

NO EVIDENCE FOR HISTORICAL DECLINES IN POLLINATION SUCCESS IN HUNGARIAN ORCHIDS

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Abstract. Pollination crisis (the decline of pollinator populations) is a global phenomenon which threatens biodiversity, human welfare and economy. The degree to which different plant populations/species are affected by pollination crisis is still unclear. In this study, long-term herbarium dataset was used to quantify the reproduction rate of Hungarian orchids between 1853 and 2008. We quantified fruit-set rate of 663 specimens belonging to 27 species. Data were available from an average of 10.3±9.3 localities, 76.5±43.2 years, and 23.4±25.6 specimens per species. Herbarium data were validated with field-observed data in case of the different pollination strategies. According to our results, the reproductive success of the vast majority of orchid species has not changed during time and pollination crisis is not apparent in Hungary at least until the end of the 20th century.

Keywords: *herbaria, natural history collections, Orchidaceae, pollination crisis, pollination mode*

Introduction

Pollinators provide key ecosystem services in most terrestrial ecosystems (Chee, 2004; Boyd and Banzhaf, 2007; Wallace, 2007; Fisher and Turner, 2008). Their activity is crucially important in the long-term survival of indigenous plant communities (Ashman et al., 2004; Aguilar et al., 2006) and the productivity of cultivated plants (Klein et al., 2007; Ricketts et al., 2008). For most crop plants and wild plants (particularly in the temperate climate zones) the most important pollinators are insects, especially bees, which are declining parallel to insect-pollinated plants at global (Kearns et al., 1998; Potts et al., 2010) and western European (Biesmeijer et al., 2006) scale.

The main causes of the observed global pollination crisis have not been fully identified, but are potentially connected to the fragmentation and destruction of (semi-)

natural habitats, spread of parasites, the use of chemicals in agriculture and global climate change. From this point of view, the recent and well documented climate change (Parmesan and Yohe, 2003; Root et al., 2003; Schröter et al., 2005; IPCC, 2007) deserves particular attention. Phenological shifts linked to changing climatic conditions were documented in different groups of plants (Fitter and Fitter, 2002; Parmesan, 2006; Post et al., 2008), including orchids (Robbirt et al., 2011; Molnár V. et al., 2012b). So far, little is known about climatic responsiveness of orchid-pollinators, but pollination mode was found to be the most important predictor of phenological response of central European terrestrial orchids (Molnár V. et al. 2012b). Nevertheless, any phenological mismatch between pollinators and flowering plants may substantially reduce the reproductive success of plants through decreased pollination efficiency (Fitter and Fitter, 2002; Hegland et al., 2009; Bartomeus et al., 2011; Rafferty and Ives, 2011). European terrestrial orchids represent an ideal research object for studying temporal changes in pollination efficiency for several reasons. First, since agamospermy (asexual seed production) is very rare in the family (Nygren, 1967; Catling and Catling, 1991), the presence of a fruit is almost always an indication of successful pollination (Neiland and Wilcock, 1995). Second, individual reproductive success of orchids is easy to estimate by counting the flowers and fruits on the shoot (Neiland and Wilcock, 1998). Third, orchids exhibit diverse pollination modes (self-pollinating, nectar-rewarding, food- and sexual deception (Dafni, 1984; Jersáková et al., 2006), consequently, their dependence on the abundance and diversity of pollinating insects differs between species. Fourth, different orchid species are attractive for specific group of insects, such as bees and wasps (Hymenoptera), butterflies (Lepidoptera) and beetles (Coleoptera) (Claessens and Kleynen, 2011).

Our aims in this study were (1) to characterize Hungarian orchid species in terms of reproductive success based on herbarium records, (2) determine the effect of pollination mode on fertilization success and (3) evaluate historical changes in reproductive success in orchids during the past decades.

Our predictions were the following: the reproductive success of autogamous species is temporarily invariable and relatively high (since they do not depend on pollinators), the reproductive success of entomophilous species depends on pollination mode: nectar-rewarding species show higher fructification rate than deceptive taxa, the reproductive success of entomophilous species (both nectar rewarding and deceptive) is decreasing due to the decline of pollinator populations.

