

<sup>1</sup> Department of Agroecology, University of Rzeszów, Ćwiklińskiej 2/D3, 35-601 Rzeszów,  
e-mail: wolanski@univ.rzeszow.pl

<sup>2</sup> Department of Botany, University of Rzeszów, Cegielniana 12, 35-959 Rzeszów

CZESŁAWA TRĄBA<sup>1</sup>, PAWEŁ WOLAŃSKI<sup>1</sup>,  
KRZYSZTOF OKLEJEWICZ<sup>2</sup>

**Floristic diversity and sward use value  
of *Lolio-Cynosuretum* association in the San river valley**

Zróżnicowanie florystyczne i wartość użytkowa runi zespołu *Lolio-Cynosuretum*  
w dolinie Sanu

**Summary.** In the present paper the floristic composition, species richness and sward use value of five subassociations distinguished within the *Lolio-Cynosuretum* association (*typicum*, *trifolietosum repentis*, *festucetosum pratense*, *dactylidosum glomeratae* and *anthoxanthosum odoratae*) are studied depending on the selected ecological factors. Phytosociological relevés, samples of soil and samples of sward were taken for analysis. Floristic diversity and use value of the *Lolio-Cynosuretum* pasture sward depended on habitat conditions, fertilizing and use intensity.

**Key words:** *Lolio-Cynosuretum*, fodder value scores (SVS), floristic diversity, San valley

INTRODUCTION

*Lolio-Cynosuretum cristati* pastures are widespread in Poland (especially in the lowlands and hills) on mesic sites. They are most abundant in Wielkopolska region (up to 30% of all the permanent grassland), whereas in other regions they usually constitute only a few percent. This association has a broad ecological scale as far as climatic, edaphic, zoogenic and anthropogenic factors are concerned [Trąba and Grzegorzczak 2003]. Much research shows that preserving semi-natural pastures and meadows is of paramount importance for the preservation of the biodiversity of agricultural systems [Loster 1991]. The aim of this work was to assess the floristic diversity and fodder value of *Lolio-Cynosuretum* pastures, which occur on flood-plain soils in the San valley (SE Poland), taking into account soil moisture, acidity and fertility.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In 2003–2004 sixty-one phytosociological relevés were taken in *Lolio-Cynosuretum* pastures (each time on/from the area of 100 m<sup>2</sup>), using the Braun-Blanquet method.

Collective samples of soil and above-ground biomass were taken for analysis. In the soil, pH and accessible P, K and Mg content were measured. Soil moisture (F) and nitrogen content (N) were estimated using Ellenberg indicator values [Ellenberg *et al.* 1992]. Fodder value (FVS) were assessed on the basis of weighed floristic content using the Filipek [1973] approach. Subassociations of *Lolio-Cynosuretum* were identified using the PROFIT 2 computer programme package. For each of the distinguished communities the following indices were calculated: constancy degree and cover coefficient [Szafer 1977], number of *Poaceae* and *Fabaceae*, mean number of species per releve and Shannon-Wiener diversity index - H' [Magurran 1996] according to the formula:

$$H' = -\sum p_i \cdot \ln p_i; \quad p_i = n_i : N$$

$n_i$  – the coverage coefficient of every species,

$N$  – sum of the coverage coefficients of all species in a given subassociations.

The floristic table contains all species with at least II constancy degree in one of the identified subassociation. The species occurring sporadically are listed under the table. The information on fertilizing and use intensity was provided by the farmers/owners of the pastures.

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Five subassociations of *Lolio-Cynosuretum* were identified in the study area: *L.-C. typicum*, *L.-C. trifolietosum repentis*, *L.-C. festucetosum pratense*, *L.-C. anthoxanthosum odoratae* and *L.-C. dactylidosum glomeratae* (tab. 1). *Lolio-Cynosuretum dactylidosum glomeratae* and *L.-C. festucetosum pratense* were found in pastures fertilised with a small amount of NPK and managed as enclosures, with one hay-making per year. Other subassociations occurred in free-range cattle and horse pastures, where no fertilisation except for remaining animal manure was used.

