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Surtsey and Mount St. Helens: a comparison of early succession rates

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Abstract

Surtsey and Mount St. Helens are celebrated, but very different volcanoes. Permanent plots allow comparisons that reveal mechanisms that control succession and its rate and suggest general principles. We estimated rates from structure development, species composition using detrended correspondence analysis (DCA), changes in Euclidean distance (ED) of DCA vectors and by principal components analysis (PCA) of DCA. On Surtsey, rates determined from DCA trajectory analyses decreased as follows: gull colony on lava with sand > gull colony on lava, no sand >> lava with sand > sand spit > block lava > tephra. On Mount St. Helens, plots on lahar deposits near woodlands were best developed. The succession rates of open meadows declined as follows: *Lupinus*-dominated pumice > protected ridge with *Lupinus* > other pumice and blasted sites > isolated lahar meadows > barren plain. Despite the prominent contrasts between the volcanoes, common themes were revealed. Isolation restricted the number of colonists on Surtsey and to a lesser degree on Mount St. Helens. Nutrient input from outside the system was crucial. On Surtsey, seabirds fashioned very fertile substrates, while on Mount St. Helens wind brought a sparse nutrient rain, then *Lupinus* enhanced fertility to promote succession. Environmental stress limits succession in both cases. On Surtsey, bare lava, compacted tephra and infertile sands restrict development. On Mount St. Helens, exposure to wind and infertility slow succession.

1 Introduction

Surtsey (Iceland) volcano emerged from the North Atlantic Ocean in 1963 and continued to erupt until 1967 (Fig. 1a). Mount St. Helens erupted in 1980 to create large expanses of barren terrain (Fig. 1b). These young volcanoes differ significantly (e.g. isolation and climate), yet each captured the imagination of scientists and the public alike (Friðriksson, 1975, 2005; del Moral and Grishin, 1999). Comparing plant succession in such contrasting habitats allows us to explore factors that control development

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on barren habitats. The rate of succession can measure the capacity of a site to support integrated communities. Understanding how rates are governed on extreme materials allows for a better understanding of ecosystem interactions (Walker and del Moral, 2009).

5 Young volcanoes provide ideal conditions to study succession (del Moral, 2009). The rate of primary succession is slow where constrained by stressful conditions and isolation (Walker and del Moral, 2003), because few propagules arrive and immigrants rarely survive (Wood and del Moral, 1987).

10 Various methods measure succession rates (Anderson, 2007). The time to achieving benchmarks is often used (Munson and Laurenroth, 2012). Turnover based on species presence or absence can be used for longer successional trajectories (Chaideftou et al., 2012), and turnover based on changes in the dominant species provide a good intuitive method (Prach et al., 1993). However, floristic turnover is more comprehensive and is calculated with detrended correspondence analysis (DCA; McCune and Mefford, 15 2006). Its main virtue is that it is a direct estimate of turnover (Mathews and Endress, 2010). Bossuty et al. (2005) showed that the Euclidean distance (ED) between DCA scores summarizes succession rates well. DCA vectors are sensitive to ephemeral cover changes and to climatic variation, so principal components analysis (PCA) can effectively smooth and summarize DCA trajectories.

20 Here, we compare succession rates on Surtsey to those on Mount St. Helens using two of the most detailed available long-term investigations of biological recovery on volcanoes. Permanent plots were established on Surtsey in 1990 (Magnússon et al., 1996) and continue. Permanent plots on Mount St. Helens were monitored from 1982 through 2010 (del Moral, 2010). Direct comparisons should reveal factors that control 25 development in both cases.

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2 Study areas

The two volcanoes differ in origin, size, location and climate (Table 1), but both are composed of lava, sometimes covered by pumice, sand or tephra. Both support recently established vegetation.

2.1 Surtsey

Surtsey emerged from the roiling North Atlantic Ocean on 14 November 1963 and by June 1967 it had reached 155 m in elevation and occupied 2.7 km². Erosion has diminished it to about 1.4 km² (Thórarinnsson, 1967; Jakobsson et al., 2000, 2009). Magnússon et al. (2009) described the vegetation using 25 permanent plots. Their analyses suggested that dispersal limited species richness, and fertility governed the degree of development. Vegetation within seabird colonies (Fig. 2) was substantial, while lava or tephra sites had changed little (Fig. 3). Until 1974, only beaches had much vascular plant vegetation (Fig. 4); as gulls began to nest in some upland sites, vegetation expanded. From 1985 to 1994, seabird abundance increased, mycorrhizal fungi developed (Greipsson and El-Mayas, 2000) and vegetation in the nesting area exploded (Fig. 5). Since then, the meadow has expanded gradually and its complexity increased. Colonization patterns were described by Magnússon et al. (2009) who noted that ocean currents brought the first colonists to the shores (9 % of the current flora), while wind dispersal brought 16 % of the flora and birds introduced the remaining 75 %.

