Predation

"Populační ekologie živočichů"

Stano Pekár

Predator categories

True predators - catch several animals and gain sustenance for their own fitness (spiders, lions)

Parasitoids - consume about single host, free adults but larvae developing on or within a host, consuming it prior to pupation (Hymenoptera, Diptera)

Parasites - live in close association with a host, gain sustenance from the host, but often do not cause mortality (Acari, Trematodes)

Herbivores - feed on plants, may totally consume plants (seed-eaters) or partially (aphids, cows)

Dietary specialisation

▶ monophagous (single prey type)
▶ oligophagous (few prey types)
▶ polyphagous/euryphagous (many prey types)
- not capable of consuming all prey types

▶ predators choose most profitable prey
- select prey items for which the gain is greatest (energy intake per time spent handling)

Krebs (1978)
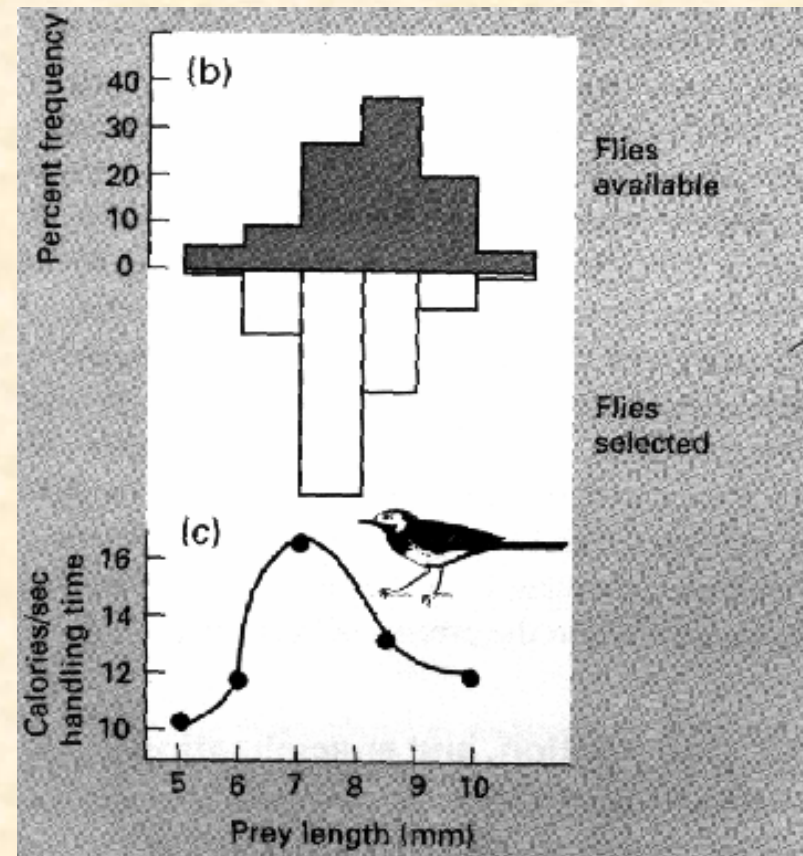
▶   predators tend to specialise to a greater or lesser extent during evolution
- monophagy evolved where prey exerts pressures which demand
morphological adaptations
- polyphagy evolved where prey was unpredictable