Natural history collections contain important and useful information on the reproductive success of orchids in historical context (Farrell, 1985; Pauw and Hawkins, 2011). To test our hypotheses we collected data on fructification rate from all publicly accessible Hungarian herbaria and analyzed these with respect to pollination mode and time of collection.

Materials and methods

Quantifying fruit-set

We used the most widely utilised (and the easiest) method of measuring of reproductive success in orchids: quantifying fruit-set (Neiland and Wilcock, 1998). The Herbarium Database of Hungarian Orchids, compiled recently (Molnár V. et al., 2012a) allowed us to analyse reproductive success of 681 specimens belonging to 27 species based on a historical dataset which spans 155 years (*Table 1*).

Table 1. List of the species and characterization of the dataset used in this study. Abbreviations: A - autogamous, FD – food deceptive, NR – nectar rewarding.

Species	Pollination mode	No. of localities	Date of collection		No. of specimens
			Median±SD	Duration (years)	
<i>Anacamptis coriophora</i>	NR	11	1944±17	55	33
<i>Anacamptis morio</i>	FD	7	1945±26	73	15
<i>Anacamptis palustris</i>	FD	4	1944±52	106	7
<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>	FD	14	1956±40	134	27
<i>Cephalanthera damasonium</i>	A	31	1946±32	132	71
<i>Cephalanthera longifolia</i>	FD	23	1939±26	104	30
<i>Cephalanthera rubra</i>	FD	9	1954.5±12	29	16
<i>Cypripedium calceolus</i>	FD	3	1939.5±13	27	6
<i>Dactylorhiza incarnata</i>	FD	19	1948±29	126	24
<i>Dactylorhiza viridis</i>	NR	7	1947±11	25	17
<i>Epipactis atrorubens</i>	NR	8	1919±21	61	24
<i>Epipactis helleborine</i>	NR	9	1926±19	71	17
<i>Epipactis microphylla</i>	A	22	1937±36	149	71
<i>Epipactis palustris</i>	A	16	1937±31	112	48
<i>Epipactis purpurata</i>	NR	11	1952±22	77	24
<i>Epipactis tallosii</i>	A	3	1948±38	66	6
<i>Goodyera repens</i>	NR	2	1954±1	2	6
<i>Gymnadenia conopsea</i>	NR	5	1922±39	106	7
<i>Gymnadenia odoratissima</i>	NR	2	1904±55	95	8
<i>Limodorum abortivum</i>	A	14	1952±30	93	26
<i>Liparis loeselii</i>	A	2	1969±16	38	10
<i>Neottia ovata</i>	A	12	1949.5±34	134	16
<i>Neottia nidus-avis</i>	A	38	1950±29	121	119
<i>Orchis militaris</i>	FD	13	1951±31	91	59
<i>Orchis purpurea</i>	FD	5	1942±31	77	6
<i>Orchis simia</i>	FD	2	1961±42	60	9
<i>Platanthera bifolia</i>	NR	25	1946±32	137	31

We considered only intact herbarium specimens collected in fruiting stage (*Fig. 1*). The number of flowers (both fertilized and non-fertilized) and the number of fruits were counted on each specimen collected at fruiting stage and identified at species level.

For statistical analyzes we used only species for which at least 3 herbarium records were collected. In the whole dataset the mean±SD numbers of records / species were 23.4±25.6, which were collected from 10.3±9.3 localities, during 76.5±43.2 years.

Life-history characterisation

Species were categorized into three groups according to their pollination mode – autogamy (including obligate and facultative self-pollination), nectar-rewarding entomophily and food deceptive entomophily, following Molnár V. et al. (2012b). A full list of all investigated species, as well as the sequence data used for phylogenetic reconstruction, is given in *Table 1*.



Figure 1. *Orchis militaris* sheet from the collection of the Department of Botany at the University of Debrecen (DE), collected near to Dabas on the 23th of May in 1951, by Tibor Simon and Olga Borsos. Its four fruits are well identifiable.