2.2 Mount St. Helens

The 18 May 1980 eruption and its aftermath were detailed by Swanson and Major (2005). The collapse of the north face unleashed a mammoth landslide; the ensuing lateral eruption and pyroclastic flows devastated 370 km² and eliminated 400 m from the cone. Four habitats once devoid of vegetation were sampled. One lahar deposit on the south side of the cone was adjacent to an intact conifer forest (2 plots; Fig. 6);

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the other was 300 m from woodlands (5 plots; Fig. 7). The Pumice Plain (12 plots) dominates the north flank (Fig. 8) where the blast removed vegetation and soil and deep, coarse pumice was deposited (del Moral et al., 2012). Studebaker Ridge (20 plots), along the western edge of the Pumice Plain, leads to the crater (Fig. 9; del Moral, 2007). The level site on the east flank of the cone (Plains of Abraham) was blasted in the first minutes of the eruption; a broad lahar completed the devastation, then pumice rained down to produce as desolate a landscape as can be imagined (10 plots; Figs. 10 and 11; del Moral et al., 2010). With the exception of *Lupinus lepidus*, colonists were wind dispersed (Fuller and del Moral, 2003).

3 Methods

3.1 Sampling

Permanent plots sampling on Surtsey started in 1990, with plots added as vegetation developed. Plots are 10 by 10 m in size and sample barren sheet lava, sheet lava covered by sand, block lava, hillside lava covered by tephra and coastal sand. Repeat sampling of the 25 surviving plots (Magnússon and Magnússon, 2000) occurs in July of alternate years, using five parallel, 10 m long, intercept transects to produce percent cover estimates; species not encountered on the transect, but present in the plot, were given a cover of 0.02 %.

At least one plot from each habitat with significant vegetation change is highlighted here, but all were analyzed (Figs. 12a–15a). Gull colony plots occur on sheet lava, with or without sand deposits. The nine plots on sandy sheet lava that lack seabird impacts were floristically distinct, with much lower richness and cover. Two plots were established on tephra-covered lava. These have very little vegetation except *Honckenia*. Two plots on the sand spit also were dominated by *Honckenia* and other sea-dispersed species. Finally, two plots on block lava were established in 2008. Cover is low and vegetation has changed little.

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The 49 permanent plots from Mount St. Helens were circular, with a 9 m radius (i.e. 250 m² in area). From the center of a plot, four radial transects were each sampled by six 1/4 m² quadrats, placed at 1 m intervals (del Moral, 2010). The percent cover of each species was recorded in each quadrat. In each plot, species not found in a quadrat were given a score of 0.1 %. All 49 plots were analyzed by DCA, but only representative plots are discussed in this study.

3.2 Statistical analyses

Richness (number of species) and mean percent cover per plot in each year were used to assess community development rates as the time needed for richness and cover to reach 90 % of the maximum. Richness loses utility once it ceases to increase, while composition continues to change. Cover ceases to be a good estimate of rates once vegetation becomes dense, but it is a useful during early stages (Baasch et al., 2012).

We used DCA to analyze each data set. Succession rates were determined by changes in DCA scores using ED weighted by the eigenvalue of each axis. Comparisons were between early and late DCA scores and between scores over the last 10 yr of the study. ED was divided by the number of years since the surface was established (45 or 30 yr) to estimate overall rate of floristic change. The ED between successive years was regressed with time to assess changes in succession rate.

Succession trajectories are rarely smooth. Therefore, we used PCA on the first three DCA axes to estimate rates of change in the trajectories, estimated by the slope of the regression with time. Several factors, including large annual fluctuations and non-linear responses, can limit the value of this method. The differences between first and last PCA scores imply the degree of change and comparisons within a study provide relative succession rates. Only general comparisons between volcanoes can be made because the number of species differs and it is difficult to account for the effects of different initial sampling dates relative to the initiating event.

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Vegetation structure and ordinations were calculated using PC-ORD (McCune and Mefford, 2006); statistics were calculated using Statistix 9 (Analytical Software, 2008); and graphs were produced using Axum 7 (Mathsoft, 2001).

4 Results

4.1 Vegetation composition

The representative Surtsey plots differed in habitat, fertility and species composition (Table 2). Four occur within the gull colony. Sur-01 is the densest, dominated by three rhizomatous grass species, *Poa*, *Festuca* and *Leymus*. Each of the three plots reported in this habitat have very high cover and have undergone significant successional change. In 2012, these plots had 6 to 11 species and vegetation cover exceeded 80 %. Three plots represent lava with sand, but unaffected by seabirds. These are dominated by *Honckenya* and *Leymus*, but are less diverse (3–7 species) with limited cover (1.9–4.0 %).

The sand spit is represented by one plot having 4 species and modest cover (38 %). These plots suffer frequent disturbances from high waves and unstable substrates that can arrest their development. Although sampling did not start until 2005, this habitat received the first colonists. It is an open community of scattered *Honckenya*, *Mertensia*, *Leymus* and *Cakile* with moderate cover. The tephra covered lavas of the island remain sparsely vegetated (3.6 % cover), with few species. *Honckenya* is the dominant species. Limited nutrients and unstable substrates have combined to restrict development. Vascular plants on bare block lava are sparse (0.1 % cover), although six species occur. This habitat changed little during monitoring.

Eight plots represent the four habitats of Mount St. Helens (Table 3). Richness on proximate lahar deposits reached 25 species per plot, but then declined to 18 species. Isolated lahar plots stabilized at 17 species. Cover was higher in the proximate plots than in the isolated ones. Four low elevation Pumice Plain plots had modest richness

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Vegetation in gull colonies changed greatly compared to that of other lavas (Fig. 14a). Plots dominated by *Poa* on sand (Sur-01 and Sur-07) changed the most while grassy plots on lava (Sur-09) changed substantially. At first, Sur-23 changed little, but as grasses invaded, turnover accelerated. A “horseshoe” trajectory explains why there is a 200 % overall change. Gull colony plots developed more slowly in the last 10 yr than did plots in other habitats.

