

# Cover letter

Eduardo Fernández Pascual

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Dear Editorial Board,

I submit my manuscript *SylvanSeeds*, a database and web app to explore seed germination in temperate broadleaf and mixed forests to be considered for publication as a **Methods** paper in New Phytologist.

## What hypotheses or questions does this work address?

This is a methods paper describing *SylvanSeeds*, a database and web app (<http://sylvanseeds.shinyapps.io/sylvanseeds/>) of raw germination records for frequent species of temperate deciduous and mixed forests. The list of frequent species was created using 17,852 vegetation relevés from the sPlot database (Bruehlheide *et al.*, 2019).

## How does this work advance our current understanding of plant science?

*SylvanSeeds* makes publicly available 4,828 germination records of 364 species from 74 families, collected in 46 countries between 1920-2017. The database is the result of a systematic literature search that screened 6,791 references and extracted raw data from 614. This manuscript presents the search methodology, applicable to other biomes.

## Why is this work important and timely?

Plant science is embarked on a global synthesis of functional traits at species (Díaz *et al.*, 2016) and community levels (Bruehlheide *et al.*, 2018). Synthesis of seed functions is however hindered by a lack of global germination datasets (Saatkamp *et al.*, 2019), a gap filled by *SylvanSeeds*.

## References

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