The Phenological network of Catalonia: a historical perspective

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The Phenological Service of Catalonia (SMC) began the systematic phenological observations in 1932. 44 observers registered the phenophases of 45 plants, the first or last sighting of 6 birds and the first sighting of one butterfly.

The study First results of the phenological observations in Catalonia was published in 1936

The SMC worked against the fascist military uprising during the Spanish Civil War. Therefore, once the war was finished, the SMC was quickly closed by the Franco dictatorship.

Phenological Network of Catalonia 1932-1939

Phenological Network of Catalonia 1996-present

The reintroduction of democracy and the return of the Catalan self-government structures (1977) allowed the re-foundation of the SMC in 1996.

Phenology is coordinated from Spain (1942-present)

The Climatology Department needed phenological data to complement the study of climatic indicators and realized the fragile situation of phenology observations in Catalonia, with few operational series.

Before 2013 Phenology coordinated from Spain

There were 10 observers in 2002.

After 2013 Creation of Fenocat

Currently there are 53 observers monitoring 25 plants, 14 birds and 6 butterflies.

1976. The SMC director Dr. E. G., published in 1936

1896. Spanish civil war "Republicans" (legal government) against "Nationalists" (Francoists)


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FENOCAT MAIN FEATURES

1- Records the onset and the duration of the phenophases

The observers choose the species and phenophases to observe and monitor them at least twice a week (in the case of birds and butterflies, they pick a suitable location and observe the presence or absence of the species).

They carry out a periodic assessment of the "status" of the phenophase for an organism, rather than simply recording the date of an "event" (Denny et al. 2014).

2- Uses BBCH international codification

BBCH scale is used broadly in monitoring natural systems across Europe (Meier 2001; Koch et al. 2007), and more recently in USA (Schwartz et al. 2013).

3- An example of citizen science

All the observers are volunteer citizens with very different backgrounds and interests, but all of them are committed to phenology and meteorology.

4- Forms part of Pan European Phenology Database (PEP725 project)

This phenology network aims to be useful to science. Therefore, since the beginning, the net has sent their recorded data to the Pan European Phenology Database (PEP725).

Bibliography


