INTRODUCTION

Emerging infectious diseases and invasive species are of significant global concern for economies and public health, and are on the rise due to socioeconomic, ecological, and environmental factors, such as human population density and growth, drug resistance, and host richness (Jones et al., 2008). In plant health, diseases such as European ash dieback (Gross et al., 2014) and sudden oak death...
Xylella fastidiosa is a bacterial plant pathogen with a wide host range of over 500 species (European Food Safety Authority, 2020). It has had a significant impact on agricultural and horticulture trade around the globe and is economically (Tumber et al., 2014) and socially (Almeida, 2016) costly. X. fastidiosa is a xylem-limited gram-negative bacterium and the recognized agent of a number of severe and economically important diseases, including Pierce’s disease of grapevines, citrus variegated chlorosis (CVC), almond leaf scorch, and other disorders of perennial crops and landscape plants (Purcell and Hopkins, 1996). In California alone, it has been estimated that Pierce’s disease directly costs the grape-growing industry $104 million per year in reduced yield, management costs, and regulatory costs (Tumber et al., 2014). Once restricted to the Americas, a new invasive strain, X. fastidiosa subsp. pauca ST 53, the causal agent of olive quick decline syndrome (Saponari et al., 2013), was discovered near Gallipoli, southern Italy, in October 2013 (Loconsole et al., 2014). Since the initial outbreak, the disease has spread through a large proportion of the olive trees (Olea europaea) in southern Puglia (Martelli, 2016). A recent estimate suggests there are 4 million unproductive heavily infected or dead olive trees, representing a 10% loss of Italian olive oil, which equates to an economic loss of approximately €390 million (Italia Olivicola, 2019). If left unchecked, it has been estimated that olive-producing countries could lose billions of euros to the disease (Schneider et al., 2020). Other strains and outbreaks of the bacterium have since been discovered in other host plants in Spain, France, other regions of Italy (Tuscany), and Portugal (EFSA Panel on Plant Health, 2019a). These detected outbreaks demonstrate multiple and independent introductions because the strains are distinct (Sicard et al., 2018; Saponari et al., 2019).

The bacterium is generally transmitted by various widespread species of xylem-feeding insect vectors (Homoptera, Auchenorrhyncha) (Cornara et al., 2017). Specifically, in olives in Puglia, Italy, X. fastidiosa subsp. pauca is mainly vectored by the froghopper Philaenus spumarius (Saponari et al., 2014b). Currently, there is no known cure for this deadly disease of olives once the tree is infected (EFSA Panel on Plant Health, 2019b), and the only approaches for control are to destroy the host trees and limit spread by creating buffer zones around them, or managing the insect vector population by insecticides or removal of their weed habitats (EFSA Panel on Plant Health, 2019a). The outbreak in Puglia, Italy, is characterized by extensive leaf scorch and dieback, mainly in olive trees, although other cultivated and wild hosts such as oleander (Nerium oleander), almond (Prunus dulcis), myrtle-leaf milkwort (Polygala myrtifolia), and coastal rosemary (Westringia fruticosa) can also harbour the bacterium (Saponari et al., 2013, 2014a).

A particular challenge posed by X. fastidiosa subsp. pauca in olives is its apparently long symptomless period before the appearance of leaf browning, dieback, and eventual death of the plant. Under laboratory conditions (e.g., artificial inoculation and constant greenhouse environment) symptoms can start to appear after a period of 14 months (c.1.2 years), although this depends on environment and olive cultivar (Saponari et al., 2017; EFSA Panel on Plant Health, 2019a). However, the symptomless period under field conditions has yet to be formally quantified. This is an important parameter to estimate because the visualization of symptoms is key for policy implications in transporting olive trees, and containment and control measures (e.g., Decision [EU] 2015/789 and Decision [EU] 2017/2352); these measures include establishing a demarcated area around detected infected areas with specific requirements associated with plant movement into or within the EU, surveillance, plant removal, and other management measures including agricultural practices to control vector populations. Furthermore, while new remote-sensing technologies are being developed to identify infected plants (Zarco-Tejada et al., 2018), current surveillance strategies and grower/public awareness rely heavily on visual detection of the symptoms, sampling, and laboratory testing (EFSA Panel on Plant Health, 2019a). Therefore, ascertaining the symptomless lag under field conditions will help to better inform effective policy.

