

Interspecific exploitative competition between *Harmonia axyridis* and other coccinellids is stronger than intraspecific competition

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The invasion of *Harmonia axyridis* has had negative consequences on coccinellid assemblages, with a decline in abundance and diversity, but the coexistence of invasive and resident species may depend on the strength of intra- and interspecific exploitative competitive interactions. These antagonistic interactions have been scarcely studied in coccinellids. Through a laboratory study we assessed aphid consumption, weight gain and reproduction when the invasive *Harmonia axyridis*, the alien *Hippodamia variegata* and the native *Eriopis chilensis* were alone, in conspecific and heterospecific groups, at low and high aphid densities. Under intraspecific competition, coccinellids were more voracious than when they were alone, particularly *H. axyridis* and *H. variegata* at high aphid density; *H. axyridis* and *H. variegata* gained more weight than *E. chilensis*, and *H. axyridis* barely reproduced at low aphid densities, even when alone, while in the other two species reproduction wa