

Project Update: November 2014

1. Field studies



Pine seedlings next to a burned trunk

We conducted four more field trips after May 2014. The first one, in May 2014, we found many plant species in the burned and unburned sites, and plant samples of many of these species were collected to identify at the lab. Some of the species had already fruits and mature seeds, so we also collected fruit and seed samples for the laboratory germination experiments.

In June 2014, the number of the species that we first realised their presence was relatively low, but we collected fruits and seeds of dozens of species. By the end of June 2014, we conducted another field trip to collect more fruits of the species in which seeds were not mature in the May or early June fieldwork.

In October 2014, we conducted our last field trip. We checked our study sites, and we still found some species we have never found in the study area, but the number was relatively lower than the previous field trips.

2. Laboratory studies

We started to separate the seeds from the fruits collected from field trip. Until now, seeds of more than half of the species were elected from remaining plant parts, and are ready for the germination experiment. The first part of the experiment will be established in November 2014.

More than half of taxa were identified to the species level, and almost all of them to the genus level. Species identifications are still going on in the herbarium, and are expected to be finalised by December 2014.

3. Initial results

We collected more than 350 plant species, including woody and herbaceous ones, in all of sites within the study area, by our current identification level. Many of these species are found only in the recently burned sites, and lack in the previous burned sites, roadsides, and mature *Pinus brutia* (Turkish red pine) forests.

We described a new species for the scientific literature belonging to the family Plantaginaceae and the genus *Chaenorhinum*. We are currently preparing the scientific paper of this discovery to introduce a new species to the plant sciences community. The new species was found only in the burned sites.

The initial results of the study indicate that burned Mediterranean pine forests include many plant species that does not exist in adjacent unburned areas, and they harbour many plant species of high conservation value.



Left: Project team in the field. Right: The study site 9 months after fire.