Stellenbosch, March 2019

Dear Editor,

The manuscript entitled EXTERNAL MORPHOLOGY AND ULTRASTRUCTURE OF TEGUMENTAL GLANDS OF *AEGLA PLATENSIS* (CRUSTACEA: ANOMURA: AEGLIDAE) PLEOPODS: MIGHT THEY PLAY A ROLE IN EGG ATTACHMENT? addresses internal and external morphology of abdominal appendages (pleopods) which are related to egg attachment process in eglids, specifically in *Aegla platensis*. Eglids are very peculiar freshwater decapod crustaceans endemic to the Neotropical region of South America with ~70 species. They occur in lakes, streams, salt marshes and caves, ranging from 320 m of depth in Chilean lakes to ∼3500 m of altitude in northeastern Argentinean cordilleras. Egg attachment process is a very important aspect of parental care in crustaceans and, in this group is unknown. Thus, we investigated the morphology of pleopods and related this features to the clutch maintenance and care. Briefly, we found that *Aegla platensis* pleopods show two morphologically distinct types of setae: long and stout setae; long setae are grouped in tufts and during egg attachment, they are twisted on their own axis in the distal region and form the *funiculus*, to which the eggs are fixed. The *funiculus* is formed with the aid of an adhesive substance which is produced by pleopodal tegumental glands. These glands are rosette-like structures formed by agglomerates of acini that contain numerous secretory cells arranged concentrically around one duct cell.

Few other manuscripts addressed morphological/functional aspects related to egg attachment process in crustacean species. In this context, this manuscript contributes to the knowledge about this issue. Moreover, different aspects of eglids natural history (diversity, taxonomy, behaviour, physiology and genetic) have been investigated in recent years and many of them with a considerable interest to the scientific community. Thus, we think that articles with eglids as model organisms are well cited and may be of interest to the Research in ecology- Biligual Publisching Co. readership. Our manuscript describes original work and is not under consideration by any other journal. All authors approved the manuscript and this submission. The orthography of the paper has been checked by at least two professional editors, both native speakers of English. For a certificate, please see: <http://www.textcheck.com/certificate/2HbV3X>. Thank you for receiving our manuscript and considering it for review. We appreciate your time and look forward to your response.

Kind regards,

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