Development in sand-filled sheet lava plots outside gull colonies differed. Sur-13, dominated by *Honckenya*, changed little at first, but its rate accelerated after 2000. The *Leymus* dominated Sur-16 exhibited floristic change comparable to some plots in the gull colony, but its rate of change has slowed. Sur-20 and Sur-30 are difficult to visualize here because both changed little. This was also true of plots on tephra (Sur-15) and block lava (Sur-31; Table 2).

Euclidean distances suggested large changes in the gull colony plots; net change averaged 158 DCA units. The degree of change declined at the margin of the gull colony. Sandy sheet lava lacking seabird inputs experienced about 1/3 as much floristic change as in the gull colony. Sand spit and tephra plots changed little. The relatively large ED in block lava was due to modest composition changes at low cover. Regression of the PCA changes over time indicated that most seabird sites changed erratically. The rate of change increased in all sand covered sheet lava lacking seabirds, as it did on the tephra plots. The sand spit and block lava plots changed little.

Sampling on Mount St. Helens began when plots had scant cover. DCA revealed three axes with 18.4, 7.6 and 4.2 % of the variation, spanning 4.2, 3.0 and 3.5 HC. The greatest change occurred on Lah-2, which spanned half of the DCA range. Lah-5 had little overall change. These trajectories diverged as invasion of conifers on Lah-2 directed the vector to the right. The Pumice Plain plots changed at similar rates and diverged slightly. Although PP-11 started slowly, it developed substantially as *Lupinus* became dominant. The delayed invasion of *Lupinus* dramatically altered the trajectory of SR-02 and obscured succession rates. SR-12 developed quickly, accumulating

pioneer species, but it changed little after 2000. SR-19 changed little. The Plains of Abraham vegetation accumulated species and developed cover slowly.

Succession rate changes, assessed by regression of ED over time, were variable both within and between habitats (Table 3). The rate of succession slowed on lahar plots near the forest, while rates on isolated plots remained steady. Most plots on the Pumice Plain increased their pace, particularly in the upper plots when *Lupinus* became dominant. The lower Studebaker Ridge plots increased their rate of change or were not significant, while upper plots decreased their rate of succession or were not significant. On the Plains of Abraham, rates slowed as persistent species became dominant.

PCA summarized DCA scores and the results were explored by linear regression. Surtsey gull colony plots changed considerably (Fig. 15a). The response of Sur-01 was non-linear because from 1990 to 1996 the scores increased (due to *Honckenya*, *Poa annua* and *Cerastium*) and then declined (due to *Festuca*, *Leymus* and *Poa pratense*). After 1996, the regression was significant. Sur-07 and Sur-09 scores declined as grasses developed. The PCA trajectory of Sur-23 is similar to the other gull colony plots despite their reduced impact. The changes of the 10 gull colony plots ranged from 0.25 to 2.63 units (average = 1.39 PCA units). Sandy lava plots outside the gull colony changed little. PCA scores of Sur-13 and Sur-16 finished in a cluster with most other plots despite its low cover. Changes were due to the development of *Leymus*. Sur-20 increased slightly with invasion of forb species. The sand spit plots changed little, perhaps due to chronic disturbance (see Gutzerova and Herben, 2001 for effects of disturbance on succession). The mean PCA change was 0.014 units. Tephra over lava (PCA change of 0.074) and block lava (0.53) also changed little.

PCA changes on Mount St. Helens were larger than in most Surtsey habitats (Fig. 15b). While most trajectories changed significantly, some were curvilinear and thus not linearly significant. Both proximate plots on lahars changed significantly (mean = 3.12 PCA units), while the mean of five isolated lahar plots was 0.97 units. Overall change in lower Pumice plots averaged 1.47 PCA units, while those in the

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upper plots averaged 2.01 units. These changes were the result of strong pulses of *Lupinus*. Trajectories of several Studebaker Ridge plots were curvilinear (e.g., SR-02). Other lower plots changed more directionally and their average change was 0.67 PCA units. PCA of the Plains of Abraham plots changed little.

5 Discussion

Assessing rates of succession is increasingly important in conservation and restoration due to accelerating climate and habitat change that causes rapid shifts in species distributions (Kapfer et al., 2012). Understanding what governs succession rates improves the creation of alternative management procedures (cf. Engel and Abella, 2011). Repeated sampling of permanent plots allows rates to be measured with more confidence than is possible using chronosequences (Feldmeyer-Christe et al., 2011).

5.1 Succession rates on Surtsey

All approaches used in this study converge to the conclusion that although dispersal barriers restrict the flora, rates of succession on Surtsey are governed mainly by soil fertility. Seabirds import nutrients from the ocean (Sigurdsson and Magnusson, 2010) and the gull colony vegetation is now dominated by strongly competitive, nutrient responsive species (Liancourt et al., 2009). Even by 1992, vascular plant richness and cover in the central colony were low; development in the margins of the colony was even slower. Similar habitats outside of the colony remained poorly developed. Sand spit communities developed slowly, but have achieved modest richness and cover.

