

# 1 A parasite's paradise: Biotrophic species prevail oomycete 2 community composition in tree canopies

3 Running title: Biotrophic oomycetes in tree canopies

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## 14 Abstract

15 Oomycetes (Stramenopiles, Protista) are among the most severe plant pathogens,  
16 comprising species with a high economic and ecologic impact on forest ecosystems. Their  
17 diversity and community structures are well studied in terrestrial habitats, but tree canopies  
18 as huge and diverse habitats have been widely neglected. A recent study highlighted distinct  
19 oomycete communities in the canopy region compared to forest soils when taking oomycete  
20 abundances into account, in contrast to the homogeneity at the incidence level. It remains  
21 however unknown if this homogeneity also leads to a functional homogenisation among  
22 microhabitats. In this study, we supplemented functional traits to oomycete canopy and  
23 ground communities, which were determined over a time period of two years with a  
24 metabarcoding approach. Our results showed that even though most oomycetes occurred in  
25 all habitats, a strong discrepancy between the strata and correspondingly the distribution of

26 oomycete lifestyles could be observed, which was constant over time. Obligate biotrophic  
27 species, exclusively feeding on living host tissue, dominated the canopy region, implying tree  
28 canopies to be a hitherto neglected reservoir for parasitic protists. Parasites highly  
29 specialised on hosts that were not sampled could be determined in high abundances in the  
30 canopy and the surrounding air, challenging the strict host dependencies ruled for some  
31 oomycetes. Our findings further contribute to the understanding of oomycete ecosystem  
32 functioning in forest ecosystems.

33 *Keywords:* protists, oomycetes, canopies, metabarcoding, parasites, forest ecosystems

## 34 1 INTRODUCTION

35 Some of the most devastating plant pathogens with worldwide economic and ecologic  
36 relevance belong to the Oomycota, protists in the Stramenopiles within the SAR  
37 superkingdom (Adl et al., 2019). They comprise several distinct lineages, i.a. the Pythiales,  
38 Peronosporales and Saprolegniales (Marano et al., 2014) and occupy ecologically important  
39 positions as saprotrophs and severe pathogens. The infamous oomycete *Phytophthora*  
40 *infestans* causes one of the most destructive plant diseases, the potato late blight, and  
41 initiated the great Irish famine in the late 1840's with a million deaths and massive  
42 emigration (Mizubuti & Fry, 2006). The ecological and economic impact of oomycetes has  
43 led to an increased research interest on their community structures (Robideau et al., 2011;  
44 Riit et al., 2016; Singer et al., 2016; Jauss et al., 2020b, 2020a; Fiore-Donno & Bonkowski,  
45 2021), and, correspondingly, their pathogenicity and infection strategies (Rizzo & Garbelotto,  
46 2003; Rizzo et al., 2005; Thines & Kamoun, 2010).

47 Three lifestyles are described for oomycetes: **Saprotrophic** species are free-living and feed  
48 on dead and decaying matter (Lewis, 1973). They occupy key roles in the trophic upgrading  
49 of terrestrial, marine and freshwater habitats (Marano et al., 2016). Although saprotrophy is  
50 less common in oomycetes, it is believed to be the ancestral state of oomycete nutrition (F.

51 Martin et al., 2016; Spanu & Panstruga, 2017), while the majority of currently described  
52 oomycetes are plant pathogens (Thines & Kamoun, 2010). The pathogenic lifestyles include  
53 **hemibiotrophy**, characterised by an initial biotrophic phase later turning into a necrotrophic  
54 phase after the death of the host (Fawke et al., 2015; Pandaranayaka et al., 2019), as well  
55 as **obligate biotrophy**, which comprises species exclusively feeding on living host tissue  
56 (Spanu & Kämper, 2010). Even though obligate biotrophic species usually do not actively kill  
57 their host, they still damage the host by chlorosis, inflorescence and killing of seedlings, and  
58 thus cause severe economic losses (Parkunan et al., 2013; Krsteska et al., 2014; Kamoun et  
59 al., 2015).

