliminary TWINSPAN classification, in which we 6 attempted to match the plots into the 38 alliances. This step allowed us to identify those plots 7 in which there was an agreement between (1) our TWINSPAN-based classification and (2) 8 the classification based on the original author's syntaxon. These plots (n = 1,725) became 9 our training dataset for semi-supervised classification. Furthermore, this step allowed us to 10 validate which alliances from our syntaxonomical checklist were present in the study 11 ecoregion (n = 28) and which were absent (n = 10).
- 12 Semi-supervised classification

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Next, we conducted a semi-supervised classification of the whole dataset (n = 2,508 plots) into the 28 validated anthropogenic alliances. Semi-supervised classification uses a training subset of *a priori* classified vegetation plots to classify a secondary subset of unclassified plots (De Cáceres et al. 2010). Since our goal was to refine the classification of the whole dataset, we allowed plots from the training subset to be re-assigned to other alliances during the classification. In addition, semi-supervised classification can create new groups to place data points that do not match the already existing *a priori* groups, but attempts to do so resulted in new groups with no ecological significance, and thus we kept the 28 alliances as final anthropogenic vegetation groups. Furthermore, we applied a noise clustering fuzzy algorithm, which allows plots to be classified either into the *a priori* alliances or into a *noise* 

- 1 group which includes outliers and transitional plots (Wiser & De Cáceres 2013). We set the
- 2 fuzziness coefficient to a low value (m = 1) to accommodate a high number of transitional
- 3 plots; and we set the distance to the noise class to d = 1. We performed this analysis with the
- 4 R package vegclust (De Cáceres et al. 2010). The semi-supervised classification with noise
- 5 clustering resulted in the final classification of 2,081 plots into 28 alliances and 427 plots left
- 6 out in the noise group. We used pairwise PERMANOVA (with 100,000 iterations, Euclidean
- 7 distances, and Holm's p-value correction) fitted with the R package RVAideMemoire (Herve
- 8 2023) to test the significance of the final vegetation alliances; along with Principal
- 9 Component Analysis (PCA) as implemented in the R package *FactoMineR* (Lê et al. 2008)
- to visualize the relationships between the classes and alliances.
- 11 Characteristic species and EUNIS habitat correspondence
- 12 To facilitate the use of the classification by local managers and environmental consultants,
- we calculated sets of characteristic species (Appendix S3) (Chytrý et al. 2020) for each one
- of the final 28 vegetation alliances. We defined dominant species as species with more than
- 15 25% cover in at least 5% of the vegetation plots of the group; constant species as species with
- a frequency higher than 50% in the group; and diagnostic species as species whose *IndVal*
- had a p-value lower than 0.05, as calculated with the R package *labdsv* (Roberts 2016) using
- 18 1.000.000 iterations. Additionally, we assigned to each alliance its corresponding level-3
- 19 EUNIS habitat code or codes (https://eunis.eea.europa.eu/habitats-code-browser-
- 20 revised.jsp).
- 21 Species origin as native, archaeophyte, or neophyte

- 1 We classified the species as native, archaeophytes, or neophytes in the Iberian Atlantic
- 2 ecoregion using the information in *Flora iberica* (1987) and catalogues of archaeophytes for
- 3 Britain (Preston et al. 2004) and the Czech Republic (Chytrý et al. 2021). We must stress that
- 4 identifying archaeophytes in southern Europe is highly problematic (Celesti-Grapow et al.
- 5 2009) and our classification must be taken as an indication of putative archaeophyte character
- 6 for the purposes of vegetation description and comparison with other European regions,
- 7 rather than a definitive classification of the species; as stated by Preston *et al.* (Preston et al.
- 8 2004), the classification of a species as an archaeophyte should be interpreted as a hypothesis
- 9 to be tested by further studies.
- 10 Species life form
- 11 Using FloraVeg.EU (2023) we extracted the species' life forms and kept therophyte and
- 12 geophyte for further analysis since these two categories had the largest contribution to
- variance among alliances, as per an exploratory Principal Component Analysis (PCA)
- performed using the R package *FactoMineR* (Lê et al. 2008).
- 15 Species height and flowering phenology
- 16 From Flora iberica (1987) we extracted the maximum height, median month of flowering,
- and length of the flowering period of each species in the dataset. We used these variables to
- calculate plot-level community-weighted means (weighting by species cover) for each trait,
- 19 to characterize the vegetation height and flowering phenology of the anthropogenic plant
- 20 communities.
- 21 Species ecological indicator values

- 1 For each species in the dataset, we collected its ecological indicator values of temperature,
- 2 moisture, light, nutrients, and soil reaction (Dengler et al. 2023); and its disturbance
- 3 frequency and severity indicator values (Midolo et al. 2023). To those species lacking an
- 4 indicator value in the accessed references, we assigned a value by reciprocal averaging,
- 5 i.e. by (1) calculating weighted average values of the species with values for each plot
- 6 (weighting by species cover), and (2) assigning to the missing species the weighted average
- 7 values of the plots where they were present (weighting by species cover). Then, for each
- 8 vegetation plot, we calculated the plot-level mean of each indicator value.

#### Results

- 10 Overview of the classification
- 11 The semi-supervised classification resulted in the classification of 2,081 vegetation plots into
- 12 28 anthropogenic alliances (Fig. 1, Appendix S4) representing 9 vegetation classes. Most of
- the alliances had a wide distribution in the ecoregion according to our dataset, but five of
- 14 them (Caucalidion lappulae, Linario polygalifoliae-Vulpion alopecuri, Convolvulo arvensis-
- 15 Agropyrion repentis, Senecionion fluviatilis and Paspalo-Agrostion semiverticillati) had
- 16 isolated occurrences towards the southern limit of the Iberian Atlantic territories. The
- 17 regional literature included in our dataset recognized 72 associations (**Appendix S5**) within
- these alliances, but exploratory analysis (not shown) indicated that the separation of these
- 19 associations within the alliances had a generally weak support based on numerical
- 20 classification methods.

- 1 The classified plots included 1,162 taxa or taxa aggregates. The 10 most frequent species
- 2 were Ochlopoa annua (621 occurrences), Urtica dioica (592), Sonchus oleraceus (540),
- 3 Stellaria media (516), Capsella bursa-pastoris (390), Polygonum aviculare (375), Dactylis
- 4 glomerata (363), Senecio vulgaris (332), and Anisantha sterilis (301). Considering only those
- 5 plots with the most frequent plot size range (10-30 m<sup>2</sup>, n = 867 plots), the average species
- 6 richness per plot was 16 (minimum = 3, maximum = 48). The class with the richest species
- 7 pool was Epilobietea angustifolii (n = 615) and the poorest was Cymbalario-Parietarietea
- 8 diffusae (n = 171).
- 9 PCA ordination of the floristic composition (Fig. 2A) clearly differentiated three vegetation
- groups: (1) trampled vegetation of class *Polygono-Poetea annuae*; (2) crop weeds of classes
- 11 Papaveretea rhoeadis and Digitario sanguinalis-Eragrostietea minoris; and (3) perennial
- 12 ruderal vegetation of classes Artemisietea vulgaris and Epilobietea angustifolii. The central
- position of the floristic space, between these three major groups, was occupied by the annual
- ruderal vegetation of classes *Chenopodietea*, *Sisymbrietea*, and *Bidentetea*; as well as by the
- wall vegetation of class *Cymbalario-Parietarietea diffusae*. Separate PCAs within the major
- vegetation groups indicated a coherent separation between most of the alliances, but with
- some cases of relatively high overlap: for example, between (i) Galio valantiae-Parietarion
- 18 judaicae and Cymbalario-Asplenion; or (ii) Geo urbani-Alliarion officinalis and Aegopodion
- 19 podagrariae.
- 20 Proportion of natives, archaeophytes and neophytes
- 21 The total synanthropic species pool (n = 1,162) was composed of 78% natives (n = 908),
- 22 15% putative archaeophytes (n = 178), and 7% neophytes (n = 76). The most frequent

