PC-ORD™

Multivariate Analysis of Ecological Data

Version 6
User's Booklet

mjm
SOFTWARE

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Cover: The essence of multivariate analysis is the extraction of a small number of important relationships from a very large number of possible relationships.

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Contents

What is PC-ORD For?

PC-ORD is a Windows program for multivariate analysis of ecological data entered in spreadsheets. The terminology in the software is tailored for ecologists. We emphasize nonparametric tools, graphical representation, and randomization tests for analysis of community data. In addition to utilities for transforming data and managing files, PC-ORD offers many ordination and classification techniques not available in major statistical packages including: CCA, DCA, MRPP, perMANOVA, two-way clustering, TWINSPAN, Beals smoothing, diversity indices, species lists, Mantel test, many ordination overlay methods (quantitative, symbol-coding, color-coding, grid, joint plot, biplot, successional vector), various rotation methods, 3D ordination graphics, indicator species analysis, Bray-Curtis ordination, city-block distance measures, species-area curves, tree data summaries, publication-quality dendrograms, and autopilot NMS.

Very large data sets can be analyzed. Most operations accept a matrix up to 32,000 rows or 32,000 columns and up to 536,848,900 matrix elements, provided that your computer has adequate memory.

Virtually any multivariate data set consisting of a set of entities, each with a number of measured attributes, is adaptable to PC-ORD. In community ecology, the first matrix will often contain species abundance data in a set of samples. The possible formats for entering these data can be found in *Data Preparation* in the software help system. In addition to this main matrix, a second matrix, often containing environmental data, can be entered for analysis of its relationship to the first matrix. The inclusion of this second matrix greatly enriches the system's analytical capabilities. Both matrices are displayed in PC-ORD in file viewing windows.

In studies of species traits or functional groups, one of the matrices contains traits or relative use of a set of resources by various species, subspecies, or individuals. A matrix of sites × functional groups or sites × traits can be produced by multiplying a community matrix by the functional group or trait matrix.

Where is the Manual?

The full manual is built into PC-ORD, so we have not produced a paper manual. Our context-sensitive Help system can be accessed at any time by pressing F1 or clicking a Help button.

How Do I Get Started?

After you install the software, click on *Help | Contents* in the main menu. Then navigate to *Getting Started* in the help system. The most important topics to read at first are:

> *Data Preparation,*
> *Spreadsheet Format,* and
> *Typical Flow of Analysis*

Managing Files and Projects

Normally you will want to keep your data and results in a folder that is separate from the folder that contains PC-ORD. If you have more than one PC-ORD project, you can keep the files from each project in a separate folder or put them in a single folder. PC-ORD helps you resume work where you left off with the *File | Open Project* and *File | Save Project* menu items. Details of how PC-ORD manages

folders (directories) and file management definitions are given under *Open Project* in the PC-ORD Help system.

When you Install PC-ORD, the PC-ORD icon is inserted in the Programs section of the Start Menu. If you wish to create an icon for a given project, first create a "shortcut" to PC-ORD on your desktop or in a folder (see your Windows help system if you don't know how to do this). Then:

- Rename the shortcut as the project it represents. (Right click, *Rename*)
- Now set the working folder for that project. (Right click on the PC-ORD icon, click on *Properties*, click on the *Shortcut* tab, then in the "*Start in*" space, type within quotes the path to the folder containing the data files for that project, for example, "c:\forests\edgedata").

From then on, when you click on this shortcut icon, PC-ORD will look in the folder you specified. It will also remember the history of files, graph options, etc., so that when you start PC-ORD from that icon, you will be right where you left off.

System Requirements

Hardware Required

- 80486 or higher CPU (including Pentium 4, Athlon, Celeron, etc.)
- 8 MB RAM (more RAM means ability to analyze larger data sets)
- 6 MB of available hard disk space

Operating System: Windows 98, NT, ME, 2000, XP, Vista, 7; 64-bit (32-bit mode)

Spreadsheet Software Recommended: A spreadsheet program capable of writing files in *.wk1, *.xls, or *.xlsx format is recommended (e.g. Excel). Many statistical software packages also export *.wk1 or *.xls files.

