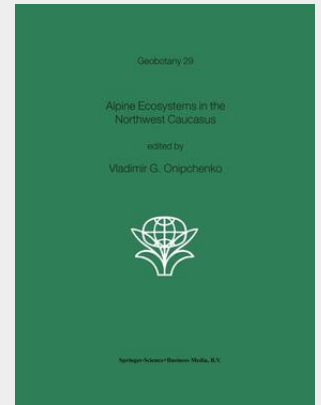


## Alpine Ecosystems in the Northwest Caucasus

Plant geographical description of the area, syntaxonomy, spatial patterns, floristic richness, structure of plant communities in relation to soil properties and herbivore influence were described for a mountain region that is difficult to access. Seasonal, inter-annual, and long-term dynamics of vegetation are discussed on the base of long-term observations as well as pollen and phytolith analyses. Population biology of alpine plants is studied by combination of field observations and mathematical modelling. Plant population strategies and soil seed banks are described for alpine plants from several communities. Results of long-term ecological experiments (plant reciprocal transplantations, dominant removals, light limitation) showed the significance of competition and facilitation for community organization. Structure of soil algal and fungal communities is represented as well as mycorrhiza of alpine plants. Main animal groups (wild) history and modern nature conservation problems are discussed.

The book represents results of 20 years' worth of ecological investigation of alpine ecosystems in the Northwest Caucasus. Plant geographical description of the area, syntaxonomy, spatial patterns, floristic richness, structure of plant communities in relation to soil properties and herbivore influence were described for a mountain region that is difficult to access. Seasonal, inter-annual, and long-term dynamics of vegetation are discussed on the base of long-term observations as well as pollen and phytolith analyses. Population biology of alpine plants is studied by combination of field observations and mathematical modelling. Plant population strategies and soil seed banks are described for alpine plants from several communities. Results of long-term ecological experiments (plant reciprocal transplantations, dominant removals, light limitation) showed the significance of competition and facilitation for community organization. Structure of soil algal and fungal communities is represented as well as mycorrhiza of alpine plants. Main animal groups (wild) history and modern nature conservation problems are discussed. The book will be of interest to plant ecologists, botanists, biogeographers, soil scientists, zoologists, soil microbiologists, naturalists and nature conservation managers dealing with high mountain ecology.



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