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Justine Viros, Catherine Fernandez, Henri Wortham, Jordane Gavinet,

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Litter of Mediterranean species as a source of volatile organic compounds

- 2 Viros J^{1*}., Fernandez C¹., Wortham H²., Gavinet J¹., Lecareux C¹., Ormeño E¹.
- **¹** CNRS, Aix Marseille Univ, Avignon Univ, IRD, IMBE, Marseille, France.
- **²**Aix Marseille Univ., CNRS, LCE, Laboratoire de Chimie de l'Environnement, Marseille, France
- *Viros Justine corresponding author: justine.viros@imbe.fr ; +33 4 13 55 11 62
- Aix-Marseille Université Bâtiment Sciences Naturelles 3 place Victor Hugo 13003 Marseille

Abstract

 Leaf litter, at the interface between the soil and the atmosphere, releases Biogenic Volatile Organic Compounds (BVOC) which play an important role both in global atmospheric chemistry and plant ecology. Litter is especially important in the Mediterranean region, where it is produced in high amounts and decomposes slowly. Only leaf litter emissions of two dominant species (*Pinus halepensis* and *Eucalyptus* spp.) present in the Mediterranean region have been studied so far. The aim of this study is to characterize (quantitatively and qualitatively) the BVOC emissions (C10- C15) from litter (freshly fallen and non-decomposed leaves) under laboratory conditions. Sixteen species frequently found in the Mediterranean region were considered, nine of which possess terpene storage structures. Results show a large diversity of BVOC (87 compounds detected, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, aldehydes, ketones, benzenoids), with terpene emission being higher than non-terpenic emission in most of the cases. Species were classified within 3 categories: 20 negligible emitters (e.g. *Acer monspessulanum* and *Quercus ilex*, < 0.10 μ g.g_{DM}^{-1.}h⁻¹), low emitters 21 (*Pinus pinea, Quercus pubescens,* 0.1 - 1.0 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹) and moderate emitters (*Thymus vulgaris, Cotinus coggygria* and *Pinus halepensis* between 1.5 to 4.7 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹). Litter that possessed terpene storage structures and known to store high terpene concentration did not always release the highest terpene emission rates (e.g. *Eucalyptus globulus*, *Rosmarinus officinalis*). Species that do not possess such structures release only non terpenic emissions (e.g. alkanes, aldehydes). Estimation of the potential contribution of *P. halepensis* and *Q. pubescens* litter to O³ and secondary organic aerosol (SOA) formation in the atmosphere showed that *P. halepensis* has a larger potential impact on the global air quality than *Q. pubescens*. This study will contribute to build future BVOC emissions inventories on leaf litter for their further integration in atmospheric chemistry models.

Keywords: BVOC emissions, terpenes, storage structure, air quality, plant functional types

32 **Graphical abstract**

33 **Highlights**

- Litter emission rate ranges from < 0.1 to 4.7 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹ 34
- 35 The highest emitters are *Thymus vulgaris*, *Cotinus coggygria* and *Pinus halepensis*
- 36 Terpene emission rates are most often higher than non-terpenic emissions
- 37 Litter BVOC emissions of a species are not necessarily lower than green leaf BVOC
- 38 Litter BVOC emissions contribute to air quality in a non-negligible way

Introduction

 Living plant species are well known to release a vast bouquet of Biogenic Volatile Organic Compounds (BVOC). Terrestrial living vegetation releases between 700 and 1000 TgC of BVOC every year to the atmosphere, of which 40 to 65% are terpenes, mainly isoprene (309–706 TgC 43 vr⁻¹), followed by monoterpenes (26–156 TgC yr⁻¹) and sesquiterpenes (26 TgC yr⁻¹) (Navarro et al., 2014). Higher BVOC emissions are probably released at the global scale since it has been estimated that soil (bare soil + litter) contributes to 1-20 % of total BVOC emission in different ecosystems (Asensio et al., 2007; Kramshøj et al., 2016; Tang et al., 2019). Quantification of leaf litter emissions at global or regional scales has not been performed using BVOC emission models due to data scarcity (Peñuelas et al., 2014). BVOC emissions from litter are important in ecological- related processes as they modify plant growth and germination, acting as volatile allelochemicals 50 (Santonja et al., 2019) and in atmospheric chemistry by influencing the OH budget, O_3 and secondary organic aerosol formation (Fehsenfeld et al., 1992; Spittler et al., 2006). As recently reviewed (Tang et al., 2019), a missing OH sink would be due to incomplete characterization of BVOC sources, particularly emissions from litter and soil.

 Quantification of BVOC emissions at the ecosystem scale is not properly resolved with available models (Peñuelas et al., 2013) where only BVOC emission from the canopy are considered. In order to integrate litter in BVOC emission models, the first step it is to list BVOC emission rates of different plant species litter as previously carried out for living plants (Owen et al., 1997, 2001). The few studies that have reported litter BVOC emissions seem to support that litter is the second major source of BVOC after the canopy (Mäki et al., 2017; Tang et al., 2019) and releases higher emissions than bare soil (Ramirez et al., 2010). BVOC litter-related studies refer either to the layer of dead plant material present on the soil surface (Schade and Goldstein, 2001; Gray et al., 2014) or dead plant material that is detached from a living plant (Isidorov et al., 2010; Isidorov et al., 2016), since ecologically the word litter has these two meanings (Krishna and Mohan, 2017).

 It is difficult to evaluate if leaf litter of a given species releases higher or lower emission rates compared to its green leaves. For example, litter emission rate of *Pinus sylvestris* L., measured 67 with a static system and SPME (Solid Phase Micro-Extraction), is 7.5 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹ (Isidorov et al., 68 2010) in good agreement with emissions from green litter (maximal emission rate 6 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹; Vanhatalo et al., 2018). Emission rates of *Picea abies* (L.) H. Karst litter, also measured with a

70 static system and SPME, is 1.3 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹ (Isidorov et al., 2010) contrast with green leaf emission 71 (~0.1-0.4 μg.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹; Bourtsoukidis et al., 2014). Likewise, *Pinus taeda* L. litter showed an z average emission rate of 117 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹ (Ramirez et al., 2010) after litter conditioning (drying at 75°C and incubation for 72 days), which is roughly 100 times higher compared to its green leaf emissions (Helmig et al., 2006). Litter conditioning and handling previous to measurements probably explain such differences. However, all these studies suggest that terpene emissions from litter are not negligible compared to green leaves.

 Leaf litter emission varies according to decomposition stages (Gray et al., 2010; Isidorov et al., 2010) as terpenes volatilize from terpene pools and microbiota associated to litter releases and consumes BVOC. As a result, comparing leaf litter emission between species requires to consider litter from the same decomposition stage. Using fresh leaf litter that has not undergone microbial decomposition in soil allows to isolate BVOC emission from litter and is also the most accurate way to compare BVOC emission rates from green leaves and leaf litter.

 Fresh litter could importantly contribute to BVOC emissions and the atmospheric chemistry in the Mediterranean region where climate is characterized by a long and hot summer period (2-5 85 months; Polade et al., 2014) which could favor BVOC emissions from litter (Greenberg et al., 2012). Moreover, litter decomposes slowly (Hart et al., 1992) and many Mediterranean plant species including *Pinus* spp. and *Quercus* spp. produce important litter biomasses (e.g. *Pinus pinea* L., *Quercus coccifera* L., Arianoutsou and Radea, 2000). The Mediterranean area is also highly populated, leading to increases in anthropogenic pollutants, such as NOx, necessary for 90 tropospheric O_3 formation, in the presence of BVOC and light (Atkinson and Arey, 2003). All these interacting phenomena highlight the importance of focusing on other biogenic sources of BVOC emission such as litter and not only living vegetation.