Network Environments

PC-ORD runs fine from a file server in a network environment, but you must set up the software correctly. Because network environments vary, your network administrator may need to help you set up PC-ORD. Generic instructions for a typical network setup are given below. These presume that PC-ORD has already been installed on your network by your network administrator.

Method 1

1.   Right click on some free space on the desktop.
2.   Select: *New* / *Shortcut*
3.   Enter the path for pcord6.exe. Or use the *Browse* button to find this executable file. Your network administrator can provide this path.
4.   Click on "*Finish*". The PC-ORD Windows icon (two overlapping circles) should now appear on the desktop.
5.   Right click on the PC-ORD icon.
6.   Select: *Properties* / *Shortcut*
7.   Under "*Start in*" enter your working folder (where you will keep your PC-ORD data files and temporary files).

Method 2

1.   Navigate in the file system of the server to the PC-ORD executable folder. Look for the file CreateDesktopShortcut.exe. The purpose of this mini-program is to create an icon on you desktop that points to PC-ORD on the server and a local folder for storing your temporary files.
2.   Double click on *CreateDesktopShortcut*.

3. You will be prompted to enter the "Start In Folder." Choose a folder on a local drive, for example, c:\temp or c:\PCORD\working.

4. Click on "OK". The PC-ORD Windows icon (two overlapping circles) should now appear on the desktop.

Important points

1. Each user needs a unique working folder (directory). Call this the "user's folder." The user's folder can be either on a local drive or on a network drive. However, the user's folder must be unique to that user or workstation and the user must have write access to that folder. We recommend using a local drive rather than a network drive. This will speed the rate of screen refreshing when manipulating windows containing your data.

2. The "*Start in*" folder MUST be changed to that unique user's folder. To set this after installation, right-click the PC-ORD icon, select "*Properties,*" and type the name of the user's folder into the "*Start in*" box. Conflicts will result if multiple users are writing to the same folder.

Recommended network setup

1. Executable files are installed in a network folder and shared by multiple users.

2. Users keep data files and temporary files on their own local drive (e.g., hard drive or USB jump drive) or in their own folder on a network drive (much slower choice).

For class use

1. Same as above, but each user should copy the data files provided for the class into their own folders.

2. In computer classrooms, users may want to define their "Start in" folder as a removable drive, such as a jump drive. This allows users to preserve their own settings from one session to the next, regardless of which machine they are using.

Limitations

Most of the programs in PC-ORD for Windows can accept a matrix up to 32,000 rows or 32,000 columns, provided that you have adequate memory installed in your machine. For all analyses, the following limits apply:

- rows x columns $\leq$ 536,848,900
- rows $\leq$ 32,000 (23,170 if a square distance matrix is calculated)
- columns $\leq$ 32,000 (23,170 for PCA)

The actual limits will depend on the particular analysis being used. For example all analyses that require a square distance matrix (Cluster Analysis, MRPP, NMS, perMANOVA, etc.), the maximum number of rows is 23,170.

You can evaluate your memory needs with the *Memory Requirements* utility provided under the *File* menu.

If you do encounter an "out of memory" error, and you do not have an exceptionally large data set, then a memory allocation error may have occurred. In this case, close out all programs, go through your normal shut-down procedure, restart, then try to rerun your analysis in PC-ORD.

Technical Help

We use email to answer technical questions about the software from registered users. Our software support pertains only to programs obtained directly from MjM Software Design.

If you experience unexpected behavior, often someone else will have detected the same problem and it will already be fixed. So before you contact us…

- Please download the latest fixes from our website <www.pcord.com>, and determine whether the problem still exists in the latest version.
- Check the **Frequently Asked Questions** (FAQ) section on our website.
- Determine the version you are using by checking the title bar of the PC-ORD menu or inspecting the header at the top of your output files. Please include the full version number in your correspondence with us, specifying not just "version 6" but "version 6.05" or whatever exact version you are using.

Updates and Fixes

Fixes will be posted on the MjM website as needed. PC-ORD maintenance fixes are free and can be downloaded from the MjM website: <www.pcord.com>. Click on *Help | Internet Support* for the current web addresses for this and other aspects of internet support.

Contact Us

MjM Website: http://www.pcord.com   **Email**: mjm@centurytel.net
Fax: 541-764-3935   **Phone (orders only)**: 1-800-690-4499
Mail: MjM Software Design, PO Box 129, Gleneden Beach, OR 97388 U.S.A.