- putative archaeophytes were Capsella bursa-pastoris (390 occurrences), Senecio vulgaris
- 2 (332), Anisantha sterilis (301), Anthemis arvensis (280), Hordeum murinum (274), Raphanus
- 3 raphanistrum (233), Vicia sativa (228), Malva sylvestris (197), Sisymbrium officinale (166),
- 4 and Echinochloa crus-galli (165); while the most frequent neophytes were Veronica persica
- 5 (212), Erigeron canadensis (138), Amaranthus hybridus (73), Oxalis corniculata (67),
- 6 Lepidium didymum (57), Oxalis latifolia (51), Paspalum distichum (48), Bidens frondosus
- 7 (35), Cyperus eragrostis (34), and Symphyotrichum squamatum (33).
- 8 By vegetation class, *Epilobietea angustifolii* had the highest proportion of natives in its
- 9 species pool (82%); Sisymbrietea had the highest proportion of putative archaeophytes
- 10 (31%); and *Bidentetea* had the highest proportion of neophytes (17%). The alliances with the
- 11 highest proportions of archaeophytes in their species pools were Caucalidion lappulae
- 12 (41%), Chenopodion muralis (35%%), and Sisymbrion officinalis (31%); while the alliances
- with the highest proportion of neophytes were *Bidention tripartitae* (19%), *Allion triquetri*
- 14 (12%), and Spergulo arvensis-Erodion cicutariae (10%).
- 15 At the community level, focusing on plot average proportions (**Fig. 3**), the alliances with the
- most archaeophytes were Caucalidion lappulae, Spergulo arvensis-Erodion cicutariae, and
- 17 Sisymbrion officinalis, in which only about half of the plot-level proportion was made up of
- 18 native species. The alliances with the highest plot-level proportion of neophytes were
- 19 Bidention tripartitae, Paspalo-Agrostion semiverticillati, and Senecionion fluviatilis. Some
- 20 alliances had high proportions of native species, e.g. Epilobion angustifolii, Convolvulo
- 21 arvensis-Agropyrion repentis, and Linario polygalifoliae-Vulpion alopecuri.
- 22 Community-level traits

1 The most frequent life form in the species pool (n = 1,162 species) were hemicryptophytes (44%), followed by therophytes (42%), geophytes (9%), chamaephytes (6%), phanerophytes 2 3 (6%), bryophytes (1%), and hydrophytes (1%). The proportion of therophytes across classes 4 and alliances (Fig. 4) agreed with the traditional description of the syntaxa: therophytes 5 dominated the annual communities of trampled-soil vegetation (*Polygono-Poetea annuae*), 6 crops weeds (Papaveretea rhoeadis, Digitario sanguinalis-Eragrostietea minoris), and 7 annual ruderals (Chenopodietea, Sisymbrietea, Bidentetea); while perennial life forms 8 (especially hemicryptophytes) dominated walls (Cymbalario-Parietarietea diffusae) and 9 perennial ruderal vegetation (Artemisietea vulgaris, Epilobietea angustifolii). Geophytes 10 represented a relatively high proportion of the vegetation in three alliances: *Allion triquetri*, 11 Convolvulo arvensis-Agropyrion repentis, and Senecionion fluviatilis. 12 Community-weighted means for plant height (Fig. 5A) also agreed with the expected 13 description of the syntaxa: the shortest communities were the dwarf-herb vegetation of 14 trampled sites (*Polygono-Poetea annuae*, average height = 45.2 cm) and crop weeds 15 (Papaveretea rhoeadis, 55.4 cm), while the tallest were the perennial ruderal vegetation of 16 dry (Artemisietea vulgaris, 129 cm) and mesic (Epilobietea angustifolii, 136 cm) sites. The 17 median month of flowering (Fig. 5B) corresponded to May (Sisymbrietea, Chenopodietea, 18 Papaveretea rhoeadis), June (Cymbalario-Parietarietea diffusae, Polygono-Poetea annuae, 19 Epilobietea angustifolii, Artemisietea vulgaris) or July (Digitario sanguinalis-Eragrostietea 20 minoris, Bidentetea). The length of the flowering season (Fig. 5C) was generally high, from 21 months (Artemisietea vulgaris, Epilobietea angustifolii) to 6 (Chenopodietea,

- 1 Sisymbrietea), 7 (Bidentetea, Digitario sanguinalis-Eragrostietea minoris, Papaveretea
- 2 rhoeadis), 8 (Polygono-Poetea annuae), or 9 (Cymbalario-Parietarietea diffusae).
- 3 Community-level ecological preferences
- 4 To visualize the major patterns of variation in the ecological and disturbance preferences of
- 5 the different anthropogenic communities (Fig. 6) we performed a PCA ordination of plot-
- 6 level means (Fig. 7). The first two PCA axes explained 59% of the variability. The major
- 7 contributors to axis 1 (36% variance explained) were light, nutrient, and moisture
- 8 requirements; it separated communities of open, dry and comparatively nutrient-poorer sites
- 9 (classes Papaveretea rhoeadis, Polygono-Poetea annuae, Sisymbrietea, Artemisietea
- 10 vulgaris, Chenopodietea, and Digitario sanguinalis-Eragrostietea minoris) from
- 11 communities of shady, moist and nutrient-richer sites (classes Cymbalario-Parietarietea
- 12 diffusae, Bidentetea, and Epilobietea angustifolii). The major contributors to axis 2 (23%
- variance explained) were disturbance severity and frequency; this axis separated
- 14 communities preferring less severe and less frequent disturbances (classes Cymbalario-
- 15 Parietarietea diffusae, Epilobietea angustifolii, Chenopodietea, Artemisietea vulgaris and
- 16 Bidentetea) from communities adapted to more severe and more frequent disturbances
- 17 (classes Papaveretea rhoeadis, Polygono-Poetea annuae, Sisymbrietea and Digitario
- 18 sanguinalis-Eragrostietea minoris).

#### Discussion

- 20 Our synthesis of the anthropogenic vegetation at the ecoregion level has detected a
- 21 discrepancy between the number of vegetation units described in the literature (i.e. 38

alliances) and the number supported by numerical classification (28 alliances). Our

- classification supported that anthropogenic vegetation can be broadly divided into three groups belonging to trampled, weed, and ruderal communities. These groups are organized along a principal axis of variation related to abiotic stress, and a second axis related to disturbance. These two axes determine the characteristics of the communities in terms of
- 6 species origins and species traits. This synthesis allows for a better understanding of
- 7 anthropogenic vegetation, as a first step towards a better integration of this biodiversity asset
- 8 into ecosystem management and nature-based solutions.

- 9 Vegetation and habitat classification of anthropogenic communities
- 10 Our analysis supports the existence of 28 anthropogenic alliances in the vegetation of the 11 Iberian Atlantic ecoregion. While the core of this vegetation diversity is made up of temperate 12 European alliances, these are enriched by the occurrence of eight Mediterranean alliances 13 (Galio valantiae-Parietarion judaicae, Polycarpion tetraphylli, Allion triquetri, 14 Chenopodion muralis, Echio-Galactition tomentosae, Paspalo-Agrostion semiverticillati, 15 Balloto-Conion maculati and Cynancho-Convolvulion sepium); plus three alliances that are 16 endemic of the Iberian coasts (Linario polygalifoliae-Vulpion alopecuri) and mountains 17 (Carduo carpetani-Cirsion odontolepidis, Cirsion richterano-chodati) (Mucina et al. 2016). 18 Seven of these alliances had been reported as absent or uncertain in the ecoregion 19 (Caucalidion lappulae, Chenopodion muralis), or only present in the Portuguese sector of 20 the ecoregion (Spergulo arvensis-Erodion cicutariae, Allion triquetri, Echio-Galactition 21 tomentosae, Carduo carpetani-Cirsion odontolepidis, Cynancho-Convolvulion sepium) by 22 the recently published distribution maps of vegetation alliances in Europe (Preislerová et al.

