



SDI FINAL EVALUATION FORM 1.1

PART 1:

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

PART 2:

FINAL EVALUATOR'S comments on revised paper (if any)	Authors' response to final evaluator's comments
<p>I still have some concerns, as the authors did not accept some of my suggestions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> As explained before, the use of the four subplots as independent sampling units is INCORRECT, being a classic example of pseudo replication. The authors should use the mean of the four subplots as the value representing each tree, which would not be a problem at all, since they have a reasonable number of individuals of <i>P. amurense</i>. In my opinion, it is essential that the analysis be remade. The difference in mean species richness at the Bartlett Arboretum seems very unlikely (3.03 x 3.39) and I guess this is probably due to the inflation of Type I error, probably because of the lack of homogeneity of variances. It is necessary that the authors take this into account by: i) first running a test to check for homogeneity of variances (e.g. Levene) and ii) in case of lack of homogeneity of variances, perform a Welch t-test or a non-parametric test instead of the usual parametric t-test. It is necessary to report the values of the test ("t", in this case) besides P and df. I am not satisfied with the quality of discussion. The argument that other papers use few references in this section is definitely not a sound justification. The discussion of a paper is one of the most important parts of it and it is by developing a good reasoning that authors can in fact contribute to the generation of knowledge. 	

Reviewer Details:

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