# STRUCTURE AND DIVERSITY OF PSOCID TAXOCENOSES (INSECTA: PSOCOPTERA) IN THE FOREST ECOSYSTEMS OF THE FAGETA ABIETIS S. LAT. ZONE IN THE WESTERN CARPATHIAN MTS.

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## Abstract

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Structure of psocid taxocenoses (Psocoptera) were studied in forest ecosystems of the Western Carpathian Mts. during 1997–2001. Vegetation tiers were used as a study frame. Lower units of forest site classification system (forest type complexes) were used for a classification of ecological conditions as well. Only a part of material, i.e. individuals that was found in the forest ecosystems of Fageta abietis s. lat. communities (= the 4th beech vegetation tier) was evaluated for purpose of this work. This vegetation tier is widespread in large part of Vsetínské vrchy hills, in the highest parts of Podbeskydská pahorkatina hills, and in the foothills of the Moravskoslezské Beskydy Mts. 1774 adults comprising 32 species were found in total in the 4th vegetation tier. As eudominant species, the following ones were found: Caecilius flavidus and C. burmeisteri, as dominant species, the following ones were found: Philotarsus picicornis, Elipsocus moebiusi and Peripsocus subfasciatus. In natural geobiocenoses with the level of naturalness of 1 or 2, the following species were found: as eudominant species: Caecilius flavidus and Elipsocus moebiusi, as dominant species, the following one was found: Mesopsocus unipunctatum. Taxocenoses of psocids were evaluated by Detrended Correspondence analysis (DCA) and Divisive Cluster analysis (DvClA). This material was compared to another material gained from various vegetation tiers in the Western Carpathians Mts. The characteristic species composition of psocids in the 4th vegetation tier was as follows: Caecilius flavidus – Elipsocus moebiusi – Peripsocus parvulus.

*Psocoptera*, taxocenoses, diversity, forest ecosystems, vegetation tier – *Fageta abietis* s. lat., the Moravskoslezské Beskydy Mts., the Western Carpathian Mts.

Order *Psocoptera* has not been in focus of faunistic or ecological studies. Complex psocopterological research was initiated recently by author in a territory of the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1997. The aim of the systematic study of psocids conducted in the Western Carpathian Mts. was to define the species diversity and characteristic species composition of psocids in particular vegetation tiers (= altitudinal vegetation zone, further only VT) and to prove an applicability of vegetation zones or lower units of geobiocenological or forest + site classification systems in zoocenological studies.

HOLUŠA (2001, 2003a, b, 2007b, c) published studies at ecological problem of psocid taxocenoses

composition dependence on VTs in the Moravskoslezské Beskydy Mts., in the Podbeskydská pahorkatina hills (Holuša, 2005) and in the alluvium of the Odra river (the Protected landscape area of Poodří) (Holuša, 2007a).

The aim of presented article is to analyse composition and diversity of psocid taxocenoses of the 4<sup>th</sup> VT (*Fageta abietis* s. lat.) i.e. and to discuss the differences with other known VTs i.e. the 5<sup>th</sup> (*Abieti-fageta* s. lat.) (Holuša, 2009), the 6<sup>th</sup> (*Picei-fageta* s. lat.) (Holuša, 2011), the 7<sup>th</sup> (*Fageti-piceeta* s. lat.) and the 8<sup>th</sup> (*Piceeta* s. lat.) VTs (Holuša, 2007c).

The aim of this study is the using of frames and units of forest site classification system (according

to Plíva, 1971, 1991; Holuša & Holuša, 2008, 2010, 2011) for zoocenological studies with a view to processing zoocoenoses characteristics for forest site units.

