



**SDI FINAL EVALUATION FORM 1.1**

**PART 1:**

Journal Name:	<b><u>International Journal of Plant &amp; Soil Science</u></b>
Manuscript Number:	<b>2014_IJPSS_13067</b>
Title of the Manuscript:	<b>An understory comparison of the exotic <i>Phellodendron amurense</i> Rupr. (RUTACEAE) and adjacent native canopy species in an urban and suburban woodland</b>

**PART 2:**

<b>FINAL EVALUATOR'S comments on revised paper (if any)</b>	<b>Authors' response to final evaluator's comments</b>
<p>The author did not perform the majority of the changes proposed. Please see my comments regarding each of the author's answers in red.</p> <p>a. I have described these more clearly in the revision. I could not find ANY description of the statistical analysis in the Methods. Please verify if the file sent correspond to the final version. Additionally, the author did not explain what the type of ANOVA used was. Factorial ANOVA is the correct analysis to be performed in this case.</p> <p>b. these were analyzed as separate units, I added this to the paper for clarity Again, I did not find any explanation in the revised manuscript. Moreover, this is not the appropriate approach for this kind of sampling design. The use of the four subplots as independent sampling units is a classic example of pseudo replication. The author should use the mean of the four subplots as the value representing each tree.</p> <p>2. In this paper we are examining only the species richness as a comparative measure from one treatment to the next. The rare faction curve is very useful for determining sampling size but not for our goals. Rarefaction curves are STRONGLY recommended to compare the number of species among different "sites" mainly in individual-based samples, since the number of individuals has evident influence over the number of species. Please check out Chapters 3 and 5 of Magurran (2004), especially pages 75-76 and 144-150.</p> <p>3. I will clarify the use of the canopy analysis in the paper. The equipment used captures an area far greater than the individual trees. Photographing each tree sampled would lead to extensive overlap in the sampled canopies. I did not find any additional explanation in the text. I have already taken hemispherical photographs in forests to investigate for the effects of canopies and I am still not convinced by the author's argument.</p> <p>5. Agreed, I have added references.</p> <p>Some references were added only at "References" section of the manuscript and not in the main text. For instance, see Simberloff et al (2013) and Gurevitch et al. (YEAR MISSING).</p> <p>6. Agreed, I have adjusted this along with number 5 above. The discussion is better indeed, but there is still room for improvement (only six references are cited, three being very general!).</p>	<p>please check that this reviewer has indeed received the newer manuscript. I am hesitant to make changes to the statistical methods since they had been previously adjusted as per two other reviewers' comments. The additional two reviewers had been previously satisfied with the methods.</p> <p>1. a. Please see lines 148-149. Lines 166-167.</p> <p>Factorial ANOVA was not used, We went with simpler method of just doing a t-test at the request of the other reviewers</p> <p>b. lines 104-105, 112-114</p> <p>2. Rarefaction curves are used primarily to address sampling size, while they can be applied here, this would add significantly to the paper which is a very preliminary analysis of one aspect of <i>P. amurense</i> invasions.</p> <p>3. Lines 136-138 were added to the earlier revision explaining this. I am not sure I understand the comment. I have taken numerous canopy photographs and there is overlap when the photos are too close. If you dont move too far, chances are the same trees will be photographed, particularly in a lower canopy. You can adjust your distances by placing a marker (usually a long straight pole), capturing it in the margin and making sure the next photo doesn't have it.</p> <p>5. This is not true, Simberloff is cited on line 66. The Gurevitch reference is cited on line 276, the missing year is a typo, I have added it.</p> <p>6. As with many Journals, the references are meant to be kept to a minimum since this is a research article and not a review. I went through the recent articles in this journal and the last few articles contain 51, 28, 22, 30, 19, 37, 22 and 25 references. Two of these articles contain only three citations in the "Results and Discussion" section. This is a section that is found in most issues of the journal however I separated the two at reviewer's request.</p>