60 Oomycete communities are well studied in terrestrial habitats, however, most studies focus  
61 on soil and the rhizosphere (Arcate et al., 2006; Esmaeili Taheri et al., 2017; Sapp et al.,  
62 2019; Fiore-Donno & Bonkowski, 2021). Recently, Jauss et al. (2020b) characterised  
63 oomycete diversity and community composition in tree canopies, which are huge  
64 ecosystems containing heterogeneous microhabitats and a large proportion of undescribed  
65 diversity (Nadkarni, 2001). Albeit the same oomycetes were present on the ground and in  
66 the canopy, communities inhabiting canopy habitats were significantly distinct from soil and  
67 leaf litter communities in their abundances. The authors concluded that oomycete diversity in  
68 forest ecosystems is shaped by deterministic microhabitat filtering, while a study by Jauss et  
69 al. (2020a) could determine air dispersal and convective transport to be the stochastic  
70 supplier and distributor of oomycetes among microhabitats and strata. However, the former  
71 study only analysed one time point, while the latter study dealing with air samples could  
72 show a strong temporal variability in community composition. Accordingly, seasonal  
73 variability has been shown to influence protistan communities, to some extent, in several  
74 studies (Nolte et al., 2010; Fiore-Donno et al., 2019; Fournier et al., 2020; Walden et al.,  
75 2021). For cercozoan communities, Walden et al. (2021) could show annually reoccurring  
76 succession patterns in the phyllosphere. This implied not only spatially, but also seasonally  
77 structured cercozoan communities in tree canopies, although this was not reflected on a

78 functional scale. If seasonal variation is also reflected in the functional diversity of oomycetes  
79 in forest ecosystems, however, remains elusive.

80 Accordingly, we supplemented functional traits and investigated the seasonal stability of  
81 oomycete community composition in forest floors and tree canopies over a period of two  
82 years. Our study tackles two hypotheses: (1) Oomycete communities vary not only in their  
83 spatial distribution, but also in their seasonal composition, and (2) the deterministic  
84 processes leading to differences in community composition between canopy and ground  
85 habitats also shape the functional diversity and functional distribution among microhabitats.

## 86 2 MATERIAL AND METHODS

### 87 2.1 Sampling, DNA extraction and sequencing

88 Microhabitat samples were collected in two seasons over a period of two years, i.e. autumn  
89 (October) 2017 and 2018 and spring (May) 2018 and 2019 in cooperation with the Leipzig  
90 Canopy Crane (LCC) Facility in a floodplain forest in Leipzig, Germany (51.3657 N, 12.3094  
91 E). Samples were obtained and processed as described in Jauss et al. (2020b). Briefly,  
92 seven microbial microhabitat compartments related to tree surface were sampled in the  
93 canopy at 20-30m height: Fresh leaves, dead wood, bark, arboreal soil and three cryptogam  
94 epiphytes (lichen and two moss genera, *Hypnum* and *Orthotrichum*). In addition, two ground  
95 samples (soil and leaf litter) were sampled. All microhabitat samples were taken with four  
96 replicates, from three tree species with three replicates each. DNA extraction was performed  
97 with the DNeasy PowerSoil kit (QIAGEN, Hilden, Germany) according to the manufacturer's  
98 instruction. This procedure was performed on four sampling dates: October 2017 (Jauss et  
99 al., 2020b), May 2018, October 2018 and May 2019 (this study). Oomycete-specific PCRs  
100 and sequencing were performed as described in Jauss et al. (2020b) with tagged primers

101 designed by Fiore-Donno & Bonkowski (2021); the used primer tag combinations are  
102 provided in Supplementary Table 1.

## 103 2.2 Sequence processing

104 Sequence processing and bioinformatics analyses followed the pipeline described in Jauss  
105 et al. (2020b). Briefly, raw reads were merged using VSEARCH v2.10.3 (Rognes et al.,  
106 2016) and demultiplexed with cutadapt v1.18 (M. Martin, 2011). Primer and tag sequences  
107 were trimmed and concatenated sequencing runs were then clustered into operational  
108 taxonomic units (OTUs) using Swarm v2.2.2 (Mahé et al., 2015). Chimeras were *de novo*  
109 detected using VSEARCH. OTUs were removed from the final OTU table if they were  
110 flagged as chimeric, showed a quality value of less than 0.0002, were shorter than 150bp, or  
111 were represented by less than 0.005% of all reads (i.e. 368 reads). OTUs were first  
112 taxonomically assigned by using BLAST+ v2.9.0 (Camacho et al., 2009) with default  
113 parameters against the non-redundant NCBI Nucleotide database (as of June 2019) and  
114 removed if the best hit in terms of bitscore was a non-oomycete sequence. Finer taxonomic  
115 assignment was performed with VSEARCH on a custom oomycete ITS1 database (Jauss et  
116 al., 2020b). The annotation was refined by assigning the species name of the best  
117 VSEARCH hit to the corresponding OTU if the pairwise identity was over 95%, OTUs with  
118 lower percentages were assigned higher taxonomic levels. Functional annotation was  
119 performed on genus level with a custom python script, based on the oomycete functional  
120 database published by Fiore-Donno & Bonkowski (2021). Samples with low sequencing  
121 depth were removed by loading the final OTU table into QIIME 2 v2018.11 (Bolyen et al.,  
122 2019) and retaining at least five samples per microhabitat and 15 samples per tree species  
123 per sampling date, i.e. samples with at least 1172 reads. Additionally, the oomycete OTU  
124 abundance matrix of air samples from Jauss et al. (2020a) was used for a comparison  
125 between tree related microhabitats and the surrounding air from spring 2019, as these  
126 samples were taken simultaneously.

