

THE DENDROFLORA OF ESTONIAN NATURE PROTECTED PARKS

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Introduction

The majority of nature protected parks of Estonia are manor parks. According to the data of the Ministry of the Environment there are ca 450 manor parks out of the total number of 548 nature protected parks. Approximately half of the nature protected manor parks are also on the list of monuments of national heritage. In other words, the most part of Estonian parks are historical, more than 150 years old. The interest towards dendroflora has been consistent which is proved by frequent dendrological inventories. The most extensive of inventories was carried out by Aino Aaspõllu at the end of 1970s and at the beginning of 1980s.

The purpose of current paper is to examine how large proportion of the tree species currently growing in manor parks is original.

Method

In the current paper, the authors analysed the proportion of distinct tree species on the basis of the inventory of 15 nature protected manor parks. The inventory results are compared to the sale lists of 19th century arboretums. Previous research in the field is taken into account, as well as the list of indigenous tree and bush species and the list of unwanted species in the so-called “black book” of species.

Results and discussion

The major part of the tree species growing in the historical parks are indigenous or planted in the 2nd half of the 19th century. The data about plantation of introduced new species in the 19th century is partially available. The inventories show that the diversity of species has declined in the 20th century due to the disappearance of some introduced new species. The results of the research demonstrate that the majority of the tree species growing in the historical parks today were in use originally. The proportion of indigenous species is more than 2/3. Some of the introduced species are on the list of unwanted species in Estonia but considering their location in the park space we may well assume that prevailing part of them have been planted in original set or have been planted later as substitutes.

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