Using PC-ORD: a Brief Overview

You can quickly learn the basics of PC-ORD by following four steps:

1. Prepare your data.
2. Open PC-ORD and your data files.
3. Run an analysis.
4. Explore your results graphically.

1. Prepare Your Data

For an easy start, follow the instructions in the help system exactly.

A. Put your data in a spreadsheet (e.g. Excel) with the sample units as rows and variables as columns. Assign a short name to each row and column.

B. Your variables will be partitioned into two files, one with response variables (**main matrix**; e.g., species presence, abundance, or other measure of performance) and the other with predictors or correlates or controlling factors (**second matrix**; e.g., environmental variables or design variables). PC-ORD will split the data set for you.

C. Start PC-ORD.

D. *File / Import Matrix*

E. Choose *Main Matrix* or *Second Matrix*, depending on whether you are importing dependent variables (response variables) or predictors or correlates of the response variables. You can do each set of variables, in sequence.

F. Choose *Excel Simple Spreadsheet* in the *Import File Type* dialog.

G. Navigate to the file that you wish to import and double click on it. You will be asked to select one worksheet to open.

H. The *Data Format* dialog is displayed, allowing you to specify the content of the matrix: what the rows and columns are and where they are named. You must have column (variable) names. If you have no row names, you can generate them automatically with a check box.

I. Then use the following dialog to indicate which variables to extract and the variable type for each. In this case we selected all species for the main matrix. We declared each variable to be type "Q" (quantitative). The main matrix is always treated as "Q" variables, even if they contain binary (0/1) data. Click *OK* and the matrix will be imported.

J. The matrix will be written to a temporary file, temp.wk1 or temp2.wk1. After your approval, the temporary file becomes the main matrix, complete with with header rows. Now save it under a new name of your choice, for example, "OakWood1.wk1."

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Parts of the header for a PC-ORD matrix.

						variable type
number of rows	47	Stands				
number of columns	103	Species				
		Q	Q	Q	Q	Q
		ALL	Abgr-t	Acar	Acma-t	Acma-s	variable name
	Stand01	0	0	0	0	0
	Stand02	0	0	0	0.018518	0.033333
	Stand03	0	0	0	0	0.013333
	Stand04	0	0	0	0	0

K. Set up the second matrix in the same way (example below). Remember, you can also import a spreadsheet that already contains the header rows (the first four rows), if you added these with Excel or your spreadsheet program. For this, use *File | Import Matrix | Excel Spreadsheet*.

| Second - OakWood2.wk1				
47	Stands			
27	Attribs			
	Q	Q	Q	Q
	Elev,m	LatAppx	LongAppx	SlopeDeg
Stand01	91	44.4831	123.3618	1
Stand02	106	44.6613	123.2029	7
Stand03	152	44.7625	123.2641	6
Stand04	91	45.0081	123.2233	5

L. After importing, save each matrix as a separate spreadsheet in *.wk1 format.

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2. Open Your Data Files

If you imported data in step 1, then proceed to step 3. Otherwise, open a pre-existing main matrix (a *.wk1 file) with *File* | *Open* | *Main Matrix*. Open your second matrix in the same way: *File* | *Open* | *Second Matrix*.
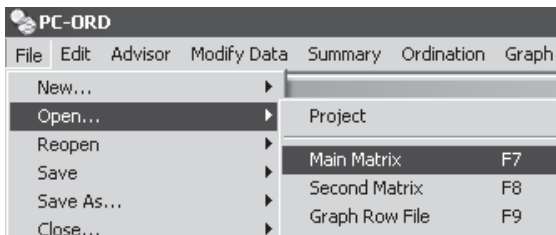
Consider organizing your work into a "project" and saving it. At any time when the PC-ORD main menu is displayed, select *File* | *Save As* | *Project*, then specify a file name. The saved project is given the extension *.prj. When you open an existing project, PC-ORD restores the four main windows (main matrix, second matrix, graph file, result file) to the way they were at the time you last saved the projects. For the oak woods example, we might save the project as OakWoods.prj.
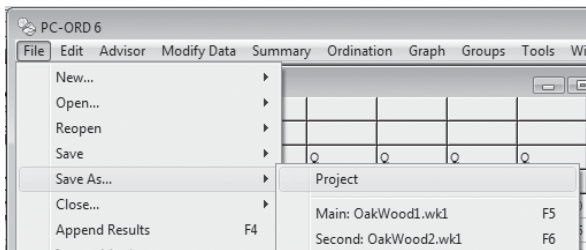
3. Run an Analysis

