

Vegetation Structure impacts Habitat Suitability for Heathland Specialists

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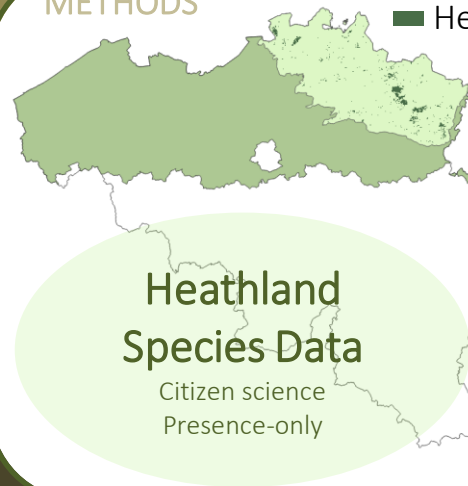
! Species conservation is challenging in highly fragmented areas with limited area expansion potential

BACKGROUND



? How does vegetation structure impact habitat suitability in heathlands?

METHODS



■ Heathland in Campine Ecoregion in Flanders (N-Belgium)

AREA Hectares of heathland in a 100 or 250 m radius

STRUCTURE 2nd order texture in Sentinel-2A Enhanced Vegetation Index (EVI) composites (May-July)

ACCESSIBILITY km roads/km²

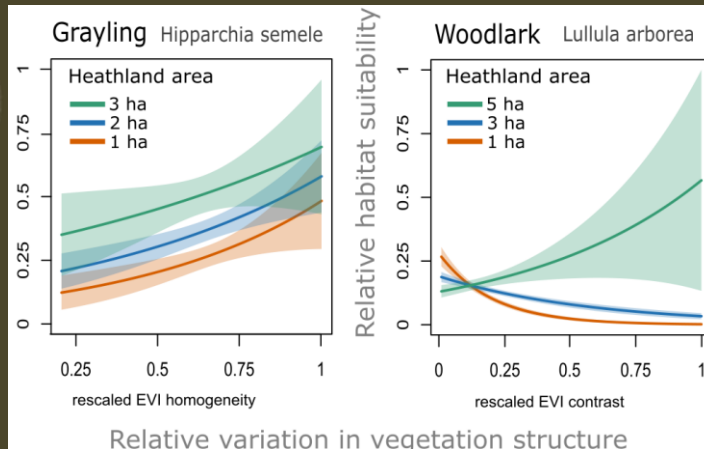
Poisson Point Process Models

Vegetation structure = Within-habitat structure variation + habitat heterogeneity

RESULTS - examples



Increased vegetation structure improves habitat suitability for Grayling in both small and large heathlands



Woodlark requires large heathlands with high vegetation structure

ONGOING RESEARCH

- Other texture measures and vegetation indices
- Patch-based approach
- Habitat heterogeneity
- For 24 heathland specialists