#### **METHODS**

The net of equally distributed geobiocenological research plots was situated in regions of eastern Moravia, eastern Silesia and northern Slovakia in the territory of Polonic and Westcarpathian biogeographical subprovinces (i.e. in the region of the Western Carpathian Mts.). Plots were selected in all VTs occurring in this region, i.e. from the 3rd (communities of Querci-fageta s. lat.) to the 9th (communities of Pineta mugi s. lat.) (cf. Holuša, 2003a). Plots were placed in such parts of forest stands which represent a particular VT and in which it was possible to collect a representative material of psocids. Approximately the same number of permanent plots was placed in all VTs. Permanent plots were marked out in the best-preserved parts of nature reserves (with the level of naturalness 1 or 2 according to Ellenberg (1973, 1978) and additional plots were selected in modified parts of nature reserves or in managed forests with the level of naturalness 3 or 4 according to Ellenberg (1973, 1978).

The material was obtained from permanent sampling sites during the vegetation period (from the beginning of May to the middle of September). The samples were collected by sweeping with a sweep net of 50 cm mouth in diameter. Branches of trees and bushes were beaten with the same sweep net in the extent of about 1 m from the branch end and up to approximately 2.5m height. Individual collection of adults also complemented this method. During sweeping and beating, 30 sweepings or beatings were carried out in each locality. At one locality Malaise trap was installed - type of Townes (Townes, 1972). The trap is used primarily for capturing Diptera (Chvála, 1980). The material was collected about 3 times a month. Malaise trap was installed by the end of IV. the beginning of X. Caught psocids were sucked into an exhauster and stored in a small test tube with 70% alcohol. All samples were collected and identified by the author. The evidence material is deposited in 70% alcohol in the author's collection. Papers of Günther (1974) and Lienhard (1998) were used for identification; nomenclature, zoogeographical distribution and ecological demands were used according to LIENHARD (1977,

Samples were sorted into vectors "habitats of psocids", where the following factors were taken into account: biogeographical region, ecological conditions (according to the forest type complexes) and tree or shrub species, from which the material was obtained (samples were also distinguished according to the capture method; captured either in a herb layer or by the Malaise trap). For example: *PB4Bbk*, where *PB* denotes the biogeographical

region of the Podbeskydský region (cf. Culek, 1996), 4B represents forest type complexes 4B (i.e. *Fagetum eutrophicum*) and *bk* is an acronym for the tree species *Fagus sylvatica*.

Material was collected at all localities in the same way, therefore dominance is calculated as the sum of all the methods for individual habitats. Malaise trap was evaluated as a separate habitat due to differences in obtaining material. Individual species are classified into classes according to the dominance of Tischler (1949). Dominance was first calculated the total for all geobiocenosis with varying degrees of nature, and then only for geobiocenosis natural (i.e. the degree of naturalness 1–2 according to Ellenberg 1973, 1978)).

Diversity was evaluated by Shannon-Wiener ( $\rm H_s$ ) and Brillouin diversity index ( $\rm H_B$ ). Both indexes, Shannon-Wiener and Brillouin, were computed according to Kaesler & Mulvany (1976a, b). Diversity indexes of individual habitats were calculated from a total number of captured specimens (Tab. 1). Some material was excluded from statistical processing because of a small number of collected specimens in some plots (i.e. species in a lower number than 5 specimens or 2 species even less than 3 specimens) to prevent a data distortion.

# Detrended Correspondence Analysis - DCA

Detrended Correspondence Analysis (DCA), according to GAUCH (1982), HILL (1974) and HILL & Gauch (1980), proceeds from the method of Principal Component Analysis (PCA), used for non-linear data. Axes were adjusted in order to prevent criteria deformation by the axis ends in the DCA-analysis. The unit length of axes corresponds with the average species dispersion. In different parts of axis it remains unchanged. The DCA ordination method has a quite heuristic character. Interpretation of axes and ordination positions of particular species is based on their ecology with a view to habitat characteristics. Modified SW Decorana was used to process the DCA analysis, which was adapted for zoocenological data processing (Povolný & Znojil, 1990).