▶   <u>true predators</u> - majority are polyphagous
▶   <u>parasites</u> - commonly monophagous due to intimate association with
hosts, their life-cycle is tuned to that of their host
▶   <u>parasitoids</u> - often monophagous but some are polyphagous presumably
because adults are free living
▶   <u>herbivores</u> - rather polyphagous, many insect herbivores
 are specialised as a result of adaptation to plant
secondary metabolites (*Drosophila pachea* consumes
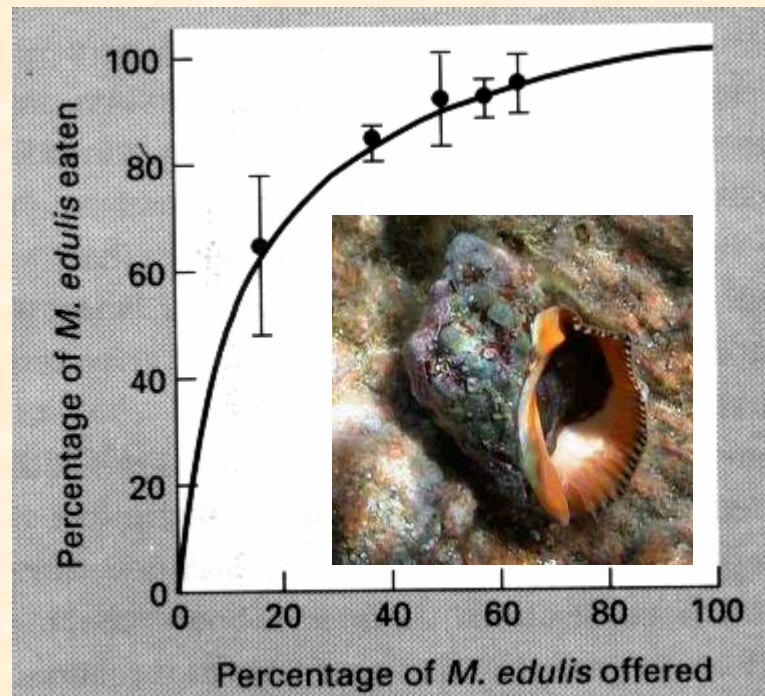rotten tissues of *Senita* cactus which contain poisonous
alkaloids)
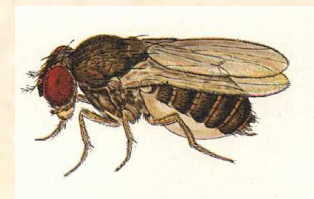
Preference & switching

▶ even polyphagous predators prefer certain prey
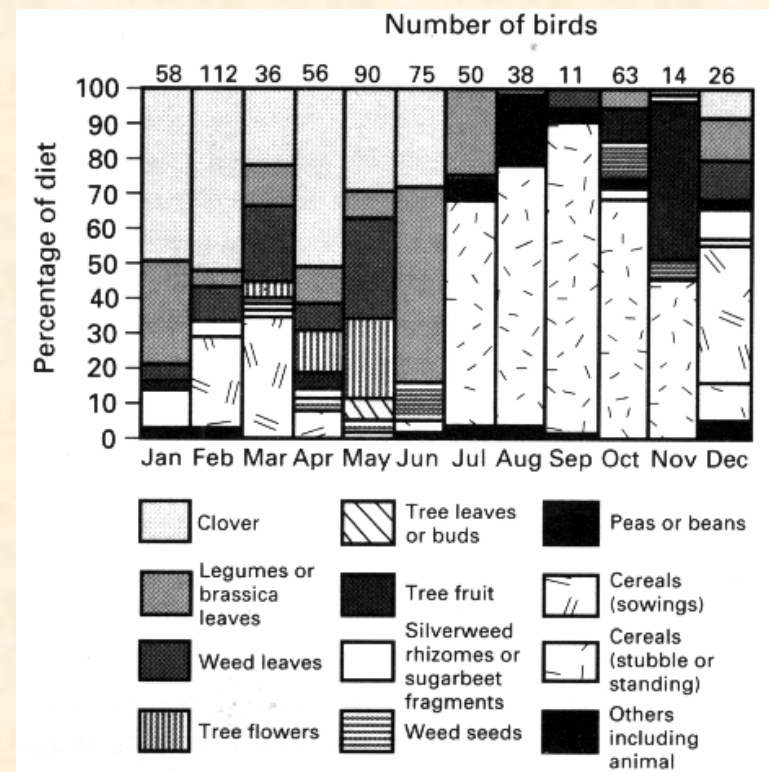- constant preference irrespective of prey density
- switching to more common prey