Select an analytical method. For this example, we will use nonmetric multidimensional scaling (NMS or NMDS), one of the most powerful ordination methods, especially adept at extracting nonlinear gradients in species composition.
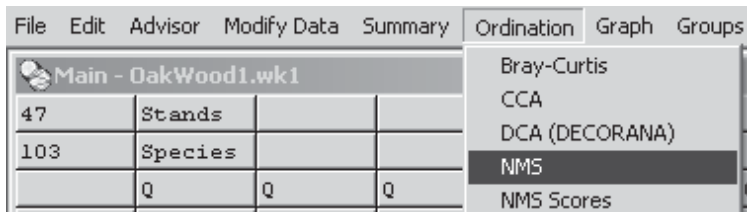
This example uses the Oak Woods data set available for download at www.pcord. com. Choose autopilot mode with medium thoroughness ("speed vs. thoroughness" sets the compromise between fast results and a thorough search for the solution of best fit). On the "Distance Measure" tab, choose Sørensen (Bray-Curtis), a good distance measure for community data. When running NMS in autopilot mode, all of the other options except the "tie handling" option (see *Help* system) are grayed out and set automatically.
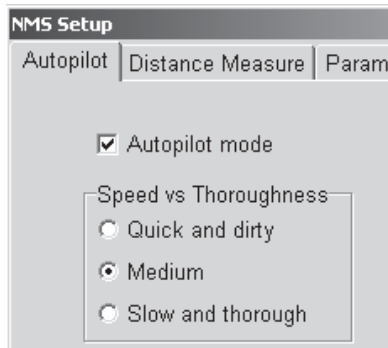
NMS iteratively searches for the best solution, then reports the results. A new result file will appear, along with windows containing coordinates for the stands (GRAPHROW.GPH) and the species (GRAPHCOL.GPH). Save each of these three files with a new name. Select *File | Save as | Result.txt*, then enter a new name, for example *NMSThil.txt*. Use a similar procedure to save the row and column coordinates, for example as *NMSThil.gph* and *NMSThilSpp.gph*. In the example below, the two graph files have been saved with those names, the first one containing the coordinates (ordination scores) for the 47 stands, the second one containing the coordinates for the 103 species.

Graph - NMSThil.gph - NMSThilSpp.gph					
Thilenius data, NMS medium autopil			Thilenius data, NMS medium autop		
47 points			103 points		
Stand01	0.06429	-0.18166	ALL	-0.44795	-0.87053
Stand02	0.16777	-0.31382	Abgr-t	0.61045	-0.02086
Stand03	0.02331	-0.24200	Acar	0.39949	0.48555
Stand04	-0.30698	0.25273	Acma-t	0.24047	0.00517

Inspect the result file. See Chapter 16 in McCune & Grace (2002) on NMS for background on how to interpret the results. Because random starting configurations are used, your results will differ somewhat from those given here if you are trying the example Oak Woods data set. A key portion of the results file is the table of stress in relation to dimensionality (number of axes; see next page). This table occurs fairly far down in the result file, after a lengthy report on the results from the various configurations that were tried. The stress table also includes a report on the randomization test:

```
STRESS IN RELATION TO DIMENSIONALITY (Number of Axes)
----------------------------------------------------------------------
          Stress in real data          Stress in randomized data
              50 run(s)                 Monte Carlo test,    50 runs
          ------------------------      ------------------------------
Axes  Minimum     Mean  Maximum  Minimum     Mean  Maximum       p
----------------------------------------------------------------------
  1    34.496   47.373   56.492   48.881   54.153   56.486    0.0196
  2    22.609   23.775   25.878   29.717   31.645   33.661    0.0196
  3    16.419   16.763   18.039   20.955   22.719   24.182    0.0196
  4    12.319   12.401   12.878   16.829   17.787   18.793    0.0196
----------------------------------------------------------------------
p = proportion of randomized runs with stress < or = observed stress
i.e., p = (1 + no. permutations <= observed)/(1 + no. permutations)

Conclusion: a 3-dimensional solution is recommended.
Now rerunning the best ordination with that dimensionality.
```

