

Plant growth forms of Chilean matorral a monocharacter growth form analysis along an altitudinal transect from sea level to 2000 m.A.s.l.

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Abstract

A vegetation transect from the Pacific Ocean to an altitude of 2000 m.a.s.l. on the slopes of the Andes was analyzed for monocharacter growth form types. Plant height, crown diameter and crown density were found generally to be the highest in altitudes of 1000–1700 m.a.s.l. Lignotubers were found to be more abundant in lower altitudes and tap roots in higher altitudes. The percentages of evergreens increase and those of summer shedders decrease with altitude. Winter shedders appear only in the higher altitudes. Whereas evergreen generally dominate the whole transect this is not the case with sclerophylls. There is a considerable percentage of plants with malacophyllous leaves part of them evergreens. An interpretation and explanation of the above data is attempted.