

Chapter 54 Community Ecology Study Guide Answers

Chapter 54 Community Ecology Study Guide Answers Chapter 54 Community Ecology Study Guide Answers Community ecology is a captivating field of study that explores the intricate relationships between species within a shared environment Understanding these relationships from competition and predation to mutualism and commensalism is crucial for comprehending the dynamics of ecosystems their stability and the impacts of human activities This study guide provides comprehensive answers to key concepts and questions related to chapter 54 focusing on community ecology

I Community Structure and Composition

1 Define community in ecological terms A community in ecological terms refers to a group of interacting species living in a particular area at a given time It encompasses all the populations of different species that inhabit a specific habitat and interact with each other through various ecological processes

2 What are the key factors that influence community structure The structure of a community is shaped by several factors including

- Species richness** The number of different species present in the community
- Species evenness** The relative abundance of each species in the community
- Trophic structure** The feeding relationships among species in the community often depicted in a food web
- Dominant species** Species with the highest abundance or biomass in the community exerting a strong influence on other species
- Keystone species** Species that have a disproportionately large impact on the community structure despite their relatively low abundance
- Foundation species** Species that create or modify habitats influencing the community structure significantly

3 Explain the difference between species richness and species evenness Species richness refers to the total number of different species present in a community It simply quantifies the diversity of species in the community Species evenness on the other hand reflects the relative abundance of each species A community with high species evenness indicates that all species are present in roughly equal numbers while low evenness implies a few dominant species and many rare ones

4 How can you quantify community structure Several methods are employed to quantify community structure including

- Species diversity indices** These indices such as the Shannon index and Simpson index combine both species richness and evenness to provide a comprehensive measure of diversity
- Rankabundance curves** These curves depict the relative abundance of species in a community with the most abundant species ranked first
- Food web analysis** This approach examines the trophic interactions within the community revealing the flow of energy and nutrients

II Interspecific Interactions

1 Describe the five main types of interspecific interactions Interspecific interactions refer to the relationships between species within a community The five main

types are Competition Occurs when two or more species require the same limited resource leading to negative impacts on both species Predation An interaction where one species predator kills and consumes another species prey Herbivory A specific type of predation where an animal consumes plants Parasitism A relationship where one species parasite benefits at the expense of another species host Mutualism A relationship where both interacting species benefit from the interaction Commensalism A relationship where one species benefits while the other is neither harmed nor helped

2 Provide examples of each type of interaction Competition Lions and hyenas competing for the same prey Predation A wolf hunting and killing a moose Herbivory A deer grazing on grass Parasitism A tapeworm living inside the intestines of a human 3 Mutualism Bees pollinating flowers while collecting nectar Commensalism Barnacles growing on the skin of a whale benefiting from the whales movement

3 Explain the concept of competitive exclusion Competitive exclusion principle states that two species cannot coexist indefinitely if they compete for the same limited resource The species with a competitive advantage will outcompete the other leading to the exclusion of the less competitive species

4 How can species coexist despite competition Species can coexist despite competition by Resource partitioning Dividing the resources using different parts of the same resource or utilizing resources at different times Character displacement Evolutionary changes in traits that reduce interspecific competition Predation Predators can help maintain species diversity by reducing the abundance of dominant competitors

III Community Dynamics 1 Explain the concept of ecological succession Ecological succession refers to the gradual and sequential changes in species composition and structure of a community over time following a disturbance It is a natural process that leads to the establishment of a more stable and diverse community

2 Differentiate between primary and secondary succession Primary succession Occurs in areas devoid of life and soil such as newly formed volcanic islands or retreating glaciers Pioneer species colonize the bare substrate gradually enriching the soil and allowing for the establishment of other species Secondary succession Occurs in areas that have been disturbed but still retain soil and seeds such as after a fire or a logging event Existing soil and seeds facilitate faster recolonization and succession compared to primary succession

3 Discuss the role of disturbance in community dynamics Disturbance plays a crucial role in community dynamics It can create opportunities for new species to colonize reshape habitat structure and alter species interactions However the severity and frequency of disturbances can significantly impact community composition and stability

4 Explain the intermediate disturbance hypothesis The intermediate disturbance hypothesis proposes that species diversity is highest at intermediate levels of disturbance Moderate disturbances prevent dominant species from monopolizing resources allowing for greater species coexistence Too little disturbance can lead to competitive exclusion while too much disturbance can prevent the establishment of any species

IV Community Stability and Resilience 1 Define community stability and community resilience Community stability The ability of a community to resist change and maintain its structure and function over time Community resilience The ability of a community to recover from disturbance and return to its original state

2 What factors

contribute to community stability and resilience Several factors influence community stability and resilience Species diversity Diverse communities are generally more stable and resilient as different species play unique roles in maintaining ecosystem functions Trophic complexity Complex food webs with multiple trophic levels provide redundancy and buffer against disturbances Habitat heterogeneity Diverse habitats offer a wider range of resources and refuge for species enhancing stability Climate stability Stable climatic conditions promote the establishment and persistence of diverse communities 3 How can human activities impact community stability and resilience Human activities can significantly alter community stability and resilience through various mechanisms Habitat loss and fragmentation Reducing habitat availability and connectivity can disrupt species interactions and reduce diversity Pollution Introducing pollutants into the environment can negatively affect species survival and alter community structure Overexploitation Harvesting species at unsustainable rates can disrupt trophic interactions and cause population declines Climate change Shifting climate patterns can alter species ranges disrupt ecosystem 5 processes and threaten community stability Conclusion Community ecology is an essential field for understanding the intricate relationships between species and the dynamics of ecosystems By studying community structure interspecific interactions and succession we gain valuable insights into how communities function adapt to change and respond to human activities This knowledge is crucial for the conservation and management of biodiversity ensuring the resilience and stability of ecosystems for future generations

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