





The choice looks to be between square root and fourth root, but note how the fourth-root matrix largely reflects the P/A structure, with the quantitative information little used. And after restoration of the 125 species (<2% of the composition anywhere and temporarily eliminated, purely for clarity of the plots here), they are also likely to add a great deal of random ‘noise’ on this scale. At the other extreme, the previous page shows that a failure to transform at all would leave a multivariate analysis (based on a measure such as Bray-Curtis) dependent only on a small handful of dominant species. Be aware of the dangers of ‘choosing the transformation which gives you the answer you want!’ but these plots suggest that the (relatively mild) square root transform might be relevant for data of this type (macrobenthic studies around N Sea oil-fields) – allowing the abundant species to play a greater role, but also taking into account contributions from a wide range of less-dominant species. Whether a multivariate analysis can discern any pattern of change with distance from the oil-field is more open to question, on the basis of this plot! The sites (x axis) are ordered from left to right in increasing distance from the oil-field but a matching trend in assemblage pattern is quite hard to discern (but is clearly present – see Section 8). We shall see later that astute re-ordering of the y axis (species) is visually helpful here (though a multivariate analysis ignores the ordering of variables!), and can be accessed from the **Graph>Special>Re-order** menu. Discussion of the wide range of possibilities on this dialog is deferred until Section 10, under **Wizard>Matrix display**.

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