The rate of succession can be assessed by several parameters (Table 4). For each, the value of a plot was determined and ranked. By each standard, plots on lava with sand in the gull colony developed structure most rapidly and changed the most during the study.

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Gull colony plots on sand developed richness and cover faster than the other plots. Total floristic change was greatest and the Δ PCA was similar to that of plots in the gull colony lacking sand. Plots on the margins of the gull colony had delayed development and were intermediate in floristic development. Sheet lava offered more germination sites than did block lava, so cover development, although slow, was more rapid. Tephra and block lava had so little vegetation that differences were irrelevant. However, block lava plots showed some turnover. The sand spit changed least in terms of flora, but developed substantial cover, so if succession were to be gauged solely by the accumulation of biomass, this vegetation fares well in comparison to the more stressed communities. However, repeated disturbances appear to hold this vegetation in an arrested state of development because little turnover has occurred.

5.2 Succession rates on Mount St. Helens

Rates of succession on Mount St. Helens are less clear than on Surtsey. Alternative methods of assessment give different rankings rate ranks (Table 5). Time to peak value of richness is a poor method because time is generally short. However, useful patterns exist in the other parameters. Most suggest that the invasion of conifers produced the most rapid succession. The upper pumice plots developed more rapidly than most herb-dominated plots, likely due to the fertility enhancement by *Lupinus* and more shelter from wind. The lower plots on Studebaker Ridge accumulated species rapidly and cover development was moderately rapid. The succession rate measured by floristic turnover was intermediate. Isolated plots on lahar deposits acquired most of its flora quickly, but cover and floristic turnover were moderate to low. The slowest succession occurred on the wind-swept, isolated and infertile Plains of Abraham.

5.3 Comparing factors that affect rates

Succession rates are affected by both external and internal factors. The degree and nature of isolation affect the density, nature and identity of invaders (Bossuyt et al.,

The determination of succession rates is complicated by several factors (Walker and del Moral, 2003). Often the rate of succession determined by species turnover was rarely constant. As the vegetation matures, species with greater longevity become dominant. Internal dynamics may be irrelevant to the questions at hand, but they offer insight into mechanisms driving succession. Using only calculations based on starting and ending conditions may miss internal changes. Even simple analyses of fluctuating succession rates can offer insights.

Cold seawater isolates Surtsey while subalpine sites on Mount St. Helens have been isolated for millennia creating a flora much smaller than that of surrounding volcanoes (del Moral and Wood, 1988). Few propagules established on Surtsey until the colonization of seabirds, retarding upland succession. On Mount St. Helens, vagile wind-dispersed propagules soon arrived, but sterility and stress severely limited establishment (Wood and del Moral, 1987). On Surtsey, colonization from fertile sites to the uplands also may be limited by stress and dispersal limitations. On Mount St. Helens, short distances filter the seed rain and affect species composition. In other Mount St. Helens studies, distance from sources of colonists reduced species richness and delayed the development of vegetation (del Moral et al., 2009).

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wind (Edwards, 1987). Deposited insects, spiders, spores, seeds and debris were concentrated in microsites. Aeolian input of nutrients is common, but seldom appreciated (Ingimarsdóttir et al., 2013). Its importance on Surtsey may become progressively more important in the uplands where nutrient deposition has allowed soil fertility to develop slowly.

Like birds on Surtsey, *Lupinus lepidus* on Mount St. Helens changed fertility levels dramatically (del Moral and Rozzell, 2005). The most rapid Mount St. Helens trajectories occur where lupines became dominant; the slowest are on the Plains of Abraham, where lupines remain scarce. The low numbers of birds and mammals and their diffuse distribution limit animal effects on soil fertility compared to the seabirds of Surtsey.

This study did not explore seedling establishment, but the importance of surface characteristics is evident on both volcanoes. On Surtsey, sites with sand developed more quickly than barren lava. Sandy substrates provide more opportunities for seeds to escape desiccation and predation (Tsuyuzaki et al., 1997). On Mount St. Helens, microsites were crucial to early seedling establishment (del Moral et al., 2005).

Infertility, instability and isolation combined to constrain succession on much of Surtsey, especially where tephra persists. On Mount St. Helens, tephra was widespread, but nowhere did it obliterate vegetation to initiate primary succession. In other boreal sites, thick isolated tephra deposits retard succession of vascular plants (e.g. Grishin et al., 1996).

The longevity of dominant species affects the rate of succession once vegetation occupies the suitable space. On Surtsey sandy gull colony plots, the succession rate first increased then decreased as grasses dominated. Less developed plots increased their rate of change. On Mount St. Helens, development slowed as woody species came to dominate. Sparsely vegetated plots lacked pattern. Where vegetation was sparse for 15 to 20 yr before rapidly accumulating biomass, the pace of succession then accelerated. Because accelerated succession on Mount St. Helens was associated with *Lupinus*, it may be that enhancing fertility can accelerate succession. However, excessive fertilization favors a few dominants to retard succession.

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Surtsey and Mount St. Helens are vividly different, yet the establishment of vegetation on their barren surfaces followed similar principles. On both, isolation retards community development and filters the available species. Stress further filters colonists. This combination of isolation and stress leads to initially variable vegetation. The result is frequently local dominance by different species with similar ecological characteristics. On both, the alleviation of stress by physical and biological processes accelerates succession rates, although the mechanisms may differ. Habitat heterogeneity was crucial for the establishment of the first colonists on both volcanoes.