## 127 2.3 Statistical analyses

128 All statistical analyses were conducted in R v3.5.3 (R Core Team, 2019). Alpha diversity  
129 indices were calculated for each sample using the *diversity* function in the *vegan* package  
130 (Oksanen et al., 2019). Non-metric multidimensional scaling was performed on the Bray-  
131 Curtis dissimilarity matrix of the log transformed relative abundances (functions *vegdist* and  
132 *metaMDS* in the *vegan* package, respectively), the same matrix was used for a  
133 permutational multivariate analysis of variance (perMANOVA) with the *adonis* function.  
134 Partitioning and visualisation of relative abundances between canopy, soil and leaf litter was  
135 performed with the *ggtern* package (Hamilton & Ferry, 2018). Determination of significantly  
136 differentially abundant OTUs was performed with the *DESeq2* package (Love et al., 2014).  
137 All figures were plotted with the *ggplot2* package (Wickham, 2016).

## 138 3 RESULTS

### 139 3.1 Taxonomic and functional annotation

140 We obtained 375 OTUs from 4,262,960 sequences. 77 OTUs (= 20.5% of all OTUs) showed  
141 a sequence similarity of less than 70% to any known reference sequence. Plotting the  
142 sequence similarity against reference sequences revealed similar patterns as previously  
143 described by Jauss et al. (2020b), i.e., many OTUs showed a similarity of 97-100% to known  
144 reference sequences, while additional peaks at ~75% and ~85% may indicate hitherto  
145 undescribed oomycete lineages (Supplementary Figure 1).

146 Peronosporales and Pythiales dominated all microhabitats at all sampling events  
147 (Supplementary Figure 2). Distribution of functional groups was relatively constant for all four  
148 sampling events (Figure 1). Based on OTU presence/absence, the pattern was nearly  
149 identical for all microhabitats (Figure 1A-D). Approximately 20% of all OTUs occupied a  
150 hemibiotrophic lifestyle, 30% were determined to be obligate biotrophic, only few OTUs

151 belonged to saprotrophic species and the lifestyle of the remaining 50% of OTUs could not  
152 be determined, mainly due to low sequence similarities to reference sequences. However,  
153 when taking abundances of OTUs into account, the pattern clearly shifted. OTUs assigned to  
154 obligate biotrophic species dominated canopy habitats, while ground habitats were more  
155 dominated by hemibiotrophic species (Figure 1E-H).

156 Comparing the data from Spring 2019 (Figure 1D,H) with air samples previously published  
157 by Jauss et al. (2020a) (Figure 2) revealed that the air surrounding canopy and ground  
158 habitats was dominated by obligate biotrophic OTUs, irrespective of incidence or  
159 abundance.

## 160 3.2 Abundance partitioning

### 161 3.2.1 Partitioning between Canopy, Soil and Leaf Litter

162 To further determine the distribution of functional groups together with the taxonomic  
163 annotation, the relative abundances of each OTU were partitioned for canopy, soil and leaf  
164 litter samples (Figure 3). Again, OTUs assigned to obligate biotrophic species dominated  
165 canopy samples, while hemibiotrophic species were more evenly distributed or more  
166 abundant in leaf litter and soil habitats. Albuginales were almost exclusively present in  
167 canopy samples, Peronosporales dominated canopy and leaf litter samples, while Pythiales  
168 showed a rather even distribution.