Host to host transmission is one of the key determinants of the speed at which X. fastidiosa spreads locally and in the landscape (White et al., 2017), but quantification of this process has so far been lacking in olives. It has been shown that within-host bacterial colonization and build-up to infectious levels can take some time (up to a year; Saponari et al., 2017), which is likely to affect vector acquisition over the infection period, with symptomless plants being less infective. However, extrapolation from laboratory studies of between-host transmission to the field is not straightforward because the vectors are polyphagous and show distinct seasonal dynamics and behaviour (Cornara et al., 2017). An additional complexity is that as the symptoms progress, during which the bacterium propagates and behaviour (Cornara et al., 2017). The symptoms, sampling, and laboratory testing (EFSA Panel on Plant Health, 2019a) during which the symptoms progress, during which the bacterium propagates and behaviour (Cornara et al., 2017).
2 | MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 | Epidemiological model

Our aim is to model the epidemiological dynamics of *X. fastidiosa* subsp. *pauca* in Puglian olive groves. Previous models of *X. fastidiosa* dynamics (White et al., 2017; Abboud et al., 2019; Daugherty and Almeida, 2019) have generally assumed simple tree to tree infection growth dynamics (e.g., logistic- or Gompertz-type growth models of the number or proportion of infected host plants), or used a simplified compartmental Susceptible-Infected (*SI*) model that omits critical features of the *X. fastidiosa* epidemiology, such as the symptomless period and host mortality rate (Soubeyrand et al., 2018). Our aim is to build a more realistic model that captures additional details of the infection process using a deterministic discrete-time modified compartmental model, adapted to the particular epidemiology of *X. fastidiosa* subsp. *pauca* infection of olive trees. A discrete time model rather than a continuous time one was used because the annual forcing of transmission by seasonal vector populations and symptom appearance by summer drought stress resembles an annual time step, and data available for model fitting lacked seasonal resolution. An explicit representation of vector populations was not included because we had no information on key vector parameters such as densities, biting rates, or transmission efficiency. Instead, the role of vectors in transmitting the bacterial disease was implicitly captured in the frequency-dependent contact rate $\beta$ of the epidemiological model, the form of which is often assumed for vector-borne diseases (Ferrari et al., 2011).

We model the numbers of susceptible and infected host plants in the olive groves. Model compartments were chosen to represent the major stages of disease progression in olive trees. A susceptible compartment ($S_t$) included the healthy uninfected trees at time $t$ (years). To reflect the potential for differential infectiveness of olive trees at different stages of infection, the infected ($I_t$) compartment from the standard framework (Allen, 1994) was subdivided into three sequential compartments representing the numbers of infected trees without symptoms (‘symptomless’, $I_{A,t}$), with symptoms (‘symptomatic’, $I_{S,t}$), and with the majority or all of the branches dead (‘desiccated’, $I_{D,t}$). We expected that, compared to trees with symptoms, there would be lower infectivity from trees without symptoms because they have a low bacterial load (Saponari et al., 2017) and are probably less likely to transmit *X. fastidiosa* subsp. *pauca* to vector insects. Similarly, we expected desiccated trees to have lower infectivity because, although the bacterial load is likely to be high, much of the foliage is withered and brown, which probably makes the trees less attractive to vector insects and may support lower vector densities. Thus, we included in the model two proportion parameters, $b_A$ and $b_D$, representing the relative infectiveness of infected symptomless and desiccated trees, respectively, as a proportion of the infectiveness of symptomatic trees.

A further modification to the standard compartmental model was made to characterize observed disease progression. In standard compartmental models (Allen, 1994), individuals may pass to the subsequent compartment immediately after entering their current compartment. In this case, transition times are exponentially distributed for continuous time models and geometrically distributed for discrete time models. However, the disease progression data indicated a delay between appearance of initial symptoms and onset of extensive symptom expression and rapid die back. This probably represents a minimum time period for bacterial load in the trees to build up to lethal levels. Therefore, we extended the basic compartmental model so that infected olive trees would not start to enter the desiccated $I_{D,t}$ compartment until after a sojourned symptom expression period of $r$ years had passed (subsequently referred to as desiccation delay parameter). We denote the $i^{th}$ compartment of symptomatic sojournment by $I_{IS,t}$. The total number of trees with symptoms is given by

$$I_{IS,t} = \sum_{j=1}^{r+1} I_{IS,t}^j$$

The epidemiological dynamics at population level are given by

$$S_{t+1} = (1-a_t) S_t$$
$$I_{A,t+1} = (1-\sigma) I_{A,t} + a_t S_t$$
$$I_{IS,t+1}^j = \sigma I_{IS,t}^j$$
$$I_{IS,t+1}^{j+1} = I_{IS,t}^j$$

