

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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I enjoyed reading this manuscript—it is clearly written, easy to follow, and addresses an ecologically important and timely topic. The introduction is well-framed, and the experimental rationale is straightforward. However, I have a few concerns regarding the experimental design and data presentation that, if addressed, would considerably strengthen the manuscript.

1. Sample size and study framing

The study relies on observations from only three individuals, which is a significant limitation. While I understand that lab-based behavioural experiments can be constrained by logistics, it would be helpful for the authors to clarify whether this is intended as a pilot or exploratory study. At present, the paper reads as though broad conclusions are being drawn, despite a sample size that limits generalisability. Relatedly, the statement that all individuals showed the same pattern of prey selection (Figure 3) would benefit from further detail—e.g., summary statistics or discussion of any individual variability.

2. Prey species selection and availability

Only two prey species were included in the trial, and the rationale for this choice is not clearly explained. While I appreciate the control this offers, a richer understanding of foraging preference—especially if optimal foraging theory is invoked—typically requires a broader prey spectrum. Additionally, more detail is needed on how often prey items were replaced. The phrase “each time the consumption of a new individual was detected” is vague—were snails monitored continuously, or was there a fixed feeding schedule? Clarifying whether prey were consistently available throughout the study is important for interpreting consumption rates and preference.

3. Prey size considerations

The reported prey size (0.8 ± 0.4 mm) seems implausibly small and may be a typo (possibly cm?). More importantly, prey size is a key factor influencing predator behaviour and energy profitability. It would have been valuable to test prey of different sizes, or at least to include more discussion of how prey size might have influenced handling time, capture efficiency, or energy return in this context.

4. Data presentation and statistics

While the small sample size limits formal statistical testing, it would still be helpful to show variation in the data—either through standard deviations, ranges, or error bars in the figures. For example, presenting individual consumption patterns or summary measures would provide more transparency and support for the claim that all individuals showed a similar pattern of preference.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.