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2022). Our dataset supports that six of these alliances are relatively well distributed in the ecoregion, while Caucalidion lappulae only has isolated occurrences. On the other hand, our dataset does not support the occurrence in the ecoregion of nine Mediterranean alliances (Roemerion hybridae, Diplotaxion erucoidis, Euphorbion prostratae, Alysso granatensis-Brassicion barrelieri, Hordeion murini, Taeniathero-Aegilopion geniculatae, Parietarion lusitanico-mauritanicae, Onopordion castellani, Silybo mariani-Urticion piluliferae) and one temperate alliance (Fragarion vescae) that had been cited as potentially occurring here (Izco et al. 2000; Mucina et al. 2016; Díaz González 2020; Durán Gómez 2020; Preislerová et al. 2022). For habitat classification purposes, we propose that this vegetation diversity can be summarized into 15 EUNIS habitat types: one constructed habitat (J2.5), ten vegetated human-made habitats (V11, V12, V13, V15, V32, V35, V34, V37, V38, V39), three habitats of woodland fringes and clearings and tall forb stands (R54, R55, R57) and one habitat of periodically-exposed shores (Q61). In general, we have followed the correspondence between alliances and EUNIS habitats proposed by the EUNIS expert system (Chytrý et al. 2020), except for *Echio-Galactition tomentosae* which, in the context of the ecoregion, seems to be more adequately placed in the habitat V37 Annual anthropogenic herbaceous vegetation rather than in the habitat V33 Dry Mediterranean land with unpalatable non-vernal herbaceous vegetation. Since our goal was to match the classification of the ecoregion classification to the EuroVegChecklist (Mucina et al. 2016), we refrained from merging recognized alliances or changing their assignation to superior syntaxa. However, there are some cases that could deserve further scrutiny. For example, the two wall alliances (Galio valantiae-Parietarion

- 1 judaicae and Cymbalario-Asplenion) had a large overlap in their geographic distribution,
- 2 their floristic composition, their proportion of alien species, their community traits, and their
- 3 ecological preferences. These two alliances are well recognized in the European literature,
- 4 and they are generally interpreted as representing the Mediterranean (Galio valantiae-
- 5 Parietarion judaicae) and temperate (Cymbalario-Asplenion) versions of wall vegetation
- 6 (Brullo & Guarino 1998; Jasprica et al. 2021). It is therefore not surprising that in
- 7 biogeographic transitional regions such as the Iberian Atlantic territories these two
- 8 alliances coexist and show a high overlap. Also, there was overlap between the alliances *Geo*
- 9 urbani-Alliarion officinalis and Aegopodion podagrariae, two alliances that can occupy
- ruderal to semi-natural nitrophilous fringes, and which are mostly differentiated by dominant
- vegetation height, as was supported by our dataset.
- 12 Characterization of anthropogenic communities
- We found 22% non-native species (including neophytes and archaeophytes) in the
- anthropogenic vegetation of the Iberian Atlantic ecoregion. This percentage is intermediate
- between that found in urban areas of temperate Europe and North America (30-50%) (Pyšek
- 16 1998; Clemants & Moore 2003; La Sorte et al. 2007; Lososová et al. 2012) and Italy (12-
- 17 26%) (Celesti-Grapow & Blasi 1998). A survey of anthropogenic vegetation in the north-
- west Balkans found 13% non-native plants, with more neophytes than archaeophytes (Silc et
- al. 2012). A similar study in the Czech Republic found 32% archaeophytes and 7% neophytes
- 20 (Simonova & Lososová 2008). Taken together, these results suggest that the Iberian Atlantic
- 21 anthropogenic vegetation shows an incidence of non-native species that is intermediate
- between southern and central-northern Europe, which is in agreement with the

biogeographical position of our ecoregion. Previous studies also suggested that the non-1 2 natives were more frequent in early successional anthropogenic communities (Pyšek et al. 3 2004), and our results confirmed this as the proportion of native species tended to be higher 4 in the perennial ruderal classes Artemisietea vulgaris and Epilobietea angustifolii. The 5 classes with more non-native species also tended to be those adapted to more frequent and 6 more severe disturbances (Papaveretea rhoeadis, Digitario sanguinalis-Eragrostietea 7 minoris, Sisymbrietea), also in agreement with previous research (Simonova & Lososová 8 2008). Archaeophytes had a higher proportion in the vegetation associated to arable habitats 9 (Papaveretea rhoeadis, Digitario sanguinalis-Eragrostietea minoris, Sisymbrietea), in 10 agreement with the ancient origin of archaeophytes during the development of agriculture 11 (Zohary 1950; Preston et al. 2004). On the other hand, neophytes tended to be in higher 12 proportions in vegetation types associated to wet conditions (Bidentetea), as has been found in other European regions (Chytrý et al. 2008). 13 14 The traits of the Iberian Atlantic anthropogenic communities agreed with those found in other 15 European regions (Lososová et al. 2006; Silc 2010), with more annual species in habitats 16 associated to arable land and more perennials in ruderal habitats, and a general dominance of 17 therophytes and hemicryptophytes in the species pool (Tabasevic, Lakusic, et al. 2021). We 18 found that the main drivers of variation in anthropogenic community composition was a 19 gradient from open-dry to shady-wet sites, supporting the importance of the moisture gradient 20 in shaping anthropogenic vegetation (Golovanov et al. 2023). Mesic and moist human-made habitats of the Iberian Atlantic territories harbor perennial communities, some of which are

- 1 especially rich in native species and have semi-natural characters. At the same time, the
- 2 wetter habitats have some of the higher prevalences of non-native species.

#### Conclusions

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4 Ecoregion-level synthesis detected a discrepancy between the number of anthropogenic 5 vegetation units described in the literature and the number supported by numerical 6 classification. The diversity of anthropogenic vegetation can be organized into trampled, 7 weed and ruderal communities varying primarily along an axis of abiotic stress. Importantly, 8 the anthropogenic vegetation of the Iberian Atlantic ecoregion is home to 1,162 plant taxa. 9 This is approximately one third of the whole ecoregion species pool represented in the SIVIM 10 database (Font et al. 2012), and one fifth of the Iberian flora (Ramos-Gutiérrez et al. 2021). 11 More than half of this synanthropic diversity (615 taxa) occurs in mesic to wet perennial 12 ruderal vegetation, highlighting the potential of some anthropogenic habitats as a source of 13 biodiversity in human-dominated landscapes (Anderson & Minor 2017; Kowarik 2018). 14 These results suggest three main objectives for the sustainable management of human-made 15 habitats: (1) focusing efforts on alien plant management in anthropogenic plant communities 16 of wet habitats; (2) conserving examples of archaeophyte-rich annual weed communities, 17 especially those linked to traditional agricultural practices (Meyer et al. 2013); and (3) 18 conserving and promoting mesic ruderal and fringe vegetation as a biodiversity refuge in 19 urban and peri-urban areas.

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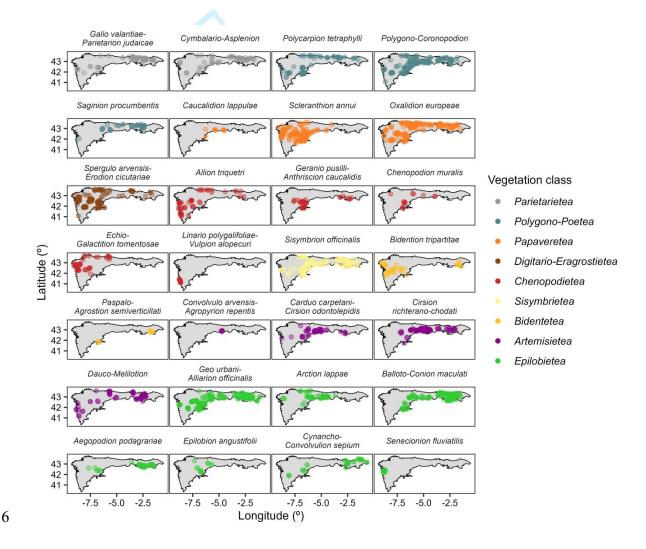
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## 10 **Supplementary Information**

- 11 Appendix S1 Checklist of anthropogenic syntaxa that could be present in the Iberian Atlantic
- ecoregion according to the literature. Syntaxa names are provided as recorded by the original
- authors of the vegetation plot. The file indicates if the presence of the syntaxon in the Iberian
- 14 Atlantic ecoregion was validated or not by our analysis.
- 15 Appendix S2 Original publications providing the vegetation plots stored in SIVIM and used
- in our analysis.
- 17 **Appendix S3** Characteristic species combinations of the anthropogenic vegetation alliances
- in spreadsheet format, divided into diagnostic, constant, and dominant species.