The following individual annual transition probabilities for infection of susceptible trees ($a_t$), symptom appearance in symptomless infected trees ($\sigma$), and mortality of infected trees with symptoms ($\gamma$), which are given by

$$a_t = 1 - e^{-1/t_A}$$
$$\sigma = 1 - e^{-1/T_A}$$
$$\gamma = 1 - e^{-1/T_D}$$

Here, $N_t = S_t + I_{A,t} + I_{IS,t} + I_{D,t}$ is the total number of olive trees in the population. The contact rate $\beta$ is the expected number of *Xylella*-transmitting contacts per year from each infective tree with symptoms (Allen, 1994) and, as explained above, proportions $b_A$ and $b_D$ scale the relative infectiveness of $I_{A,t}$ and $I_{D,t}$. Parameter $T_A$ is
2.2 | Data to estimate the model parameters

Models were fitted to data from 2 to 3 yearly censuses of symptom prevalence in 17 olive groves infected with *X. fastidiosa* subsp. *pauca* in Puglia, Italy. All trees were naturally infected and are situated within the demarcated infected zone in Puglia. The majority of the data came from 3 years of monitoring symptom progression in 3,335 olive trees in 16 infected olive groves containing susceptible olive cultivars (mean plot area 1.86 ± 1.57 ha, mean tree density 97.9 ± 41.7 trees/ha, typical of ancient olive groves in Puglia (EFSA Panel on Plant Health, 2019a). A subset of these data has previously been used to detect infection using airborne imaging spectroscopy and thermography (Zarco-Tejada et al., 2018), and earth observation satellite imagery (Hornero et al., 2020). The data consist of visual rating of disease severity for each tree, scored on a 0–5 canopy desiccation scale (see Zarco-Tejada et al., 2018, and Hornero et al., 2020, for a full description of the data). Maximum severity scores for each tree surveyed in late 2016 (June or October), 2017 (June, July, or December), and 2018 (July) were classified into compartments of the epidemiology model. Specifically, we chose severity score = 0 to represent both the uninfected susceptible (S) compartment and the infected symptomless compartment (I_A), severity score = 1–3 was regarded as being in the symptomatic infected (I_P) compartment and severity score = 4 (canopies with a prevalence of dead branches) or 5 (canopy completely dead) was regarded as the desiccated (I_D) compartment.

In addition, we used a census of disease symptoms from a single olive grove containing 187 trees from January 2014 and April 2015 at the early stages of infection. No desiccated trees were present, so all trees with symptoms were considered as being in the symptomatic infected (I_P) compartment.

2.3 | Model fitting and model comparison

The generalized SI_A|_I_P|_O model and its simplifications from the SEIR family (SI-like, SIR-like, SEI-like, and SEIR), all with a fixed range of values of the desiccation delay parameter, τ, were fitted to these data in a Bayesian framework. Then the fits of the candidate models were compared using the deviance information criterion (DIC) (Gelman et al., 2013) in order to identify the most parsimonious model structure and value of τ consistent with the data.

For any set of model parameters, we calculated deterministic disease dynamics for 12 years starting from an initial proportion of infected trees without symptoms, I_A^t0, which was treated as an additional parameter to be estimated because it was not known when the trees became infected. Twelve years was considered an upper limit on the plausible length of time the plots could have been infected (Loconsole et al., 2014). The log-likelihood of the observed time series of symptomless trees, trees with symptoms, and desiccated trees from each plot were then estimated by aligning each plot’s time series to the disease progression curves as well as possible. The optimal alignment was identified by calculating the log-likelihood of the observed numbers of trees without symptoms, with symptoms, and desiccated if their probabilities followed the model proportions of S + I_A, S + I_A, I_S, and I_D compartments, respectively. The summed likelihood across plots was then calculated for optimization of the parameters. In effect, this approach estimates the time of infection of each plot as a latent variable.

Parameter estimation from these likelihoods was achieved using an adaptive Metropolis–Hastings MCMC sampler in which the variance–covariance matrix of the multivariate normal proposal distribution was tuned to an acceptance rate of 30% (Scheidegger, 2018). Each model was fitted with a chain of 10^6 iterations after a burn-in of 10^5 iterations and starting at maximum-likelihood parameters found by the Nelder–Mead simplex algorithm initiated from 100 random start parameterizations.