Seasonal shift in *Columba*

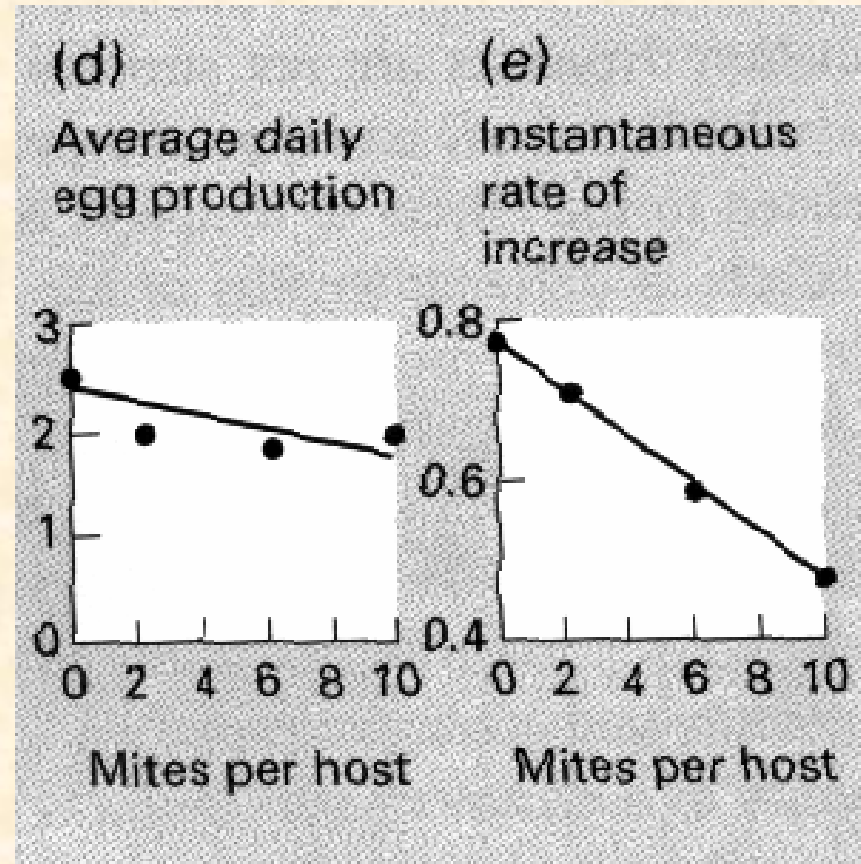*Thais* preferred *Mytilus edulis* over *M. californianus*

Murdoch & Oaten (1975)

Murton et al. (1964)

Effect on fitness of prey

▶ predation has positive effect on population of prey because reduce intraspecific competition - stabilise prey population dynamic

▶ true predators and parasitoids reduce fitness of prey to „0"
- *Mustela* consumed mainly solitary and injured individuals, so it has little effect on the *Ondatra* population growth

▶ caterpillars defoliate partially so that re-growth can occur, but cause reduction in fertility

▶ parasites - reduce fitness partially, effect is correlated with the burden

Negative effect of mite parasites on *Hydrometra*

(d) Average daily egg production

(e) Instantaneous rate of increase

Mites per host

Mites per host

Lanciani (1975)

Total response

▸ mortality of prey increases with the prey density due to predation

▸ Total response of a predator
- increasing consumption rate of individual predators → **functional response**
- increasing consumption of popualtion of predators → **numerical response**

▸ Holling (1959) found that predation rate increased with increasing prey population density
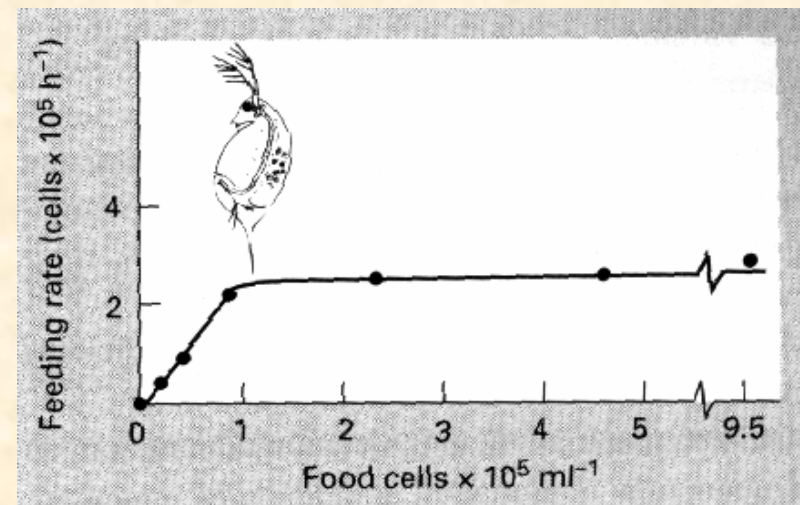- defined three types of functional responses

