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Clade C *Symbiodinium* in dominant sea anemones off Qeshm and Hengam islands in the northern Persian Gulf Iran

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ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

1	Running head: Zooaxnthellae in sea anemones of the Persian Gulf
2	
3	Title: Clade C Symbiodinium in dominant sea anemones off Qeshm and Hengam islands in
4	the northern Persian Gulf, Iran
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11	
12	ABSTRACT
13	This study identified symbiont algae coexisting with three sea anemones including bubble-tip
14	(Entacmaea quadricolor), carpet (Stichodactyla haddoni) and drilling (Anthopleura artemisia)
15	anemones off Qeshm and Hengam islands, in the northern Persian Gulf, Iran. Sea anemones
16	were collected from intertidal sandy flat and three meters subtidal areas. The results showed that
17	all sea anemones contained clade C Symbiodinium. Advantages provided by clade C, have
18	encouraged sea anemones in intertidal and subtidal areas to harbor clade C rather than clade D
19	that has shown to have negative effects on the energetics of the reef corals by reducing their
20	fitness. Given the prevailing harsh environmental conditions with regard to warm water
21	(exceeding 36°C in summers) and salinity (up to ~50‰) in the Persian Gulf, it seems that both
22	Symbiodinium and the sea anemones are locally adapted. The findings from the present study
23	suggest that ambient environmental parameters might play a key role in dictating sea anemones
24	to host a symbiotic alga preferably the type that increases their fitness.
25	
26 27	Keywords: Anthozoa, zooxanthellae, Symbiodinium, symbiotic dinoflagellate, host specificity

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