Statistical analyses

To analyze historical changes in reproductive success and its relationship to pollination mode, we used generalized linear mixed models (GLMMs). Since fruit-set is proportion data following a binomial distribution, we used binomial GLMMs with the number of fruits (successes) and number of unpollinated flowers (failures) as a bivariate response. Binomial GLMMs were performed using the MCMCglmm package (Hadfield, 2010) in the R Statistical Environment (R Core Team, 2014). MCMCglmm implements a Bayesian version of traditional GLMMs and it has the advantage that it can incorporate complex covariance structure in the random effects, such as the covariance arising from the phylogenetic relationship between species; hence, these models can be used to evaluate the relationship between species traits while controlling for the non-independence of data points arising from shared phylogenetic descent.

To prepare a phylogenetic tree that describes phylogenetic distances between the species studied, we used one of the most useful molecular phylogenetic marker, the nuclear ribosomal internal transcribed spacer (nrITS) region (Baldwin et al., 1995; Álvarez and Wendel, 2003). An alignment of the sequences was made by eye in BioEdit v.7.1.3 (Hall, 1999). The resulting matrix was subject to phylogenetic tree

reconstruction under the maximum parsimony (MP) criterion in Paup v.4.0b*10 (Swofford, 2003) using a heuristic search with default settings but holding 10 trees at each iteration step and repeating the search 1000-times. As we used a geographically strongly biased sample-set (Hungarian orchids), we had to apply a backbone constraint to overcome false tree-reconstruction due to suboptimal taxon sampling. Thus, the well-established phylogenetic relationship of European orchids (Bateman et al., 2003; Bateman et al., 2005; Bateman, 2009) was fixed as constraint (see Fig. 2). The most parsimonious phylogenetic trees compatible with our constraint were saved with branch length corresponding to mutational changes (i.e. as phylograms), then one of these trees was made ultrametric by applying the non-parametric rate smoothing algorithm (Sanderson, 1997) as implemented in r8s v.1.71 (Sanderson, 2003). Statistical robustness of our MP reconstruction was assessed by the non-parametric bootstrap procedure applying 1000 pseudo-replicates in Paup. This above procedure allowed us to assess the genetic distance between each species we studied, and the resulting ultrametric tree (Fig. 2) was used as input for analyses using the phylogenetic control.

