Geographical variation of plant-pollinator networks associated to sunflower fields and field margins in Argentina

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Insect visits to sunflower heads are important to maximize fruit set. Availability of adequate pollination service is thus one of the factors controlling yield in this crop. We present data on the composition of plant-pollinator networks supported by sunflower fields and their margins in 6 sites spanning much of this crop’s cultivation area (S 26° 51’ to S 37° 47’) in Argentina. A total of 186 species of flower visitors (58 of these on sunflower) and 117 plant species were recorded. Across sites, the number of plant species in the field margins was positively correlated with the number of insect taxa visiting sunflower (r=0.85; p=0.032; n=6), suggesting that the weed community supports sunflower pollination.