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Peer Review

Review of: "Prey Selection of the Invasive Gastropod Rapana venosa (Valenciennes 1846) from the Río de la Plata Estuary Under Laboratory Conditions"

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Review – Lercari & Brugnoli Rapana paper

Review – Lercari & Brugnoli *Rapana* paper

This study explores prey selection by the invasive gastropod *Rapana venosa* under laboratory conditions, offering insights into its feeding preferences. However, several aspects of the experimental design and interpretation could benefit from clarification and improvement.

First, the experiment was carried out with only three individuals of *R. venosa*, which is a very limited sample size for drawing robust conclusions about feeding preferences. In addition, the study includes only two prey items, while in the natural environment, this species has access to a broader range of potential prey. For example, common and locally abundant bivalves such as *Mactra isabelleana* were not considered. It would strengthen the work to explain why these two prey species were selected—especially since they seem to inhabit different environments.

It is also unclear how the average daily consumption (in wet weight) was calculated, given that the animals were consumed. Was this estimated from the remaining shells? If so, a more detailed explanation of the methodology is needed.

The percentages reported (57% and 43%) for prey selection are not clearly supported. There's no raw data presented to verify these values, and with only two prey options, it's unclear whether these differences are statistically meaningful. Was any statistical test applied to support the conclusions?

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Regarding the figures, the caption below the image refers to the “expulsion of the shell,” which seems odd. As far as is known, *R. venosa* feeds by drilling or prying open a gap between the valves, not by ingesting and then expelling the entire shell. There’s no evidence or documentation in the literature that supports this kind of behavior. Also, the caption above the photo states that the foot is used to catch the prey, but based on the image, the foot doesn’t appear to be involved in that way.

The literature cited in the paper is quite limited. Many relevant publications from the last two decades on *R. venosa* biology and feeding behavior are not included. In particular, the first report of *R. venosa* in the Río de la Plata estuary—Pastorino et al., 2000—is missing and should be cited, as it predates the reference used by nearly ten years.

Additionally, the authors′ findings seem to contradict earlier work by Giberto et al., who found a strong preference for mussels. If clams are preferred in this experiment, it would be useful to discuss possible energetic or ecological explanations for this shift—at present, this is not addressed.

In summary, while the topic is certainly relevant and the question interesting, the manuscript would benefit greatly from a clearer presentation of methods, some statistical support for the conclusions, a more representative experimental design, and a more thorough engagement with the existing literature.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.