“Patterns of seed dispersal and seed mortality influence the spatial structure of plant populations and the local coexistence of competing species,” says Dr. Noelle Beckman, assistant professor in USU’s Department of Biology and the USU Ecology Center. “Most seeds are dispersed close to the parent tree, where mortality is also expected to be the highest, due to competition with siblings or the attraction of natural enemies.”

Utah State University ecologist Noelle Beckman and colleagues Philippe Marchand of the University of Quebec, Liza Comita of Yale University, Joseph Wright of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama, Richard Condit of Chicago’s Field Museum of Natural History and internationally renowned ecologist Stephen P. Hubbell of the University of California, Los Angeles, explore these questions and recently published findings about seed-to-seedling transitions in the journal Ecology. See the USU Today article here. See the original publication in Ecology here.