Parameters were estimated on their natural scales with uniform prior distributions (U) either spanning the full range of possible values (i.e., U[0, 1] for the proportion parameters b_X, b_S, and I_A) or bounded at a lower value of 0 for strictly positive parameters. For τ, a prior distribution of U[0, 1,000] was used, far exceeding the likely upper range for transmission rates. For T_P, a prior distribution of U[0, 12] was used reflecting the duration of simulations. The exception to these extremely uninformative prior distributions was for T_A, for which a recent meta-analysis of literature data estimated a mean symptomless period for olive trees of 1.24 years (EFSA Panel on Plant Health, 2019a). Based on this information, we set the prior distribution for T_A to U[0.75, 1.5] to allow for some degree of variance.

The adaptive MCMC sampler uses a multivariate normal proposal distribution for the parameters, which is not well suited to discrete parameter distributions. Therefore, we ran separate chains for
values of the desiccation delay parameter, τ, fixed at integer values between 0 and 6 years. For each model specification (SI\textsubscript{A}I\textsubscript{D}A, SI-like, SIR-like, SEI-like, and SEIR) the optimal value of τ was identified as that giving the minimal DIC, calculated using the variance of deviations in the MCMC chain (Gelman et al., 2013). Following this, the model specifications were then compared based on their DIC values.

### 2.4 | Sensitivity analysis

To assess the relative contribution of the model parameters to X. fastidiosa epidemics, we performed a sensitivity analysis on each fitted parameter, β, b\textsubscript{A}, b\textsubscript{D}, T\textsubscript{A}, T\textsubscript{D}, and I\textsubscript{A,D}. Specifically, we compared relative changes (C) to the total change in susceptible and infected proportions over 12 simulated years (discrete area under the curve) relative to the median posterior valued scenario (\textit{p}_\textit{D}) for four different percentage changes in a single parameter value (\textit{p}_\textit{D}), where all other parameters remain at their median posterior value, such that

\[ C_X = \frac{\sum_{t=0}^{12} X_t|_{p_X} - \sum_{t=0}^{12} X_t|_{p_D}}{\sum_{t=0}^{12} X_t|_{p_D}}, \text{ for } X \in \{I_{A,D}, I_A, I_D, T_A, T_D\}, \]

where \(X_t|_{p_x}\) are the output values (proportions in each model compartment) from simulating the epidemic model for a given set of parameter values, \(p \in \{I_{A,D}, T_A, T_D, \beta, b_A, b_D\}\).

### 3 | RESULTS

#### 3.1 | Model comparison

For all five epidemiological model specifications, MCMC chains had the lowest DIC when the desiccation delay parameter τ (the number of years with symptoms before desiccation begins) was set to 3 years (Table S1). In all cases, setting τ to a different value resulted in large increases in DIC of at least 7 units (Table S1) indicating very low support compared to models with τ = 3 years.

With τ = 3 years, comparison of the different epidemiological model specifications showed that the SEIR and SEI-like models gave the best fits to the data and were essentially indistinguishable from each other (Table 1). The full SI\textsubscript{A}I\textsubscript{D}A model was slightly less parsimonious and was penalized for estimating two extra parameters that did little to differentiate the generalized model from the simpler SEI-like and SEIR models (Table S1). For example, the SI\textsubscript{A}I\textsubscript{D}A model posterior median estimate of \(b_A\) (relative infectivity of desiccated trees) recapitulated its uniform prior distribution (Table 2, Figure 1), showing that this parameter has no effect on model fit and supporting the inability to distinguish between SEI-like and SEIR fits (Table 1). Furthermore, the SI\textsubscript{A}I\textsubscript{D}A model posterior median estimate of \(b_A\) (relative infectivity of trees without symptoms) was very close to zero (Table 2) causing the trees without symptoms in the SI\textsubscript{A}I\textsubscript{D}A model to function equivalently to the exposed (E) compartment of SEI-like and SEIR models. Supporting this, models in which trees without symptoms were fully infective (SI-like and SIR-like, with \(b_A = 1\)) gave the poorest fits to the data on the basis of DIC (Table 2).