 BVOC emissions from litter rely on both, soil microbial activity and specific BVOC reservoirs (such as glandular trichomes, secretory cavities) and cuticle where waxes are accumulated (Bondada et al., 1996). BVOC reservoirs (present only in some species) allow to store a high quantity of compounds resulting in toxic concentration for the other organisms (herbivore or phytopathogenic microorganisms) (Lange, 2015). BVOC reservoirs mostly contain terpenic compounds (Wagner, 1991) (excepting isoprene which is produced *de novo* and never stored in specific storing structures, Sharkey and Yeh, 2001), and are thus referred to as terpene storage structures. These structures can either be internal to the leaf such as the secretory cavities within needles of resinous species or external to the leaf such as the glandular trichome (e.g . *Lamiaceae* spp). Numerous Mediterranean plant species (*Rosmarinus officinalis* L.*, Pinus halepensis* Mill.*, Pinus sylvestris, Pinus nigra*R. Legay) possess remarkable terpene amounts in these leaf reservoirs $(5-30 \text{ mg}.g_{DM}^{-1})$ presumably allowing these terpenes to be released in high amounts from leaf litter. 105 Other species (*Cistus* spp, *P. pinea*) only store small amounts of terpenes $(5-64.5 \mu g. g_{DM}⁻¹)$ in these structures (Ormeño et al., 2009**)**. While terpene reservoirs are present in some species only, all vascular species possess an upper cuticle layer which mainly stores low weight saturated and unsaturated aliphatic hydrocarbons (< C16) (Bondada et al., 1996; Barik et al., 2004) but also a small fraction of terpene compounds in coniferous species (Joensuu et al., 2016). All these volatiles could thereby plausibly be released by leaf litter cuticle.

 The main goal of this study is to characterize BVOC emissions from litter of 16 Mediterranean species to identify those that could mostly contribute to biosphere-atmosphere interactions. Species belonging to different Plant Functional Types (PFT) are considered, including evergreen trees, deciduous trees and evergreen shrubs. This study considers fresh leaf litter (senescent leaves) that has not undergone decomposition by soil microorganisms and focuses on leaf terpene content (from literature data) to evaluate if this parameter could be an indicator of the potential of litter to release BVOC. Additionally, we aimed to estimate the potential impact of litter BVOC emissions on air quality. For this purpose, we focused on two tree species (*P. halepensis* and *Q. pubescens*) and calculated, for both plant species, three indicators of their influence on air quality: regional litter BVOC emissions, photochemical ozone creation potential (POCP) and secondary organic aerosol production (SOAP). These two plant species were chosen for this modelling exercise since they are major species in the Sud-PACA region where they occupy 197 000 ha and 356 000 ha respectively (IGN – Inventory of 2014 to 2018).

2. Material and Methods

2.1. Plant material

 Fresh leaf litter (hereafter referred to as litter) of 16 Mediterranean species was collected in 2017 and 2018 in Southern France (Sud-PACA region). Litter consisted of both senescent leaves previous to abscission and senescent leaves freshly fallen from the plant (within the first days following leaf abscission) collected by means of a fine-mesh net previously placed in the field to avoid litter contact with soil (Santonja et al., 2018). The studied species were chosen in order to select a significant number of the most abundant Mediterranean species. We paid a special attention

e	Collection	GPS Coordinates		Storage structure Plant Functional Type Leaf litter production			Green leaves emission		
					$g.m^{-2}.y^{-1}$	Reference	$\mu g.g^{1}.\overline{h^{1}}$	Type	Referenc
lS.	April	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	Glandular trichome	Shrub	673	Rodriguez-Ramirez et al. (2017)	$0.1 - 4.5$	MT>ST	Owen Ormeno
olius	June	43°10'44.3"N 5°34'16.2"E	Glandular trichome	Shrub	Unknown		3.1	MT>ST	Owen et
ygria	November	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	Glandular trichome	Shrub	117	Unpublished data	Unknown	Unknown	
lobulus	November	43°04'13.5"N 5°51'12.3"E	Subdermal oil glands	Evergreen broad leaf 250 - 370 tree		Arianoutsou (1989)	$5.4 - 42.0$	MT>ST	He et all Pio (200
ycedrus	August	43°14'27.1"N 5°40'33.3"E	Secretory cavities	Evergreen needle leaf Unknown tree			$0.5 - 2.3$	Iso>MT>ST	Owen $&$
nsis	August	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	Secretory cavities	Evergreen needle leaf 340 ^a tree		Arianoutsou & Radea (2000)	$3.0 - 15.0$	MT>ST	Ormeno Llusia ar
	August	43°17'22.1"N 5°24'35.2"E	Secretory cavities	Evergreen needle leaf 240 - 790 tree		Arianoutsou & Radea (2000)	$3.4 - 8.8$	MT>ST	Street et & Hewit
officinalis	August	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	Glandular trichome	Shrub	385	Rodriguez-Ramirez et al. (2017)	$2.2 - 5.0$	MT>ST	Owen Ormeno
aris	July	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	Glandular trichome	Shrub	Unknown		3.6	MT>ST	Parra et:
ssulanum	November	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	None	Deciduous tree	$55 - 125$	Unpublished data	< 0.3	Iso, MT	Genard-2 (2014)
a	June	43°10'44.3"N 5°34'16.2"E	None	Shrub	Unknown		19.0	Iso	Owen et
cifera	September	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	None	Shrub	538	Arianoutsou (1989)	$5.5 - 14.6$	Iso>MT, ST	Owen Staudt &
	June	43°14'27.1"N 5°40'33.3"E	None	Evergreen broad leaf 180 - 250 tree		Bello et al. (1992)	$15.0 - 21.0$	MT>ST	Kesselm (1999)
escens	January	43°10'44.3"N 5°34'16.2"E	None	Deciduous tree	166 ^b	Saunier et al. (2018)	90.0	Iso	Kesselm Saunier
er	June	43°15'19.2"N 6°13'06.3"E	None	Evergreen broad leaf 349 tree		Robert et al. (1996)	$0.2 - 30.0$	MT	Pio et al. Osorio e
rus	June	43°21'54.9"N 5°25'30.9"E	None	Shrub	323	Rodriguez-Ramirez et al. (2017)	$9.0 - 14.0$	Iso	Owen et

132 to integrate both, species with leaf terpenic reservoirs and species that do not possess such

 structures, also species belonging to different plant functional types and finally taking into accompt their litter production. For example, *P. halepensis* is an *Evergreen needle leaf tree*, possesses terpene storage structures, occupies 231 000 ha in France and features a non-negligible litter production $(150-530 \text{ g.m}^{-2} \text{.y}^{-1})$,

137 [Table 1](#page-11-0)). *Q. pubescens* is a *Deciduous broad leaf tree* free of terpene storage structure, 138 occupies 320 000 ha in the Sud-PACA region and features a moderate litter production (138 - 194 139 $g.m^{-2}.y^{-1}$,

140 [Table 1](#page-11-0)).

141 Litter was collected from 3 to 10 individuals in different locations and months according to

142 the time of the year when litter fall peak of each species occurs [\(](#page-11-0)

143 [Table 1](#page-11-0)). Litter collection of each species took place in the same location and was never

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144 carried out after rain events to avoid excess of humidity. Average litter humidity was 9.6 ± 1.2 % 145 $(\pm$ standard error).

 Seven of the studied species do not possess specific terpene storage structures (*Acer monspessulanum* L., *Erica arborea*, L., *Q. coccifera*, *Quercus ilex* L., *Quercus pubescens* Willd., *Quercus suber* L., *Ulex parviflorus* Pourr.). Nine species possess terpene storage structures internal to the leaf (*Eucalyptus globulus* Labill., *Juniperus oxycedrus* L., *P. halepensis*, *P. pinea*) or external to the leaf (*Cistus albidus* L., *Cistus salviifolius* L., *Cotinus coggygria* Scop., *R. officinalis*, *Thymus vulgaris* L.,

152 [Table 1](#page-11-0)).