*Lolio-Cynosuretum* is well-developed in the San valley. In all the plots numerous characteristic and differentiating species of the *Cynosurion* alliance occurred, especially *Lolium perenne* and *Trifolium repens* (tab. 1). *Lolio-Cynosuretum typicum* differed from other subassociations the most. It had the lowest fodder value and the highest floristic diversity expressed as the total number of species, mean number of species per releve and Shannon-Wiener (H') index (tab. 2). The *L.-C. trifolietosum repentis* subassociation had the highest *Trifolium repens* cover (from 30 to 60%). In this community *Lolium perenne*, *Poa pratensis* and *Taraxacum officinale* were more abundant, and *Festuca rubra* less abundant than in *L.-C. typicum*, whereas *Agrostis capillaris*, *Achillea millefolium* and *Prunella vulgaris* had similar cover. It had a higher fodder value than *L.-C. typicum* (tab. 2). The high cover of *Trifolium repens* is attributed to excess grazing, which causes the disappearance of taller grasses, replaced by *Trifolium repens* and low rosette-forming dicots, and impoverishes the floristic diversity of the community [Wilson 1994].

This work confirms this view. *Lolio-Cynosuretum festucetosum pratense* and *L.-C. dactylidosum glomeratae* have a higher number and cover of *Poaceae* than the previously discussed communities. Tall grasses and *Trifolium pratense* are particularly abundant. Out of lower grasses, *Festuca rubra* is more frequent and *Lolium perenne* and *Poa*

Table 1. The constancy degree and cover coefficient of plant species in *Lolio-Cynosuretum* subassociations

Tabela 1. Stałość i współczynnik pokrycia gatunków roślin w podzespołach zespołu *Lolio-Cynosuretum*

