

# Foraging behaviour and diet of a Mediterranean lizard on an ephemeral resource

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**Abstract:** A more generalized diet, as well as higher plant consumption by lizards in islands with poor trophic resources, has been widely documented. From some years ago, it has been observed individuals of the Balearic lizard, *Podarcis lilfordi* (Lacertidae), climbing to *Carlina corymbosa* (Asteraceae) in Aire Island (Menorca, Balearic Islands, Spain) and foraging on their flowers during the blooming period, from early July to late August. Through focal observations, we have studied the foraging behaviour of *P. lilfordi* on *C. corymbosa*. We obtained fourteen variables, from which we defined three groups according to the information they provide: movements and foraging strategy, use of *C. corymbosa* as a trophic resource and foraging behaviour of *P. lilfordi* on that plant species. The analysis of these variables shows that *P. lilfordi* is a widely forager that employs a mixed strategy of licking and pulling up *Carlina* flowers. This behaviour is probably due to a low production and/or a difficult availability of nectar. Some behavioural traits are similar to those observed while foraging on carcasses. We also studied, during the same period, the diet of *P. lilfordi* through the analysis of faecal samples. We observed that the consumption of plant elements is important during July and August, and that *C. corymbosa* is an important resource in the areas of the island where it is present.