153 **Table 1** – Species studied, family they belong to, data when litter was collected and location, presence of storage structures in leaves, leaf litter

154 production, green leaf emission rate and type according to literature. Species are classified according to the presence or absence of specific terpene-155 storage structures and alphabetically ordered.

156 Iso: isoprene; MT : monoterpenes, ST : sesquiterpenes

157 a calculated mean $(150 - 530 \text{ g.m}^2 \cdot \text{y}^{-1})$ from Arianoutsou and Radea (2000)
158 b calculated mean $(138 - 194 \text{ g.m}^{-2} \cdot \text{y}^{-1})$ from Saunier et al. (2018)

2.2. Collection of BVOC emissions from litter

 A dynamic pull-push system was used to collect BVOC released by litter. This system is composed by 2 Pyrex® jars of 1.2 L each and a system that continuously flushes air inside these jars. The air flushed into each jar was previously filtered with both drierite (W.A. 163 Hammond DrieriteTM Indicating Absorbents Mesh size 8, USA) to avoid the excess of humidity inside the system, and activated charcoal (Untreated, Mesh 4-8, Sigma Aldrich, USA) to remove VOC from ambient air. Finally, the air goes through a particle filter treated with sodium thiosulfate 166 to remove the O_3 that could interact with BVOC emitted by litter.

 Ten grams of freshly collected litter were placed inside a jar, leaving the other one empty to check for the absence of VOC in the air flushed through the jars (blank measurement). We used between 3 to 10 replicates per species, and emissions were collected once for each replicate. The emission factor of litter (standardized emission rate at 30 °C; Guenther et al., 2006) was measured 171 by placing the jars inside a stove at 30 °C. Temperature and air humidity were measured with an iButton ® (Hygrochron, Maxim Integrated iButtons, USA) placed inside each jar. Before 173 measurements took place, air inside the jars was renewed (1 L.min⁻¹ during 30 min) to avoid sampling BVOC that would initially be inside the jar. During VOC sampling, flow inside and 175 outside the jar was set up to 0.2 L.min⁻¹ for 20 min. We used Mass Flow Controllers (MFC, EL-176 Flow select, Bronkhorst France, 0-1 L. min⁻¹) to control the flows. The air coming out of each jar was collected onto glass cartridges (20 cm height; 10.5 mm external diameter, Gerstel®, Germany) filled with two kind of adsorbents : Tenax TA (50 mg; Agilent technologies; 20 - 35 Mesh) and Carbotrap B (120 mg; Carbotrap Graphitized Carbon Black n°20287; Sigma Aldrich). Before use, 180 cartridges were conditioned at 300 °C for 3 h with a constant nitrogen flow (Nitrogen 4.5, purity 99.995 %) using a cartridge conditioner (TERA environment; RT-12-CN-3601-01). After BVOC collection, cartridges were sealed and put inside a freezer at -4 °C until being analyzed by GC-MS (see below).

 Between samplings, the Pyrex jars were rinsed with water, then with ethanol (70 %) and finally put inside a muffle furnace for 4 h at 400 °C to ensure full VOC and plant debris removal that could influence the following samples. Blanks were performed for confirmation.

187 *2.3. Chemical analysis*

188 BVOC were analyzed using a Gas Chromatography (GC, 6890N, Agilent Technologies®) 189 coupled to a Mass Spectrometer Detector (MSD 5973, Agilent Technologies ®). BVOC trapped 190 in the cartridges were desorbed by a thermodesorber using a ramp of temperature from 50 \degree C to 191 250 °C at the rate of 3 °C.s⁻¹ for 15 min (TDS3/CIS4, Gerstel®), using helium as carrier gas (50 192 mL.min⁻¹). BVOC were then trapped in the Cooled Injection System (CIS) at 6.8 Psi pressure at 193 - 50 °C using liquid nitrogen. Then, the CIS was rapidly heated (25 s) from -50 °C to 250 °C 194 allowing molecule passage to the chromatographic column (HP5-MS, 30 m length, 0.25 mm 195 diameter, 0.25 μm film thickness, Agilent Technologies®). Molecules were separated using a ramp 196 of temperature from 40 °C to 280 °C with a rate of 3 °C.min⁻¹ with a constant helium flow of 1.0 197 mL.min⁻¹. The method accuracy (101.27 %) and precision (4.7 %) were determined through 198 replicate analyses (dodecane). The calibration linearity or coefficient of determination (\mathbb{R}^2 = 199 0.9935, CV = 0.0019) and the limit of detection (LOD = 0.10 ng) were determined using standard 200 calibrations. Molecule identification in chromatograms (Suppl. Figure 2) was achieved using 201 spectral libraries (NIST library), spectra from injected standards of high purity (> 99 %, Sigma 202 Aldrich®, France, Suppl Table 1 & 2), and by comparison of our experimental and theoretical 203 Kovats index from Adams (2007).

204 *2.4. Scanning electron microscopy*

 Since we did not find any data on the type of leaf terpene storage structures in *C. coggygria*, we explored its litter surface (abaxial side) using a Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM, model XL30 ESEM from FEI). Small surfaces of leaf litter were fastened with adhesive tape on brass stubs and then gold coated in a metallizer using a Cressington 108 Sputter Coater.

209 *2.5. Calculation of regional litter emission, global POCP and SOAP of P. halepensis and Q.* 210 *pubescens*

211 In order to assess the impact of litter emission on air quality, we calculated three indicators. 212 First, we estimated the regional litter BVOC emissions $(t.y^{-1})$ for the Sud-PACA region according 213 to the following equation:

214 *Regional litter BVOC emissions* =
$$
\frac{ER \times 8760 \times Litter\ production \times Surface}{10^9}
$$
 (1)

215 where, *ER* refers to emission rates (μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹) reported in this study, 8760 refers to the hours in 216 one year, *Litter production* refers to annual litter production (g.m⁻²) noted in Table 1, the *Surface*

 refers to the forest area (m²) (IGN 2014-2018) occupied by each species in the Sud-PACA region 218 and 10^9 is used to express results in ton. Second, for the two litter, we have calculated the photochemical ozone creation potential (POCP) and the potential secondary organic aerosol production (SOAP) using the following equations:

221
$$
POCP = \sum_{n=i} [contribution (\%)_i \times POCP_i]
$$
 (2)

222
$$
SOAP = \sum_{n=i} [contribution (\%)_i \times SOAP_i]
$$
 (3)

 where, *contribution (%)ⁱ* refers to the relative contribution of the BVOC i to the litter emission under study, *POCPⁱ* refers to the individual POCP of the BVOC *i* as reported in the Suppl. Table 6 and *SOAPⁱ* refers to individual SOAP of the BVOC *i* as reported in the Suppl. Table 6,

 The POCP for individual VOC were reported from Dominutti et al. (2019). Unfortunately, POCP values were missing for monoterpenes and sesquiterpenes. Thus, as suggested by several authors, the isoprene POCP value (109.2) was also used for monoterpenes, because of their chemical similarity (Huang et al., 2017; Dominutti et al., 2019). The same reasoning was applied in this work for sesquiterpenes for which the isoprene value was used. Likewise, the SOAP for individual VOC were reported from Derwent et al., (2010) but SOAP values were available in 232 literature for only two monoterpenes having similar values (α -pinene: 17.4 and β -pinene: 18.1). They were missing for the other monoterpenes and sesquiterpenes. As suggested by Dominutti et al. (2019), the SOAP value of β-pinene was used in the present work for all the monoterpenes because of their similar chemical properties. The SOAP values of individual sesquiterpenes were estimated from their SOA Mass Yield, using SOAP and SOA Mass Yield of α-pinene and isoprene as reference according to the following equation:

$$
238 \quad SOAP_i = \frac{SOA_M Y_i \times SOAP_{ref}}{SOA_M Y_{ref}} \tag{4}
$$

239 where, $SOAP_i$ and SOA_MY_i are the SOAP and the SOA Mass Yield of the sesquiterpene *i* 240 respectively, $SOAP_{ref}$ and $SOA_M_Y_{ref}$ are the SOAP and the SOA Mass Yield of the reference VOC. Because several SOA Mass Yields were available in literature for each sesquiterpene and reference VOC, the mean values were used (Suppl. Table 7). The calculated individual SOAP values obtained using the two reference VOC (isoprene and α-pinene) were close and the mean values were used in the present work (Suppl. Table 7)

2.6. Statistical analysis

 Differences and similarities in the BVOC emission profile between litter from different plant species were assessed using a Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The statistical analysis of the data was performed with R software (version 3.4.X, R Core Team 2017) using ade4, factoextra packages.