Type I

▸ number of captured prey is proportional to density
- prey mortality is constant
▸ less common
▸ found in passive predators (web-building spiders)
▸ the handling time exerts its effect suddenly
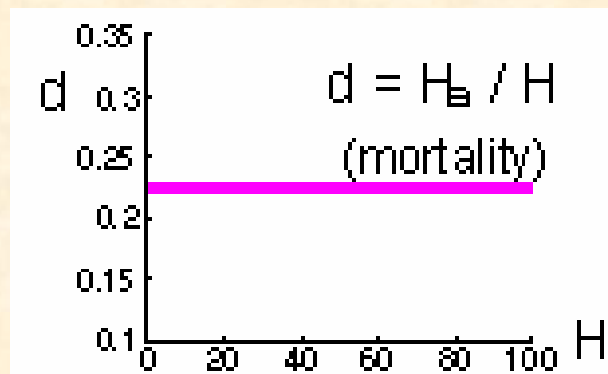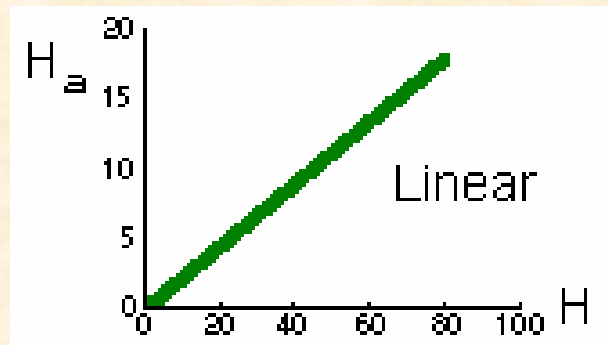
Daphnia feeding on *Saccharomyces* - above 10^5 cells
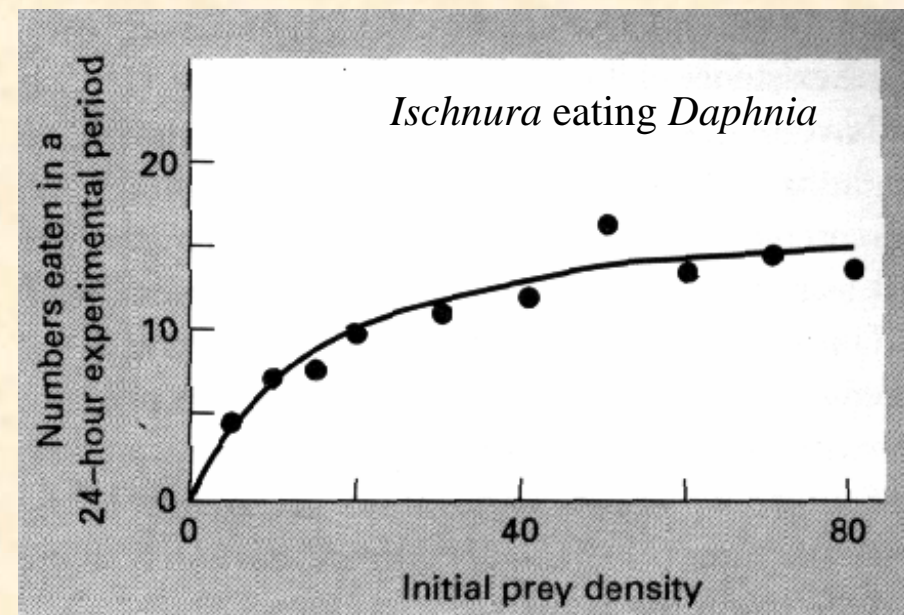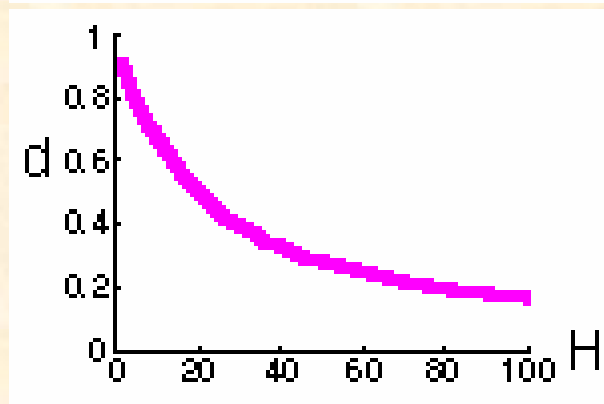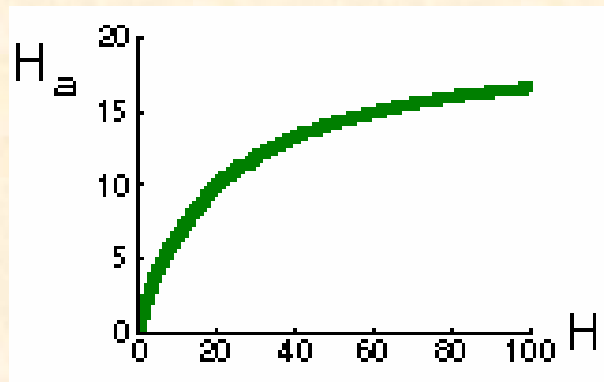*Daphnia* is unable to swallow all food