## Divisive Cluster Analysis - DvClA

Divisive Cluster Analysis (DvClA) represents a method of hierarchic divisive classification (Gower, 1967; Orlóci, 1975). The ordination of groups is performed twice by "Reciprocal averaging" (RA). All vectors are projected into the main axis as a super-ellipsoid. In the second phase, partial complexes of vectors are divided according to species ordinate in particular vectors and according to abundance of particular species (indicators) as well. These indicators are automatically selected by the program in compliance with the species spectrum of particular vectors (habitats) for the end parts of ordination axis. Used modification 'Twinspan algorithm' comes from a gradual division of habitats and species. Every processed file is ordinated by RA method, whereupon characteristic

I: Values of Indexes of diversity and equitability for particular "habitats of psocids" in the vegetation tier of Fageta abietis s. lat.

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BE4Bbk	4	13	0.835	0.775	1.091	0.787	PB4Bsm	6	63	1.216	0.616	1.388	0.632	VS4Bjd	14	36	1.802	0.840	2.215	0.839
BE4Bdbl	4	52	0.837	0.658	0.925	0.667	PB4Dbk	3	15	0.356	0.395	0.485	0.442	VS4Blpm	2	15	0.181	0.309	0.245	0.353
BE4Bhb	3	36	0.628	0.632	0.709	0.645	PB4Ddbl	1	4	ı	1	ı	1	VS4Bos	4	∞	0.727	0.743	1.074	0.774
BE4Bjd	2	4	0.347	0.774	0.562	0.811	PB4Djd	4	4	0.795	1.000	1.386	1.000	VS4Bpod	2	13	0.506	0.882	0.617	0.890
BE4Blpm	4	18	0.735	0.646	0.926	0.668	PB4Dsm	3	16	0.464	0.512	0.602	0.548	VS4Bsm	22	864	2.038	0.673	2.089	929.0
BE4Bdbl	2	3	0.366	1.000	0.637	0.918	PB4Hsm	2	13	0.197	0.344	0.271	0.391	VS4Btrn	2	43	0.896	0.622	1.025	0.637
BE4Bsm	П	6	ı	ı	ı	ı	PB4Wsvk	1	22	ı	ı	ı	ı	VS4Ddbz	2	9	0.299	0.598	0.451	0.650
PB4Ajlh	2	4	0.448	1.000	0.693	1.000	VS4Bbb	2	9	0.299	0.598	0.451	0.650	VS4Djd	4	18	0.774	0.680	0.974	0.702
PB4Ajs	П	32	ı	1	1	1	VS4Bbk	4	44	0.384	0.305	0.462	0.333	VS4Dsm	00	15	1.329	0.865	1.807	0.869
PB4Ajv	2	4	0.347	0.774	0.562	0.811	VS4Bbo	9	∞	1.152	1.000	1.733	0.967	VS4Ejb	2	6	0.398	0.741	0.530	0.764
PB4Bbk	9	41	0.765	0.484	0.914	0.510	VS4Bdbl	3	12	0.541	0.621	0.721	0.657	VS4Emd	3	5	0.599	0.881	0.950	0.865
PB4Bhb	3	24	0.444	0.464	0.544	0.495	VS4Bdbz	3	7	0.764	1.000	1.079	0.982	VS4Esvk	2	6	0.244	0.454	0.349	0.503
PB4Bjd	3	5	0.680	1.000	1.055	096.0	VS4Bhb	3	104	0.192	0.182	0.217	0.197	VS4Fbk	2	9	0.299	0.598	0.451	0.650
PB4Blpm	4	22	0.517	0.442	0.663	0.478	VS4Bhh	3	7	0.534	0.699	0.796	0.725	VS4Sjd	3	9	0.682	0.910	1.011	0.921
PB4Bma	∞	16	1.350	0.860	1.808	0.869	VS4Bjb	9	19	0.924	0.646	1.202	0.671	VS4Ssm	7	31	1.304	0.793	1.553	0.798
PB4Bpod	2	16	0.173	0.293	0.234	0.337														