From the randomization test results on the right half of the table, note that the *p*-values indicate that solutions of any dimensionality from 1 through 4 are stronger than expected by chance. Autopilot chose a 3D solution because it reduced the minimum final stress in the real data by over 5 units, versus a 2D solution, while still giving a small *p*-value. The minimum stress for the best 3D solution was 16.4.

4. **Explore Your Results Graphically**

You can explore your ordination results with:

- 2D and 3D ordination graphs
- Joint plots (*Graph | Joint Plot*) with variables from the second matrix
- Determine how much of the variation in the distance matrix is represented in the ordination diagram (*Graph | Statistics | Percent of Variance in Distance Matrix*),
- Graphically examine the relationships between the ordination and individual variables in the second matrix (*Graph | Overlay From Second Matrix*),
- Calculate linear and rank correlation coefficients between axis scores and variables in the second matrix (*Statistics | Correlations With Second Matrix*),
- Rotate the diagram so that major vectors in the joint plot are aligned with the axes (select *Graph | Joint plot*, then *Rotate | By Angle Continuous*. Select 5° for the increment and click *Next* repeatedly to gradually rotate the ordination. See Chapter 15 in McCune and Grace (2002).
- Use "successional vectors" to connect before-and-after or other sequential measurements.

Selected examples of these are shown below.

Joint plot

A joint plot superimposes on the ordination a set of radiating lines. These show relationships between variables in the second matrix and the ordination scores. In this case we also set the symbols to code for the categorical variable "Group," based on a separate cluster analysis of stands in species space. "TreeHtM" (tree height) and "SppRich" (species richness) are strongly and oppositely related to the second axis. Group 4 is relatively rich in species. "PDIR" (potential direct incident radiation) is rather weakly related to axis 2. The ordination has been rotated to align the strongest correlations with the horizontal axis.


Oak woods data
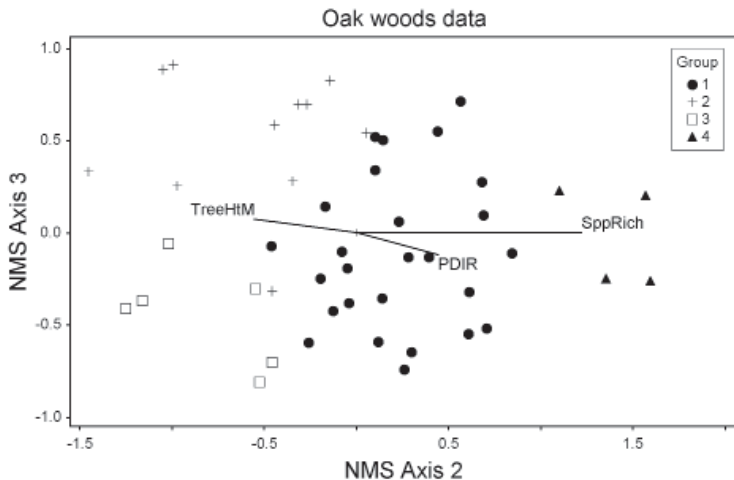
3D Joint Plot

Joint plots for ordinations with three axes can also be produced in 3D (*Graph / Ordination / 3D*). The graph below used the same ordination scores as in the previous example, though not rotated. Much more informative than this static view is the capability to rotate this 3D picture continuously, allowing you to see the three dimensional structure more clearly. You can save the rotating figure as an animated GIF, for use in presentations and web sites (*File / Save Animated GIF As*).