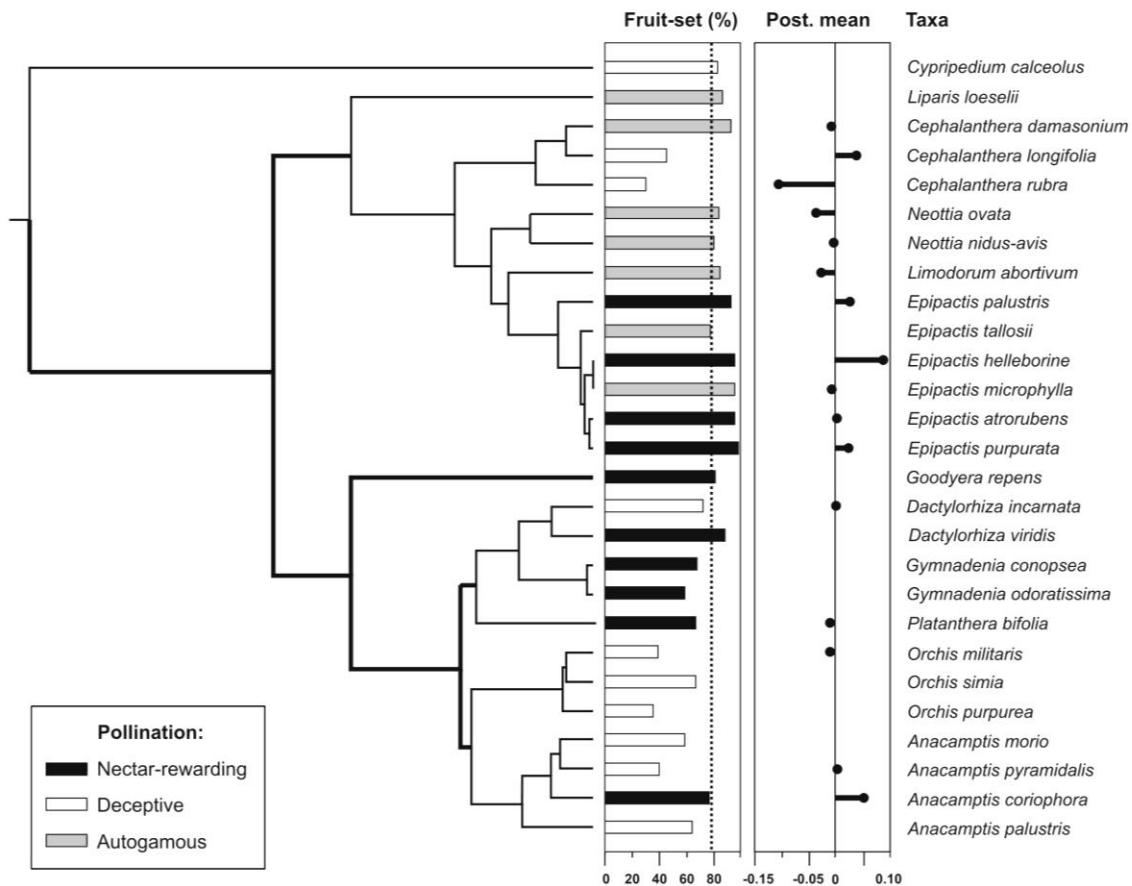


Figure 2. The favoured phylogenetic tree of four equally most parsimonious trees made ultrametric by non-parametric rate smoothing and used in analysis as phylogenetic control. The backbone constraint applied in the heuristic MP search is indicated by thick branches. Mean fruit-set values calculated (dashed line represents median) for each taxon and changes in fruit-set rates (posterior mean from Bayesian GLMM, see Table 4) calculated for 16 species are given next to the tree.

We first evaluated the effect of pollination mode on fruit-set; as random factors we included the ID of herbarium records (to control for multiple plant individuals collected at the same time from the same location), species (to control for multiple records per species) and phylogenetic position (to control for shared phylogenetic descent). Next we built a similar model with year as fixed effect, and a third model with the interaction of these two factors.

Lastly, we evaluated temporal changes in fruit-set in species where the number of records per species was >10 (this was the case for N=16 species). These latter models were evidently run without phylogenetic control, but we included the ID of herbarium records as a random factor.

Results

The phylogenetic tree reconstruction found four equally parsimonious trees under the MP criterion that were compatible with the backbone constraint applied. These four trees at step 1320 were found repeatedly during the 1000 random repetitions. The difference between the trees effected the tips; on one part of the trees *Limodorum abortivum* was sister to the genus *Neottia*, while the other part was affected by the exchanged placement of *Orchis militaris* and *O. purpurea*. All these placements are poorly resolved in the currently available studies. The finally favoured tree (Fig. 2) is the one fully compatible with those published in the relevant literature (Bateman et al., 2003; Bateman et al., 2005; Bateman, 2009).

Species-specific fruit-set rates in the 27 species ranged between 35 % and 98 %. (Table 2). Pollination mode had a significant effect on reproductive success; compared to nectar-rewarding species, deceptive taxa had significantly lower fruit-set (posterior mean: -2.152; lower: -3.380; upper 95% CI: -1.079; p=0.004). Fruit-set of autogamous taxa was not significantly different from nectar-rewarding ones (posterior mean: 0.747; lower: -0.577; upper 95% CI: -1.796; p=0.224) (Table 3, Fig. 3).

