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AN ANALYSIS OF SURFACE-DWELLING SPIDERS (ARANEAE) ON BURNT
CAPE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

By

Anne Marie Hynes

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Memorial University of Newfoundland

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Abstract

The Burnt Cape Ecological Reserve is considered one of the most significant botanical sites in Newfoundland and Labrador. Located on the Great Northern Peninsula, Burnt Cape is considered the most arctic region of insular Newfoundland and is predominantly limestone. This reserve displays high species richness, with over three hundred species of plants, thirty-five of which are considered rare. Invertebrates on Burnt Cape have not been well documented. The purpose of this study is to complete a baseline survey of surface-dwelling spiders (*Araneae*) on Burnt Cape Ecological Reserve. Various environmental variables were analyzed to determine their influence on the spider population on Burnt Cape. Five previously defined habitats, classified according to dominant vegetation, were sampled for spiders. Spiders were collected from July to September, 2003, using covered pitfall traps. Sixty-eight spider species have been identified, representing ten families. Nine species remain unidentified. Comparisons with other studies indicated that the majority of identified spider species (54) were previously recorded in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Only six of the identified species were recorded in collections made in other northern areas that were considered similar to Burnt Cape. Analyses of environmental variables suggested weak indications of the various variables' influences.