

THE MECHANISMS AND PROCESSES OF VEGETATION DYNAMICS ON OIL-SHALE SPOIL BINGS IN WEST LOTHIAN, SCOTLAND

Contents

ABSTRACT vi

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS vii

CHAPTER ONE..... 1

1 INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 ECOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE WEST LOTHIAN BINGS..... 2

 1.1.1 *Importance of the bings to West Lothian*..... 2

 1.1.2 *Global importance of the bings* 2

1.2 AIMS 3

1.3 ANALYSES AND STATISTICS..... 3

 1.3.1 *Direct gradient analysis (DGA)* 4

 1.3.2 *Ordination* 5

 1.3.3 *Frequentist statistics*..... 5

 1.3.4 *Bayesian statistics* 5

1.4 SUCCESSION - THE MECHANISMS AND PROCESSES 6

1.5 OTHER MECHANISMS AND PROCESSES 9

1.6 OTHER INFLUENCES AFFECTING PLANT COMMUNITY STRUCTURES 10

1.7 PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON PRIMARY SUCCESSION SITES 11

 1.7.1 *Man made primary succession sites* 12

 1.7.2 *Natural primary succession sites*..... 13

1.8 THE QUESTIONS..... 14

CHAPTER TWO 16

2 WEST LOTHIAN, OIL SHALE AND THE SHALE-OIL INDUSTRY 16

2.1 THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE COUNTY 16

2.2 THE GEOLOGY 16

2.3 THE HISTORY 18

2.4 THE SHALE OIL INDUSTRY 19

 2.4.1 *The global picture* 20

 2.4.2 *The importance of the industry in West Lothian*..... 20

2.5 THE PARENT ROCK 21

2.6 THE MAIN “BY PRODUCT” 22

 2.6.1 *The physical scale* 22

 2.6.2 *The visual impact* 23

CHAPTER THREE	27
3 VEGETATION STRUCTURE ON OIL-SHALE BINGS	27
3.1 VEGETATION PATTERNS	27
3.1.1 <i>Data collection</i>	29
3.1.2 <i>Classification and ordination</i>	29
3.1.3 <i>Identifying vegetation types</i>	30
3.2 PRE-SURVEY INVESTIGATIONS	32
3.2.1 <i>Species identification</i>	32
3.2.2 <i>Results of classification</i>	33
3.2.3 <i>Pilot study</i>	38
3.2.4 <i>Discussion of findings</i>	39
3.3 THE BASELINE SURVEY METHODS	42
3.3.1 <i>Data collection</i>	44
3.4 CLASSIFICATION, ORDINATION AND ANALYSIS	45
3.4.1 <i>General findings</i>	46
3.4.2 <i>Species frequency, affiliation and richness</i>	48
3.4.3 <i>Species diversity</i>	54
3.4.4 <i>Ordination by ecological indicator values (Ellenberg)</i>	56
3.4.5 <i>Ordination by functional type (C-S-R)</i>	58
3.4.6 <i>Ordination by National Vegetation Classification (NVC)</i>	61
3.4.7 <i>Classification Using Two-Way Indicator Species Analysis</i>	66
3.5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	70
3.5.1 <i>Summary</i>	72
CHAPTER FOUR.....	74
4 THE ASSOCIATION OF PLANT SPECIES AND COMMUNITIES WITH THE PHYSICAL AND CHEMICAL ENVIRONMENT.....	74
4.1 THE SHALE SUBSTRATE	75
4.2 COLLECTING, PREPARING AND ANALYSING THE DATA	78
4.2.1 <i>Physical analyses</i>	80
4.2.2 <i>Chemical analyses</i>	84
4.2.3 <i>Multivariate statistical analyses</i>	85
4.3 PLANT SPECIES DISTRIBUTIONS	87
4.3.1 <i>Elevation</i>	87
4.3.2 <i>Aspect</i>	91
4.3.3 <i>Management</i>	93
4.3.4 <i>Angle of slope</i>	96

