

A TEMPORAL-SPATIAL STUDY ON EPIFAUNA ASSOCIATED TO MACROALGAE IN CÍES ARCHIPELAGO (ATLANTIC ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK, NW SPAIN)



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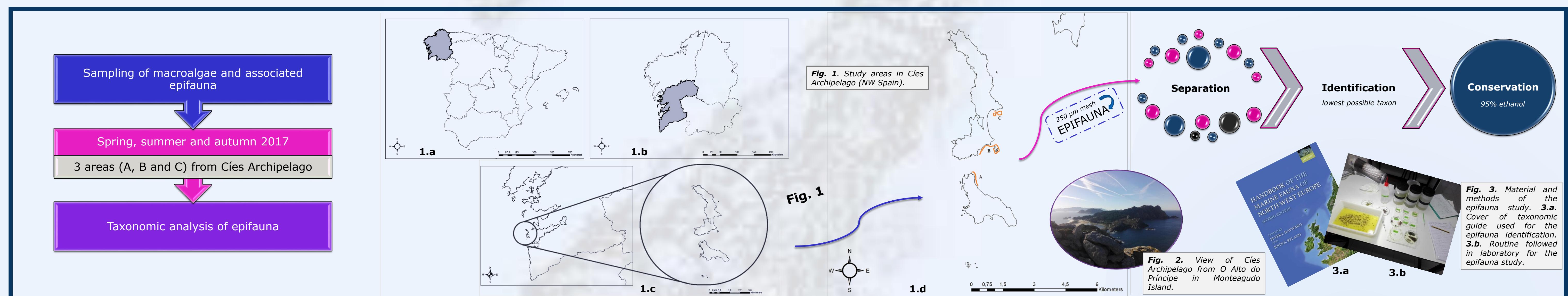
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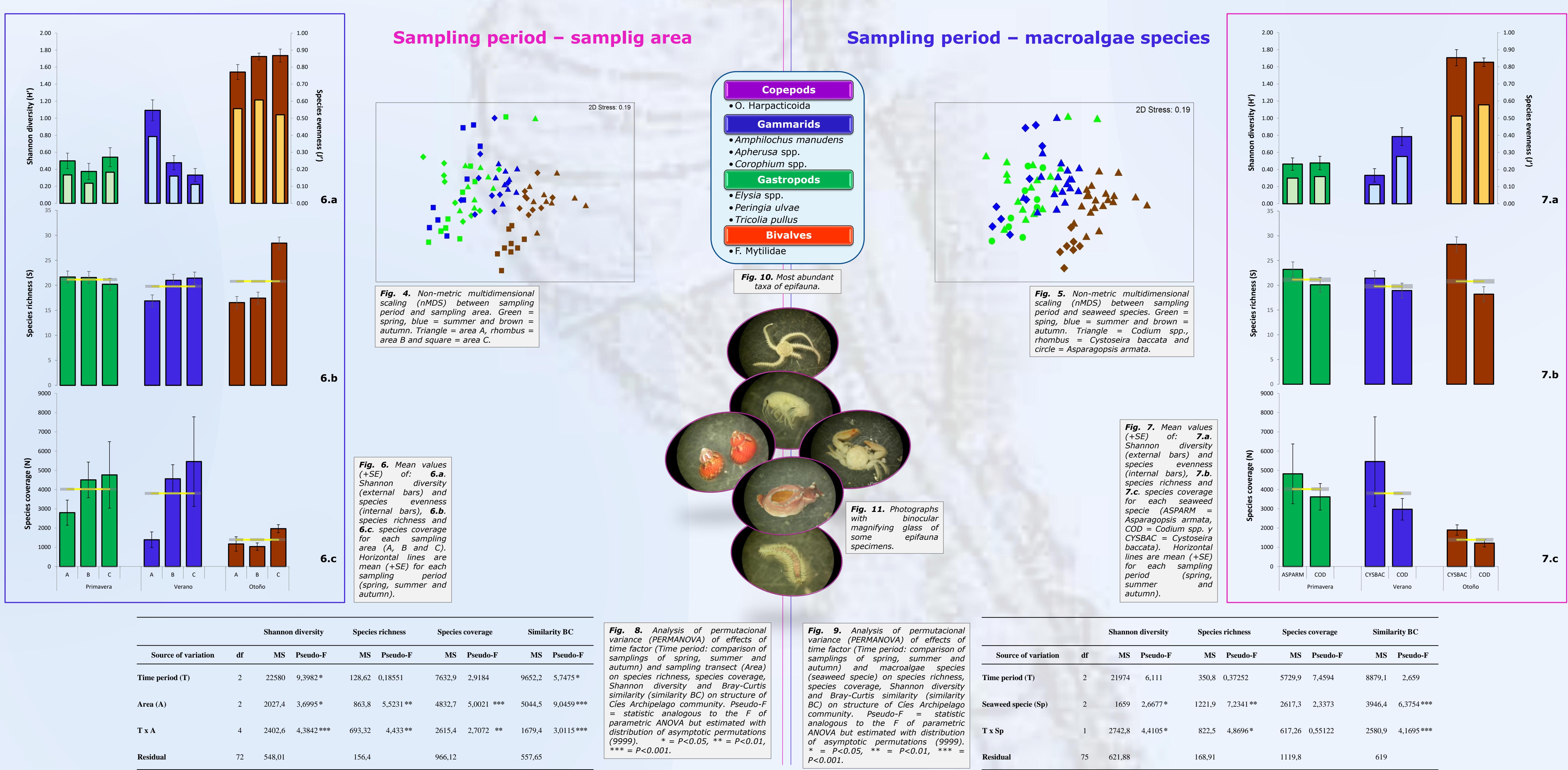
INTRODUCTION

Epifauna such as crustaceans, polychaetes, gastropods and bivalves are abundant on seaweeds, playing important roles in temperate rocky ecosystems as grazers or filter feeders, and serving as food for larger fauna (mostly fishes). In this study, we investigated the coverage and temporal-spatial variation of the epifauna associated with subtidal macroalgae in Cíes Archipelago (Atlantic Islands National Park, NW Spain).

MATERIAL AND METHODS



RESULTS



DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Our results showed strong seasonal variations between spring-summer and autumn samples, regardless of the seaweed species host and sampling site. Species richness remained notably stable across seasons, while Shannon diversity and total abundance showed strong seasonality. Diversity increased and total abundance decreased in autumn when the dominant groups (copepods and gammarids) experienced a strong seasonal decline. Our findings highlight the great diversity of epifaunal species in Cíes Archipelago throughout the year despite the observed changes in their abundance.

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