3. Results

3.1. BVOC emissions from leaf litter

 Regarding total emissions, we identified a remarkable diversity with a total of 87 compounds, mainly terpenes (69 different compounds) followed by non-terpenic compounds (18 compounds) including alkanes, alkenes, aldehydes, ketones and benzenoids. Within each species, the bouquet of released compounds was also important for most species ranging from 4 emitted compounds in *Q. ilex* to 46 in *J. oxycedrus* (Suppl. Table 1 and 2). Terpene-storing species emitted an important 257 diversity of compounds (mean: 29 ± 4 compounds) with the most commonly emitted terpenes being limonene, β-caryophyllene, α-pinene, α-humulene and α-terpinolene (Suppl. Table 1). By contrast, 259 the non-terpene storing species emitted on average 8 ± 1 compounds. Quantitatively, the studied species could be classified in 3 different groups based on their total emissions: *i)* negligible emitters $\left(\langle 0.1 \mu g. g_{DM}^{-1} \cdot h^{-1} \rangle \right)$ including A. monspessulanum, Q. ilex, U. parviflorus, Q. suber and *E. arborea*, *ii*) low emitters $(0.1 < \text{emissions} < 1.0 \,\mu\text{g g}_{DM}^{-1} \cdot \text{h}^{-1})$ including (in decreasing order) *R. officinalis*, *Q. pubescens*, *P. pinea*, *Q. coccifera*, *C. albidus*, *J. oxycedrus*, *C. salviifolius* and *E. globulus* and 264 , *iii*) moderate emitters $(1.0 < \text{emissions} < 5.0 \ \mu\text{g.g./m}^{-1} \cdot \text{h}^{-1})$ including (in decreasing order) *T*. 265 vulgaris, C. coggygria and P. halepensis $(4.74; 3.37 \text{ and } 1.52 \mu\text{g.g./m}^{-1} \text{.}^1$ respectively; Suppl. Table 3).

 Terpene emissions only occurred from terpene-storing species. The highest terpene emitters 268 were also *T. vulgaris, C. coggygria* and *P. halepensis* (4.74; 3.37; 1.52 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹ respectively) 269 whereas the remaining species emitted between 0.22 (*E. globulus*) and 0.71 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹ (*R. officinalis*). Monoterpenes dominated emission from *T. vulgaris* (α-terpinyl acetate, α-terpineol, limonene, linalool and trans-4-thujanol) and *C. coggygria* (limonene, cis-β-ocimene and myrcene) representing 98 % and 91 % respectively (Suppl. Table 1). By contrast, *P. halepensis* featured sesquiterpene emissions (61 % of total emissions), mainly β-caryophyllene and α-humulene 274 (Suppl. Table 1) and showed the highest sesquiterpene emission rates $(0.92 \mu g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹)$ of all species. Within each terpene emitter species, terpenes accounted for the major fraction in all

276 species, excepting *C. albidus* where terpene emissions $(0.18 \mu g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹)$ were close to non-277 terpenic emissions $(0.11 \mu g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹; Suppl. Table 3).$

 All species released non-terpenic emissions (Suppl. Table 3; Suppl. Table 4), saturated 279 aliphatic alkanes $(C_{14}H_{30}, C_{13}H_{28})$, followed by aldehydes (nonanal, decanal), representing the major fraction in most species (Suppl. Table 1 and 2). The most remarkable non-terpenic emissions occurred in *Q. pubescens* > *Q. coccifera* > *C. coggygria* (0.61, 0.32 and 0.23 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹ respectively), followed by *P. halepensis* and *C. albidus* (0.16 and 0.11 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹, respectively).

 Species that do not possess terpene storage structures showed lower total BVOC emission rates than terpene storing species, with two exceptions, *Q. pubescens* and *Q. coccifera*, with total 285 non-terpenic emission (0.61 and 0.32 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹, respectively) higher than total emissions of the terpene-storing species *C. albidus, C. salviifolius* and *J. oxycedrus.* $(0.30, 0.21 \text{ and } 0.21 \mu\text{g.} \text{g}^2\text{m}^1\text{h}^1$ $287 \frac{1}{2}$, respectively).

 Clear differences occurred between species, even when they belong to the same genus (Figure 1). In *Pinus* spp, *P. halepensis* mainly emitted sesquiterpenes (60 % of total emission), with a large diversity of volatiles (27 compounds) and a total emission rate 3-times higher (1.52 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹) than *P. pinea* (0.54 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹) which mainly released monoterpenes (60 % of total emissions) with a higher diversity (43 compounds) (Suppl. Table 3). *Quercus* spp.- the main source of non-terpenic emissions - showed a poorer diversity of BVOC (4-10 compounds) compared to *Pinus* spp. *Q. suber* and *Q. ilex* showed lower emission rates (< 0.1 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹) compared to *Q. coccifera* and *Q. pubescens* (0.32 and 0.61 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹) (Suppl. Table 4). *C. albidus* and *C. salviifolius* emitted BVOC in similar rates (Suppl. Table 3), but *C. albidus* mostly released monoterpenes (50 % of total emission) (mainly limonene, Suppl. Table 1), while *C. salviifolius* mainly released sesquiterpenes (71 % of total emission,β-caryophyllene and α-humulene). Litter emission rates also exhibited some quantitative differences between samples of the same species, up to 5-times different in samples of *E. globulus*.

301 **Figure 1** – Principal Component Analysis showing litter BVOC profiles of the different species studied. 303 Litter samples are represented with symbols and variables are represented with arrows. Variables with the 304 highest weight in Dim 1 are alkanes and aldehydes on the right part of PC1, and monoterpene derivatives 305 and monoterpene ketones on the left part of Dim 1. Variables with the highest weight in Dim 2 are 306 sesquiterpene hydrocarbons and monoterpenes hydrocarbons on the top part of Dim 2. Weights of all 307 variables is shown in Suppl Table 3.

 The sum of the most emitted terpenes (representing individually at least 5 % of the total emission) contribute, at least, to half of the total emissions of a given species. For example, only two and three terpenes account for ~ 50 % of total emissions from *J. oxycedrus* and the remaining emissions were also characterized by terpene compounds, indicating that this species emits a large diversity of terpenes in small quantities. By contrast, only four terpenes represent 90 % of total emissions from *R. officinalis*, indicating few terpenes dominated emissions from this species [\(Figure 2\)](#page-18-0).