| Model type\(^a\) | Optimal delay (\(\tau\) years) | DIC | ΔDIC | \(R^2\) | Symptomless trees | Trees with symptoms | Desiccated trees |
|------------------|-----------------------------|-----|------|-------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| SI-like (\(b_A = 0, b_D = 1\)) | 3 | 884.3 | 0.000 | 0.844 | 0.742 | 0.826 |
| SEIR (\(b_A = 0, b_D = 0\)) | 3 | 884.3 | 0.020 | 0.844 | 0.742 | 0.826 |
| SI\textsubscript{A}I\textsubscript{D}A | 3 | 889.8 | 5.504 | 0.838 | 0.730 | 0.825 |
| SI-like (\(b_A = 1, b_D = 0\)) | 3 | 891.2 | 7.370 | 0.835 | 0.714 | 0.825 |

\[^a\]SEIR, Susceptible-Exposed-Infected-Removed model; SI\textsubscript{A}I\textsubscript{D}A, Susceptible-Infected (symptomless)-Infected (symptomatic)-Infected (desiccated) model; \(b_A\), infectivity of symptomless infected olive trees, relative to trees with symptoms; \(b_D\), infectivity of desiccated olive trees, relative to trees with symptoms.

### 3.2 | Parameter estimates and model dynamics

Parameter posterior estimates from the SEI-like and SEIR model were extremely similar (Table 2) and gave a very good fit to the observed disease progression in the monitored plots (Figures 2 and 3; Figure S1). The posterior for \(\beta\) suggested that an olive tree with symptoms is able to infect an average of 19.5 other trees in the local population each year (95% credible range 14–26; Table 2, Figure 1). The posterior distribution for \(T_A\) suggested a mean period without symptoms of around 1.2 years (14 months, 95% credible range 1.0–1.3 years; Table 2, Figure 1). Accounting for the 3-year delay before desiccation, the estimated mean time from symptom establishment to desiccation (\(r + T_D\)) was 4.3 years (95% credible range 4.0–4.6 years;
Table 2, Figure 1). Posterior estimates for the initially infected proportion \( I_{A,0} \) were very low (Table 2, Figure 1) and equate to approximately one tree being initially infected in the median-sized plot. There was appreciable posterior correlation between estimates for some parameters, most notably the strong negative correlation between \( \beta \) and \( I_{A,0} \) and positive correlation between \( \beta \) and \( T_A \) (Figure 1) as these parameters modulate the speed of disease spread in the early stages of infection.

Model projections by the fitted SEI-like version of the full SI_AI_D model shows that the model closely matches the data from the aggregated data across all plots (Figure 4) and that variation in the joint posterior distributions did not much affect the expected disease progression.
The results of the sensitivity analysis for the full SI\(_{AID}\) model is given in Figure 5 where we compare −50%, −10%, +10%, and +50% changes in individual median posterior parameter values given in Table 2 (comparable results for the SEI-like and SEIR models are presented in Figure S2). Results show that \(\beta\) and \(I_{A,0}\) are the most sensitive parameters, where parameter increases result in decreases in total susceptible host plants and increases in infected host plants. Conversely, \(b_D\) is the least sensitive, showing little change in the model output. This is perhaps unsurprising given that \(b_D\) was found to be uninformative in the Bayesian model fitting (Table 2). Interestingly, other model parameters show sensitivity in particular infection compartments, but not in the overall infection as seen in...
For example, changes in $T_A$ cause large effects on the symptomless compartment ($I_A$), but less on the overall disease dynamics ($S$).

4 | DISCUSSION

*X. fastidiosa* is a devastating plant pathogen that has the potential to infect large numbers and species of cultivated and wild plants (European Food Safety Authority, 2018; EFSA Panel on Plant Health, 2019a). Due to the unpredictable nature of the Puglian outbreak (e.g., a new host, a novel location, conducive climate, etc.), mitigation strategies have mostly been underpinned by laboratory studies, or on studies from its previous range (European Food Safety Authority, 2018; EFSA Panel on Plant Health, 2019a, 2019b). Importantly, detailed quantified knowledge of the epidemiological progression in olive hosts in a field setting has been lacking, an omission that we have attempted to address here. In this paper we fitted mathematical epidemiological models to field data that detailed the level of symptoms expressed by the bacterial disease. In general, there is an inherent difficulty of model fitting for long-lived or emerging infectious diseases, where, typically, long time series are required to track full infection and mortality of a population (Meentemeyer et al., 2011). Here, we address that difficulty by analysing and fitting the models to short disease time series from multiple populations that capture the full range of disease dynamics (assuming similar underlying processes), thus effectively swapping space for time. When we compared the full model against simplified model versions to test how well the model was supported by the data, our selected model fitted the data well and estimated important epidemiological parameters.

