

Mesopredator Behavior in a Periurban Gardenscape

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Background

- ❖ Boldness, an individual's response to a risky situation, is important for animals to survive in unpredictable environments. However, while boldness may be favorable in one context, it may also be detrimental.
- ❖ Understanding this variation is important as personality can determine how individuals interact with their environment.

Research Questions

- 1) How do mesopredators vary in boldness?
- 2) How do mesopredators vary in time spent exploring?

Hypotheses

Boldness across species will (1) be higher in species that are perceived as "low threat" by people (e.g., domestic cats, striped skunks, and raccoons) and (2) lower in species perceived as "high threat" (e.g., coyotes, and opossums).

Methods

- ❖ Novel object deployed from Nov 2021 – Feb 2022
- ❖ Recorded interactions using trail-cameras
- ❖ Scored behavioral responses in Boris
- ❖ Analyzed data using one-way ANOVAs and Tukey HSD



Raccoons are significantly bolder than most mesopredators and Skunks spent a longer time exploring than other mesopredators

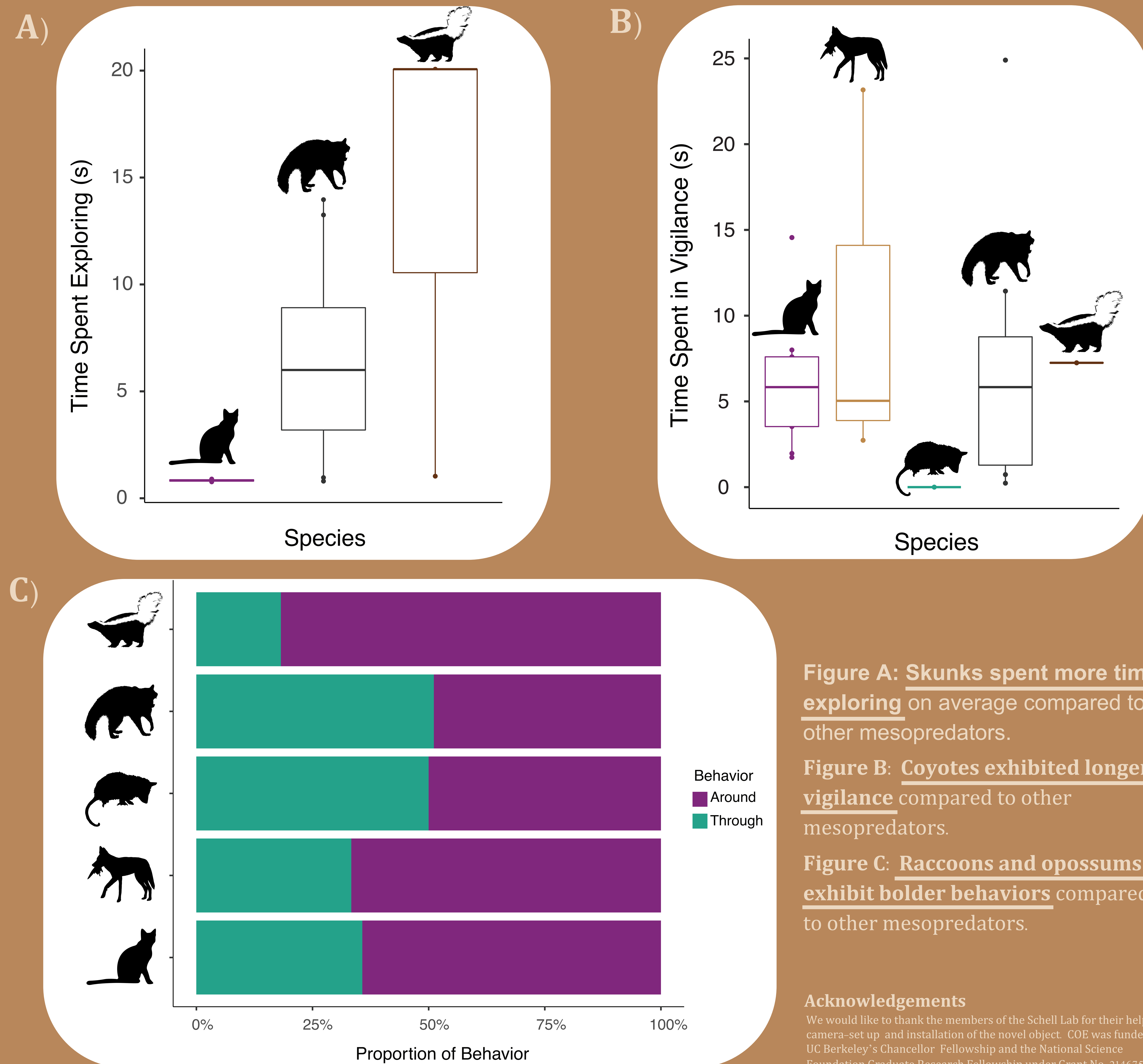


Figure A: Skunks spent more time exploring on average compared to other mesopredators.

Figure B: Coyotes exhibited longer vigilance compared to other mesopredators.

Figure C: Raccoons and opossums exhibit bolder behaviors compared to other mesopredators.

Acknowledgements

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