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Fire and shade: a trait-based perspective on woody communities from savannas and forests in the Cerrado

presented by

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ABSTRACT

Savannas and forests are widely distributed across the tropics, displaying different species composition and vegetation structure. Despite the striking differences between these two biomes, savannas and forests can be found under the same climatic conditions, suggesting the existence of different environmental variables such as fire and shade in shaping their coexistence. Using boundaries between savannas and forests from the Cerrado, in this talk, I will present how woody species with different life-forms cope with fire disturbance and discuss how fire adaptations may hinder their competitive ability for light acquisition. Then, I will discuss how traits accounting for protection against fire can explain part of the community assembly of savannas and forests, highlighting some gaps in our understanding regarding forest-savanna biome coexistence.

KEY WORDS

Fire disturbance, Light competition, Tropical Savannas, Tropical Forests, Functional traits

Invited and animated by:

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