Subassociation Podzespół	Typicum		<i>Trifolieto- sum repentis</i>		<i>Festucetosum pratense</i>		<i>Dactylosum glomeratae</i>		<i>Anthoxanthosum odoratae</i>	
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<b>Ch.D.All. Cynosurion</b>										
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	V <sup>1</sup>	1679 <sup>2</sup>	V	4917*	V	2068	V	1944	V	1862
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	IV	1539	V	1923	IV	800	IV	1117	V	1167
<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>	IV	953	II	150	I	50	IV	789	V	1612
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	IV	582	III	87	III	109	III	79	II	17
<i>Phleum pratense</i>	IV	242	III	128	III	89	III	27	III	177
<i>Leontodon autumnalis</i>	II	329	II	160	II	214	III	128	II	92
<i>Veronica filiformis</i>	II	164	I	33	II	323	II	111	-	-
<i>Veronica serpyllifolia</i>	II	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Ranunculus sardous</i>	I	71	III	493	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Ch. O. Arrhenatheretalia</b>										
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	V	1254	V	1390	IV	805	V	628	V	454
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	V	357	V	710	V	595	IV	428	IV	250
<i>Carum carvi</i>	III	300	II	47	IV	155	II	67	-	-
<i>Bromus hordeaceus</i>	III	150	II	160	II	350	I	5	II	196
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	III	54	II	80	IV	155	V	1972*	III	388
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	II	400	I	7	III	736	-	-	I	145
<i>Trisetum flavescens</i>	I	254	I	3	II	209	III	22	-	-
<i>Daucus carota</i>	II	75	I	3	II	14	III	72	II	54
<i>Crepis biennis</i>	II	11	I	37	II	100	III	28	III	58
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	II	11	-	-	II	18	II	11	III	21
<i>Trifolium dubium</i>	II	11	I	40	I	45	III	439	III	367
<i>Galium mollugo</i>	I	7	I	10	I	9	II	11	III	29
<i>Geranium pratense</i>	I	7	I	7	II	95	-	-	-	-
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	I	40	-	-	II	18	III	28	II	50
<i>Pastinaca sativa</i>	I	7	-	-	II	14	-	-	-	-
<i>Campanula patula</i>	I	7	-	-	I	45	I	5	II	12
<b>Sporadical species:</b> <i>Alchemilla monticola</i> 2, 6; <i>Knautia arvensis</i> 2, 5, 6; <i>Pimpinella major</i> 2; <i>Rhinanthus serotinus</i> 2, 3; <i>Tragopogon pratensis</i> 3, 4.										
<b>Ch. O. Trifolio fragiferæ-Agrostietalia stoloniferæ</b>										
<i>Carex hirta</i>	II	114	II	127	I	50	II	11	I	8
<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	II	50	III	117	II	173	II	306	-	-
<i>Carex distans</i>	II	43	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Rorippa sylvestris</i>	II	11	II	13	I	5	I	5	II	12
<i>Rumex crispus</i>	II	11	II	15	II	14	II	17	II	12
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	-	-	II	337	I	5	-	-	II	12
<i>Lysimachia nummularia</i>	I	7	I	3	I	5	II	11	II	12
<b>Sporadical species:</b> <i>Mentha longifolia</i> 2, 3; <i>Alopecurus geniculatus</i> 3; <i>Festuca arundinacea</i> 3, 4; <i>Juncus compressus</i> 3, 4; <i>Juncus inflexus</i> 3; <i>Trifolium fragiferum</i> 3.										
<b>Ch. O. Plantaginietalia majoris</b>										
<i>Plantago major</i>	III	211	III	257	III	23	II	11	II	12
<i>Poa annua</i>	II	132	II	263	I	2	I	5	-	-
<b>Sporadically species:</b> <i>Juncus tenuis</i> 2										
<b>Ch. Cl. Molinio-Arrhenatheretea</b>										
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	V	1786	IV	853	V	1891	V	2222	IV	799
<i>Poa pratensis</i>	V	957	V	1637	V	755	V	589	IV	288
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	V	650	IV	107	V	855	IV	517	III	208
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	V	389	III	147	III	105	IV	378	IV	367
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	V	326	III	87	V	659	IV	617	V	442
<i>Cerastium holosteoides</i>	V	232	IV	123	IV	77	IV	39	V	42
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	IV	486	III	400	II	100	II	11	III	25
<i>Festuca pratensis</i>	IV	350	IV	577	V	2000*	IV	478	III	96
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	IV	254	I	40	II	55	III	78	III	238
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	III	214	IV	550	V	400	III	417	IV	471
<i>Potentilla anserina</i>	III	157	IV	240	II	255	III	128	II	12
<i>Centaurea jacea</i>	III	57	I	3	I	9	II	11	II	12
<i>Leontodon hispidus</i>	V	46	I	67	I	5	II	206	IV	700
<i>Vicia cracca</i>	V	44	I	1	I	50	-	-	III	21
<i>Poa trivialis</i>	IV	43	III	263	III	150	II	11	II	154
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	IV	18	I	40	II	69	II	17	III	200

