Introduction

Percent cover is an efficient means of understanding the relative abundance and contribution to the ecosystem made by different plants. Percent cover is a measure of influence. However, plants may be persisting, or dropping out, or coming in to the system.

You have to monitor over time. Understanding land use history, and an appreciation of random change, both help to explain the mechanisms of why certain plants occur where they do, and why plant succession occurs the way it does. Succession is also fueled by the seed bank that is present. Some seeds can remain viable for long periods of time, others decay quickly. Some species of plants are sensitive to changes in soil pH, or changes in soil fauna.

This protocol allows students to calculate the relative abundance of plants in a given area.

**To Calculate Total Species Abundance**

1. **Use the % percentage cover data you have and**
2. **ADD UP ALL OF THE SAME SPECIES AND TOTAL IN THE CHART BELOW**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| SPECIES NAME | TOTAL PERCENT COVERAGE (%) |
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|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**CHANCERY LANE SWAMP / Long** Beach – Data From Line Transect #1

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| SPECIES  | SCIENTIFIC NAME |
| 1 |  Sporobolus virginicus (Crab grass) |
| 2 | Euphorbia mesembrianthemifolia |
| 3 | Ipomoea pes-caprae |
|  |  |
|  |  |

LONG BEACH- SITE # 2- Line Transect #2

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| SPECIES  | SCIENTIFIC NAME |
| 4 | Coccoloba uvifera (Sea grape) |
|  |  |

**Graeme Hall Swamp**- Site # 3

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| SPECIES | SCIENTIFIC NAME |
| A | paspalum vaginatum - grass |
| B | UNKNOWN SPECIES B |
| C | UNKNOWN SPECIES C |

Graeme Hall Swamp- Site # 4

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| SPECIES | SCIENTIFIC NAME |
| A | paspalum vaginatum - grass |
| B | UNKNOWN SPECIES B |
|  |  |