

Peer Review

Review of: "Feeding Ecology and Activity Rhythms of the Critically Endangered Hawksbill Turtle"

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This manuscript presents valuable insights into the diet and foraging behavior of hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) in Martinique, using animal-borne cameras to document individual behavior over a 48-hour deployment. The study provides a unique contribution to the existing body of knowledge on the species and offers high-quality observational data that are rarely captured with such fine temporal resolution. I am confident that, once published, this work will enhance our understanding of hawksbill feeding ecology, particularly within Caribbean reef systems.

While the results are compelling and well-presented, I would like to offer several comments to further strengthen the manuscript:

Sample Size and Temporal Distribution:

The number of individuals tracked in this study is relatively small, and deployments were carried out in different periods of the year. Although the authors acknowledge these limitations, I recommend explicitly stating this in the discussion as a constraint for interpreting the broader ecological relevance of the findings. In future research, increasing the sample size and ensuring more consistent temporal coverage would help capture inter-individual and seasonal variability.

Complementary Methods and Temporal Dynamics:

As a suggestion for future directions, the authors may consider integrating complementary techniques such as stable isotope analysis to assess long-term dietary assimilation. Additionally, investigating the temporal component of prey availability and its relationship to dietary preferences would add depth to the analysis. Understanding how feeding behavior varies across seasons or in response to environmental fluctuations could yield important ecological insights.

Ontogenetic and Sex-Specific Behavior:

It would be interesting to explore whether similar foraging behaviors occur in juvenile turtles or in adult females, should they remain in the foraging habitat long enough for this type of video monitoring. Expanding the demographic scope of future studies could provide a more comprehensive view of hawksbill trophic ecology.

Geographic Specificity and Generalization:

The authors should take care to emphasize that the behavioral patterns observed in this study are specific to hawksbill turtles in Martinique. While the findings are robust at the local scale, caution is warranted when extrapolating these behaviors to the species as a whole, given the global distribution of *E. imbricata* and the ecological diversity of its foraging habitats.

In conclusion, I congratulate the authors for conducting such a creative and technically challenging study. The manuscript is well-written and makes a meaningful contribution to the field. I recommend it for publication pending minor revisions to address the points outlined above.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.