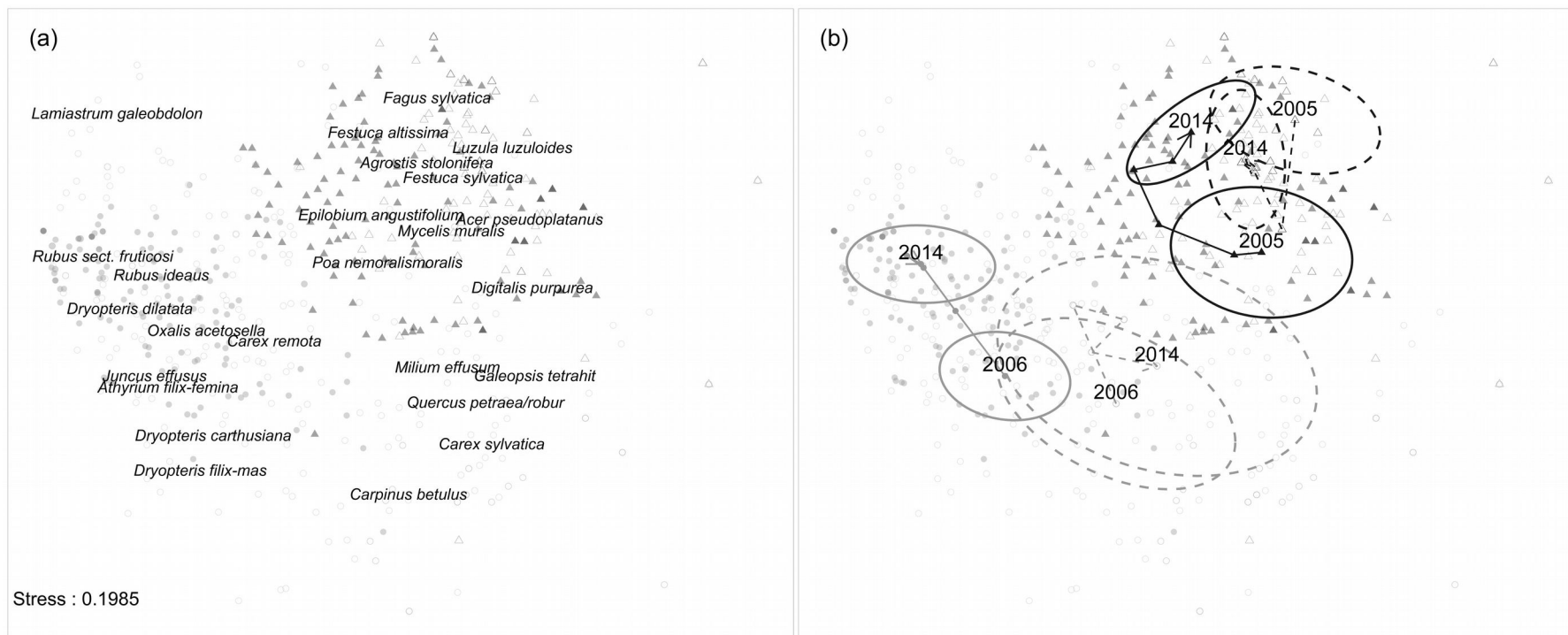


**Supplementary Material**

**Tab. S1** - Summary table of herbaceous species presence/ abundance according to site and herbivory modality. Species with a cover of more than 2.5 % in more than 5 % of the subplots of at least one site. Mean abundance  $\pm$  SE (frequency in %), all years taken together. Results from an in situ experiment over an eight-year period at two different sites in a temperate hardwood forest in the North-East of France (“La petite Pierre”). We used paired control plot (unfenced area, free access to deer) and exclosure (fenced area, excluding deer) at both sites.