4.3.5	<i>Percentage bare ground</i>	98
4.3.6	<i>Synthesis of plant species distributions by physical environment</i>	100
4.4	CHEMICAL ANALYSIS AND NUTRIENT DISTRIBUTION	105
4.5	MULTIVARIATE ANALYSES OF DATA	110
4.5.1	<i>Analysis of the effect of physical environment</i>	111
4.5.2	<i>Analysis of the effect of the chemical environment</i>	115
4.5.3	<i>Analysis of the combined effects of the physical and chemical environment</i>	116
4.6	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	117
4.6.1	<i>Elevation</i>	118
4.6.2	<i>Aspect</i>	120
4.6.3	<i>Management</i>	121
4.6.4	<i>Angle of slope</i>	122
4.6.5	<i>Bare ground</i>	123
4.6.6	<i>Substrate chemistry</i>	124
4.6.7	<i>Multivariate analyses</i>	127
4.7	SUMMARY	132
CHAPTER FIVE		135
5 VARIATION IN MORPHOLOGY, PRODUCTIVITY AND DISPERSAL IN SELECTED SPECIES		135
5.1	PLASTICITY AND SEED ECOLOGY	136
5.2	NINE SPECIES	137
5.3.1	<i>Plant height and seed production</i>	146
5.3.2	<i>Seed and seedling identification</i>	146
5.3.3	<i>Glasshouse germination trials</i>	146
5.3.4	<i>Soil seedbank trial</i>	147
5.3.5	<i>Seed traps</i>	148
5.3.6	<i>Analysis of data</i>	149
5.4	RESULTS OF FIELD MEASUREMENTS.....	149
5.4.1	<i>Plant height</i>	150
5.4.2	<i>Density</i>	152
5.4.3	<i>Seed production</i>	153
5.5	RESULTS OF TRIALS	153
5.5.1	<i>Glasshouse germination trial</i>	153
5.5.2	<i>Soil seedbank trial</i>	155
5.6	ANALYSES OF COMBINED MEASUREMENTS AND DATA COLLECTION	157
5.6.1	<i>Correlations and calculations</i>	157
5.6.2	<i>Relationships to physical and chemical environment</i>	159

5.7	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS.....	165
5.7.1	<i>Morphological measurements</i>	165
5.7.2	<i>Germination trials</i>	165
5.7.3	<i>Seedbank trials</i>	165
5.7.4	<i>Multivariate analyses</i>	169
5.7.5	<i>The nine species</i>	171
5.7.6	<i>General observations</i>	175
5.7.7	<i>Conclusions</i>	177
CHAPTER SIX.....		179
6	SUCCESSIONAL MODELS AND OTHER PRIMARY SITES.....	179
6.1	PRIMARY SUCCESSION ON BINGS.....	180
6.1.1	<i>A model of bing succession</i>	180
6.1.2	<i>Describing the bing succession</i>	183
6.1.3	<i>Seeds</i>	188
6.1.4	<i>Physiological variation within species</i>	188
6.1.5	<i>Reactions and interactions</i>	189
6.2	SUCCESSION MODELS IN LITERATURE	191
6.2.1	<i>Descriptive models</i>	191
6.2.2	<i>Numerical models</i>	196
6.2.3	<i>Experimental models</i>	197
6.3	POST-INDUSTRIAL SITES OF PRIMARY SUCCESSION	198
6.3.1	<i>Coal</i>	199
6.3.2	<i>China clay (Kaolin)</i>	202
6.3.3	<i>Quarries</i>	203
6.3.4	<i>Other man-made sites</i>	205
6.4	NATURAL SITES OF PRIMARY SUCCESSION	205
6.4.1	<i>Islands</i>	205
6.4.2	<i>Volcanoes</i>	207
6.4.3	<i>Sand dunes</i>	210
6.4.4	<i>Glaciers</i>	211
6.5	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	212
6.5.1	<i>Model comparisons</i>	213
6.5.2	<i>Primary comparisons</i>	215
6.5.3	<i>Summary</i>	219

CHAPTER SEVEN.....	220
7 GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	220
7.1 THE ECOLOGICAL VALUE OF THE STUDY OF SHALE BINGS IN WEST LOTHIAN.....	221
7.2 INDICATOR SPECIES	223
7.3 TRANSIENT AND TRANSITORY SPECIES.....	225
7.4 RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT.....	227
7.4.1 <i>Natural reclamation vs. assisted management</i>	228
7.5 BINGS AND BIODIVERSITY	232
7.5.1 <i>Locally Rare Fauna</i>	233
7.5.2 <i>Locally Rare Flora</i>	234
7.5.3 <i>West Lothian Biodiversity Action Plan</i>	235
7.6 'PLANT LIFE OF EDINBURGH AND THE LOTHIAN' AND 'ATLAS 2000'	236
7.7 CONCLUSION	237
REFERENCES.....	239

APPENDICES

1 <i>Site descriptions</i>	-1-
2 <i>Combined species list from previous studies</i>	-8-
3 <i>Autecological keys</i>	-16-
4 <i>Species recorded at Five Sisters</i>	-17-
5 <i>Field data recording sheet</i>	-18-
6 <i>Species list from baseline survey</i>	-19-
7 <i>Shannon-Weiner diversity indices and evenness scores</i>	-25-
8 <i>C-S-R functional types</i>	-30-
9 <i>Ternary bubble plots</i>	-33-
10 <i>Description of matching coefficients used in ComKey</i>	-36-
11 <i>The closest NVC matches for all baseline quadrats</i>	-39-
12 <i>Quadrats by TWINSpan grouping</i>	-43-
13 <i>Species by TWINSpan grouping</i>	-44-
14 <i>NVC types by TWINSpan grouping</i>	-45-
15 <i>Chemical analysis results</i>	-47-
16 <i>Extract from CCA results summary log and description of calculation of explained variance</i>	-49-