Oak woods data
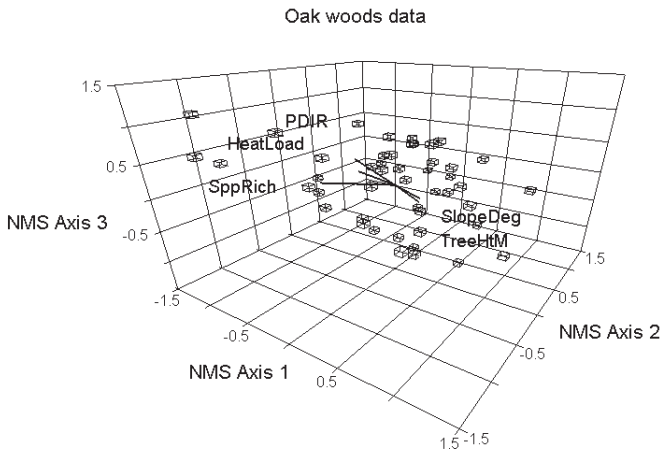
Overlay From Second Matrix

   Individual variables in both the main and second matrix can be overlaid on ordinations. Categorical overlays are shown by different colors or symbols. Quantitative overlays are shown by making the size of the symbol proportional to the overlay variable. "Side scatterplots" are also shown. These simple, bivariate scatterplots show a variable in relation to score on a particular axis.

Oak woods data

Species Richness

NMS Axis 2
r = .835 tau = .675
NMS Axis 3
r = .026 tau = -.003
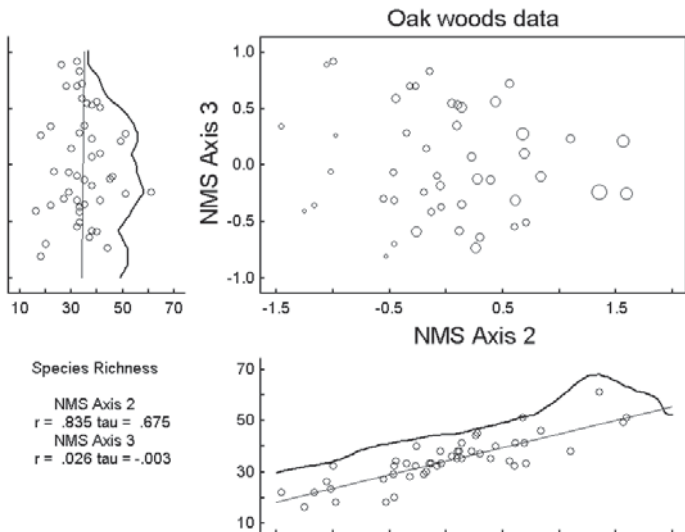
Other Graph Types

The next few pages illustrate tools in PC-ORD for graphically exploring your data.

Dominance Curves

Dominance curves, also known as dominance-diversity curves, are used to study the distribution of abundance among species in a data set. These curves are interesting descriptors of communities in their own right, but have also been used to inform ecological theory.

Each point is a species plotted as the log of total abundance against the rank order of abundance.

Another use of dominance curves is to observe the effect of data transformations and relativizations on the relative abundance of species, an important consideration for distance-based analyses. See examples on p. 72 in McCune and Grace (2002), *Analysis of Ecological Communities*.