One of the most critical epidemiological parameters to measure is the transmission rate, the rate at which susceptible hosts become infected, as this is a measure of disease spread, and strongly influences how difficult achieving control may be (Allen, 1994). We estimated that one infected symptomatic olive infected approximately 19 susceptible hosts per year, suggesting a fast rate of transmission. During the symptomless period, the bacterium begins to replicate within the host, colonizing large parts of the plant xylem (Saponari et al., 2017). Over this period the host plant is potentially infectious as it is possible for xylem-feeding insect vectors to take up the bacterium (Sicard et al., 2018). However, infectivity or transmission has not yet been directly estimated in laboratory or field experiments; thus, our model estimates are useful first attempts at quantifying this. We estimated from the $SI_{AI_D}$ model that the relative infection rate of olive trees without symptoms is, on average, approximately 1.5% of that of plants with symptoms; however, there is some degree of uncertainty in our estimates. Model selection and sensitivity analysis showed that the effects of symptomless infectivity are almost negligible, and therefore, we conclude it has little effect on overall epidemiological dynamics once the outbreak has established. Unfortunately, we were unable to ascertain the relative contribution of desiccated plants because there was insufficient information in the data to inform the parameter range. This was because delayed desiccation and rapid transmission led to all olives becoming infected before desiccation. However, it is likely that highly infected desiccated plants are less infectious than plants with symptoms,
because they are less attractive to vectors (Sicard et al., 2018); nevertheless, new shoots (i.e., suckers) that are infected, and develop symptoms later, could act as a reservoir for further transmission. Our sensitivity analysis revealed that the parameter has little effect on the model disease dynamics over a 12-year period, suggesting that desiccated plants may not play an important role in growth of local infection during the initial stages of an outbreak. Furthermore, given the substantial time to desiccation and that the speed of spread is often determined by the dynamics at the invasion wavefront (Kot and Schaffer, 1986), desiccated plants may also have little impact on long distance spread. However, failing to remove desiccated infectious trees could spawn new infections in uninfected trees, such as newly planted trees, as they could act as a disease reservoir.

Detecting the presence of infected plants for surveillance or control can require considerable costly resources. The problem is further compounded when the pest is not easily detectable, such as when symptoms are not visible (Mastin et al., 2019), although new remote-sensing technologies are being developed (Zarco-Tejada et al., 2018; Hornero et al., 2020). This challenge is especially important for biosecurity of imports, because long symptomless periods may result in the movement of infected materials without the knowledge of the importer or importee. Furthermore, outbreaks of disease may go unnoticed for a considerable time (Soubeyrand et al., 2018), making eradication difficult. Therefore, estimates of the symptomless period are critical for pest risk assessment (Thompson et al., 2016). Laboratory studies of plants infected with X. fastidiosa have estimated the symptomless period in susceptible olive cultivars to be approximately 14 months (c.1.2 years; Saponari et al., 2017; EFSA Panel on Plant Health, 2019a), with symptoms appearing after a longer delay in cultivars deemed resistant to X. fastidiosa subsp. pauca ST 53 (the causative agent of olive quick decline syndrome; Saponari et al., 2017). Although these laboratory studies were carried out with saplings in idealized conditions as opposed to mature trees in the field, our field estimates are in approximate agreement with their results. This alignment in our estimate gives some independent validation, and is clearly important for legislation because it has been shown that X. fastidiosa has one of the longest symptomless periods amongst some of the most dangerous plant diseases (EFSA Panel on Plant Health, 2019a). It should be noted that we used an informed prior distribution in our Bayesian framework, but the posterior distribution was shown to have a smaller credible interval, suggesting a high degree of confidence in model fitting.