169 The relative abundances of the latter two orders were further partitioned into the four  
170 sampling events (Supplementary Figure 3). Abundances of Pythiales were rather  
171 homogenous and consistent throughout the seasons, while Peronosporales abundances  
172 were more shifted to the canopy region in spring samples. In Autumn 2017, OTUs assigned  
173 to the Peronosporales were almost exclusively present in canopy and leaf litter samples,  
174 while the distribution in Autumn 2018 was more homogenous.

### 175 3.2.2 Differential Abundance Analysis

176 To determine which OTU abundances were significantly different between the two strata  
177 ground and canopy as well as the two sampling seasons spring and autumn, a differential  
178 abundance analysis was carried out (Figure 4, Supplementary Figure 4). Within the  
179 Peronosporales, this revealed the genera *Peronospora* and *Hyaloperonospora* (obligate  
180 biotrophic genera) to be the dominant taxa in canopy samples, while *Phytophthora*  
181 (hemibiotrophic) species were significantly differentially abundant in ground samples (Figure  
182 4). For the seasonal effect, more *Peronospora* species were differentially abundant in spring  
183 samples compared to autumn samples (Supplementary Figure 4). Within the Pythiales, the  
184 genera *Pythium* (hemibiotrophic) and *Globisporangium* (obligate biotrophic) were  
185 significantly differentially abundant in ground samples. Most Pythiales, however, could not  
186 be determined due to the low sequence similarity to reference sequences.

### 187 3.3 Alpha and beta diversity

188 Despite OTU richness being quite variable among microhabitats, Shannon diversity as well  
189 as evenness were high and did not differ between the samplings (Supplementary Figure 5).  
190 Beta diversity analyses revealed similar patterns for all seasons as well: the NMDS plot  
191 (Figure 5) showed a large overlap of canopy inhabiting communities, which in turn did not  
192 overlap with leaf litter and soil communities. This indicated distinct communities inhabiting  
193 canopy and ground habitats, respectively, a pattern recurring in all samplings.  
194 Variation in community composition was twice as high among microhabitats ( $R^2=0.20$ ) than  
195 between canopy and ground ( $R^2=0.11$ ) or sampling dates ( $R^2=0.10$ ). Tree species ( $R^2=0.05$ )  
196 and season ( $R^2=0.04$ ) explained only a minor fraction of beta diversity (permANOVA, Table  
197 1).



## 198 4 DISCUSSION

199 The most striking pattern of oomycete community composition is the distribution of obligate  
200 biotrophic and hemibiotrophic species, with the former dominating canopy habitats and the  
201 latter predominantly found in ground habitats (Figure 1). In a previous study, Jauss et al.  
202 (2020b) proposed increasing functional diversity instead of increasing species richness with  
203 increasing habitat diversity, as most OTUs were shared between all habitats irrespective of  
204 specific strata or tree species. Here we supplemented functional traits of the detected OTUs,  
205 which revealed that the observed diversity is driven by the lifestyle of the oomycetes.  
206 Species occupying a hemibiotrophic lifestyle dominated the two ground habitats soil and leaf  
207 litter. Hemibiotrophy is characterised by an initial biotrophic phase, which turns into a  
208 necrotrophic phase (Fawke et al., 2015; Pandaranayaka et al., 2019). Oomycetes dwelling  
209 the ground habitats are thus capable of feeding on the dead organic matter in the soil, leaf  
210 litter and deadwood samples. Deadwood on the forest floor has already been shown to  
211 harbour hemibiotrophic oomycetes (Kwaśna et al. 2017a; 2017b). In the canopy, however,  
212 deadwood harbours only little hemibiotrophic species, as they are dominated by obligate  
213 biotrophic species, like the other canopy habitats. The reason for this might be the high  
214 number of obligate biotrophs in the other surrounding canopy habitats as well as in the air  
215 (Figure 2). These samples might be overwhelmed by the passive influx of biotrophic species,  
216 which are capable of surviving in the other, living, habitats, which would be an interplay  
217 between stochastic and deterministic processes for community assembly.