 $3₋$

 The contribution of each group of compounds to the total emission varied between species [\(Figure 3](#page-19-0) and [Figure 4\)](#page-19-1). Terpene emissions (monoterpene hydrocarbons, oxygenated monoterpenes, sesquiterpene hydrocarbons and oxygenated sesquiterpenes) represented most of the emissions for the species that possess terpene storage structures [\(Figure 3\)](#page-19-0). For example, they represent 62 % to 100 % of the total emission (*C. albidus* and *R. officinalis* respectively). By contrast, for species that do not possess terpene storage structures, non terpenic emissions are the most emitted compounds with alkanes and aldehydes being the major BVOC. *Quercus* spp. showed major alkane emissions (54 % to 77 % of total emission for *Q. coccifera* and *Q. pubescens*) while *A. monspessulanum*, *E. arborea* and *U. parviflorus* mostly emitted aldehydes (52 %, 46 % and 56 % respectively; [Figure 4\)](#page-19-1).

³¹⁶ **Figure 2 –** Contribution (%) of the major terpenes to the total emissions of nine plant species that possess 317 terpene storage structures. BVOC shown in the caption are ordered according to their molecular weight and 318 represent at least 5% of total emission of the species under study. Values are mean of n=3-10.

329 330

331 **Figure 3 –** Contribution (%) of the compound groups (terpene and non-terpenic groups) to the total 332 emissions of nine species that possess terpene storage structures. Values are mean of n=3-10.

Figure 4 – Contribution (%) of the compound groups to the total emissions of six species that do not possess 336 terpene storage structures. Values are mean of n=3-10.

337 *3.2. Potential participation of P. halepensis and Q. pubescens litter BVOC to air quality at regional* 338 *scale*

339 The potential impact of the two main tree species in the Sud-PACA region on the regional 340 air quality are assessed according to the three indicators previously described: their regional BVOC 341 – emissions $(t.y^{-1})$ and their potential to form SOA and O_3 . *P. halepensis* regional emissions represent 342 almost 3 times those of *Q. pubescens* (8919 and 3158 t.y⁻¹ respectively, [Table 2\)](#page-20-0) and its POCP is 343 2 times higher (96.2) than the POCP of *Q. pubescens* (47.7).

 Despite the lower regional BVOC emissions from *Q. pubescens* litter, the SOAP calculated for both species is similar (36.9 and 37.5 for *P. halepensis* and *Q. pubescens* respectively). Indeed, on the one hand, *Q. pubescens* emissions are dominated by alkanes (pentadecane and tetradecane) which have the highest individual SOAP (54.5, Suppl. Table 6) but this high values are compensated by the SOAP value (zero) of aldehydes (second major group of BVOC from *Q. pubescens*). On the other hand, *P. halepensis* emissions are mainly constituted by monoterpenes and sesquiterpenes which have a lower individual SOAP (18 and 51.1 respectively, Suppl. Table 351 6).

352 **Table 2 –** Emission rates (ER) of the litter of *P. halepensis* and *Q. pubescens* and the estimation of their 353 litter emission at a regional scale $(t.y⁻¹)$, their litter production $(g.m⁻².y⁻¹)$ and the global litter POCP and 354 SOAP attributed

Plant species	Emission type ^a	ER $(\mu$ g.g _{DM} ⁻¹ .h ⁻¹) ^b	Litter production $(g_{DM}.m^{-2}.y^{-1})$	ER $(\mu$ g.g _{DM} ⁻¹ .y ⁻¹) $(g.m^{-2}.y^{-1})^e$	ER	Assessed regional BVOC POCP & SOAP & emission (t,y^{-1}) ^f		
P. halepensis	ST > MT > 1.5		340 ^c	13300	4.5	8919	96.2	36.9
<i>Q.</i> pubescens	Ald > Alk Alk > Ald	0.6	166 ^d	5340	0.9	3158	47.7	37.5

MT: monoterpenes; ST: sesquiterpenes; Ald: Aldehydes; Alk: Alkanes

^a Emissions that represent at least 1% of total emissions

b Results from this study

^c Arianoutsou & Radea (2000)

^d Saunier et al. (2018)

^e Obtained by multiplying the emission rate (μ g.g⁻DM¹.y⁻¹) by litter production

^f Obtained by multiplying emission rates $(g.m^2.y^{-1})$ by the surface occupied by the plant species in the Sud-PACA region: 197000 ha for *P*. *halepensis* and 356000 ha for *Q. pubescens* according to to IGN 2014-2018

^g Refer to material and methods for calculations and Suppl. Table 6 for SOAP and POCP of each compound

4. Discussion

 This study shows that fresh leaf litter is a source of BVOC emissions with important differences between species but also within litter of a given species (up to 5-times). BVOC emissions from green leaves are indeed also characterized by an important variability within a species under the same environmental conditions. For example, the study from Genard-Zielinski et al. (2014) reported important inter-canopy differences (up to 4-times) for *Q. pubescens* under very similar conditions of light, temperature and air relative humidity in the field.

 Results are discussed in the following subsections for all the species grouped according to their PFT as used in BVOC emission models (Guenther et al., 2006; Messina et al., 2016). Before that, it is worth to mention that results in the present work were obtained at an averaged litter humidity of 9.6 % which is close to previous published data for senescent leaves (8 % in Isidorov 2003, 5-7 % Romero et al., 2019). Different litter humidity values would have probably led to higher emission rates considering the laboratory results from Greenberg et al (2012) on *Pinus ponderosa* needle litter (specific values not reported in their paper). Excluding Greenberg et al (2012), all other litter BVOC-related studies in the laboratory have been performed using a single humidity (8 % litter humidity of *Pinus sylvestris* in Isidorov 2003, 0 % humidity in 12 species in Gray et al., 2010).

4.1. BVOC emissions from litter of evergreen needle leaf tree species

P. halepensis showed one of the highest litter emission rates in the present study (1.52 µg.g_{DM} ¹.h⁻¹), in agreement with previous results on *P. sylvestris* non decomposed litter 1.96 μ g.g⁻¹.h⁻¹ (Isidorov et al., 2010), and contrasting to *P. pinea* (~ 3-times less emission rates). This difference could be partly explained by the terpene content within their leaf litter which is negligible in *P.* 377 *pinea* (0.064 mg.g_{DM}⁻¹) and high in *P. halepensis* (5 mg.g_{DM}⁻¹, Ormeño et al., 2009). The moderate emission rates of *P. halepensis* litter could significantly contribute to BVOC emissions at the scale of the Mediterranean region where it shows a rather important leaf litter production (150-530 380 $g.m^{-2}.y^{-1}$,

381 [Table 1](#page-11-0)). *P. halepensis* could also remarkably contribute to total BVOC in local areas such as

e	Collection	GPS Coordinates		Storage structure Plant Functional Type Leaf litter production			Green leaves emission		
					$g.m^{-2}.y^{-1}$	Reference	μ g.g ⁻¹ .h ⁻¹	Type	Referenc
tS.	April	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	Glandular trichome	Shrub	673	Rodriguez-Ramirez et al. (2017)	$0.1 - 4.5$	MT>ST	Owen Ormeno
olius	June	43°10'44.3"N 5°34'16.2"E	Glandular trichome	Shrub	Unknown		3.1	MT>ST	Owen et
ygria	November	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	Glandular trichome	Shrub	117	Unpublished data	Unknown	Unknown	
lobulus	November	43°04'13.5"N 5°51'12.3"E	Subdermal oil glands	Evergreen broad leaf 250 - 370 tree		Arianoutsou (1989)	$5.4 - 42.0$	MT>ST	He et al. Pio (200
vcedrus	August	43°14'27.1"N 5°40'33.3"E	Secretory cavities	Evergreen needle leaf Unknown tree			$0.5 - 2.3$	Iso>MT>ST	Owen $&$
nsis	August	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	Secretory cavities	Evergreen needle leaf 340 ^a tree		Arianoutsou & Radea (2000)	$3.0 - 15.0$	MT>ST	Ormeno Llusia ar
	August	43°17'22.1"N 5°24'35.2"E	Secretory cavities	Evergreen needle leaf 240 - 790 tree		Arianoutsou & Radea (2000)	$3.4 - 8.8$	MT>ST	Street et & Hewit
officinalis	August	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	Glandular trichome	Shrub	385	Rodriguez-Ramirez et al. (2017)	$2.2 - 5.0$	MT>ST	Owen Ormeno
aris	July	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	Glandular trichome	Shrub	Unknown		3.6	MT>ST	Parra et a
ssulanum	November	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	None	Deciduous tree	$55 - 125$	Unpublished data	< 0.3	Iso, MT	Genard-2 (2014)
a	June	43°10'44.3"N 5°34'16.2"E	None	Shrub	Unknown		19.0	Iso	Owen et
cifera	September	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	None	Shrub	538	Arianoutsou (1989)	$5.5 - 14.6$	Iso>MT, ST	Owen Staudt &
	June	43°14'27.1"N 5°40'33.3"E	None	Evergreen broad leaf 180 - 250 tree		Bello et al. (1992)	$15.0 - 21.0$	MT>ST	Kesselm (1999)
escens	January	43°10'44.3"N 5°34'16.2"E	None	Deciduous tree	166 ^b	Saunier et al. (2018)	90.0	Iso	Kesselm Saunier
er	June	43°15'19.2"N 6°13'06.3"E	None	Evergreen broad leaf 349 tree		Robert et al. (1996)	$0.2 - 30.0$	MT	Pio et al. Osorio e
rus	June	43°21'54.9"N 5°25'30.9"E	None	Shrub	323	Rodriguez-Ramirez et al. (2017)	$9.0 - 14.0$	Iso	Owen et