Table 1 continued – cd. tabeli 1

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	IV	11	I	7	I	5	III	122	III	167
<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	II	71	II	107	III	260	-	-	I	8
<i>Deschampsia caespitosa</i>	I	7	II	47	II	55	II	17	III	21
<b>Sporadic species:</b> <i>Juncus conglomeratus</i> 2, 3; <i>Lathyrus pratensis</i> 2, 3, 4, 5; <i>Lychnis flos-cuculi</i> 2, 3, 4; <i>Lythrum salicaria</i> 2; <i>Rhinanthus minor</i> 2, 6; <i>Trifolium hybridum</i> 2, 4; <i>Equisetum palustre</i> 3, 4; <i>Myosotis palustris</i> 3; <i>Angelica sylvestris</i> 4; <i>Agrostis gigantea</i> 4; <i>Lysimachia vulgaris</i> 5, 6; <i>Avenula pubescens</i> 6										
<b>Ch. Cl. Nardo-Callunetea</b>										
<i>Luzula campestris</i>	II	43	I	10	I	5	III	78	III	62
<i>Hieracium pilosella</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	II	125
<i>Veronica officinalis</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	II	50
<b>Sporadic species:</b> <i>Veronica officinalis</i> 2; <i>Hieracium umbellatum</i> 6; <i>Polygala vulgaris</i> 6; <i>Carex pilulifera</i> 6.										
<b>Ch. Cl. Artemisietea i Agropyretea</b>										
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	IV	254	II	193	II	59	III	178	II	12
<i>Agropyron repens</i>	II	79	II	223	II	95	II	61	I	8
<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	II	46	II	217	III	64	I	11	I	4
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	I	7	II	130	I	5	-	-	-	-
<i>Equisetum arvense</i>	I	7	I	7	II	59	II	17	III	58
<b>Sporadic species:</b> <i>Arctium lappa</i> 2, 3, 4; <i>Armoracia rusticana</i> 2, 3; <i>Artemisia vulgaris</i> 2, 6; <i>Carduus crispus</i> 2, 3, 6; <i>Cichorium intybus</i> 2, 4, 5; <i>Lamium album</i> 2, 3; <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> 2, 3; <i>Solidago gigantea</i> 2; <i>Urtica dioica</i> 2, 3; <i>Convolvulus arvensis</i> 2, 3, 6; <i>Tanacetum vulgare</i> 3, 5, 6; <i>Carduus acanthoides</i> 3, 4, 5; <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> 4; <i>Chaerophyllum aromaticum</i> 4; <i>Epilobium hirsutum</i> 4; <i>Linaria vulgaris</i> 6.										
<b>Other</b>										
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	IV	793	IV	780	II	14	II	67	IV	1025
<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>	IV	164	IV	63	III	23	IV	33	III	100
<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	III	175	II	73	III	391	IV	239	I	4
<i>Stellaria graminea</i>	III	21	II	14	II	14	III	22	III	67
<i>Plantago media</i>	II	18	I	10	I	5	III	72	-	-
<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	I	39	I	117	I	91	III	244	V	2417*
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	II	67	III	58
<i>Vicia angustifolia</i>	I	3	-	-	I	5	II	67	I	8
<i>Vicia sepium</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	II	17	I	8
<i>Carex pairea</i>	-	-	I	10	I	5	II	17	-	-
<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	II	11	I	4
<i>Medicago sativa</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	II	11	-	-
<i>Medicago x varia</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	II	11	-	-
<i>Pimpinella saxifraga</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	I	5	II	17
<i>Rumex acetosella</i>	I	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	II	12
<i>Solidago virgaurea</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	I	5	II	12
<i>Vicia grandiflora</i>	I	3	-	-	I	5	I	5	II	12
<b>Sporadic species:</b> <i>Aegopodium podagraria</i> 2, 3, 5, 6; <i>Briza media</i> 2, 6; <i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i> 2, 3, 4, 6; <i>Dianthus deltooides</i> 2, 6; <i>Erigeron annuus</i> 2, 3, 5, 6; <i>Euphorbia cyparissias</i> 2, 3, 6; <i>Galium verum</i> 2, 5, 6; <i>Hypochoeris radicata</i> 2, 6; <i>Medicago falcata</i> 2, 5; <i>Mentha arvensis</i> 2; <i>Ononis arvensis</i> 2; <i>Phalaris arundinacea</i> 2; <i>Ranunculus auricomus</i> 2; <i>Senecio jacobaea</i> 2, 5, 6; <i>Stachys sylvatica</i> 2; <i>Matricaria inodora</i> 2, 3; <i>Carex ovalis</i> 2, 3, 4, 6; <i>Carex gracilis</i> 3; <i>Eryngium planum</i> 3; <i>Euphorbia esula</i> 3; <i>Geranium dissectum</i> 3; <i>Helianthus tuberosus</i> 3; <i>Lolium multiflorum</i> 3, 5; <i>Polygonum amphibium</i> 3, 4; <i>Ranunculus flammula</i> 3; <i>Rorippa palustris</i> 3, 4; <i>Rumex confertus</i> 3; <i>Stellaria media</i> 3, 5; <i>Symphytum officinale</i> 3, 4; <i>Tussilago farfara</i> 3, 5; <i>Veronica arvensis</i> 3; <i>Carex pallescens</i> 4, 5, 6; <i>Lathyrus tuberosus</i> 4, 5; <i>Polygonum hydropiper</i> 4; <i>Trifolium medium</i> 5; <i>Fragaria vesca</i> 5; <i>Centaurium erythraea</i> 6; <i>Myosotis arvensis</i> 6; <i>Thymus pulegioides</i> 6; <i>Vicia hirsuta</i> 6; <i>Viscaria vulgaris</i> 6; <i>Rosa canina</i> 6.										