218 Recent molecular studies analysing oomycete diversity determined similar patterns as  
219 reflected in our study, i.e. soil habitats are dominated by hemibiotrophic species, mostly  
220 members of the Pythiales (Sapkota & Nicolaisen, 2015; Riit et al., 2016; Fiore-Donno &  
221 Bonkowski, 2021). Species of the genus *Pythium* were significantly differentially abundant in  
222 our ground habitats. Habitats in the canopy, however, were dominated by the obligate  
223 biotrophic genera *Peronospora* and *Hyaloperonospora* (Figure 4). Tree canopies have only  
224 recently been subject to studies on microbial diversity (Jauss et al., 2020a, 2020b; Walden et

225 al., 2021; Herrmann et al., 2021), indicating tree canopies to be a hitherto neglected  
226 reservoir for parasitic microorganisms. Species of the genus *Hyaloperonospora* are known to  
227 be highly host-specific, infecting plant species of Brassicaceae and closely related families  
228 (Lee et al., 2017 and references therein). However, none of our sampled trees and  
229 microhabitats belong to the Brassicaceae or the order Brassicales. Yet, we observed a high  
230 number of reads and OTUs assigned to the genus *Hyaloperonospora* in the microhabitat  
231 samples in the canopy as well as in the air samples in both strata, while their number in  
232 ground microhabitats is significantly depleted (Figure 4). This indicates a non-random  
233 distribution of *Hyaloperonospora* species, as the air as a distribution mechanism should lead  
234 to a more or less equal distribution in canopy and ground habitats. Here, they should not be  
235 able to survive due to their high host specificity. But the domination in canopy samples  
236 implies a capability of survival on hosts they are not specialised on. Thus, we tentatively  
237 propose an even less strict host dependency for the genus *Hyaloperonospora* than already  
238 suggested (Yerkes & Shaw, 1959; McMeekin, 1960; Dickinson & Greenhalgh, 1977).

239 The significant differential abundance in the canopy of several undetermined OTUs that can  
240 only be assigned to the family Pythiaceae (Figure 4) indicates hitherto undescribed lineages,  
241 specialised on the survival in the canopy. Members of the Pythiaceae can occupy all  
242 lifestyles, from saprotrophy over hemibiotrophy to obligate biotrophy (Fawke et al., 2015;  
243 Marano et al., 2016; Fiore-Donno & Bonkowski, 2021). If the OTUs in the canopy would  
244 show an obligate biotrophic lifestyle, it would be in line with observations of the other  
245 lineages in the canopy (Figure 1). Yet, the sequence similarity of these OTUs amounts to  
246 only ca 80-85% to any reference sequence, thus we only tentatively draw conclusions about  
247 their lifestyle.

248 A common pattern in microbial community ecology studies is a high seasonal variability  
249 (Nolte et al., 2010; Fiore-Donno et al., 2019; Fournier et al., 2020; Walden et al., 2021).  
250 Oomycete community compositions were in fact slightly, yet significantly distinct for every  
251 sampling and correspondingly for every season (Table 1). This pattern is in line with  
252 hypotheses proposed by Jauss et al. (2020a), that seasonal variation in air samples drives

253 the community composition in forest ecosystems. The environment, however, then selects  
254 the species most adapted to the microhabitat, leading to overall similar community patterns  
255 and microhabitat differences for every season (Figure 5). The seasonal changes in  
256 microhabitat properties (e.g. temperature, moisture or habitat structure) thus affect all  
257 habitats and communities equally. The season itself explained less variance in community  
258 composition than the sampling dates (i.e., Autumn 2017 vs. Autumn 2018 etc.; Table 1),  
259 suggesting that annual changes do not lead to similar community structures within  
260 microhabitats in each season as an annual cycle *per se*, but rather indicate a high temporal  
261 variability while preserving spatial diversity. Fournier et al. (2020) observed similar patterns,  
262 concluding deterministic niche-based processes in microbial forest soil community assembly.  
263 Implications are that ecosystem functioning of oomycete communities is not mainly affected  
264 by seasonal fluctuations, but rather by microhabitat identity and, correspondingly, responses  
265 of lifestyle to microhabitat filtering (Fiore-Donno & Bonkowski, 2021).

## 266 Conclusions

267 Both our hypotheses were confirmed in this study: Oomycetes show not only a spatial, but,  
268 to a lesser extent, also a temporal variation in their communities. Within the temporal  
269 variation however, the spatial variation is preserved, leading to overall similar community  
270 patterns for every sampling date. Further, these deterministic processes also shape their  
271 functional diversity in forest ecosystems. Our results indicate that tree canopies not only  
272 offer numerous distinct habitats to microorganisms, but also serve as a reservoir for parasitic  
273 species. Spatial diversity and correspondingly functional diversity drive the oomycete  
274 community to a greater extent than temporal diversity. Thus, our findings contribute to future  
275 studies on oomycete ecosystem functioning.