Oak Woods Data
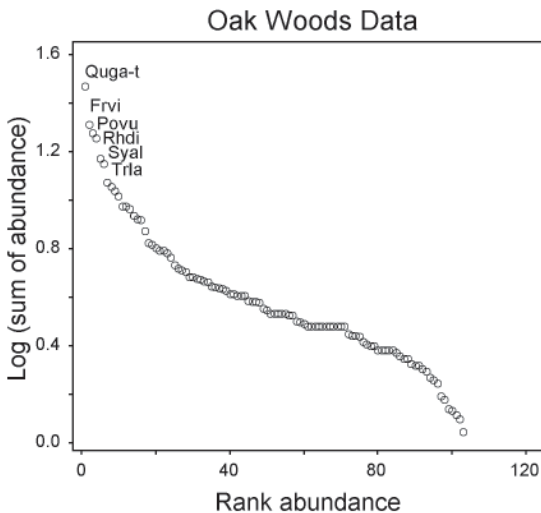
Two-way Cluster Analysis

You can perform cluster analysis of rows and columns of a single matrix (*Groups | Two-way Cluster Analysis*). The matrix of shaded squares represents the sample unit × species matrix, while the dendrograms show the clustering. The intensity of the shading is proportional to the abundance of the species. The axes show information remaining for sample unit (left) and species (top) clustering.
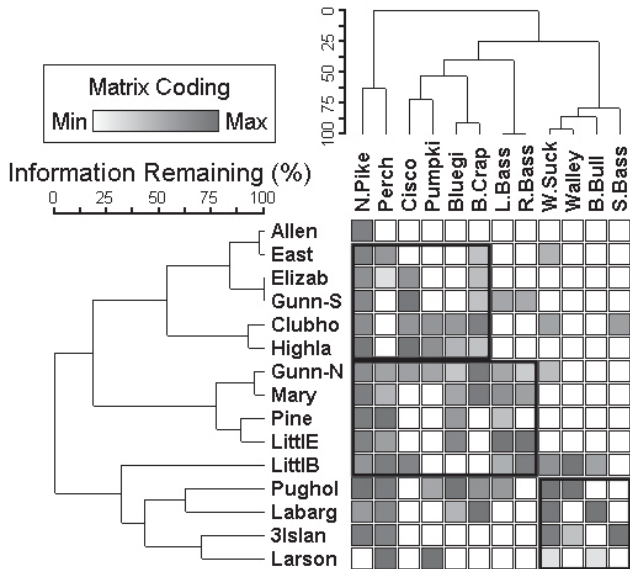
Distributions

You can represent frequency distributions of continuous or discrete variables with smooth density estimates. This is not density in the sense of numbers per unit area or volume, but rather the density of our observations along a continuous scale. We offer a selection of methods for representing your observed data, along with some classic distributions for comparison to your data; for example, normal, lognormal, poisson, binomial, and negative binomial. We use the "method of moments," calculating the parameter estimates (moments) from the observed data, then inserting them as parameters into the theoretical distributions.


Xanthoria polycarpa cover, %

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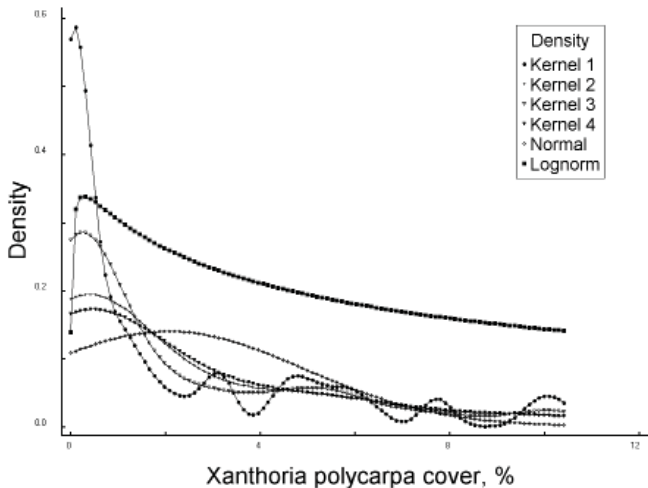
Scatterplot Matrix

A scatterplot matrix is one of the simplest but most effective ways to assess whether or not your variables are linearly related and to evaluate the need for data transformation. *Graph | Scatterplot Matrix* produces a matrix of simple scatterplots in a simplified format. Use a picklist to choose from variables in both the main and second matrices.
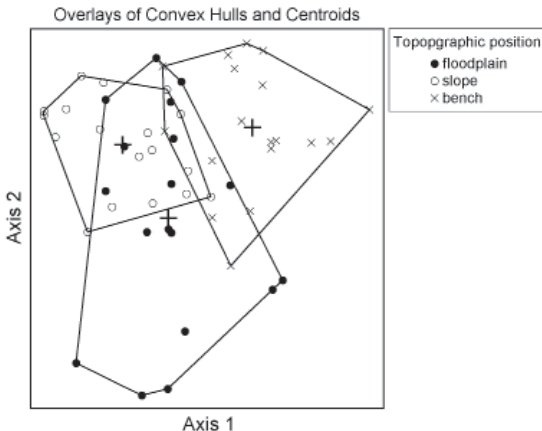
Scatterplot Matrix
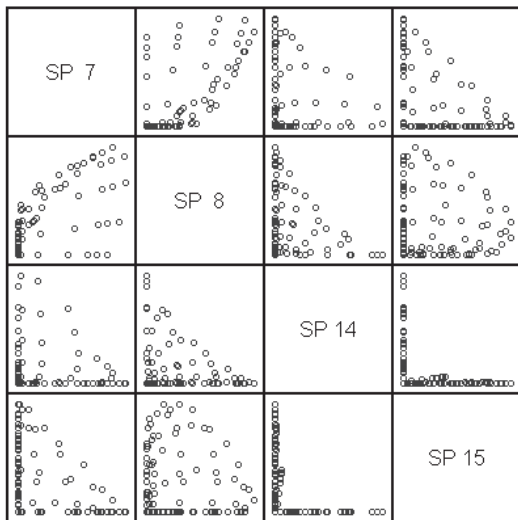
Convex Hulls and Group Centroid Overlays