Rigler (1961)

Type II

▶ predators cause maximum mortality at low prey density
▶ as prey density increases, search becomes trivial and handling takes up increasing portion of the time
▶ saturation of predation at high densities
- prey mortality declines with density

Ischnura eating *Daphnia*

Thompson (1975)

Type III

‣ when attack rate increases or handling time decreases with increasing density
‣ predators develop search image (respond to kairomones)
‣ polyphagous predators switch to the most abundant prey
- prey mortality increases then declines
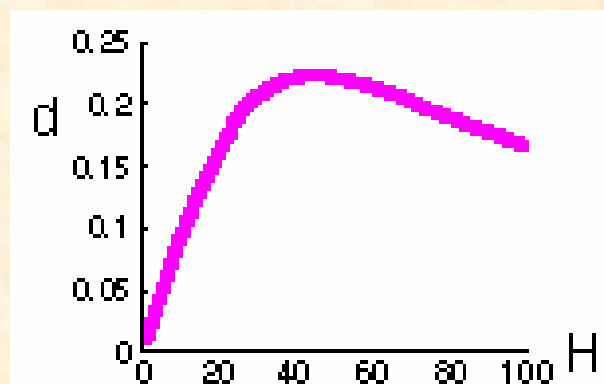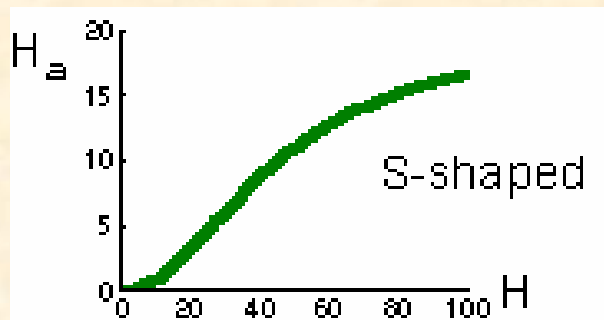
Notonecta switched from *Cleon* to *Asellus* based on its abundance

S-shaped
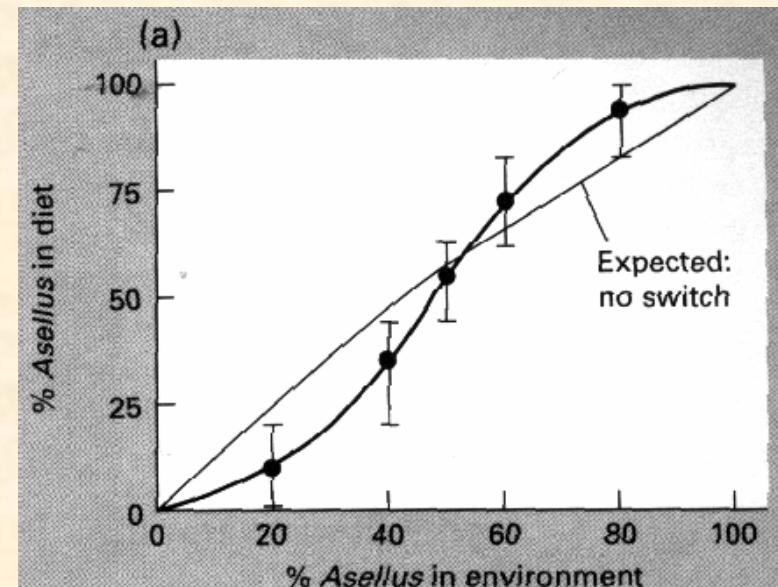
Lawton et al. (1974)

