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Assessing 20 Years of Change in the Interdunal Swale Plant Communities of Sandy Neck

Abstract:

Interdunal swales occur between sand dunes and support a relatively high density and diversity of plants. In the mid-1990s, data were collected on the plant communities of various swales at Sandy Neck in Barnstable, MA. The very same methods were repeated, 20 years later (in this study) in a unique attempt to quantify change in these swale plant communities over time. Distinct patterns of succession emerged, and the removal of the highly invasive *Phragmites australis*, or common reed, had no long-term impact on the plant communities of invaded swales.