- 1 Appendix S4 Synthetic description of the 28 alliances present in the Iberian Atlantic
- 2 anthropogenic vegetation.
- 3 Appendix S5 Revised checklist of vegetation associations described in the regional literature
- 4 and belonging to the 28 alliances present in the Iberian Atlantic anthropogenic vegetation.

# Figures



- 7 Figure 1: Anthropogenic vegetation alliances of the Iberian Atlantic ecoregion. Each dot is
- 8 a vegetation plot. Dot colors indicate the vegetation class.

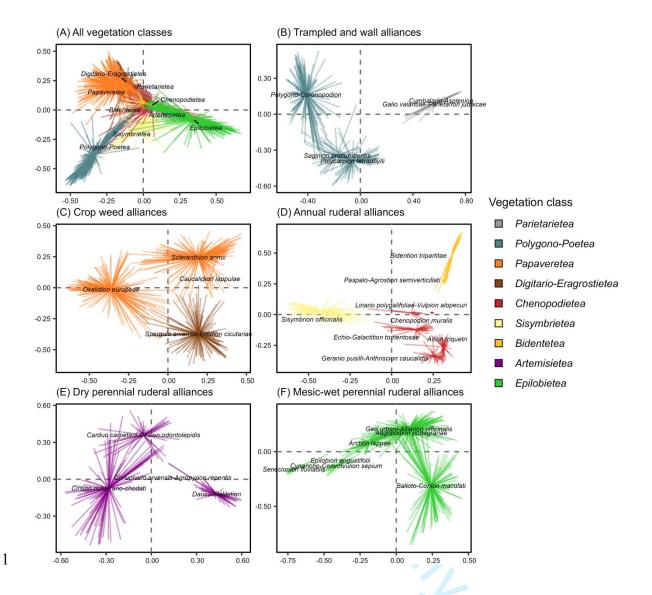


Figure 2: Floristic diversity of the anthropogenic plant communities of the Iberian Atlantic ecoregion. Biplots produced by Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Hellinger transformation. PCAs were conducted for the whole vegetation (A) and for specific subsets (B-F). Colors indicate the vegetation class.

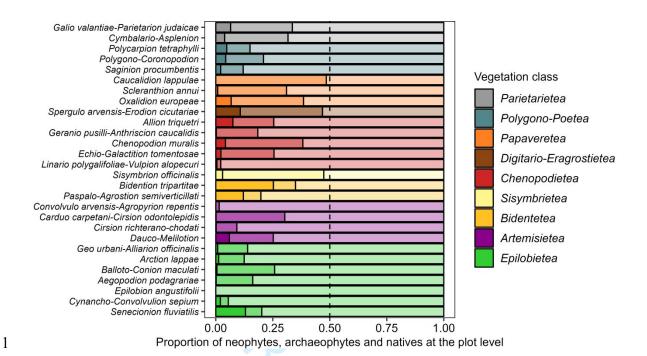


Figure 3: Proportion of neophytes, archaeophytes, and native species in the anthropogenic plant communities of the Iberian Atlantic ecoregion. Each bar represents the plot-level average proportion of neophytes (dark shade), archaeophytes (medium shade), and natives (light shade) in each vegetation alliance. Colors indicate the vegetation class.

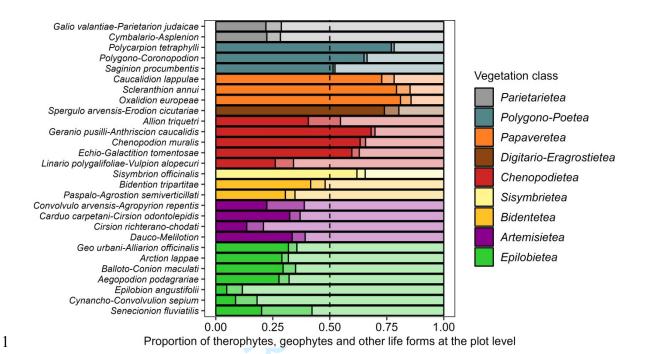


Figure 4: Proportion of therophytes, geophytes, and other life forms (hemicryptophytes, chamaephytes, phanerophytes, bryophytes, hydrophytes) in the anthropogenic plant communities of the Iberian Atlantic ecoregion. Each bar represents the plot-level average proportion of therophytes (dark shade), geophytes (medium shade), and other life forms (light shade) in each vegetation alliance. Colors indicate the vegetation class.

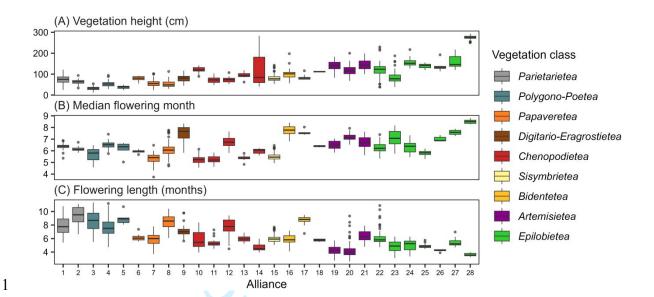


Figure 5: Vegetation height and flowering phenology of the anthropogenic plant communities of the Iberian Atlantic ecoregion. Boxplots show the community-weighted mean for plant height, median month of flowering, and length of the flowering season for each vegetation alliance. Colors indicate the vegetation class. Alliances as ordered as in Figures 1 and 3-4, and alliance numbers are the same as listed in Appendix S4.

4

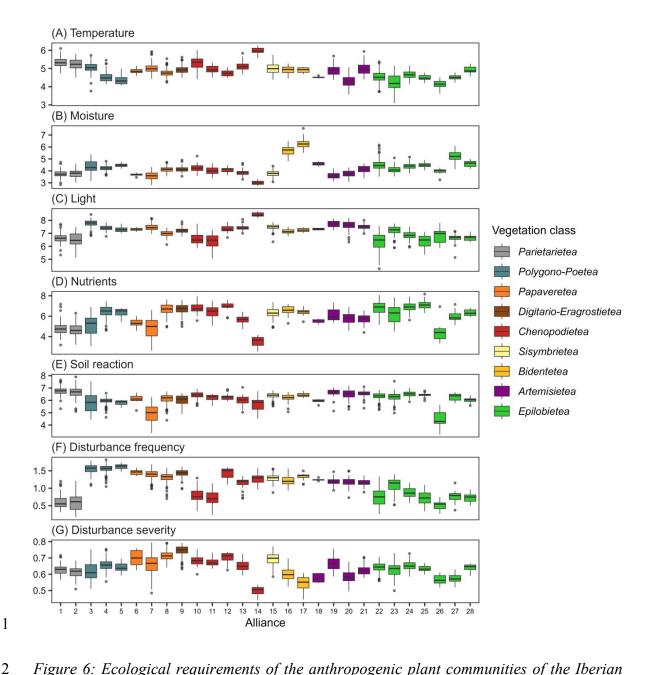


Figure 6: Ecological requirements of the anthropogenic plant communities of the Iberian Atlantic ecoregion. Boxplots show the plot-level means for the ecological indicator values of temperature, moisture, light, nutrients, soil reaction, disturbance frequency, and disturbance severity, calculated for each vegetation alliance. Colors indicate the vegetation class.

- 1 Alliances as ordered as in Figures 1 and 3-4, and alliance numbers are the same as listed in
- 2 Appendix S4.

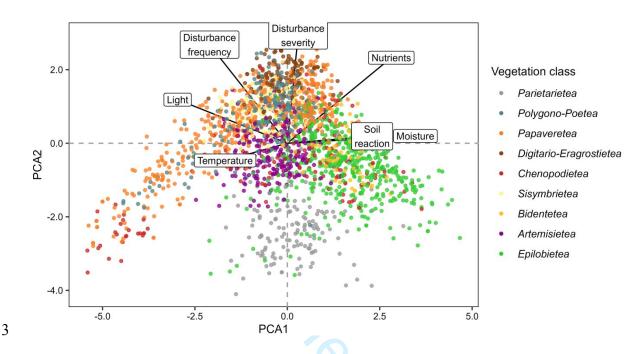


Figure 7: Ecological requirements of the anthropogenic plant communities of the Iberian

Atlantic ecoregion. Biplot produced by Principal Component Analysis (PCA) of the plot-level

means for the ecological indicator values of temperature, moisture, light, nutrients, soil

reaction, disturbance frequency, and disturbance severity. Labels and arrows indicate the

contribution of each indicator to the first and second principal components. Colors indicate

the vegetation class.