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Characteristics	Surtsey ¹	Mount St. Helens ²	Comments
Surface Age	Since 1963	Since 1980	
Area	1.4 km ²	370 km ²	Blast zone To summit
Elevation	155 m	2550 m	
Latitude	63°18' N	46°11' N	
Longitude	20°36' W	122°12' W	
Number of plots	25	49	Primary sites
All vascular plants	58	91	
Reproductive	39	91	
Sampled in plots	22	58	

¹ Status in 2012.² Uplands.

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Table 2. Characteristics of selected sample plots on Surtsey. Richness and cover were recorded in 2012. Group richness range is range of maximum richness. ED = Euclidean distance of the trajectory; Δ PCA is change in PCA-1 scores that summarize the DCA analysis; significant linear regressions indicated as follows: ^a = $P < 0.05$; ^b = $P < 0.01$; ^c ≤ 0.001 .

Habitat	Gulls	Richness	Cover (%)	ED	Δ PCA ^d	Leading Dominants ^d
Sandy sheet lava (Sur-1)	Dense	7	132.3	210	1.55	<i>Poapra; Leyare; Fesric; Stemed; Honpep; Cerfon</i>
Sheet lava (Sur-7)	Dense	6	94	94	2.64	<i>Poapra; Fesric; Cerfon; Sagpro</i>
Sheet lava (Sur-9)	Dense	10	68.2	48	1.54	<i>Puccis; Poapra; Matmar; Sagpro; Cerfon; Cocoff</i>
Sheet lava (Sur-23)	Moderate	8	14.3	59	0.98	<i>Poaann; Puccis; Sagpro; Cerfon; Fesric; Honpep</i>
Gull colony ($n = 10$)		3–12	4.8–146	158	1.39	
Sandy sheet lava (Sur-13)	No	3	2.3	79 ^c	0.19	<i>Honpep; Leyare; Sagpro</i>
Sandy sheet lava (Sur-16)	No	5	2.9	170	0.84	<i>Leyare; Honpep; Sagpro; Cerfon; Siluni</i>
Sandy sheet lava (Sur-20)	No	7	4	11 ^b	0.13	<i>Honpep; Siluni; Rumace; Cerfon;</i>
Sandy sheet lava ($n = 8$)		2–9	0.5–23.8	52	0.39	
Sand spit (Sur-30)	No	3	38.0	1.2	0.03	<i>Honpep; Mermar; Leyare</i>
Sand spit ($n = 2$)		3	24.6–38.0	0.6	0.01	
Tephra (Sur-15) ^e	No	2	3.6	0.7 ^b	0.02	<i>Honpep</i>
Tephra slope ($n = 2$)		2–5	1.5–3.6	4.5	0.07	
Block lava (Sur-31) ^e	No	6	0.18	33	0.48	<i>Sagpro; Puccis; Honpep; Leyare; Poaann; Siluni</i>
Block lava ($n = 2$)		1–6	0.02–0.18	52	0.53	

^d Species listed in order of dominance in last three years of plots sampled.

^e Not plotted.

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R. del Moral and
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Habitat	Impact Type	Richness	Cover (%)	ED	Δ PCA	Leading Dominants ^d
Lahar 2 – near conifers	Lahar deposit	18	53.1	172 ^c	2.36	<i>Abilas; Pincon; Luepec; Eripyr; Poldav</i>
Near woodland Range	2 plots	18–18	53.1–57.2	17	3.12	
Lahar 5 – isolated	Lahar deposit	14	13.9	98	1.57	<i>Luplep; Eripyr; Pencar; Poldav; Junpar</i>
Isolated Range	5 plots	14–18	9.5–22.9	74	0.97	
Pumice Plain 3 – low	Blast, pumice	14	11.3	124	1.51	<i>Pencar; Luplep; Agrpal; Carmer; Luzpar</i>
Low Elevation	4 plots	14–19	11.3–22.0	92	1.47	
Pumice Plain 11 – high	Blast, pumice	20	42.9	144 ^c	2.24	<i>Luplep; Agrpal; Salsit; Pencar</i>
High Elevation	3 plots	16–20	42.9–58.8	139	2.01	
Studebaker Ridge 2 – low	Blast	17	62.4	96 ^a	0.19	<i>Agrpal; Luplep; Pencar; Hiealb</i>
Low Elevation	4 plots	14–18	11.3–35.9	117	0.67	
Studebaker Ridge 12 – middle	Blast	16	9.0	131	1.38	<i>Agrpal; Luplep; Salsit; Hiealb</i>
Mid Elevation	4 plots	13–16	5.3–9.0	109	0.78	
Studebaker Ridge 19 – high	Blast	13	3.6	62 ^a	0.86	<i>Luepec; Agrpal; Cisumb; Luplep; Agrsca</i>
High Elevation	4 plots	13	3.6–4.5	74	0.62	
Plains of Abraham 1	Blast, scour	12	4.7	79 ^a	2.34	<i>Pencar; Cisumb; Junpar; Agrpal; Carmer</i>
Scour with pumice	10 plots	11–22	3.8–6.0	52	0.58	

^d Species listed in order of dominance in last three years of plots sampled.