Explanations: <sup>1</sup> constancy degree, <sup>2</sup> cover coefficient, <sup>3</sup> differential species of subassociations

Wyjaśnienia: <sup>1</sup> stopień stałości, <sup>2</sup> współczynnik pokrycia, <sup>3</sup> gatunki wyróżniające się w podzespołach

*pratensis* less. in *L.-C. festucetosum pratense*, *Ranunculus acris* also had high cover. Fodder value of these two taxa was nearly identical, and higher than for *L.-C. typicum* and *L.-C. trifolietosum repentis* (tab. 1). *Lolio-Cynosuretum anthoxanthosum odoratae* occurred mainly in higher elevations. It can be differentiated by the highest cover of *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Agrostis capillaris* and *Cynosurus cristatus*. Out of dicots, *Leontodon hispidus* was more frequent than in other communities. The diversity index H' for *L.-C. anthoxanthosum* was similar to that of *L.-C. dactylidosum glomeratae* and *L.-C. festucetosum pratense*, whereas its FVS was lower (tab. 2). In the whole 61 releve set, 166 species of vascular plants were found. A long list of species representing *Ar-*

*temisietea* and *Agropyreteae* classes, including 21 sporadic species deserves attention. It gives evidence that a less intensive use of the studied pastures has a positive influence on their floristic diversity [Kryszak 2004].

Table 2. Floristic diversity and fodder value of sward in *Lolio-Cynosuretum* subassociations in San valley

Tabela 2. Zróżnicowanie florystyczne i wartość użytkowa runi podzespołów zespołu *Lolio-Cynosuretum* w dolinie Sanu

Subassociations Podzespoły	<i>Typicum</i>	<i>Trifolietosum repentis</i>	<i>Festucetosum pratense</i>	<i>Dactylidosum glomeratae</i>	<i>Anthoxanthosum odoratae</i>
Number of relevés Liczba zdjęć	14	15	11	9	12
Number of plant species Liczba gatunków roślin	108	102	88	83	94
Percentage of grasses Procent traw	17,6	19,6	21,6	20,5	20,2
Percentage of legumes Procent strączkowych	11,1	7,8	12,5	16,9	11,7
Mean number in one relevés Średnia liczba w jednym zdjęciu	33,2	27,0	27,0	31,0	31,0
H'	3,39	3,07	3,23	3,17	3,21
FVS	6,2	6,9	7,6	7,6	6,5

*L.-C. dactylidosum glomeratae* and *L.-C. festucetosum pratense* had the highest proportion of grasses. The characteristic feature of the *L.-C. dactylidosum glomeratae* sub-association was the highest share of legumes in the flora, which, however, did not correspond with the surface coverage by those plants (tab. 2).