 Southern France (PACA- Sud Region) were *P. halepensis* is especially present (231 000 ha, (Fernandez et al., 2013). Considering all the Western Mediterranean area, *P. halepensis* is more widespread (~3.5 million ha) than *P. pinea* (320 000 ha) (Quézel and Médail, 2003). Thereby, it is likely that litter from *P. halepensis* contributes more importantly to BVOC emissions than *P. pinea* in the Mediterranean region. Contrasting to leaf litter, literature shows higher emission rates from

387 green leaves of *P. pinea* and *P. halepensis*, mainly represented by monoterpene compounds [\(](#page-11-0)

388 [Table 1](#page-11-0)).

seems to contribute little to BVOC emissions since leaf litter emission rates (0.21 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹) is

391 low [\(](#page-11-0)

392 [Table 1](#page-11-0)). This tree species possesses internal terpene storing structures and their content is

e	Collection	GPS Coordinates		Storage structure Plant Functional Type Leaf litter production			Green leaves emission			
					$g.m^{-2}.y^{-1}$	Reference	$\mu g.g^{-1}.h^{-1}$	Type	Referenc	
lS.	April	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	Glandular trichome	Shrub	673	Rodriguez-Ramirez et al. (2017)	$0.1 - 4.5$	MT>ST	Owen Ormeno	
olius	June	43°10'44.3"N 5°34'16.2"E	Glandular trichome	Shrub	Unknown		3.1	MT>ST	Owen et	
ygria	November	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	Glandular trichome	Shrub	117	Unpublished data	Unknown	Unknown		
lobulus	November	43°04'13.5"N 5°51'12.3"E	Subdermal oil glands	Evergreen broad leaf 250 - 370 tree		Arianoutsou (1989)	$5.4 - 42.0$	MT>ST	He et al. Pio (200	
vcedrus	August	43°14'27.1"N 5°40'33.3"E	Secretory cavities	Evergreen needle leaf Unknown tree			$0.5 - 2.3$	Iso>MT>ST	Owen $&$	
nsis	August	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	Secretory cavities	Evergreen needle leaf 340 ^a tree		Arianoutsou & Radea (2000)	$3.0 - 15.0$	MT>ST	Ormeno Llusia ar	
	August	43°17'22.1"N 5°24'35.2"E	Secretory cavities	Evergreen needle leaf 240 - 790 tree		Arianoutsou & Radea (2000)	$3.4 - 8.8$	MT>ST	Street et & Hewit	
officinalis	August	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	Glandular trichome	Shrub	385	Rodriguez-Ramirez et al. (2017)	$2.2 - 5.0$	MT>ST	Owen Ormeno	
aris	July	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	Glandular trichome	Shrub	Unknown		3.6	MT>ST	Parra et a	
ssulanum	November	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	None	Deciduous tree	$55 - 125$	Unpublished data	< 0.3	Iso, MT	Genard-2 (2014)	
a	June	43°10'44.3"N 5°34'16.2"E	None	Shrub	Unknown		19.0	Iso	Owen et	
cifera	September	43°56'06.0"N 5°42'37.7"E	None	Shrub	538	Arianoutsou (1989)	$5.5 - 14.6$	Iso>MT, ST	Owen Staudt &	
	June	43°14'27.1"N 5°40'33.3"E	None	Evergreen broad leaf 180 - 250 tree		Bello et al. (1992)	$15.0 - 21.0$	MT>ST	Kesselm (1999)	
escens	January	43°10'44.3"N 5°34'16.2"E	None	Deciduous tree	166 ^b	Saunier et al. (2018)	90.0	Iso	Kesselm Saunier	
er	June	43°15'19.2"N 6°13'06.3"E	None	Evergreen broad leaf 349 tree		Robert et al. (1996)	$0.2 - 30.0$	MT	Pio et al. Osorio e	
rus	June	43°21'54.9"N 5°25'30.9"E	None	Shrub	323	Rodriguez-Ramirez et al. (2017)	$9.0 - 14.0$	Iso	Owen et	

 often used to produce essential oil. However, terpene emissions from litter contrast with literature on its needle essential oil content which is characterized by monoterpenes (41 % of total emission; Dob et al., 2006) while its litter emits mostly sesquiterpenes (57 % of total emission; [Figure 3\)](#page-19-0). The green leaves of *J. oxycedrus* also emits different types of BVOC including isoprene, which can not be produced by the litter, monoterpenes and sesquiterpenes, its emission can reach 2.3 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹. The difference of emission between green leaves and litter might also be explained by the thickness of the cuticle of this species (Vasic and Dubak, 2012) that could act as a barrier for the emission when still intact.

401 *4.2. BVOC emissions from litter of evergreen broad leaf tree species*

 Litter of *Q. ilex* and *Q. suber* released non-terpenic compounds only such as fatty acids derivatives (alkanes, alkenes) probably emitted by the cuticle present on top of the leaf litter (Maffei, 1994). Green leaves of these *Quercus* spp. are known to release high monoterpene emission which require photosynthesis to occur, own to the absence of monoterpene reservoirs within their foliage (Kesselmeier and Staudt, 1999). Such feature explains the absence of terpene emissions from their freshly collected leaf litter. It can be concluded that evergreen forests of *Quercus* ssp. are a remarkable source of terpene compounds from the canopy as shown in literature and a minor source of non-terpenic compounds from litter, although this could be moderated by their abundance and litter production.

E. globulus litter showed a rather low emission rate $(0.20 \mu g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹)$ dominated by monoterpenes. Contrastingly, Gray et al. (2010) showed that *Eucalyptus* litter released very high 413 amounts of monoterpenes (0.4 μ mol.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹), which represents 54.4 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹. In their study, litter had been previously oven-dried at 60 °C and litter leaves were cut into small pieces triggering monoterpene emissions from litter and accumulation in the head space system they used (125 mL jars). It is important to note that the authors explicitly indicate that they aimed to compare litter emission rates between species not to accurately quantify them. *E. globulus* canopy is a major 418 source of isoprene $(38 \mu g. g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹)$; Keenan et al., 2009) with some monoterpene emissions too $(2.7$ μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹). Moreover, terpene content of green leaves of *E. globulus* is very high (25 mg.g_{DM}⁻¹) contrasting with the leaf litter emission we measured. Since several authors (Wilt et al., 1993; Romero et al., 2019) showed a good agreement between terpene content in leaf litter and green leaves of numerous species, one can expect that terpene content in litter of *E. globulus* is also very high. We argue that such discrepancy (between low emission rates found in this study and high terpene content in green leaves reported in literature) is maybe due to the thick cuticles of fully expanded leaves of *E. globulus* (Johnson, 1926), since the cuticle limits BVOC diffusion from leaf 426 tissues to the atmosphere (Joensuu et al., 2016).

