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Does ecosystem size determine aquatic bacterial richness?

Reche I, Pulido-Villena E, Morales-Baquero R, Casamayor E.O.

Ecology 2005 **86**:1715-1722 [[order article](#)] [CSIC - Servicio de enlaces](#)

Selected by | Carlos Pedrós-Alió

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**Carlos
Pedrós-Alió**

Instituto de Ciencias del
Mar, Spain
ECOLOGY

Controversial

Comments

This paper tests some predictions from general ecological theory with microorganisms. The findings are intriguing. Ecological theory has developed essentially from studies of animals and plants. Whether it applies to microorganisms or not needs to be tested. Thus, it is encouraging that some studies that use microorganisms appear in a general ecology journal. The theory in question is that of island biogeography. The intriguing finding is that bacterial taxon richness (defined as bands in a DGGE gel) increases with lake area in a series of high mountain lakes. This is equivalent (for example) to the number of bird species increasing with the area of islands. The question is that a lake, no matter how small it is, is enormously large for bacteria. In principle one would expect no limitation on the number of bacterial taxons by the size of the lake. This finding, therefore, is thought provoking for general and microbial ecologists alike. For the abstract of this paper, please see <http://www.esa.org/>.

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