



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>Phellodendronamurense</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>1. Need to place p-values for your significant & non-significant results in the ABSRACT section;</p> <p>2. L 97 How long were the transects? What was the minimum distance between plots?;</p> <p>3. L112 documents <i>B. lenta</i> as a major component of both forests in terms of importance value. Thus, please resolve with L95 that states Forest Park is dominated by <i>Quercus</i> spp.;</p> <p>4. L123 'sited' should be 'sites';</p> <p>5. L132 'assure' should be 'ensure';</p> <p>6. L142 It is probably more important to note that 1-tailed t-tests were run, given your hypotheses;</p> <p>7. L153-154 Provide Standard Error (SE) or 95% confidence interval (CI) estimates for your derived means;</p> <p>8. L154-156 ... The authors reverted back to the original results; which I had issue with in my original review. It is rather simple, however. .. from my original comments the first time through:</p> <p>L140 Please be explicit with the statistical analyses used. I'll assume that t-tests were run. However, looking at the degrees of freedom it looks like you used 'plot' as a sampling point. Given that 4 quadrats were drawn from under the same tree, I question the <i>independence</i> of each plot (nb., a stipulation of any parametric analysis). It would perhaps be better to obtain the mean from the four plots under each tree & run your t-tests using these averaged values. Thus, 72 plots at Bartlett becomes n=18; & the 96 at Forest Park becomes 24, etc. As before, you could nest cardinal direction (aspect) into your design to see if any differences in regeneration patterns existed. You could then perhaps respond to some of your Qs concerning mechanisms.</p> <p>Re-analysing your dataset may not change the results any, but at least you will have run analyses correctly & have no worry that your results are marred by pseudoreplication (Hurlbert 1984).. I have provided you the link to an important article here: http://www.masterenbiodiversidad.org/docs/asig3/Hurlbert_1984_Pseudoreplication.pdf</p> <p>9. L167-170 As above with analyses; also, add SE or CI values to means;</p> <p>10. L187-190 As above with analyses; add SE or CI values to means;</p> <p>11. L202-203 Add Se or CI values to means;</p> <p>12. L207 F &df values missing;</p> <p>13. Results & Discussion – I would still like to know what the species actually were under the canopies of each (i.e., add a species list for each understory group). Because, what is potentially more important is if there were differences in species composition</p>	



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<p>rather than total number of species. This may help provide insight into developing hypotheses for the <i>mechanisms</i> involved. For example, what if understory plant composition was dominated by different species under <i>P. amurense</i> canopy or excluded certain species normally found under native canopy? This could potentially alter successional patterns & thus, species diversity across the landscape over time. Providing us (the reader) with only info on abundance simply scrapes the surface of what you can do/provide the reader with the information you collected. The reader is told that diversity is lower under invasive spp canopy. But is it always the same 8.95 (\pm xxSE) understory species found (at Bartlett) or are different mixes of species also found under native canopy established there? i.e., <i>are there any understory species only found under invasive spp canopy or only found under native species canopy?</i></p> <p>14. Please actually do the revisions this time. Again, if running analyses is an issue, seek guidance from one of your peers. Also, addressing my last comment (providing species lists) would help immensely, not so much so that we know what species are present (as most people not in NY or CT wouldn't care), but more so to determine if species composition differed under invasive vs native canopies</p>	
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Reviewer Details:

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