 $\begin{tabular}{l} Nsp-number of species \\ N-number of specimens \\ H_s-Shannon-Wiener index of diversity \\ E_s-Equitability \\ H_b-Brillouin index of diversity \\ E_b-Equitability \\ \end{tabular}$ 

species (or biotopes) are associated with axes ends. Central parts of axes are ordinated consequently. On the base of gained results, it is searched for species combinations, which are characteristic of parts of ordination axes and can be used as appropriate "tools for cuts" (HILL, 1974). This method was modified for the purpose of this study, because the first version was defined for phytocenological studies only. Column heads represent abbreviations of biotopes. Numbers in columns below indicate the division of appropriate algorithm (every habitat is divided, marked 0 or 1). There are species names in the left column and on the right there is one algorithm division of species spectrums in groups. The main field represents the semiquantitative relative frequency of particular species in groups corresponding with their biotopes. Explanations: - species does not occur, 1 - rare species, 2 - very scarce, 3 – scarce, 4 – common, 5 – very common to subdominant, 6 - dominant. Groups of psocid species and groups of habitats were organized to increase their clearness so that there is an evident species transfer within biotopes in the diagonal direction from the left upper corner to the right lower corner.

Acronyms of biogeographical regions: BE biogeographical region of the Beskydský region, PB - biogeographical region of the Podbeskydský region, VS - biogeographical region of the Vsetínský region; codes of forest type complexes (according to Plíva 1971, 1991): 4S - Fagetum mesotrophicum, 4B - Fagetum eutrophicum, 4F - Fagetum lapidosum mesotrophicum, 4H – Fagetum illimerosum trophicum, 4W - Fagetum calcarium, 4D - Fagetum acerosum deluvium, 4A - Tilieto-fagetum acerosum lapidosum, for solitaire trees was used code of "4E" i.e. without classification of natural community; acronyms of trees and shrubs (investigated tree species): bb - Acer campestre, bk – Fagus sylvatica, bo – Pinus sylvestris, dbl – Quercus robur, dbz - Quercus petraea, hb - Carpinus betulus, hh - Crataegus laevigata, jb - Malus sylvestris, jd - Abies alba, jlh – Ulmus glabra, js – Fraxinus excelsior, jv – Acer platanoides, lpm - Tilia cordata, md - Larix decidua, os -Populus tremula, sm – Picea abies, sv – Prunus domestica, svk - Cornus sanguinea, trn - Prunus spinosa, ma malaise trap, pod – undergrowth.

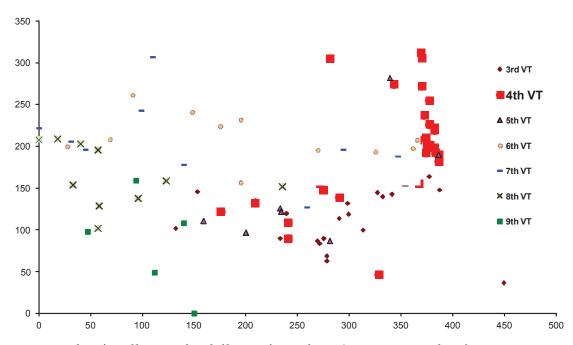
# The characteristic of the 4<sup>th</sup> vegetation tier (Fageta abietis s. lat.)

According to Holuša & Holuša (2008)  $4^{th}$  VT (Fageta abietis s. lat.) represents geobiocenoses where Fagus sylvatica is a dominant species in natural conditions, it creates the main level of stands (the maximum the height over 50 m). Abies alba occurs in the co-dominant level, sporadically in the level exceeding the main level. It can reach the representation of  $\pm 20\%$  and the height of up to 50 m. Quercus sp. – Quercus petraea and Quercus robur – occur only as interspersed species with the representation to 10%, they do not reach the co-dominant tree level. Carpinus betulus is represented regularly, but in the forest stand structure only in the overtopped

