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Citation style: Wilczek Zbigniew, Kamycka Zuzanna, Zarzycki Wojciech. (2014). Occurrence of synanthropic species in plant communities of the Vistula and Brennica Rivers gravel banks (Western Carpathians) : [poster]. "Biodiversity Research and Conservation" (Suppl. 1, (2014), s. 89).



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Occurrence of synanthropic species in plant communities of the Vistula and Brennica Rivers gravel banks (Western Carpathians)

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Gravel banks are the initial habitats inseparably connected with mountain streams. On the one hand, they are an unstable substrate, influenced by the overflows and high waters and, on the other, they are also exposed to strong sunlight and heat. This situation determines specific vegetation which, due to dynamic changes in the habitat, has a pioneer character. What is more, gravel banks are areas where many river migratory species and many random species appear. Among them, there are also synanthropic ones.

In 2011-2012, floristic and phytosociological studies were conducted in the Silesian Beskids. The goal of these studies was to recognize the vegetation of the gravel banks of the Vistula and the Brennica Rivers – from their springs in the Silesian Beskids to the point where the Brennica River flows into the Vistula River

in the Silesian Foothills. The studied section of the two rivers is regulated. Particular attention was paid to the synanthropic species which pose a threat to the native flora.

The aim of this study was to recognize the synanthropic flora of the discussed area and to determine its occurrence at subsequent stages of the gravel banks succession.

The study allowed description of a series of succession stages of the vegetation of the river banks. Moreover, the obtained results showed that synanthropic species were present in all of them. The most common invasive species that were spotted comprised: *Impatiens glandulifera*, *Heracleum mantegazzianum* and *Reynoutria japonica*.