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## 286 Conflict of Interest

287 None declared.

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458

## 459 Data Accessibility

460 Raw sequence data have been submitted to the European Nucleotide Archive (ENA)  
461 database under the Bioproject number PRJEB37525, with accession numbers ERS4399744,  
462 ERS5649966 and ERS5649967.  
463 All figures, codes and detailed bioinformatic/statistical methods used in this study are  
464 available at <https://github.com/RJauss/ParasitesParadise>.

## 465 Author contributions

466 MB and MS conceived the study. RW and StS designed the sampling and DNA extraction.  
467 AMF-D contributed the primers and functional annotation of oomycetes. SW and R-TJ  
468 conducted the sampling, DNA extraction and PCRs. KF assisted DNA extraction and PCRs.  
469 RT-J performed the bioinformatic and statistical analyses and drafted the manuscript. All  
470 authors contributed to and approved the final version.

## 471 Tables

472 **Table 1: Results of permutational multivariate analysis of variance (perMANOVA) from the**  
473 ***adonis* function.** Factors were used independently with the default of 999 permutations. *Season*  
474 provides the two factors Autumn and Spring, while *Sampling Date* corresponds to the specific time  
475 points of sampling, i.e. Autumn 2017, Spring 2018 etc.

	<i>Df</i>	<i>SumsOfSqs</i>	<i>F value</i>	<i>R2</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Tree Species</i>	2	5.18	7.95	0.05	0.001
<i>Microhabitat</i>	8	20.45	9.12	0.20	0.001
<i>Stratum</i>	1	10.78	35.20	0.11	0.001
<i>Season</i>	1	4.00	12.15	0.04	0.001
<i>Sampling Date</i>	3	10.32	11.10	0.10	0.001

476



## 477 Figures

478 **Figure 1: Functional annotation of oomycete OTUs in canopy and ground habitats.** (A-D)  
479 Distribution of functional groups based on OTU presence/absence, i.e. the proportion of OTUs per  
480 Lifestyle. (E-H) Distribution of functional groups when taking abundances into account. A = Arboreal  
481 Soil, B = Bark, D = Deadwood, F = Fresh Leaves, H = Hypnum, Li = Lichen, O = Orthotrichum, S =  
482 Soil, LL = Leaf Litter

483 **Figure 2: Functional annotation of oomycete OTUs from Spring 2019.** Microhabitat samples  
484 based on OTU presence/absence (A) and OTU abundances (C) compared to air samples based on  
485 OTU presence/absence (B) and OTU abundances (D). For microhabitat abbreviations, see Figure 1.

486 **Figure 3: Ternary plot partitioning the relative abundances of OTUs between canopy, soil and**  
487 **leaf litter.** Each dot represents one OTU, sorted by taxonomic order and coloured by lifestyle.  
488 *Incertae sedis* comprises families and genera not associated with any order, e.g. Lagenaceae or  
489 *Paralagenidium*. The order *Undetermined* represents OTUs with sequence similarities of less than  
490 70% to any reference sequence.

491 **Figure 4: Differential abundance analysis between the two strata canopy (top panels) and**  
492 **ground (bottom panels) sorted by taxonomic order.** Each dot represents one significantly  
493 differentially abundant OTU grouped by genus. Y-axis ( $\log_2\text{FoldChange}$ ) gives the measurement of  
494 the differential abundance.

495 **Figure 5: Non-metric multidimensional scaling (NMDS) ordination of Bray-Curtis dissimilarity**  
496 **matrices for canopy and ground microhabitats.** Canopy microhabitat communities show a large  
497 overlap along all sampling events. Ground habitat communities are strongly separated, indicating  
498 unique exclusive communities compared to the canopy region, irrespective of the sampling season.

## 499 Supplementary Figures

500 **Supplementary Figure 1: Sequence similarity of reads (top) and OTUs (bottom) per sampling**  
501 **event to published reference sequences.** 20.5% of all OTUs, corresponding to 3% of all reads, had  
502 a similarity of less than 70% to any known reference sequence (not shown).