tree level. Tilia cordata, Tilia platyphyllos, and Fraxinus excelsior occur in the co-dominant tree level. Also Acer platanoides, Acer pseudoplatanus, Ulmus glabra, and Padus avium are co-dominant and overtopped tree levels. Tilia cordata, Tilia platyphyllos, and Acer platanoides have thein ecological optimum. The 4th VT occurs in the altitude from 300-640 m a.s.l. with the centre of occurrence in the interval of 380-440 m a.s.l., locally up to 680 m a.s.l. Soils arose on the flysh series of rocks of sandstones and shales, insular on the deluvial loams. There are represented the following soil types: Cambisols (typical, eutrophic, sporadically also dystric and pseudogley), are less frequent then podzols (cambic, typical). 4th VT occupies large areas in the Natural forest area (further only NFA) 41, coherent areas in the highest parts of NFA 39, and some proportions of the lowest parts of NFA 40. The most widespread communities in the study area are the following ones: Forest site type complex (further only FTC) 4B (Fagetum eutrophicum), FTC 4S (Fagetum mesotrophicum), and FTC 4D (Fagetum acerosum deluvium). 4th VT occurs on the 35.2% of the study area (including also nonforest land).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

1774 adults comprising 32 species were found in total in the 4th VT. The following eudominant species were found: Caecilius flavidus, C. burmeisteri, and as dominant species, the following ones were found: Philotarsus picicornis, Elipsocus moebiusi and Peripsocus subfasciatus. In natural geobiocenoses with the level of naturalness of 1 or 2, the following eudominant species were found: Caecilius flavidus, Elipsocus moebiusi. Dominant species was Mesopsocus unipunctatum. Resulting from the comparison of the tree colonization, the most numerous taxocenosis was found at Picea abies, which resulted in a significant change in dominance (see above). Abies alba was colonized by numerous taxocenoses, while the *Fagus sylvatica* inhabits the very poor range of psocids species in low abundances (see Tab. 1). In comparison with higher VTs (i.e. 5th and 6th), there was a change between species dominance. Eudominant species of 4th VT - Caecilius flavidus, occurs in the higher VTs only as dominant species. This representation is related to the change in tree species composition – reducing the representation of broadleave tree species in 5th and then more in 6th VT. Contrary species *Caecilius despaxi*, which in 4<sup>th</sup> VT occurs only sporadically, in 5th VT is scarce species, in the 6th VT becomes a eudominant species. Similarly, species Mesopsocus unipunctatus and Stenopsocus lachlani that occur rarely in the 4th, occur in 6th VT as a eudominant species. Resulting from the comparison of tree colonization, Picea abies was the most colonized tree species in all VT: 4th, 5th and 6th. In contrast to the tree species, Abies alba and Fagus sylvatica, which were colonised by lower number of species, u *Fagus sylvatica* also in lower abundances.



1: DCA analysis of psocid biotopes with marked biotopes of Fageta abietis ( $4^{th}$  VT) tier (axis x – gradient of vegetation tiers, axis q – gradient of hydricity)

The DCA-analysis might be interpreted as follows: the x-axis denotes an influence of VTs i.e. vertical zonality and the q-axis refers to an influence of hydricity (cf. Holuša, 2007c). Habitats of  $4^{th}$  VT create a large dotted elongated as in the gravity gradient vegetation (x-axis) as well as hydricity gradient (q-axis) (see Fig. 1). Dotted field is quite similarly to the field of the  $5^{th}$  VT, but more elongated along the q-axis. Extensiveness of dotted field corresponds to the large number of different tree species and the nature of the studied sites in  $4^{th}$  VT. Dotted field in the x-q axis is shifted higher than field of the  $3^{rd}$  VT. From the viewpoint of hydricity, the field of  $4^{th}$  VT is larger than the field of  $5^{th}$  VT. Generally, habitats of  $4^{th}$  VT are "drier" than habitats of  $3^{rd}$  and  $5^{th}$  VTs.

Habitats of 4<sup>th</sup> VT are represented in more groups in the DvClA-analysis, according to species, where it was collected. Habitats of broad-leaf trees are sorted into following groups: A-I-b, individually in A-II-a-2 (see Fig. 2.). In the A-I-b group are habitats of 4<sup>th</sup> VT grouped into larger complexes. Habitats of coniferous are sorted into following groups: B-I-a, B-I-b and-II-a. Habitats of coniferous (especially *Picea abies*) are sorted into higher VTs. Habitats of 4<sup>th</sup> VT are represented in the widest possible scale, compared to other VTs, the 4<sup>th</sup> VT is the most diversified.