Table 3. Fertility and moisture of habitat of *Lolio-Cynosuretum* association in the San valley (mean sample value)

Tabela 3. Żyzność i uwilgotnienie siedlisk zespołu *Lolio-Cynosuretum* w dolinie Sanu (średnie z prób)

Syntaxonomic units of <i>Lolio-Cynosuretum</i> Syntaksonomiczne jednostki <i>Lolio-Cynosuretum</i>	pH in KCl pH w KCl	P	K	Mg	Ellenberg index value Wartość indeksu Ellenberga	
					Moisture Wilgotność	Soil nitrogen Azot w glebie
	mg · kg <sup>-1</sup> D.M. of soil mg · kg <sup>-1</sup> s.m. gleby	F	N			
<i>Typicum</i>	6,6	58	66	219	5,2	5,7
<i>Trifolietum repentis</i>	6,8	62	90	234	5,3	6,2
<i>Festucetosum pratense</i>	7,2	84	136	143	5,8	6,7
<i>Dactylidosum glomeratae</i>	6,3	71	142	85	5,0	6,2
<i>Anthoxanthosum odoratae</i>	5,0	24	68	114	5,2	5,3

*Lolio-Cynosuretum* occurred in versatile habitat. *L.-C. festucetosum pratense* occupied the soils, which were moistest and richest in phosphorus and nitrogen and with the highest pH. *L.-C. anthoxanthosum odoratae* occupied the least fertile and most acidic soils. *L.-C. trifolietosum repentis* occurred in most magnesium-rich soils. *Lolio-Cynosuretum dactylidosum glomeratae* occupied the driest sites, which were simultaneously rich in potassium and poor in magnesium (tab. 3). Kryszak and Kryszak [2001] distinguished as many as 12 subdivisions in the *Lolio-Cynosuretum* of the river valleys in Wielkopolska. Similarly as in the San valley, *L.-C. typicum* had the highest biodiversity and *L.-C. dactylidosum glomeratae* and *L.-C. festucetosum pratense* had the highest fodder value. The same subassociations had the lowest biodiversity in Wielkopolska as in the San valley.

#### CONCLUSIONS

1. Floristic diversity and fodder value of *Lolio-Cynosuretrum* depended on habitat conditions, application of fertiliser and intensity of use.

2. *L.-C. typicum* and *L.-C. anthoxanthosum odoratae*, occupying the most acidic and poor in P, K and N sites, revealed the highest floristic diversity.

3. The most humid, neutral and richest in nutrients soils were occupied by *L.-C. festucetosum pratense*, floristically poor, with sward being additionally sowed and systematically harvested.

4. *L.-C. dactylidosum glomeratae* subassociation was the highest share of *Fabaceae* in the flora, which, however, did not correspond to the surface coverage by those plants. A reverse situation was found for *L.-C. trifolietum repentis*.

5. The best fodder was provided by the *L.-C. dactylidosum glomeratae* and *L.-C. festucetosum pratense* pastures with a high share of valuable grass species. The lowest use value was revealed by *L.-C. anthoxanthosum odoratae* pastures, extensively used and unfertilized except for the excrements of grazing animals.

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**Streszczenie.** W niniejszej pracy porównano skład florystyczny, bogactwo gatunkowe oraz wartość użytkową runi 5 podzespołów wyróżnionych w obrębie pastwiskowego zespołu *Lolio-Cynosuretum* (*typicum*, *trifolietosum repentis*, *festucetosum pratense*, *dactylidosum glomeratae* i *anthoxanthosum odoratae*) w zależności od niektórych czynników ekologicznych. Przedmiotem analiz były zdjęcia fitosocjologiczne oraz próbki gleby i runi. Różnorodność florystyczna i wartość użytkowa runi zależały od warunków siedliskowych, nawożenia oraz intensywności użytkowania.

**Słowa kluczowe:** *Lolio-Cynosuretum*, wartość użytkowa, zróżnicowanie florystyczne, rzeka San

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