503 **Supplementary Figure 2: Taxonomic assignment of OTUs per sampling and microhabitat.** Black  
504 line separates canopy and ground habitats. Distribution of taxonomic groups was similar for every  
505 sampling, i.e. Pythiales and Peronosporales dominating all samples.

506 **Supplementary Figure 3: Ternary plot partitioning the relative abundances of Peronosporales**  
507 **and Pythiales per sampling event.** Each dot represents one OTU.

508 **Supplementary Figure 4: Differential abundance analysis between the two seasons spring (top**  
509 **panels) and autumn (bottom panels) sorted by taxonomic order.** Each dot represents one  
510 significantly differentially abundant OTU grouped by genus. Y-axis ( $\log_2\text{FoldChange}$ ) gives the  
511 measurement of the differential abundance.

512 **Supplementary Figure 5: Boxplot of alpha diversity indices for microhabitat communities per**  
513 **sampling.** Outliers are given by dots. Observed patterns show no strong variability over the four  
514 sampling events.

## 515 Supplementary Tables

516 **Supplementary Table 1: Primer tags used in this study.** Given are the sample ID, forward and  
517 (reverse complemented) reverse tag and the ENA sequencing run ID.

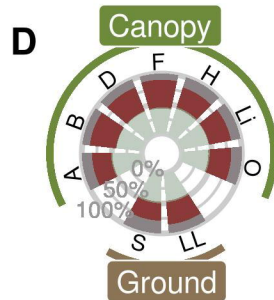
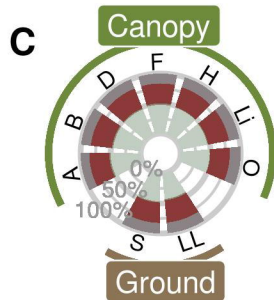
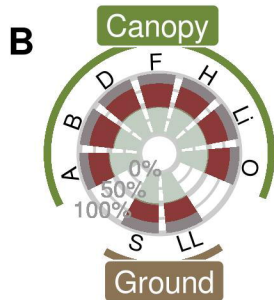
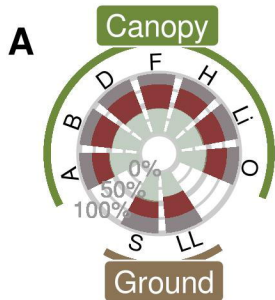
Autumn 2017

Spring 2018

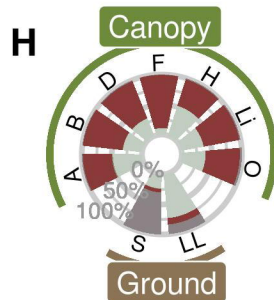
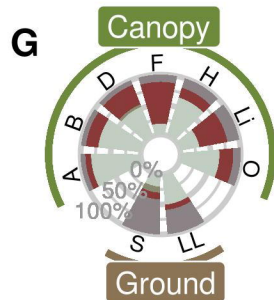
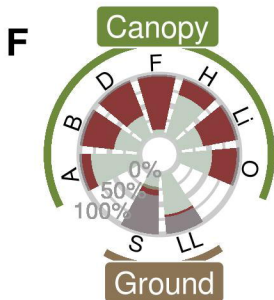
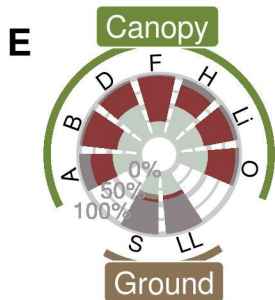
Autumn 2018

Spring 2019

Incidence based



Abundance based

**Lifestyle**

hemibiotroph



obligate biotroph



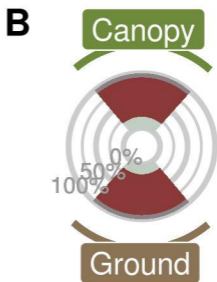
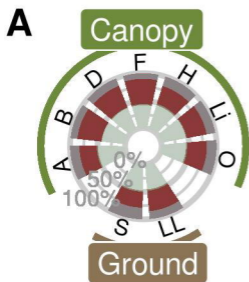
saprotroph