There were found higher values of diversity indexes in the 4B community for the VS4Bsm psocids biotope, i.e.  $H_{\rm s}$  1.52 and  $H_{\rm b}$  1.87, and high value was also found for the VS4Bjd psocid biotope, i.e.  $H_{\rm s}$  1.80 and  $H_{\rm b}$  2.21 (see Table 1). Generally speaking, the indexes of diversity  $H_{\rm s}$  are in the interval of 0.18–2.04 and the  $H_{\rm b}$  indexes are in the interval of 0.22–2.21.

The characteristic species combination of psocids for the 4<sup>th</sup> VT was established as follows: *Caecilius flavidus – Elipsocus moebiusi – Peripsocus parvulus*. Unlike 3<sup>rd</sup> VT species *Ectopsocus meridionalis* is missing in 4<sup>th</sup> VT. Also species *Enderleinella obsoleta*, *Cuneopalpus cyanops* and *Caecilius piceus* are characteristic for the 4<sup>th</sup> VT (like for the 5<sup>th</sup> VT). The "spruce" corticolous species are starting to dominate in the changed vegetation (i.e. spruce stands) such as *Caecilius burmeisteri*, *Philotarsus picicornis*, *Stenopsocus lachlani*, just that at this tree species "descend" to lower VTs.

Compared with species combinations of 5th VT, which was identified as follows: Caecilius flavidus - C.burmeisteri - C.despaxi - Metylophorus nebulosus - Philotarsus picicornis. Elipsocus moebiusi is missing in 5th VT, in contrast to 4th VT. The occurrence of Caecilius despaxi was found as the differential feature between 4th and 5th VTs. 6th VT has totally different species combination, which was as follows: Caecilius despaxi – Stenopsocus lachlani – Mesopsocus unipunctatus Reuterella helvimacula. Caecilius despaxi which is clearly more dominant, in contrast to the 5th VT. And also Reuterella helvimacula is more dominant. There is a conspicuous change of characteristic psocid species, however also in the dominance of Caecilius despaxi diagnostic species which occurs in the 6th VT as a eudominant species.

In conclusion, it is the first step towards to the knowledge of taxocenoses of model group of psocids in the forest site classification frames – VTs, in this article the composition in the zone of *Fageta abietis* s. lat. The data is based on relatively small sample of the material, and should take in account the short-term of study (two growing seasons). It is therefore necessary to continue research and to monitor changes of psocid taxocenoses.

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## **CONCLUSION**

The results of this work with previous results for the 5<sup>th</sup> *Abieto-fageta* s. lat. (Holuša, 2009), 6<sup>th</sup> *Piceeti-fageta* s. lat. (Holuša, 2011), 7<sup>th</sup> *Fageti-piceeta* s. lat and 8<sup>th</sup> *Piceeta* s. lat. VTs (Holuša, 2007c) create a survey of compositions of psocid taxocenoses in the majority of VTs in the Western Carpathian Mts. The 4<sup>th</sup> VT is a community of *Fageta abietis* s.lat. with large richness of tree edificators, therefore there is also larger diversity types of forest stands. With regard to richness and abundance of psocid species, 4<sup>th</sup> VT is the richest. Compared to psocid taxocenoses, there is a noticeable difference to the higher VTs, which also corresponds phytocenological consequently geobiocenological characteristics of VTs.

This work verifies the hypothesis that units of geobiocenological or forest-typological system i.e. at first VTs, have proved to be a suitable frame for zoocenological studies. These units, as characteristics of a potential state of ecosystems, together with the description of the present tree species composition and the level of naturalness form a perfect base for studies focused on the animal taxocenoses structure. Therefore VTs are an ideal frame for animal (entomological) studies. And on the other side, the order of psocids can be used for geobiocenological classification of ecosystems and also for evaluation of potential ecosystem changes.

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