

Population ecology of spiders in Australian wheat agroecosystems

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ABSTRACT

The predatory role of spiders in wheat systems has been researched a great deal worldwide. However in Australia almost nothing is known about the spider communities in broad-acre cereals. Over two years of sampling, this foundation study in South-Eastern Australian wheat gathered basic ecological information on the composition, diversity, abundance and phenology of the spider population. Synchronicity between the spider community, pest insects and the crop cycle was explored whilst remarking on the potential influence of drought. Comparisons between the Australian fauna and other continents were drawn.