4.3 BVOC emissions from litter of deciduous tree species

428 Leaf litter from *Q. pubescens* showed a low emission rate $(0.61 \mu g.g_{DM}⁻¹ h⁻¹)$ with only non- terpenic emissions, mostly low chain fatty acids derivatives (alkanes, alkenes). Contrastingly, green leaves of *Q. pubescens* are a remarkable source of isoprene emissions with emissions of fully 431 expanded leaves ranging from 78.5 to 124.3 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹ at 30 °C (Genard-Zielinski et al., 2014; Saunier et al., 2017a). According to the European inventory of BVOC emissions (Keenan et al., 2009)**,** *Q. pubescens* is the second major isoprene emitting species. Isoprene requires *de novo* formation to be produced (Sharkey and Yeh, 2001) since there is no specific storage of isoprene in leaves (probably due to its very high vapor pressure) explaining that it is not released by leaf litter. However, isoprene can be synthesized from soil microorganisms (as shown in the data base mVOC 2.0; Lemfack et al., 2018) which probably explains why Warneke et al. (1999) showed isoprene emission from oak, beech, spruce, grass litter (although the authors did not detail whether it was fresh or decomposed litter). Despite the low non-terpenic emissions we reported for *Q. pubescens*, this species grows in highly widespread deciduous forests where litter production is moderate (153 441 g.m⁻².y⁻¹; Suppl. Table 3), suggesting that *Q. pubescens* litter could contribute to some extent to air chemistry during the leaf abscission period (December-March in Mediterranean ecosystems). *Q. pubescens* abundance is especially important in Southern France where it occupies more than 2 million ha only in the Sud-PACA (Saunier et al., 2017b).

 Forests dominated by *A. monspessulanum* are probably a negligible source of BVOC emissions independently of the ecological compartment considered, since litter released the lowest emission rates $(< 0.01 \mu g.g_{DM}⁻¹$. h⁻¹, all of them being non-terpenic) and green leaves release only 448 negligible terpene emissions(< 0.5μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹. h⁻¹; Ormeño et al., 2020; Genard-Zielinski et al., 2014).

4.4 BVOC emissions from litter of shrub species

450 *T. vulgaris* released the highest terpene emission rates $(4.72 \mu g. g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹)$ similar to green leaf the 451 emissions (3.6 μg.g_{DM}⁻¹, h⁻¹; Parra et al., 2004). Accordingly, *T. vulgaris* contains remarkable 452 monoterpene concentrations in the glandular trichome of green leaves $(22.0 \text{ mg}. g_{DM}⁻¹; Nielsen et)$ al., 2015). This major aromatic plant species largely widespread in Mediterranean garrigues, is thus probably an important source of BVOC in these ecosystems.

 Interestingly, BVOC emissions from litter or green leaves of *C. coggygria* have never been studied despite *C. coggygria* leaves have been largely used for medicinal purposes own to its essential oil (Matić et al., 2016). This species naturally coexists in the understory vegetation of Mediterranean forests (Genard-Zielinski et al., 2014) and is highly used as ornamental plant in urban vegetation. We observed, for the first time, the presence of a capitate sessile trichome, a type glandular trichome, on the leaf abaxial (bottom) surface (Suppl. Fig 1) in agreement with other Anacardiaceae species (Metcalfe and Chalk, 1988). Despite the presence of these structures, *C.* ⁴⁶² *coggygria* stores poor amounts of terpenes (0.3 mg.g_{DM}⁻¹) both, in leaf litter (Santonja et al., 2018) and green leaves (Romero et al., 2019).

464 R. *officinalis* appeared to be a low emitter $(0.71 \mu g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹)$ with numerous monoterpenes. 465 Green leaves of *R. officinalis* release low to moderate terpene emission rates $(2.2 - 5.0 \,\mu g. g_{DM}⁻¹ \cdot h⁻¹;$ 466 Owen and Hewitt, 2000; Ormeño et al., 2007b) and store high amounts of terpenes $(6.0 \text{ mg.g}_{DM}^{-1})$; 467 Peñuelas and Llusià, 1997; Ormeño et al., 2007b). This result reveals that the presence of an 468 important storage of terpenes does not necessarily implies a high emission rate from leaf litter 469 although the underlying processes remain to be tested.

470 *C. albidus* and *C. salviifolius* showed low emission rates of both terpene and non-terpenic 471 compounds (0.30 and 0.21 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹.h⁻¹ each). Accordingly, terpene emissions from green leaves of 472 *Cistus spp.* are low to moderate $(0.5{\text -}5.0 \,\mu{\text g}.{\text g}^{-1}.h^{-1}$; Owen et al., 2001; Ormeño et al., 2007a), and 473 store low terpene amounts $(0.8 \text{ mg.g}_{DM}^{-1})$; Ormeño et al., 2007b). Epicuticular wax coverage (very 474 long chained and saturated wax components) in leaves of *C. albidus* is very high $(200 \mu g.cm^{-2})$ 475 and represents about 3.5 % of the leaf dry weight (Hennig et al., 1988). Such coverage, which is a 476 mechanism to cope with the relative aridity that characterizes macchias and garigues, probably 477 limits leaf litter terpene emissions too. Although litter from *Cistus* spp. releases low emission rates, 478 its contribution to BVOC emissions in Mediterranean garrigue ecosystems could be compensated 479 by a high litter production $(673 \text{ g.m}^{-2} \text{yr}^{-1})$;

480 [Table 1](#page-11-0)).

481 *Q. coccifera* also showed low emission rates (only non-terpenic emissions) but, again, its

482 important litter production [\(](#page-11-0)

483 [Table 1](#page-11-0)) could compensate for such low emissions at the ecosystem scale. Finally, *U.*

parviflorus and the *E. arborea* showed negligible BVOC emissions (<0.04 μ g.g_{DM}⁻¹. h⁻¹), while green leaves release high isoprene emissions (Owen and Hewitt, 2000). Since these species are not the most commonly found in garrigues their litter is unlikely to contribute significantly to the whole BVOC budget at the ecosystem scale.

4.5. Environmental implications of BVOC emissions from litter

 According to our study, most emitted terpene compounds were limonene, β-caryophyllene, α -pinene and α -humulene, in agreement with Leff and Fierer, (2008) and emissions from green leaves (Owen et al., 2001). We note that highly volatile compounds such as methanol, acetaldehyde, acetic acid, formic acid and acetone, are also commonly released by leaf litter alone (Gray et al., 2010; Greenberg et al., 2012; Tang et al., 2019) or soil and litter together (Schade and Goldstein, 2001) but these highly volatile compounds were not screened in our study.

 The influence of BVOC emissions from soil (litter included) on secondary air pollution and the oxidizing capacity of the atmosphere are, by far, less well understood than their emission rates. Terpenes found in our study are known to take part of cloud condensation nuclei formation leading to the production of SOA (Hartz et al., 2005). The SOA mass yield (%) varies according to the 499 species: β-caryophyllene, α -humulene and α -pinene have a high SOA mass yield (respectively 45 %, 45 % and 41 %), while monoterpenes such as β-pinene or myrcene have a smaller SOA mass yield (17 % and 11 % respectively; Lee et al., 2006). It is important to highlight that BVOC from litter extend the seasonal period where BVOC are emitted from the ecosystem and so participate to SOA formation (Faiola et al., 2014) since the canopy of deciduous broadleaf species do not contribute to BVOC emissions through the entire seasonal cycle.

