

Review of: "The Effect of Habitat Structural Complexity on Gastropods in Anarid Mangrove Wetland"

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Potential competing interests: The author(s) declared that no potential competing interests exist.

This paper reports on a well-designed study of a gastropod fauna from a mangrove of arid climate, in the Persian Gulf (Khuran mangrove, Iran)). Mangrove ecosystems are particularly vulnerable to anthropogenic change and gastropods are a functional component of their ecosystem. Since mangroves from arid climates are functionally the weakest among mangroves, there is a general interest for this study to be published. My major concerns and the reason why I suggest major changes before publication are the following:

1. The macroinvertebrate fauna, including the gastropods, of the Khuran mangrove has been recently studied by Delfan et al. (2021). Four out of six sampling locations and one author out of three in the present study are the same as those of Delfan et al. (2021). Present authors need to explain what connects the two studies, both in terms of experimental design and conclusions.
2. One of the conclusions of both studies is that the pneumatophore zone and the mudflats host distinct macrobenthic communities. This is a major result, and it should be outlined in the abstract and in the concluding chapter.
3. Since this study brings novel data to a major debate on functional loss of modern mangroves, and since this was recently brought to the forefront by a PNAS paper by Cannicci et al. (2021), authors need to further explore the significance of their paper for the global community of mangrove researchers.
4. Among all organisms of the mangrove, gastropods have the richest fossil record and are the best means to track the history of the ecosystem as a whole. This adds another interest that should be underlined. Key papers on this are Ellison et al. (1999), Plaziat et al. (2001) and Reid et al. (2008). On this topic see also Dominici & Kowalke (2014) and Cannicci et al. (2021).
5. The discussion on the difference between the two above habitats should include an analogue study by Wolff et al. (1993).
6. See other comments in the attached file.

References

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