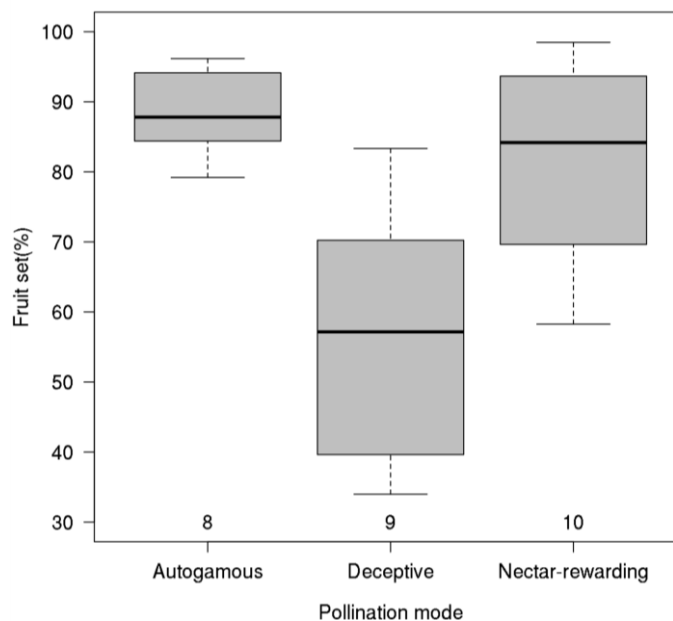


Figure 3. Reproductive success of orchids with different pollination mode. The number of species with each pollination strategy is indicated below the boxes.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics on fruit-set data of species examined in this study.

Species	Number of flowers		Number of fruits		Fruit-set (%)
	Total	Mean	Total	Mean	Mean ± SD
<i>Anacamptis coriophora</i>	512	15.5	394	11.9	77 ± 17
<i>Anacamptis morio</i>	147	9.8	86	5.7	59 ± 15
<i>Anacamptis palustris</i>	72	10.3	46	6.6	64 ± 24
<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>	603	22.3	241	8.9	40 ± 25
<i>Cephalanthera damasonium</i>	344	4.9	321	4.5	93 ± 13
<i>Cephalanthera longifolia</i>	236	7.9	106	3.5	45 ± 39
<i>Cephalanthera rubra</i>	164	10.3	50	3.1	30 ± 34
<i>Cypripedium calceolus</i>	6	1.0	5	0.8	83 ± 25
<i>Dactylorhiza incarnata</i>	527	22.0	380	15.8	72 ± 28
<i>Dactylorhiza viridis</i>	217	12.8	190	11.2	88 ± 11
<i>Epipactis atrorubens</i>	362	15.1	347	14.5	96 ± 4
<i>Epipactis helleborine</i>	287	16.9	275	16.2	96 ± 22
<i>Epipactis microphylla</i>	799	11.3	769	10.8	96 ± 4
<i>Epipactis palustris</i>	522	10.9	486	10.1	93 ± 8
<i>Epipactis purpurata</i>	527	22.0	518	21.6	98 ± 3
<i>Epipactis tallosii</i>	85	14.2	66	11.0	78 ± 27
<i>Goodyera repens</i>	96	16.0	78	13.0	81 ± 9
<i>Gymnadenia conopsea</i>	145	20.7	99	14.1	68 ± 31
<i>Gymnadenia odoratissima</i>	175	21.9	104	13.0	59 ± 19
<i>Limodorum abortivum</i>	280	10.8	239	9.2	85 ± 16
<i>Liparis loeselii</i>	38	3.8	33	3.3	87 ± 14
<i>Neottia ovata</i>	556	34.8	467	29.2	84 ± 13
<i>Neottia nidus-avis</i>	2990	25.1	2386	20.1	80 ± 7
<i>Orchis militaris</i>	1243	21.1	483	8.19	39 ± 18
<i>Orchis purpurea</i>	193	32.2	67	11.2	35 ± 14
<i>Orchis simia</i>	146	16.2	98	10.9	67 ± 24
<i>Platanthera bifolia</i>	494	15.9	330	10.7	67 ± 24

Table 3. Mean fruit-set rates of the species with different reproductive strategy

	Number of species	Number of flowers			Number of fruits		
		Median	Mean	SD	Median	Mean	SD
Autogamous	9	10.9	13.5	10.2	10.1	11.5	8.3
Food deceptive	12	13	14.9	8.4	6.3	6.9	4.4
Nectar rewarding	10	16.4	17.7	3.3	13.6	14.4	3.4

Fruit-set did not change with time (posterior mean: -0.004; lower: -0.011; upper 95% CI: 0.002; $p=0.194$, Fig. 4.). Furthermore, when year and pollination mode were included in interaction with each other (allowing different temporal changes in the three pollination strategies), none of the model parameters were significant.