PC-ORD 6 provides two additional overlays for ordinations (in addition to color-coding, symbol coding, joint plots, biplots, grids, and vectors): convex hulls and group centroids. Both apply to groups of sample units (rows), and are illustrated below.

A convex hull uses a polygon to enclose all of the points in a group. The shapes are "convex" because the interior angles of the polygon are always ≤ 180°. The purpose of this overlay is to show the outline of a group in an ordination or a scatterplot, helping the viewer to discern if and how groups are separated or overlap.

The centroid of a cloud of points on an ordination is the average position of those points in the ordination space (shown as a large "+" below). If your data are subdivided into groups you can display the centroid of each of those groups in the ordination space.

Overlays of Convex Hulls and Centroids

Topopgraphic position
● floodplain
○ slope
× bench

Axis 2

Axis 1

A Decision Tree for Beginners

PC-ORD includes a decision tree (*Advisor* / *Wizard*) to help you decide how to analyze your data. You can also use the wizard as a self teaching tool. We attempt to deal only with relatively common data analysis problems that you are likely to encounter with ecological community data. In practice, many data sets have peculiarities or complexities that do not fit well into this decision tree. Strive for understanding and experience beyond what is captured in the decision tree. Think creatively about the best approach to your particular question and data. Remember to think beyond the range of tools included in the decision tree, for example, "is this question best answered with a univariate method?" or "Is this problem best suited to a habitat model, where we have a single species response variable in relationship to multiple predictors?" Most simple univariate problems can be adequately addressed with the major statistical software packages. For habitat modeling, consider HyperNiche (see www.hyperniche.com), particularly if you like the interface in PC-ORD and our emphasis on tools that deal well with nonlinear responses along ecological gradients and interactions among ecological factors.

The decision tree consists of a set of nodes, all connected to a starting point, the root node. Your answers to questions about the purpose of the analysis or the nature of the data link a node to other nodes.

Nodes are of two kinds, **Question-Answer** nodes, and **Conclusion-Action** nodes. Question-Answer nodes navigate you through the tree. Conclusion-Action nodes are endpoints on the tree. Conclusion-Action nodes state the conclusion, followed by one or more actions: an option to run an analysis, a suggestion for an analysis (which may or may not be part of PC-ORD), or some other recommendation.

Batch Commands for Advanced Users

You can **automate a series of commands** to perform repetitive tasks or to apply **resampling techniques** in your analyses. For example, you may wish to process a series of data sets in an identical way, changing only the input files. Or, you might want to use **bootstrap resampling to calculate a confidence interval** for a statistic of particular interest. This requires taking a random sample of a data set, performing an analysis, then repeating those steps many times.

A **batch command** is an action item selected from the PC-ORD menu system, along with the options chosen in any subsequent dialog boxes. A **batch set** is a sequence of batch commands. A **loop** is a programming structure that repeats itself a set number of times or until some criterion is met. Loops may be nested within other loops. An **iteration** is one cycle of a loop. To **glean** statistics from a result file is to scan through it, pulling out key statistics and tabulating them. This is useful for repeated runs of a specific analysis with a loop, for example calculating confidence intervals based on bootstrap resampling of a data set.

The steps to create and execute a batch of commands is as follows:

1. Plan the sequence of operations and any loop structure.
2. Record each component action.
3. Save each command with a descriptive name.
4. After all component commands have been recorded, create a set of commands with *File | New Batch Set* and drag commands into the set.
5. When the batch is complete, save it as a named file (*Save As Batch Set*), then click *Run*.
6. Add the loop structure(s) if desired.