Species	Plant function group	Site 1		Site 2	
		control	exclosure	control	exclosure
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	graminoids	0.4 $\pm$ 0.2 (4.8)	1.9 $\pm$ 0.7 (10.8)	0 $\pm$ 0 (0.7)	0 $\pm$ 0 (0)
<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>	ferns	0 $\pm$ 0 (0)	0 $\pm$ 0 (0)	1 $\pm$ 0.2 (14.9)	0.4 $\pm$ 0.2 (6.7)
<i>Carex remota</i>	graminoids	1.6 $\pm$ 0.5 (15.2)	4.5 $\pm$ 0.7 (40.5)	3.7 $\pm$ 0.6 (32.4)	5.3 $\pm$ 0.9 (34.7)
<i>Carex sylvatica</i>	graminoids	0 $\pm$ 0 (3.8)	4.6 $\pm$ 0.9 (37.8)	0.4 $\pm$ 0.1 (13.5)	0.6 $\pm$ 0.2 (8.7)
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	forbs	0.7 $\pm$ 0.3 (7.6)	2 $\pm$ 0.5 (16.2)	0.1 $\pm$ 0.1 (1.1)	0 $\pm$ 0 (0)
<i>Dryopteris carthusiana</i>	ferns	0 $\pm$ 0 (0)	0 $\pm$ 0 (0.9)	0.9 $\pm$ 0.2 (16.7)	1.2 $\pm$ 0.3 (19.3)
<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	ferns	0 $\pm$ 0 (0)	0 $\pm$ 0 (0)	1 $\pm$ 0.2 (14.2)	0.3 $\pm$ 0.1 (7.3)
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	ferns	0 $\pm$ 0 (0)	0 $\pm$ 0 (0)	2.2 $\pm$ 0.5 (20.4)	2.4 $\pm$ 0.5 (27.3)
<i>Epilobium angustifolium</i>	forbs	0 $\pm$ 0 (0)	1.7 $\pm$ 0.7 (16.2)	0 $\pm$ 0 (0)	0 $\pm$ 0 (0)
<i>Festuca altissima</i>	graminoids	0.8 $\pm$ 0.3 (12.4)	1 $\pm$ 0.3 (12.6)	0 $\pm$ 0 (1.5)	0.3 $\pm$ 0.2 (4)
<i>Festuca sylvatica</i>	graminoids	0.8 $\pm$ 0.3 (9.5)	5.9 $\pm$ 0.9 (44.1)	0 $\pm$ 0 (1.5)	0 $\pm$ 0 (1.3)
<i>Galeopsis tetrahit</i>	forbs	0.9 $\pm$ 0.3 (46.7)	4.6 $\pm$ 1.1 (45)	0.3 $\pm$ 0 (23.3)	0.3 $\pm$ 0.1 (7.3)
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	graminoids	0 $\pm$ 0 (0)	0.3 $\pm$ 0.2 (4.5)	2.1 $\pm$ 0.4 (22.5)	5.5 $\pm$ 1 (33.3)
<i>Lamium galeobdolon</i>	forbs	0 $\pm$ 0 (2.9)	0 $\pm$ 0 (0)	1.3 $\pm$ 0.3 (8)	0 $\pm$ 0 (0)
<i>Luzula luzuloides</i>	graminoids	2.3 $\pm$ 0.5 (53.3)	4 $\pm$ 0.7 (32.4)	0.3 $\pm$ 0.1 (7.6)	0 $\pm$ 0 (4)
<i>Milium effusum</i>	graminoids	0.2 $\pm$ 0.1 (4.8)	1.4 $\pm$ 0.4 (17.1)	0.1 $\pm$ 0.1 (4.4)	0.1 $\pm$ 0.1 (6)
<i>Mycelis muralis</i>	forbs	0.1 $\pm$ 0 (5.7)	1.8 $\pm$ 0.4 (37.8)	0 $\pm$ 0 (0)	0 $\pm$ 0 (0.7)
<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>	forbs	0 $\pm$ 0 (1)	0 $\pm$ 0 (0.9)	0.7 $\pm$ 0.2 (9.8)	0.6 $\pm$ 0.2 (8)
<i>Poa nemoralis</i>	graminoids	0.6 $\pm$ 0.3 (9.5)	0.8 $\pm$ 0.3 (9)	0.3 $\pm$ 0.1 (3.3)	0.1 $\pm$ 0.1 (2.7)
<i>Rubus idaeus</i>	rubus	0.5 $\pm$ 0.4 (3.8)	6.5 $\pm$ 1.4 (39.6)	2.5 $\pm$ 0.4 (24)	8.9 $\pm$ 1.2 (48)
<i>Rubus sect. fruticosi</i>	rubus	0.2 $\pm$ 0.1 (6.7)	6.7 $\pm$ 1.4 (46.8)	16.3 $\pm$ 1.6 (51.6)	60.5 $\pm$ 2.5 (98)

**Fig.S1** - NMDS ordination of plant community cover recorded in the presence of deer (control plots - dotted line) and in the absence of deer (exclosures - solid line) for sites 1 and 2 from 2005 to 2014. a) Species centroid plots. b) Ellipse per year for Site/Fencing. A global solution was reached with two dimensions: 20 iterations achieved a minimum stress of 0.19.



**Sites and fencing** Site 2 control plot Site 2 exclosure plot Site 1 control plot Site 1 exclosure plot

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**Fig. S2** - Julve plant community light index for sites 1 and 2 from 2005 to 2014. Error bars indicate standard errors of the mean. Wilcoxon tests were used to estimate differences between control and enclosure plots at each given year; the results of the tests are displayed at the top of each panel: ns = non-significant; \* = p-value<0.05; \*\* = p-value<0.01; \*\*\* = p-value<0.001. Letters next to points indicate differences between successive years at a 5% probability (Kruskal-Wallis): lower and upper case letters are for control and enclosure plots, respectively.