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Alliance	Species	Type	Value
Aegopodio	Urtica dioic	Constant	100
Aegopodio	Anthriscus	Constant	100
Aegopodio	Galium apa	Constant	97.05882
Aegopodio	Heracleum	Constant	79.41176
Aegopodio	Anisantha s	Constant	67.64706
• .	Geranium r		58.82353
	Lamium ma		50
	Rumex obti		50
• .	Anthriscus		97.58415
• .	Heracleum	•	58.05971
	Galium apa	-	34.1514
	Anthriscus	-	97.05882
	Urtica dioic		38.23529
• .	Galium apa		26.47059
• .	Urtica mem		67.85714
•	Sonchus ol		58.92857
•	Urtica mem		64.40183
•	Smyrnium (	_	45.56765
•	Tradescant	-	34.79457
•	Smyrnium (	-	46.42857
•	Urtica mem		44.64286
•	Tradescant		14.28571
•	Urtica dioic		10.71429
•	:Allium triqu		7.142857
•	Urtica dioic		89.28571
	Oxybasis ru		64.28571
	Senecio du		57.14286
	Oxybasis ru		63.40707
	Senecio du		53.84273
	Oxybasis ru	-	33.92857
	Senecio du		14.28571
	Urtica dioic		10.71429
	Blitum bonu		7.142857
	Urtica dioic		96.06299
	Sambucus		81.88976
	Galium apa	_	74.80315
	Sambucus		74.4542
	Sambucus		59.05512
	Urtica dioic		27.55906
	Conium ma		22.04724
	Galium apa		10.23622
	Lythrum sa		87.23404
	Persicaria I		80.85106
	Bidens fron		70.21277
	Helosciadiu		59.57447
	Lycopus eu		57.44681
	Phalaroides		55.31915
	Cyperus en		53.19149
	Echinochlo		53.19149
	Persicaria I		51.06383
	Persicaria I		80.12695
	Bidens fron		70.16011
	Lythrum sa		59.32772
	Helosciadiu	-	55.99265
	Phalaroides		53.24776
2.4511101111	. Halarolaet	- lagi lootio	55. <u>2</u> -777

Bidention trCyperus en Diagnostic	50.0326	
Bidention trDysphania Diagnostic	38.0004	
Bidention trBidens fron Dominant	59.57447	
Bidention trPersicaria l Dominant	53.19149	
Bidention trPersicaria I Dominant	27.65957	
Bidention trXanthium o Dominant	19.14894	
Bidention trLythrum sa Dominant	8.510638	
Bidention trArtemisia v Dominant	8.510638	
Carduo car Onopordun Constant	88.37209	
Carduo car Echium vul Constant	67.44186	
Carduo car Carduus ca Constant	60.46512	
Carduo car Dipsacus ft Constant	55.81395	
Carduo car Lactuca vin Constant	51.16279	
Carduo car Rumex cris Constant	51.16279	
Carduo car Onopordun Diagnostic	86.21676	
Carduo car Onopordun Dominant	48.83721	
Carduo car Echium vul Dominant	11.62791	
Carduo car Carduus ca Dominant	6.976744	
Caucalidior Cyanus seç Constant	100	
Caucalidior Papaver rh Constant	90	
Caucalidior Anthemis a Constant	80	
Caucalidior Convolvulu Constant	60	
Caucalidior Vicia sativa Constant	60	
Caucalidior Trifolium ar Constant	50	
Caucalidior Anacyclus · Constant	50	
Caucalidior Bromus hol Constant	50	
Caucalidior Chenopodii Constant	50	
Caucalidior Trifolium ca Constant	50	
Caucalidior Cyanus se Diagnostic	96.69095	
Caucalidior Papaver rh Diagnostic	70.22851	
CaucalidiorTrifolium ar Diagnostic	38.74341	
Caucalidior Anacyclus Diagnostic	37.17855	
Caucalidior Valerianella Diagnostic	20	
Caucalidior Cyanus se Dominant	30	
Caucalidior Anthoxanth Dominant	10	
Caucalidior Anacyclus (Dominant	10	
CaucalidiorPapaver rh Dominant	10	
Chenopodi Malva negli Constant	85.71429	
ChenopodicPolygonum Constant	64.28571	
ChenopodicUrtica uren: Constant	64.28571	
Chenopodi Plantago la Constant	57.14286	
Chenopodio Ochlopoa a Constant	50	
Chenopodi Malva negli Diagnostic	74.80469	
ChenopodicUrtica uren Diagnostic	62.6446	
ChenopodicUrtica uren Dominant	28.57143	
Chenopodi Amaranthu Dominant	14.28571	
ChenopodicAtriplex ros Dominant	14.28571	
ChenopodicArtemisia a Dominant	7.142857	
Chenopodi/Polygonum Dominant	7.142857	
Chenopodi Malva negli Dominant	7.142857	
Circion rich Carduus ca Constant	64	
Cirsion rich Cirsium eric Constant Cirsion rich Jacobaea v Constant	63 56	
Cirsion richCirsium vul Constant	55 55	
Cirsion rich Cirsium arv Constant	52	
Cirsion rich Cirsium eric Diagnostic	59.98642	
Choich Horronaldin ent Diagnostic	JJ.JUU42	

0	40 =000
Cirsion rich Carduus ca Diagnostic	40.5036
Cirsion rich Carduus nu Diagnostic	35.80729
Cirsion rich Cirsium eric Dominant	22
Cirsion rich Cirsium rich Dominant	19
Cirsion rich Carduus ca Dominant	15
Cirsion rich Carduus nu Dominant	9
Cirsion rich Cirsium arv Dominant	9
Cirsion richJacobaea v Dominant	5
Convolvulo Avenella fle Constant	100
Convolvulo Poa compreConstant	100
Convolvulo Potentilla re Constant	100
Convolvulo Rumex cris Constant	100
	100
Convolvulo Elytrigia rer Constant	
Convolvulo Valerianella Constant	80
Convolvulo Cirsium arv Constant	60
Convolvulo Rumex con Constant	60
Convolvulo Sisymbrella Constant	60
Convolvulo Herniaria gl Constant	60
Convolvulo Carex hirta Constant	60
Convolvulo Chamaeme Constant	60
Convolvulo Convolvulu Constant	60
Convolvulo Poa compre Diagnostic	99.85401
Convolvulo Elytrigia rer Diagnostic	98.09415
Convolvulo Potentilla re Diagnostic	88.36032
Convolvulo Valerianella Diagnostic	64.68805
Convolvulo Sisymbrella Diagnostic	59.85528
Convolvulo Avenella fle Diagnostic	55.82589
Convolvulo Herniaria gi Diagnostic	51.77459
Convolvulo Carex hirta Diagnostic	46.47453
Convolvulo Rumex cris Diagnostic	42.5174
Convolvulo Carum vert Diagnostic	39.95322
Convolvulo Sanguisorb Diagnostic	39.31741
Convolvulo Elytrigia rer Dominant	100
Convolvulo Potentilla re Dominant	40
Cymbalario Cymbalaria Constant	100
•	67.79661
Cymbalario Asplenium Constant	52.54237
Cymbalario Parietaria ji Constant	
Cymbalario Cymbalaria Diagnostic	79.10389
Cymbalario Cymbalaria Dominant	57.62712
Cynancho-(Eupatorium Constant	100
Cynancho-(Picris hiera Constant	73.52941
Cynancho-(Angelica sy Constant	67.64706
Cynancho-(Mentha sua Constant	58.82353
Cynancho-(Rubus ulmi Constant	50
Cynancho-(Eupatorium Diagnostic	96.31208
Cynancho-(Angelica sy Diagnostic	64.24655
Cynancho-(Picris hiera Diagnostic	44.4771
Cynancho-(Eupatorium Dominant	61.76471
Cynancho-(Mentha sua Dominant	17.64706
Cynancho-(Angelica sy Dominant	14.70588
Cynancho-(Mentha Ion Dominant	5.882353
Cynancho-(Ranunculu: Dominant	5.882353
Dauco-MeliDaucus car Constant	89.85507
Dauco-MeliHelminthotl Constant	65.21739
Dauco-MeliPlantago la Constant	55.07246
Dauco-MeliFoeniculur Constant	53.62319
	33.320.0

