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Antibacterial properties of plasma from the prairie rattlesnake (Crotalus viridis)

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1	Antibacterial Properties of Plasma from the Prairie Rattlesnake (Crotalus viridis)
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7	ABSTRACT
8	The innate immune system functions to quickly respond to pathogens and is likely the primary
9	line of defense for ecothermic vertebrates. Snake populations appear to be in widespread decline
10	globally, but despite the threats from emerging pathogens, very little work has been conducted to
11	characterize their basic immune function. We used a wide-ranging snake species, the Prairie
12	Rattlesnake (Crotalus viridis), to measure effects of snake plasma on the growth of eight
13	bacterial species. Additionally, we quantified bacterial killing ability and kinetics of the immune
14	response. Our results show that Prairie Rattlesnakes have robust innate immune systems, and
15	concentrations of 10% snake plasma inhibit growth of 6 of 8 bacteria tested. Undiluted snake
16	plasma inhibited nearly all bacterial growth. The immune response was fairly rapid, inhibiting
17	73% of bacterial growth within 20 minutes of exposure. These results are encouraging for
18	conservation of wild populations, as snakes appear to exhibit a strong innate immune response.
19	However, further work needs to be directed toward the evaluation of immune system capabilities
20	in individual populations of conservation concern, and against pathogens known to cause
21	mortality in wild snakes.
22	Keywords: antimicrobial; bacteria; innate immunity; rattlesnake; serum complement
23	Declarations of Interest: None.

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