Fruit-set decreased significantly with time in *Neottia ovata*, increased with time in *Anacamptis coriophora*, and no statistically significant trend was seen in the remainder of species with at least 10 herbarium records (14 out of 16; Table 4).

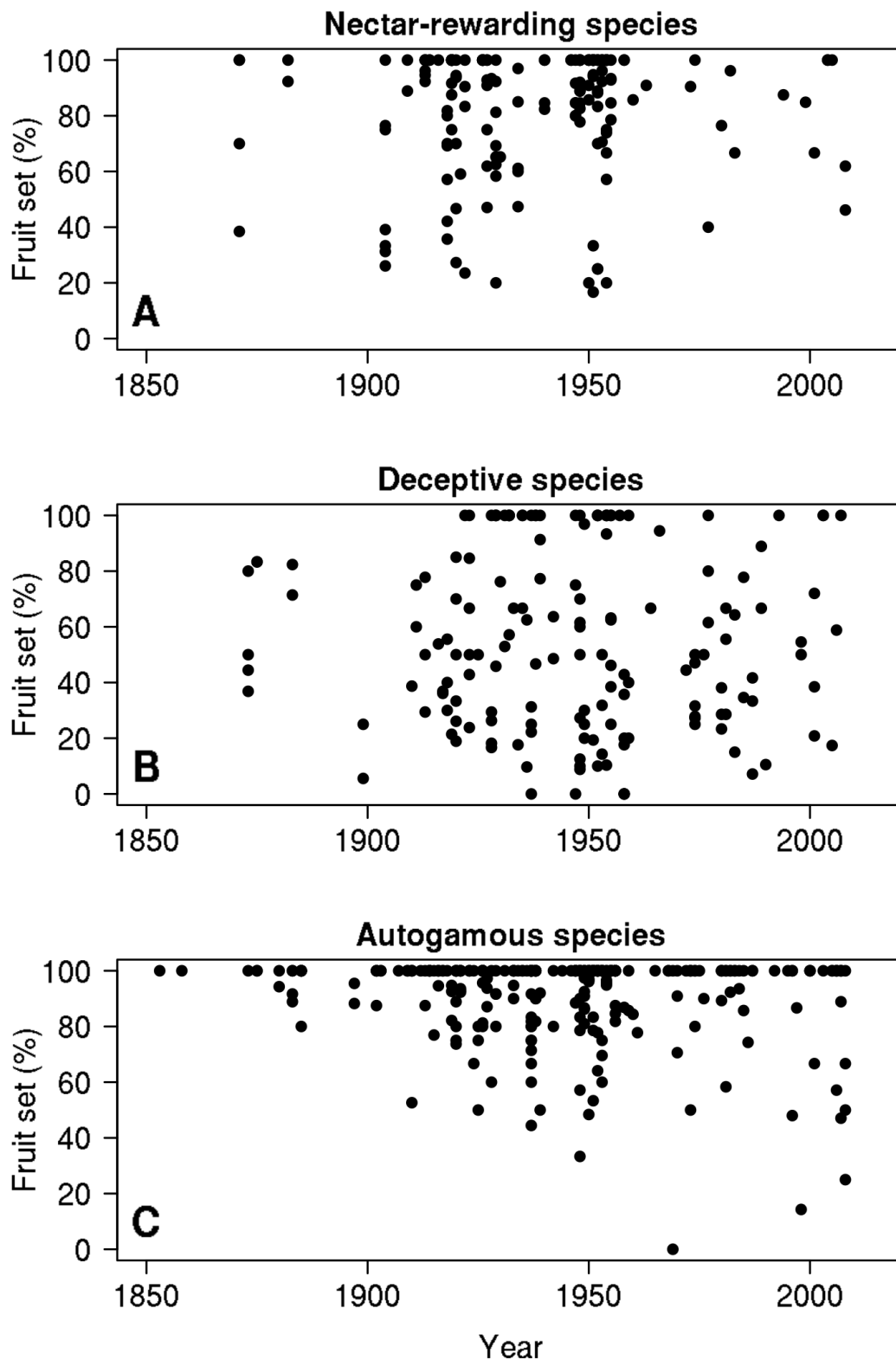


Figure 4. Fruit-set data of nectar-rewarding (A), deceptive (B) and autogamous (C) taxa in relation to year of collection. Overall, there was no significant temporal changes in fructification rate (see Results)