Dauco-MeliHolcus Iana Constant	52.17391
Dauco-MeliDactylis glc Constant	50.72464
Dauco-MeliHelminthotl Diagnostic	55.37944
Dauco-MeliDaucus car Diagnostic	50.5155
Dauco-MeliMelilotus al Diagnostic	44.07194
Dauco-MeliFoeniculur Diagnostic	40.92062
Dauco-MeliFoeniculur Dominant	24.63768
Dauco-MeliMelilotus al Dominant	20.28986
Dauco-MeliHelminthotl Dominant	15.94203
Dauco-MeliDipsacus ft Dominant	10.14493
Dauco-MeliErigeron ca Dominant	5.797101
Dauco-MeliDaucus car Dominant	5.797101
Echio-Gala Galactites t Constant	100
Echio-Gala Dactylis glc Constant	65.85366
Echio-Gala Sonchus ol Constant	65.85366
Echio-Gala Daucus car Constant	65.85366
Echio-Gala Vicia sativa Constant	63.41463
Echio-Gala Plantago la Constant	63.41463
Echio-Gala Coleosteph Constant	58.53659
Echio-Gala Holcus Iana Constant	51.21951
Echio-Gala Lolium mult Constant	51.21951
Echio-Gala Galactites t Diagnostic	96.22819
Echio-Gala Coleosteph Diagnostic	42.53218
Echio-Gala Anisantha r Diagnostic	37.76593
Echio-Gala Galactites t Dominant	68.29268
Echio-Gala Anisantha r Dominant	21.95122
Echio-Gala Coleosteph Dominant	12.19512
Echio-Gala Echium vul Dominant	9.756098
Epilobion a Epilobium ¿ Constant	100
Epilobion a Digitalis pu Constant	83.33333
Epilobion a Avenella fle Constant	50
Epilobion a Epilobium & Diagnostic	99.71709
Epilobion a Digitalis pu Diagnostic	68.54322
Epilobion a Luzula lact Diagnostic	39.93985
Epilobion a Helictochlo Diagnostic	25
Epilobion a Vaccinium Diagnostic	25
Epilobion a Peucedanu Diagnostic	25
Epilobion a Eryngium d Diagnostic	24.80086
Epilobion a Epilobium ¿ Dominant	66.66667
Epilobion a Avenella fle Dominant	8.333333
Galio valan Parietaria ji Constant	95
Galio valan Cymbalaria Constant	80
Galio valan Asplenium Constant	60
Galio valan Centranthu Constant	51.25
Galio valan Asplenium Constant	51.25
Galio valan Parietaria ji Diagnostic	72.22401
Galio valan Centranthu Diagnostic	44.80099
Galio valan Asplenium Diagnostic	38.89201
Galio valan Parietaria ji Dominant	37.5
Galio valan Centranthu Dominant	12.5
Galio valan Asplenium Dominant	8.75
Galio valan Hypericum Dominant	6.25
Galio valan Erigeron ka Dominant	5
Galio valan Cymbalaria Dominant	5
Geo urbani Urtica dioic Constant	94.68085
Geo urbani Galium apa Constant	66.48936

Geo urbani Urtica dioic Diagnostic	31.86205
Geo urbani Urtica dioic Dominant	62.23404
Geo urbani Galium apa Dominant	15.42553
Geo urbani Geranium r Dominant	7.446809
Geo urbani Pentaglottis Dominant	7.446809
Geranio pu Geranium I Constant	100
Geranio pu Galium apa Constant	82.35294
Geranio pu Anthriscus Constant	58.82353
Geranio pu Anisantha ؛ Constant	55.88235
Geranio pu Geranium I Diagnostic	87.9836
Geranio pu Anthriscus Diagnostic	52.50239
Geranio pu Geranium I Dominant	70.58824
Geranio pu Anthriscus Dominant	23.52941
Linario polyVulpia alop Constant	70.83333
Linario polyArtemisia c Constant	62.5
Linario polyCrucianella Constant	62.5
Linario polyJasione mc Constant	62.5
Linario polyMalcolmia I Constant	62.5
Linario polyAmmophila Constant	58.33333
Linario polyHelichrysur Constant	58.33333
Linario polyLeontodon Constant	54.16667
Linario polyVulpia alop Diagnostic	70.83333
Linario polyMalcolmia I Diagnostic	62.5
Linario polyCrucianella Diagnostic	62.5
Linario polyArtemisia c Diagnostic	62.37784
Linario polyAmmophila Diagnostic	58.33333
Linario polyHelichrysur Diagnostic	58.33333
Linario polyLeontodon Diagnostic	54.16667
Linario polyJasione mc Diagnostic	52.52241
Linario polyLinaria poly Diagnostic	41.66667
Linario polyCorynepho Diagnostic	41.66667
Linario polyScrophulari Diagnostic	39.67002
Linario polySeseli tortu Diagnostic	37.5
Linario polyCistus salvi Diagnostic	33.33333
Linario polyAchillea ma Diagnostic	20.83333
Linario polyDaphne gn Diagnostic	20.83333
Linario polyPancratium Diagnostic	20.83333
Linario polySilene porti Diagnostic	20.83333
Linario polyVulpia alop Dominant	20.83333
Linario polyArtemisia c Dominant	16.66667
Linario polyCarex aren Dominant	8.333333
Linario polyCistus salvi Dominant	8.333333
Linario polyCorema alt Dominant	8.333333
Linario polyCrucianella Dominant	8.333333
Oxalidion eStellaria mcConstant	96.60194
Oxalidion eSenecio vu Constant	72.3301
Oxalidion eVeronica pcConstant	69.90291
Oxalidion eOchlopoa aConstant	62.62136
Oxalidion eSonchus ol Constant	62.13592
Oxalidion eStellaria mcDiagnostic	62.79958
Oxalidion eVeronica pe Diagnostic	58.57388
Oxalidion eStellaria mcDominant	54.85437
Oxalidion eOchlopoa a Dominant	11.65049
Oxalidion eVeronica pe Dominant	9.223301
Paspalo-AçPaspalum (Constant	100
Paspalo-AgPersicaria I Constant	75
. 5	