 Although litter is a source of BVOC, part of the emission is adsorbed or assimilated through soil-related processes (Ramirez et al., 2010) and part readily reacts with atmospheric oxidants. For example, most commonly emitted terpenes in this study (limonene, β-caryophyllene, α-pinene and α-humulene) feature high reactivity with OH (Atkinson and Arey, 2003). Accordingly, studies on OH reactivity in the forests highlight a missing OH sink own to incomplete characterization of BVOC sources (Di Carlo et al., 2004) and several authors suggest the missing source is soil (including litter) (Praplan et al., 2019 and citations therein).

 It is worth to note that BVOC emissions from litter are not only important in atmospheric chemistry but also in ecological-driven processes. For instance, Santonja et al. (2019) recently showed that β-caryophyllene emissions from *P. halepensis* litter negatively affected the development of neighboring herbaceous plants, eventually shaping the ecosystem diversity. Moreover, terpenes impact the soil food web and slow down the litter decomposition process (Chomel et al., 2016).

 It is important to highlight, that soil acts as a sink of BVOC (highly volatile compounds, isoprene and monoterpenes) through microbial uptake, dissolution in soil water and adsorption to soil particles (Misra et al., 1996**;** Ramirez et al., 2010). Independently of the underlying processes, several authors suggest that measuring BVOC emission from different compartments (litter alone, soil+litter, bare soil) can greatly benefit further model parametrization (Tang et al., 2019). Measuring BVOC emission rates from isolated leaf litter is thus necessary.

4.6. Potential participation of P. halepensis and Q. pubescens litter BVOC to air quality at regional scale

526 The regional emissions of *P. halepensis* and *Q. pubescens* litter $(8.9 \text{ and } 3.2 \text{ kt.y}^{-1})$ could 527 contribute to global forest BVOC emissions in France, which are estimated to 457 kt.y^{-1} of 528 isoprene, 350 kt.y⁻¹ of monoterpenes and 129 kt.y⁻¹ of other BVOC considering only the canopy BVOC emissions (Simon et al., 2001). It should however be highlighted that our estimations are preliminary since litter BVOC emission are likely to vary over the decomposition process as later discussed.

 Although the SOAP of *P. halepensis* and *Q. pubescens* were similar, it is likely that *P. halepensis* litter contributes more than *Q. pubescens* to SOA formation at the regional scale since the amount of BVOC emitted by *P. halepensis* was more than 2-times higher. Similar, SOAP of the two tree species is explained by the emission chemical composition of their litter. While *P. halepensis* mainly releases sesquiterpenes (~ 60 % of total emissions) which are considered to have a high SOAP equal to 51.1, followed by monoterpenes with a SOAP equal to 18 (see Suppl Table 6), *Q. pubescens* features alkane emissions (77 % of total emissions) which have the highest SOAP (54.5, Dominutti et al., 2019, Suppl Table 6). By contrast, litter emission of *P. halepensis* showed a 2-times higher POCP than *Q. pubescens*. This difference is due to the moderate POCP of alkanes (44.5, Suppl Table 6) which accounted for the major emissions of *Q. pubescens* (Dominutti et al., 2019, Suppl Table 6) whereas the individual POCP of monoterpenes and sesquiterpenes released by *P. halepensis* is much higher (109.2, Suppl Table 6). As described in material and methods, the POCP of terpenes actually lacks in literature. As a result, the isoprene POCP was used in the present study for all terpenes because of their similar chemical structure, thus further studies to calculate terpenes POCP would be useful to improve our estimates. With a moderate emission rate from the litter of *P. halepensis* and a high POCP, the litter of this species could contribute to the formation 548 of O_3 and SOA in a non-negligible way.

 According to our results, species that mostly release sesquiterpenes such as *P. halepensis*, *C. salviifolius* and *J. oxycedrus* (60 %, 74 % and 60 % of the total emission respectively, [Figure 3\)](#page-19-0) could be of special importance in terms of SOA formation. Moreover, species that emit both, monoterpenes and sesquiterpenes would have a higher potential of ozone formation assuming that terpenes possess a POCP as high as isoprene. These preliminary estimations thereby require further modelling exercises using models such as CHIMERE and ORCHIDE but also BVOC emission algorithms able to calculate BVOC litter emissions.

5. Conclusion

 The forest canopy is known to be the main source of BVOC emissions. This study shows that litter emission of Mediterranean tree and shrub species should not be neglected in biosphere- atmosphere interactions. We also suggest that leaf terpene content shown in literature is not necessarily an indicator of the potential of litter to release BVOC. Of the three species known to possess rich terpene concentrations (*T. vulgaris, R. officinalis*, *E. globulus*)*,* only *T. vulgaris* released high terpene amounts from litter. While litter of most species released low BVOC emission rates with a few exceptions (*T. vulgaris, C. coggygria, P. halepensis*), literature shows that litter is also a source of highly volatile compounds (methanol, ethanol, short-chained aldehydes, acids, acetone), which were not investigated in this study (Gray et al., 2010; Tang et al., 2019). Consequently, emission rates would have been higher if a more exhaustive BVOC 567 screening had been carried out including compounds below C_{10} .

 We suggest future *in vitro* and *in situ* research tackles BVOC emission variability according to biotic (microorganisms) and abiotic factors (climatic conditions, soil). Since a couple of studies have reported that litter BVOC emissions vary with decomposition degree (Gray et al., 2010; Isidorov et al., 2010), soil properties (Gray et al., 2014; Mancuso et al., 2015; Chaignaud et al., 2018), and climatic conditions (Derendorp et al., 2011, Greenberg et al., 2012), future research should take into account these factors. For these purposes, BVOC from litter that has undergone decomposition in the field (using for example litterbags, Isidorov et al., 2010, Santonja et al., 2015) could be collected over different decomposition times ranging from several months to years. BVOC from these differently decomposed litter could be measured by combining *in vitro* measurements - using a controlled environment (at different temperatures and humidity) - and *in situ* measurements -using transparent dynamic enclosures equipped with temperature, humidity and light sensors as described by Svendsen et al. (2016). Transparency of the enclosure system would allow to take

 into account weather variability (e.g. sunny, cloudy and so light conditions). Additionally, for *in vitro* measurements, BVOC emissions of litter free of microorganisms (using for example gamma irradiation as sterilization technique) could be compared to natural litter in order to assess microorganism-related BVOC and better estimate the contribution of litter itself. Characterization of microbiota litter (Wilkinson et al., 2002; Isidorov et al., 2016), could also help to explain BVOC emission variability over decomposition stages. These types of studies (combining decomposition processes and contribution of microbiota to BVOC emissions) will be compared to BVOC emissions from non-decomposed litter (our study). We also suggest that both, *in vitro* and *in situ* measurements are performed using litter plus soil, litter alone and soil alone to gain insight into soil capacity to act as a sink of BVOC as indicated by different authors (Isidorov et al., 1999; Chaignaud et al., 2018; Rinnan and Albers, 2020). It is particularly important to perform such studies with a focus on BVOC emissions from *P. halepensis* litter since it features a high litter production, occupies a high forest surface in the Mediterranean area and shows the highest litter BVOC emission rates among all tree species considered in this study. Results from this species could serve as a model to other *Pinus* spp.

 To conclude, although litter BVOC emissions are roughly lower compared to green leaf emissions, litter accumulates in soil so BVOC emissions could occur all year round. This could be particularly true in the Mediterranean region where litter production of numerous species is rather high and decomposes slowly due to relative water scarcity during most part of the year (Quézel and Médail, 2003). Litter could thereby importantly contribute to BVOC emissions, O³ and SOA formation in this region.

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Data availability :

The data used in this study is available on demand.

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