Table 4. Changes in fruit-set rate during time (results from Bayesian Generalized Linear Mixed Models). Boldface indicates statistically significant change.

Species	Parameter estimate (posterior mean)	Lower 95% CI	Upper 95% CI	pMCMC
<i>Anacamptis coriophora</i>	0.052	0.009	0.094	0.020
<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>	0.004	-0.016	0.023	0.750
<i>Cephalanthera damasonium</i>	-0.007	-0.035	0.024	0.622
<i>Cephalanthera longifolia</i>	0.039	-0.077	0.141	0.422
<i>Cephalanthera rubra</i>	-0.104	-0.277	0.025	0.104
<i>Dactylorhiza incarnata</i>	0.003	-0.032	0.047	0.896
<i>Epipactis atrorubens</i>	0.003	-0.054	0.061	0.996
<i>Epipactis helleborine</i>	0.088	-0.376	0.875	0.734
<i>Epipactis microphylla</i>	-0.006	-0.037	0.019	0.700
<i>Epipactis palustris</i>	0.027	-0.035	0.095	0.360
<i>Epipactis purpurata</i>	0.024	-0.084	0.158	0.694
<i>Limodorum abortivum</i>	-0.026	-0.070	0.025	0.214
<i>Neottia ovata</i>	-0.035	-0.072	0.001	0.040
<i>Neottia nidus-avis</i>	-0.003	-0.021	0.012	0.666
<i>Orchis militaris</i>	-0.010	-0.026	0.010	0.266
<i>Platanthera bifolia</i>	-0.010	-0.035	0.014	0.398

Discussion

Long-term data from herbaria were used to quantify the reproductive success of orchids in Hungary. Fruit-set rates of species with different pollination strategies are different; orchids with food deceptive strategy develop significantly less seedpods than autogamous species. This information is in accordance with field experiences (Neiland and Wilcock, 1998).

Our analyses seem to suggest that reproductive success in the vast majority (91%) of Hungarian orchids has not changed temporally, i.e. pollination crisis has not occurred in Hungary, at least until the end of the 20th century. Our results are in accordance with a recent paper of E. Vojtkó et al. (2015) who also reported relatively high recent reproduction success of two deceit pollinated *Dactylorhiza* species in comparison to Western European data.

In our dataset only two species showed significant temporal changes in their reproduction success: the Common Twayblade (*Neottia ovata*) showed a significant decrease in fruit set, while in the Bug Orchid (*Anacamptis coriophora*) reproduction success increased significantly. Because our study may have been adversely affected by varying temporal sampling frequency, the significant changes may be results of sampling bias.

There are at least two possible explanations to the detected trends. Firstly, the diversity of the bee communities is much higher in Hungary (Sároszpataki et al., 2009), than in some Western European countries (Dauber et al., 2003; Hirsch and Wolters, 2003). Secondly, the very high and continuously increasing honeybee density in Hungary (Tóth, 2013) may contribute to the high recent reproductive success of deceit pollinated orchids (Biró et al., 2015) and also to the temporal invariability of reproduction success of orchids in Hungary. The only species (*Anacamptis coriophora*) with increasing fruit-set is

pollinated by many different insects (Hymenoptera, Diptera, Hemiptera, Claessens and Kleynen, 2011) and also honeybee (Dafni and Ivri, 1979; Berger, 2004).

To summarize, our data show that compared to Western European populations, pollination crisis has not affected Hungarian orchids (at least in terms of reproductive success). This conclusion suggests that geographical variation needs to be taken account when studying the consequences of pollination crisis.

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