Paspalo-AcCyperus loi Constant	68.75
Paspalo-AcLythrum sa Constant	62.5
Paspalo-AcSchoenople Constant	50
Paspalo-AcLycopus eu Constant	50
Paspalo-AcPaspalum (Diagnostic	96.52209
Paspalo-AcCyperus loi Diagnostic	58.05595
Paspalo-AcSchoenople Diagnostic	49.95321
Paspalo-AcEleocharis Diagnostic	31.07222
Paspalo-AcJuncus articDiagnostic	24.76798
Paspalo-AcPaspalum (Dominant	100
Paspalo-AcEleocharis Dominant	6.25
Paspalo-AcXanthium s Dominant	6.25
Polycarpior Ochlopoa a Constant	70.42254
PolycarpiorPlantago ccConstant	56.33803
Polycarpior Sagina ape Constant	54.92958
Polycarpior Sagina ape Diagnostic	47.24556
PolycarpiorPlantago cc Diagnostic	35.47583
Polycarpior Crassula til Diagnostic	33.72656
Polycarpior Spergularia Diagnostic	32.39437
Polycarpior Spergularia Dominant	21.12676
Polycarpior Ochlopoa a Dominant	14.08451
Polycarpior Crassula til Dominant	5.633803
Polycarpior Plantago co Dominant	5.633803
Polygono-COchlopoa a Constant	97.04142
Polygono-CPolygonum Constant	94.67456
Polygono-CMatricaria & Constant	59.76331
Polygono-CPlantago m Constant	54.43787
Polygono-CMatricaria s Diagnostic	55.161
Polygono-CPolygonum Diagnostic	53.54944
Polygono-CPolygonum Dominant	27.21893
Polygono-COchlopoa a Dominant	18.3432
Polygono-CMatricaria & Dominant	10.65089
Saginion prOchlopoa a Constant	94.87179
Saginion prSagina pro Constant	82.05128
Saginion prBryum arge Constant	76.92308 58.97436
Saginion prPolygonum Constant	
Saginion prSagina pro Diagnostic	79.90261
Saginion prBryum arge Diagnostic	76.52238 23.07692
Saginion prOchlopoa a Dominant Saginion prBryum arge Dominant	17.94872
Saginion program arge Dominant	17.94872
Scleranthio Anthemis a Constant	68.85965
Scleranthio Raphanus i Constant	57.01754
Scleranthio Spergula a Constant	52.19298
Scleranthio Spergula al Constant	51.75439
Scleranthio Mibora min Diagnostic	40.29409
Scleranthio Rumex ace Diagnostic	32.80294
Scleranthio Mibora min Dominant	9.210526
Scleranthio Anthemis a Dominant	7.894737
Scleranthio Anthoxanth Dominant	5.701754
Scleranthio Spergula a Dominant	5.701754
Senecionio Arundo dor Constant	100
Senecionio Silene latifc Constant	96.66667
Senecionio Pteridium a Constant	80
Senecionio Calystegia Constant	73.33333
Senecionio Mentha sua Constant	60

Senecionio Pentaglottis Constant	53.33333
Senecionio Arundo dor Diagnostic	99.99684
Senecionio Silene latifc Diagnostic	51.34474
Senecionio Arundo dor Dominant	100
Sisymbrion Hordeum n Constant	100
Sisymbrion Sisymbrium Constant	72.41379
Sisymbrion Lolium per Constant	54.48276
Sisymbrion Anisantha & Constant	53.7931
Sisymbrion Hordeum n Diagnostic	82.13867
Sisymbrion Sisymbrium Diagnostic	50.90752
Sisymbrion Hordeum n Dominant	64.13793
Sisymbrion Sisymbrium Dominant	13.7931
Spergulo aıChenopodiı Constant	81.94444
Spergulo aıEchinochlo Constant	70.13889
Spergulo aiPersicaria r Constant	70.13889
Spergulo aıDigitaria sa Constant	63.19444
Spergulo aıStellaria mcConstant	56.25
Spergulo aıDigitaria sa Diagnostic	51.41471
Spergulo aıEchinochlo Diagnostic	50.3007
Spergulo aıChenopodiı Diagnostic	45.52249
Spergulo aıAmaranthu: Diagnostic	40.22668
Spergulo aıAmaranthu: Dominant	13.88889
Spergulo aıEchinochlo Dominant	12.5
Spergulo aıChenopodiı Dominant	12.5
Spergulo aıDigitaria sa Dominant	10.41667

# Appendix S4 Synthetic description of the 28 alliances present in the Iberian Atlantic anthropogenic vegetation.

#### Cymbalario-Parietarietea diffusae Vegetation of human-made walls.

- 1. Galio valantiae-Parietarion judaicae Hemicryptophyte-rich vegetation of walls. Occupies slightly warmer and sunnier situations than the other alliance in the class and has a shorter flowering season. Wide distribution in the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Parietaria judaica, Centranthus ruber, Asplenium trichomanes. Correspondence with EUNIS (2012) habitat J2.5 Constructed boundaries.
- 2. Cymbalario-Asplenion Fern-rich vegetation of walls. Occupies slightly colder and shadier walls than the other alliance in the class and has a longer flowering season. Wide distribution in the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Cymbalaria muralis. Correspondence with EUNIS (2012) habitat J2.5 Constructed boundaries.

#### Polygono-Poetea annuae Dwarf-herb vegetation of heavily-trampled sites.

- 3. Polycarpion tetraphylli Dwarf-annual trampled vegetation of warm and sunny sites. Occupies warmer, sunnier and nutrient-poorer situations than the other alliances in the class and has an earlier flowering season. Wide distribution in the ecoregion, specially along the coast and in submediterranean valleys of the interior. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Sagina apetala, Plantago coronopus, Crassula tillaea, Spergularia marina. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat V34 Trampled xeric grassland with annuals.
- 4. Polygono-Coronopodion Annual trampled vegetation of dry sites. Occupies sites that are colder than those preferred by Polycarpion tetraphylli, but drier than those of Saginion procumbentis. Has a specially high proportion of neophytes. Wide distribution in the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Matricaria suaveolens, Polygonum aviculare. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat V34 Trampled xeric grassland with annuals.
- 5. Saginion procumbentis Bryophyte-rich trampled vegetation of mesic sites. Occupies colder and wetter situations than the other alliances in the class, is less dominated by therophytes and has a relatively high proportion of bryophytes. Distribution concentrated in the central part of the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Sagina procumbens, Bryum argenteum. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat V35 Trampled mesophilous grassland with annuals.

## Papaveretea rhoeadis Annual weed vegetation of crops and gardens.

- 6. Caucalidion lappulae Annual weed vegetation of cereal crops on base-rich soils. Very high proportion of putative archaeophytes. Distribution mostly limited to the more submediterranean valleys south of the Cantabrian Mountains. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Cyanus segetum, Papaver rhoeas, Trifolium arvense, Anacyclus clavatus, Valerianella eriocarpa. Correspondence with EUNIS habitats V11 Intensive unmixed crops and V13 Arable land with unmixed crops grown by low-intensity agricultural methods.
- 7. Scleranthion annui Annual weed vegetation of cereal crops on base-poor soils. Occupies more acidic soils than the other alliances in the class, and flowers earlier. High proportion of putative archaeophytes. Wide distribution in the ecoregion, but especially in the west, where acidic bedrocks dominate. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Mibora minima, Rumex acetosella. Correspondence with EUNIS habitats V11 Intensive unmixed crops, V12 Mixed crops of market gardens and horticulture, V13 Arable land with unmixed crops grown by low-intensity agricultural methods and V15 Bare tilled, fallow or recently abandoned arable land.

8. Oxalidion europeae Annual weed vegetation of gardens and root crops. Occupies wetter, shadier and nutrient-richer situations, and has a longer flowering season, than the other alliances in the class. High proportion of putative archaeophytes, and more neophytes than the other alliances in the class. Wide distribution in the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Stellaria media, Veronica persica. Correspondence with EUNIS habitats V11 Intensive unmixed crops, V12 Mixed crops of market gardens and horticulture, V13 Arable land with unmixed crops grown by low-intensity agricultural methods and V15 Bare tilled, fallow or recently abandoned arable land.

#### Digitario sanguinalis-Eragrostietea minoris Summer-annual C4 weed vegetation.

9. Spergulo arvensis-Erodion cicutariae Summer-annual C4 weed vegetation. Late-flowering alliance rich in neophytes and grasses, occurring in highly-disturbed and nutrient-rich sites. Wide distribution in the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Digitaria sanguinalis, Echinochloa crus-galli, Chenopodium album, Amaranthus hybridus. Correspondence with EUNIS habitats V11 Intensive unmixed crops, V12 Mixed crops of market gardens and horticulture and V13 Arable land with unmixed crops grown by low-intensity agricultural methods.