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Table 4. Relative ranking of succession rates on Surtsey using several criteria.

Habitat	Richness	Rate to Peak	Cover	Rate to Peak	ED	Δ PCA	PCA diff.
Lava: Gull and Sand	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.38
Lava: Gull	2	1	2	2	2	1	1.46
Lava: Moderate Gull	3	2	4	3	3	3	0.84
Lava: Sand	4	3	5	5	4	4	0.51
Lava: Block	5	4	7	6	5	5	0.43
Tephra	5	4	6	6	6	6	0.07
Sand spit	5	4	3	4	7	7	0.01

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Early succession ratesR. del Moral and
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Habitat	Richness	Rate to Peak	Cover	Rate to Peak	ED	Δ PCA	PCA diff.
Lahar-Near	1	1	1	2	1	1	1.97
Lahar-Far	3	1	4	4	5	3	0.63
Pumice-Low	1	2	3	4	4	2	1.49
Pumice-High	1	1	1	1	2	1	1.70
Blasted Ridge-Low	2	1	2	3	3	2	1.00
Blasted Ridge-Mid	2	2	4	4	3	3	1.73
Blasted Ridge-High	3	2	4	5	4	3	0.62
Scour-Abraham	4	1	5	5	5	4	0.52

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Abbreviation	Surtsey: Latin Name	Abbreviation	Mount St. Helens: Latin Name
Cerfon	<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	Abilas	<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i>
Cocoff	<i>Cochlearia officinalis</i>	Agrpal	<i>Agrostis pallens</i>
Fesric	<i>Festuca richardsonii</i>	Carmer	<i>Carex mertensii</i>
Honpep	<i>Honckenya peploides</i>	Cisumb	<i>Cistanthe umbellata</i>
Leyare	<i>Leymus arenarius</i>	Eripyr	<i>Eriogonum pyrolifolium</i>
Matmar	<i>Matricaria maritima</i>	Hiealb	<i>Hieracium albiflorum</i>
Mermar	<i>Mertensia maritima</i>	Junpar	<i>Juncus parryi</i>
Poaann	<i>Poa annua</i>	Luepec	<i>Luetkea pectinata</i>
Poapra	<i>Poa pratensis</i>	Luplep	<i>Lupinus lepidus</i>
Pucdis	<i>Puccinellia distans</i>	Luzpar	<i>Luzula parviflora</i>
Rumace	<i>Rumex acetosella</i>	Pencar	<i>Penstemon cardwellii</i>
Sagpro	<i>Sagina procumbens</i>	Pincon	<i>Pinus contorta</i>
Siluni	<i>Silene uniflora</i>	Poldav	<i>Polygonum davisiae</i>
Stemed	<i>Stellaria media</i>	Salsit	<i>Salix sitchensis</i>

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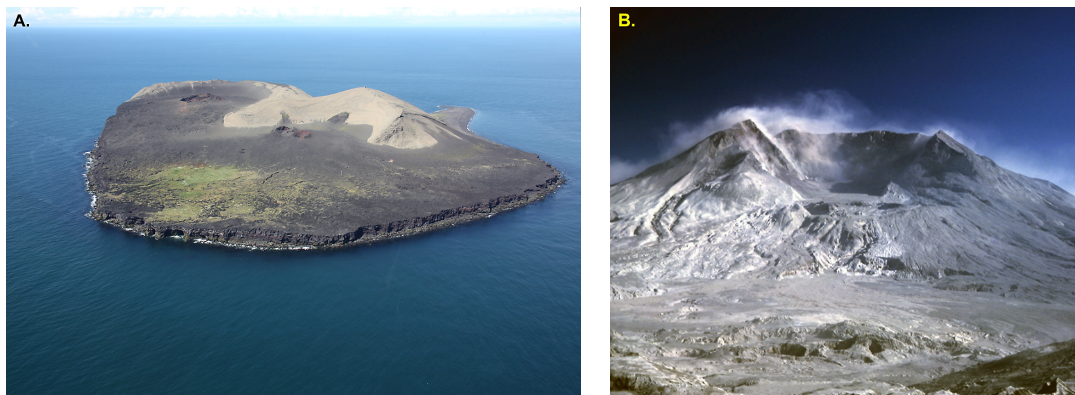
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Fig. 1. (A) Surtsey: aerial view looking north showing the barren tephra hills, crater areas and protruding sand spit. The descending lava shield with the dense vegetation of the seabird colony is in the foreground (photo: Erling Ólafsson, 2010). **(B)** Mount St. Helens: aerial view looking south from ca. 15 km north of the crater overlooking Spirit Lake and showing the devastated habitats (photo: RdM, August 1980). The Pumice Plain is in the center, Studebaker Ridge is on the extreme right (west) of image.

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Fig. 2. Surtsey seabird colony with dense grass dominated vegetation (photo: BM 2013).



Fig. 3. Surtsey tephra slopes with scattered flowering plants (photo: BM 2013).



Fig. 4. Shoreline vegetation on north sand spit of Surtsey (photo: BM 2013).