Our analyses estimated that the mean time from early symptom expression to desiccation was approximately 4.3 years ($\tau + TD$). Furthermore, the findings are consistent with an approximately 3-year delay before the onset of rapid desiccation in mature olive trees. This is in line with our casual observations and those of others (Martelli, 2016), with area-wide rapid and relatively synchronized

![FIGURE 5](image-url)  
Sensitivity analysis of the Susceptible-Infected (symptomless)-Infected (symptomatic)-Infected (desiccated) (SI_AIIID) epidemiological model for Xylella fastidiosa infecting olive trees. The analysis shows the relative changes (C) in total proportions of susceptible and infected host plants for percentage changes in parameter values for the SI_AIIID model. $I_A$: Initial proportion of infected trees without symptoms; $T_A$: mean duration of the symptomless period; $T_D$: mean time to desiccation after $\tau$ years with symptoms; $\beta$: effective contact rate for infected olive trees with symptoms (per year); $b_A$: infectivity of symptomless infected olive trees, relative to trees with symptoms; $b_D$: infectivity of desiccated olive trees, relative to trees with symptoms.
desiccation events. Saponari et al. (2017) found that full desiccation in laboratory studies using saplings occurred after approximately 2 years. However, it is likely that time to desiccation in mature trees in the field is highly dependent on environmental factors, which may induce stress (e.g., water stress), and other factors such as the number and timings of inoculations from multiple vector bites, size, age, and health of the host plant, season, location of inoculum and prevalence of vectors, to name a few. Despite these factors, our time to desiccation estimate had a relatively narrow 95% confidence interval. This may be due to the fact that the data were collected from adjacent locations over the same period.

In Puglia, *P. spumarius* is the main vector of *X. fastidiosa* subsp. *pauca* (Saponari et al., 2014b; Cornara et al., 2017). Vector abundance is difficult to predict as their distribution is patchy (Morente et al., 2019). However, it has been shown that *P. spumarius* occurrence and abundance does increase with olive grove land cover, although evidence of other biotic and abiotic factors affecting insect populations is less well supported (Santoiemma et al., 2019). Based on this, and a lack of data on the abundance of insect vectors, we chose not to explicitly model vector dynamics (but see EFSA Panel on Plant Health, 2019a, for a seasonal vector model). One further caveat with our approach is that our data only relates to the symptoms expressed rather than a quantitative measure of bacterial load. This is especially important because symptomless plants may be either uninfected or infected without symptoms. We have attempted to counteract this in our fitting method by combining the two classes in the model when comparing it to the data with a severity score of zero.

*X. fastidiosa* has been predicted to be able to establish over wide geographical areas, with the most suitable environment in the Xeradication strategies in the event of a detection of is high, given the global increase in trade (Chapman et al., 2017; see et al., 2019). However, it has been shown that *P. spumarius* occurrence and abundance does increase with olive grove land cover, although evidence of other biotic and abiotic factors affecting insect populations is less well supported (Santoiemma et al., 2019). Based on this, and a lack of data on the abundance of insect vectors, we chose not to explicitly model vector dynamics (but see EFSA Panel on Plant Health, 2019a, for a seasonal vector model). One further caveat with our approach is that our data only relates to the symptoms expressed rather than a quantitative measure of bacterial load. This is especially important because symptomless plants may be either uninfected or infected without symptoms. We have attempted to counteract this in our fitting method by combining the two classes in the model when comparing it to the data with a severity score of zero.

*X. fastidiosa* has been predicted to be able to establish over wide geographical areas, with the most suitable environment in the Mediterranean basin (EFSA Panel on Plant Health, 2019a), even under climate change (Bosso et al., 2016). Whilst the current outbreaks represent a small fraction of this suitable region, the potential for spread is high, given the global increase in trade (Chapman et al., 2017; see Saponari et al. 2019, for example). Policies, as described in Decision (EU) 2015/789 and Decision (EU) 2017/2352 on the containment and eradication strategies in the event of a detection of *X. fastidiosa* in the EU, rely on accurate information. Our findings on key epidemiological parameters, such as the transmission rate at different stages of the disease, symptomless period, and time to death, help to achieve informed policy. These will be important for predicting the spread and control of this disease using spatially explicit landscape-scale models (White et al., 2017; Soubeyrand et al., 2018; Abboud et al., 2019; EFSA Panel on Plant Health, 2019a). Furthermore, these epidemiological parameters are difficult and costly to measure experimentally, but models fitted to monitoring data can provide estimates and uncertainty distributions, giving valuable knowledge on *X. fastidiosa* disease dynamics and, potentially, other plant diseases.

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**DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT**

The data that support the findings of this study are available from https://github.com/Quantalab/Xf-NPlants-2018/tree/master/data or the corresponding author upon request.

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION
Additional supporting information may be found online in the Supporting Information section.

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