## Chenopodietea Winter-annual fringe and ruderal vegetation.

- 10. Allion triquetri Geophyte-rich fringe vegetation. This vegetation occupies warmer, shadier and less frequently disturbed situations than other alliances in the class, and is comparatively taller and earlier-flowering. Has a higher proportion of geophytes and a lower proportion of therophytes. The proportion of neophytes is the highest in the class. Wide distribution in the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Urtica membranacea, Smyrnium olusatrum, Tradescantia fluminensis. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat V37 Annual anthropogenic herbaceous vegetation.
- 11. Geranio pusilli-Anthriscion caucalidis Winter-annual fringe vegetation. Occupies situations similar to the previous alliance, but in colder sites, and is a shorter vegetation dominated by therophytes instead of geophytes. Mostly distributed in the submediterranean valleys south of the Cantabrian Mountains. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Geranium lucidum, Anthriscus caucalis. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat V37 Annual anthropogenic herbaceous vegetation.
- 12. Chenopodion muralis Low-growth winter-annual ruderal vegetation. Short vegetation occupying colder situations than the other alliances in the class and more disturbed sites. Flowering season longer and later. Has a high proportion of archaeophytes. Sparse occurrence throughout the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Malva neglecta, Urtica urens. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat V37 Annual anthropogenic herbaceous vegetation.
- 13. Echio-Galactition tomentosae Tall-herb winter-annual ruderal vegetation. Occupies drier, sunnier and less nutrient-rich situations than other alliances in the class. Mostly distributed in the west of the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Galactites tomentosus, Coleostephus myconis, Anisantha rigida. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat V37 Annual anthropogenic herbaceous vegetation.
- 14. Linario polygalifoliae-Vulpion alopecuri Ephemeral annual vegetation of disturbed coastal dunes. Occupies warm, dry and sunny coastal sites, and has a high number of coastal dune species. Isolated occurrence in the southern coast of the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Vulpia alopecuros, Malcolmia littorea, Crucianella maritima, Artemisia campestris. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat V32 Mediterranean subnitrophilous annual grassland.

# ${\bf \it Sisymbrietea} \ {\bf Summer-annual} \ {\bf ruderal} \ {\bf vegetation}.$

15. Sisymbrion officinalis Summer-annual ruderal vegetation. Rich in therophytes and archaeophytes and adapted to severe disturbances. Wide distribution in the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Hordeum murinum, Sisymbrium officinale. Correspondence with EUNIS habitats V15 Bare tilled, fallow or recently abandoned arable land and V37 Annual anthropogenic herbaceous vegetation.

# Bidentetea Summer-annual pioneer vegetation of temporarily flooded sites.

16. Bidention tripartitae Summer-annual pioneer vegetation of temporarily flooded sites. Occupies nutrient-richer sites than the other alliance in the class and has a higher proportion of therophytes and neophytes.

- Dispersed throughout the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Persicaria hydropiper, Bidens frondosus, Lythrum salicaria. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat Q61 Periodically exposed shore with stable, eutrophic sediments with pioneer or ephemeral vegetation.
- 17. Paspalo-Agrostion semiverticillati Summer-annual pioneer vegetation of temporarily flooded and warm sites. Occupies wetter and more frequently disturbed sites than the other alliance in the class and has a longer flowering season. Isolated occurrences in the south of the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Paspalum distichum, Cyperus longus, Schoenoplectus lacustris. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat R55 Lowland moist or wet tall-herb and fern fringe.

# Artemisietea vulgaris Perennial ruderal vegetation of dry sites.

- 18. Convolvulo arvensis-Agropyrion repentis Semiruderal grasslands. Occupies wetter, shadier and nutrient-poorer situations than the other alliances in the class, and has a higher proportion of geophytes, grasses and native species. Isolated occurrence in the south of the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Poa compressa, Elytrigia repens, Potentilla reptans, Valerianella locusta. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat V38 Dry perennial anthropogenic herbaceous vegetation.
- 19. Carduo carpetani-Cirsion odontolepidis Thistle ruderal vegetation of warm sites. Occupies warmer situations than the other thistle alliance in the class and has a high proportion of archaeophytes. Mostly distributed in the Cantabrian Mountains. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Onopordum acanthium. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat V38 Dry perennial anthropogenic herbaceous vegetation.
- 20. Cirsion richterano-chodati Thistle ruderal vegetation of cold sites. Occupies colder situations than the other thistle alliance in the class. Mostly distributed in the Cantabrian Mountains. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Cirsium eriophorum, Carduus carpetanus, Carduus nutans. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat V38 Dry perennial anthropogenic herbaceous vegetation.
- 21. Dauco-Melilotion Biennial ruderal vegetation. Occupies wetter situations than the two thistle alliances in the class and has a higher proportion of neophytes. Occurrence throughout the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Helminthotheca echioides, Daucus carota, Melilotus albus, Foeniculum vulgare. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat V38 Dry perennial anthropogenic herbaceous vegetation.

## Epilobietea angustifolii Perennial fringe and ruderal vegetation of mesic to wet sites.

- 22. Geo urbani-Alliarion officinalis Low-herb short-lived semiruderal and fringe vegetation. Occupies shadier and less frequently disturbed situations than the other alliances in the class and has a higher proportion of therophytes and shorter plants. Wide distribution in the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Urtica dioica. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat V39 Mesic perennial anthropogenic herbaceous vegetation.
- 23. Arction lappae Low-herb short-lived ruderal vegetation. Occupies sunnier and more frequently disturbed situations than the other alliances in the class, and has a higher proportion of therophytes and shorter plants. Distribution concentrated in the Cantabrian Mountains. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Oxybasis rubra, Senecio duriaei. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat V39 Mesic perennial anthropogenic herbaceous vegetation.
- 24. Balloto-Conion maculati Tall-herb perennial ruderal vegetation. Occupies warmer situations than the other alliances in the class. Has a high proportion of archaeophytes. Distribution concentrated in the Cantabrian Mountains and the east of the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Sambucus ebulus. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat V39 Mesic perennial anthropogenic herbaceous vegetation.
- 25. Aegopodion podagrariae Tall-herb perennial vegetation of forest margins and clearings. Occupies shadier and less disturbed situations than the other alliances in the class. Sparse occurrence throughout the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Anthriscus sylvestris, Heracleum sphondylium, Galium aparine. Correspondence with EUNIS habitats R55 Lowland moist or wet tall-herb and fern fringe and V39 Mesic perennial anthropogenic herbaceous vegetation.
- 26. Epilobion angustifolii Tall-herb perennial vegetation of forest margins and clearings in acidic soils. Occupies colder, nutrient-poorer, more acidic and less disturbed situations than the other alliances in

- the class. Distributed towards the west of the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: *Epilobium angustifolium*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Luzula lactea*. Correspondence with EUNIS habitats R54 Pteridium aquilinum vegetation and R57 Herbaceous forest clearing vegetation.
- 27. Cynancho-Convolvulion sepium Tall-herb fringe vegetation of nutrient-rich riparian habitats. Occupies wetter and less disturbed situations than the other alliances in the class and has a later flowering season. Dispersed throughout the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Eupatorium cannabinum, Angelica sylvestris, Picris hieracioides. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat R55 Lowland moist or wet tall-herb and fern fringe.
- 28. Senecionion fluviatilis Tall-herb vegetation of nutrient-rich riverbanks and ditches. Occupies warmer and wetter situations than the other alliances in the class, flowers later, has taller plants and has a high proportion of neophytes and geophytes. Isolated occurrence in the western coast of the ecoregion. Diagnostic species in the ecoregion: Arundo donax, Silene latifolia. Correspondence with EUNIS habitat R55 Lowland moist or wet tall-herb and fern fringe.



Alliance Association Autores

AegopodiorChaerophyl Rivas-Mart nez & Costa 1997

AegopodiorGalio aparirLoidi, Berastegi, Biurrun, Garc ♦a-Mijangos & Herrera 1995

Allion trique Allio triquet Alves, Honrado & Barreto de Oliveira 2003

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Balloto-CorGalio aparii Rivas-Mart nez ex G. L pez 1978

Balloto-CorUrtico dioic (Br.-Bl. in Br.-Bl., Gajewski, Wraber & Walas 1936) Br.-Bl. in Br.-Bl., Roussine &

Bidention trBidenti tripa Rivas-Mart♦nez, Belmonte, Fern♦ndez-Gonz♦lez & S♦nchez-Mata in S§nchez-Mata in S§nc

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Polygono-CCoronopod Br.-Bl. in Br.-Bl., Gajewski, Wraber & Walas 1936

Polygono-CMatricario-IM♦ller ex Oberdorfer 1971 corr. Passarge 1996

Polygono-CPolycarpo t Rivas-Mart♦nez, Wildpret, Del Arco, O. Rodr♦guez, P♦rez de Paz, Garc♦a €

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