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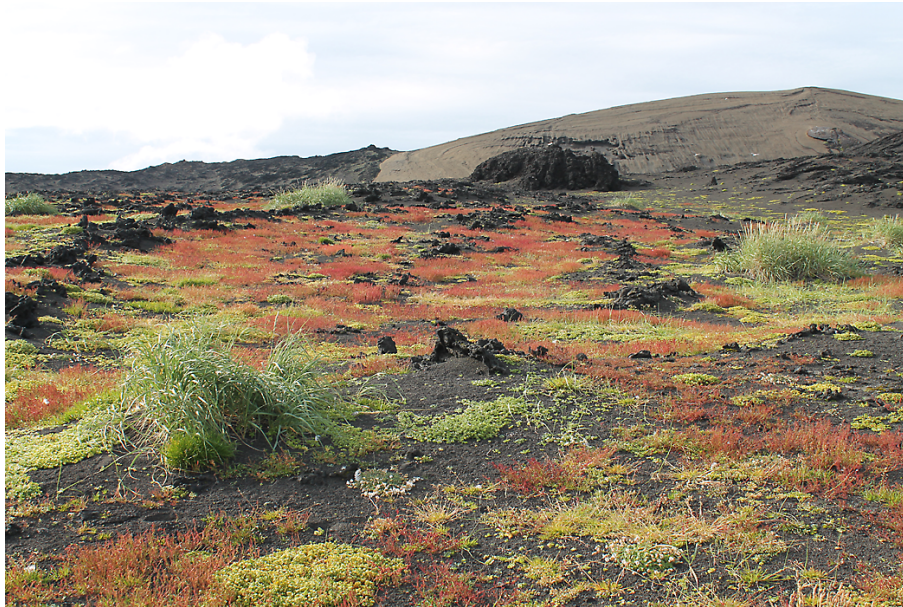


Fig. 5. Pioneer vegetation at the edge of the Surtsey gull colony (photo: BM 2013).



Fig. 6. Lower lahar on south side of Mount St. Helens, adjacent to woodland, with strong invasion by *Abies* and *Pinus* evident (photo: RdM 2008).

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Fig. 7. Lahar deposit vegetation isolated from surviving vegetation (photo: RdM 2004).

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Fig. 8. Upper Pumice Plain plots showing a bloom of *Lupinus lepidus* with *Castilleja miniata* (photo: RdM 2007).



Fig. 9. Upper Studebaker Ridge, with rocky lava exposed and only a few scattered herbs (photo: RdM 2009).



Fig. 10. Plains of Abraham showing total lack of vegetation (photo: RdM September 1980).

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Fig. 11. Plains of Abraham showing very sparse vegetation (photo: RdM August 2009).

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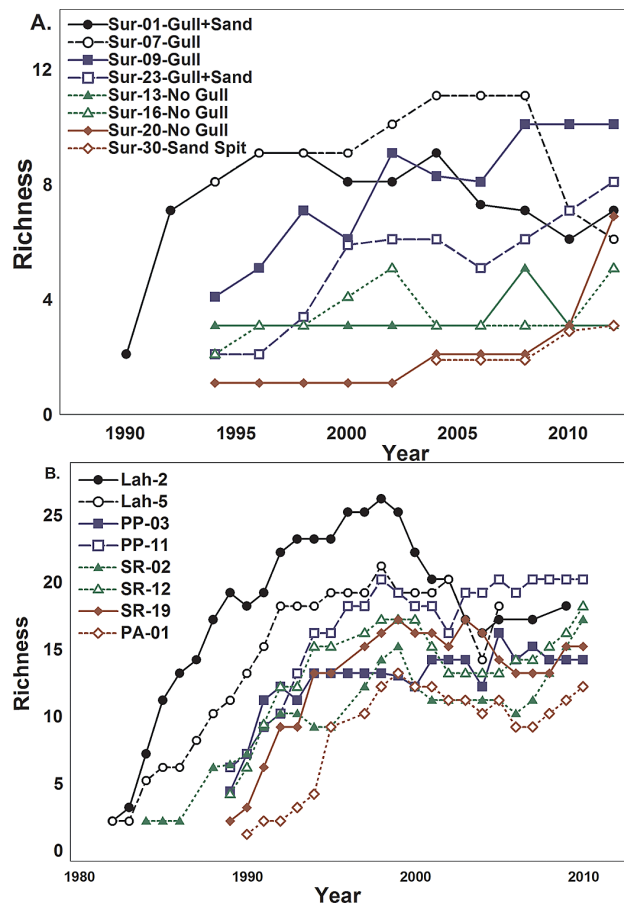


Fig. 12. Richness development on selected plots: **(A)** Surtsey; **(B)** Mount St. Helens.

