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Spatially structured population dynamics in feral oilseed rape.

Crawley MJ, Brown SL

Proc Biol Sci 2004 Sep 22 **271**(1551):1909-16 [[abstract on PubMed](#)]

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Selected by | Niklaus Ammann

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Faculty Member

Niklaus Ammann

University of Berne, Switzerland

PLANT BIOLOGY

- Hypothesis
- New Finding

Comments

I found this article interesting because it reveals for the first time detailed population data on feral oilseed rape over 10 years (1993-2002) in the London area. Fears of such feral populations evolving into superweeds can be dismissed on the grounds of such results. Despite a widespread 'superweed' concern - related to oilseed rape - among scientists and the public, there is little evidence for any pervasive dynamics in the populations; also, there is no large-scale synchrony due to climatic forcing among the various studied populations. The authors demonstrate the complexity of population dynamics, which cannot even remotely be recalculated and thus predicted by any of the existing modeling programmes. They hypothesize that synchrony in this system is driven by at least three processes: small-scale, local forcing caused by soil disturbance; intermediate-scale forcing as a result of seed input; and large-scale climatic forcing (e.g. winter rainfall) that affects the motorway as a whole.

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