

smaller fractional abundances, differences in environment tend to be smaller and larger counts are needed to provide the required smaller errors. Based on the plot (Figure 1), it is suggested that if an indicator species has a fractional abundance of approximately 50 percent or greater, as few as 50 counts are required; a species making up 10 percent of a particular sample requires at least 300 counts; species making up 5 percent of the sample require 500–1,000 counts; and species making up 1 percent of a sample require several thousand counts to provide reliable statistics. In addition, as shown by the example (Table 1), similar environments require greater numbers of counts to distinguish them.

3. It is also recommended that researchers calculate fractional error and include it with their abundance data to provide an easier assessment of the results.

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