Hold the Salt, Please!
Herbivory Along a Salinity Gradient in a Pacific Island Mangrove

WHERE IN THE WORLD?
Mangrove forests occur along coasts between 30° N and 30°S around the globe. This study was conducted in Kosrae, Federated States of Micronesia, in the Pacific.

WHAT ARE MANGROVES?
Mangroves are Halophytes. Halo = salt, -phyte = plant. Mangroves grow in tidal areas and are the interface between terrestrial and marine systems.

WHO EATS MANGROVES?
Herbivores observed in this study were insects: Orthoptera: Tettigoniidae; Lepidoptera: Geometridae; Crabs: Sesarmidae.

Insects ate 69.1% & preferred top leaves:
Crabs ate 26.7% & preferred bottom leaves.

MORE SALT? LESS LEAF DAMAGE
Herbivory was negatively correlated with increasing salinity.

CLIMATE CHANGE
Sea level rise & increased storm frequency and intensity will drive changes in salinity regimes. How will shifts in salinity affect patterns of plant-arthropod interactions?

WHAT NEXT?
This study focused on chewing herbivores on seedlings. Lots of plant-arthropod interactions remain to be explored in mangrove systems. What questions would YOU ask?

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