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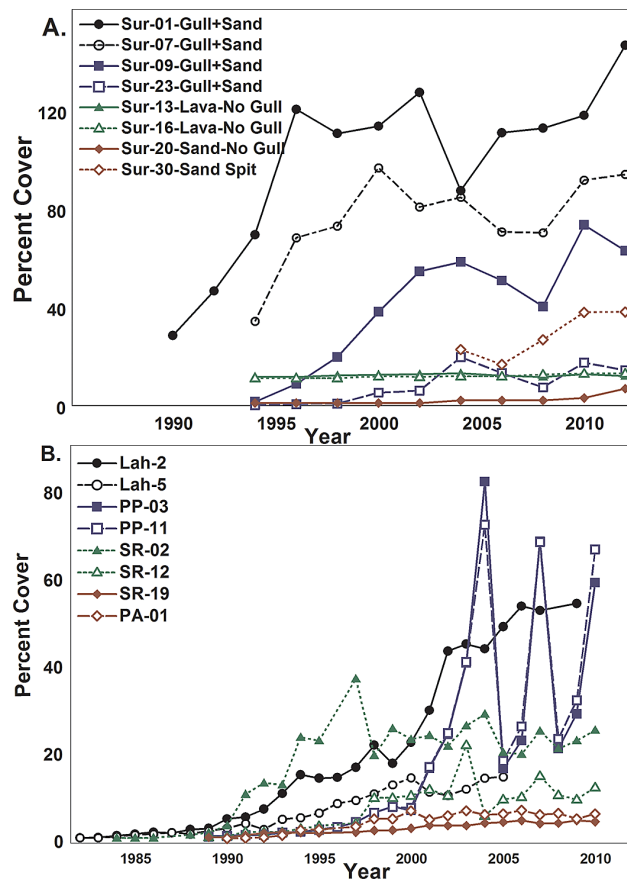


Fig. 13. Percent Cover on selected plots. **(A)** Surtsey; **(B)** Mount St. Helens.

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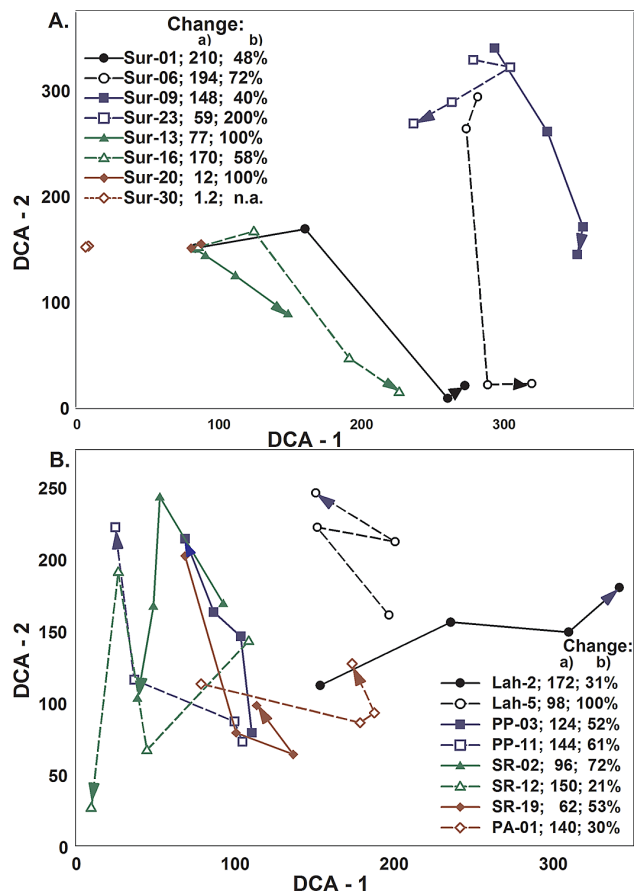
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Fig. 14. Modified DCA plots: **(A)** Surtsey; **(B)** Mount St. Helens. Change units “a” are the overall Euclidean distance between early and final plots; “b” is the percentage of this change that occurred in the last 10 yr of the record. Lower percentages indicate slower development in recent years.

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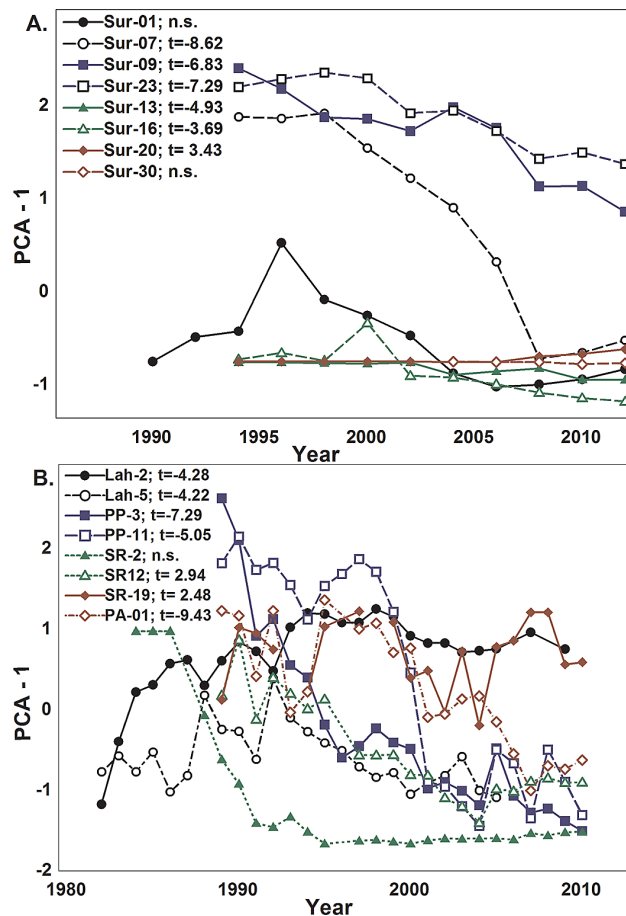


Fig. 15. The first principal component of the DCA scores over time. **(A)** Surtsey; **(B)** Mount St. Helens. The t value is derived from a linear regression of the PCA axis 1 over time.