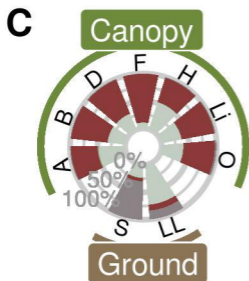
undetermined

# Spring '19 Microhabitats/Spring '19 Air Samples

Incidence based



Abundance based



## Lifestyle



hemibiotroph

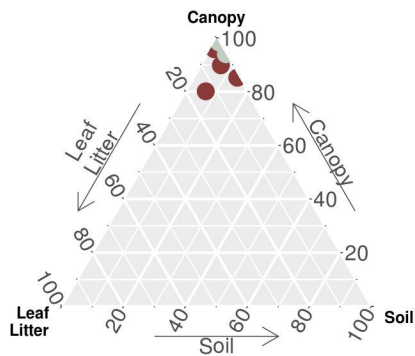
obligate biotroph



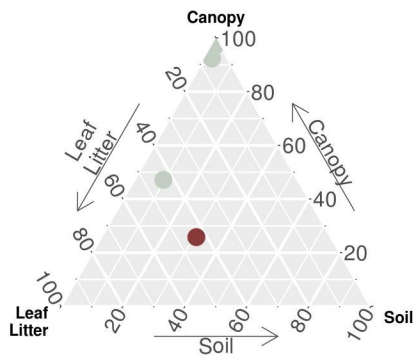
saprotroph

undetermined

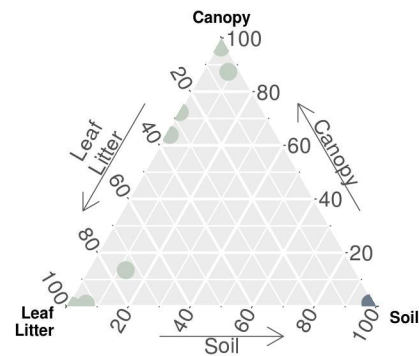
## Albuginales



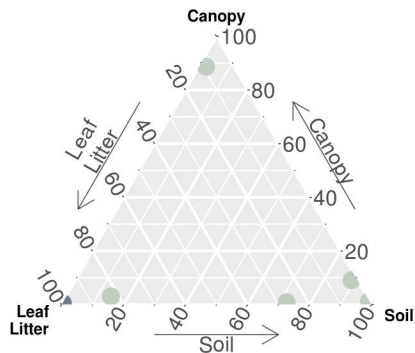
## Incertae sedis



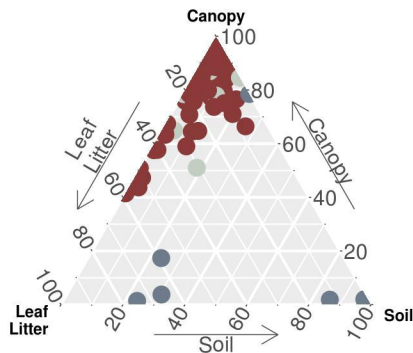
## Lagenidiales



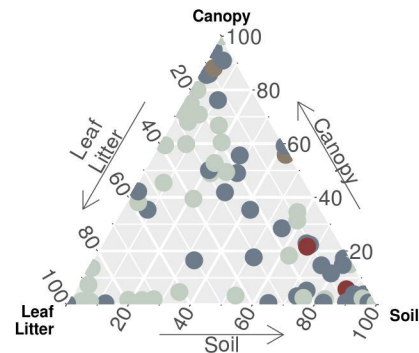
## Myzocytiopsidales



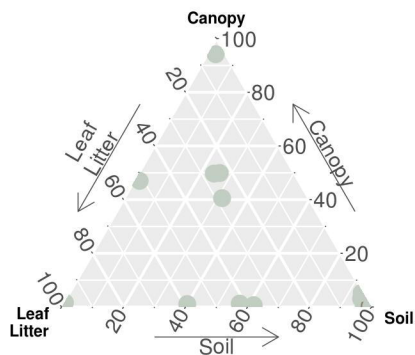
## Peronosporales



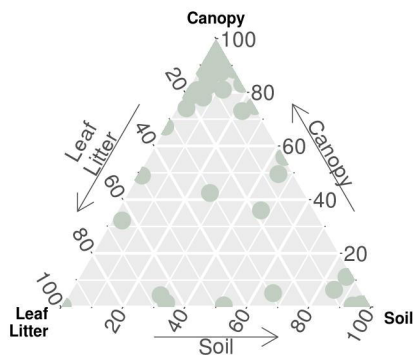
## Pythiales



## Saprolegniales



## Undetermined



## Lifestyle

- hemibiotroph
- obligate biotroph
- saprotroph
- undetermined

log2FoldChange