Models of response

T .. total time

T_S .. searching time - searching for prey

T_H .. handling time - handling prey (chasing, killing, eating, digesting)

$$T = T_S + T_H$$

H .. prey density

H_a .. number of captured prey

a .. capture efficiency or "search rate"

Type I

‣ consumption rate of a predator is unlimited

‣ $T_H = 0$

$$\boxed{H_a = aHT_S}$$

Type II

▸ consumption rate of a predator is limited because even if no time is needed for search, predator still needs to spend time on prey handling

▸ $T_H > 0$

▸ predator captures H_a prey during T

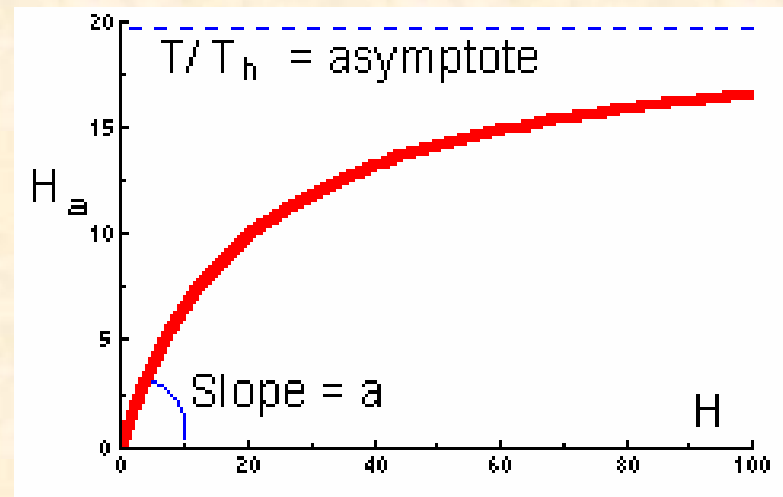T_h .. time spent on handling 1 prey

$$T_H = H_a T_h$$

$$H_a = aHT_S \rightarrow T_S = \frac{H_a}{aH}$$

▸ at low density predator spends most of the time searching, at high density on prey handling

$$T = T_H + T_S = H_a T_h + \frac{H_a}{aH}$$
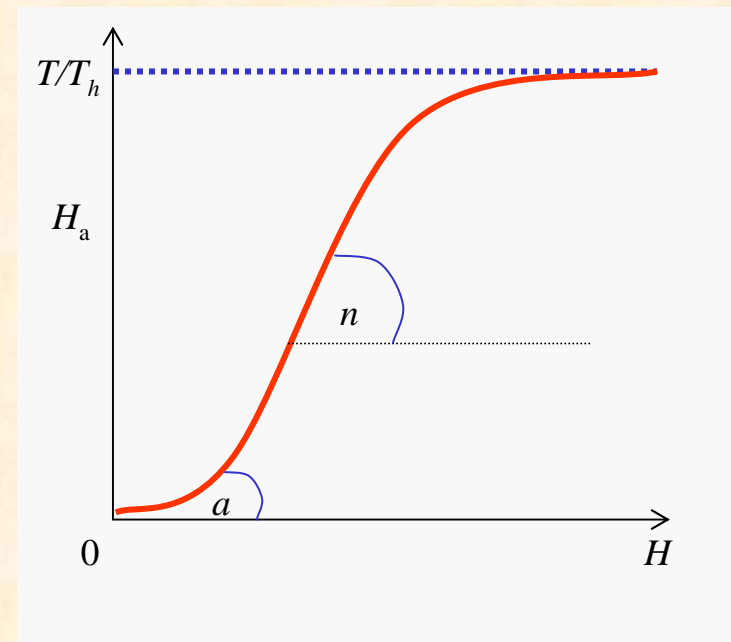
$$H_a = \frac{aHT}{1 + aHT_h}$$

Type III

▸ consumption increases at low densities and decreases at higher densities

n .. rate of increased consumption at higher densities
if $n = 1 \rightarrow$ Type II

a .. rate of increase at low densities

$$H_a = \frac{aTH^n}{1 + aT_hH^n}$$

Numerical response

Increase of predator population may result from:

▶ **increased rate of reproduction**
- the more prey is consumed the more energy can predator allocate to reproduction
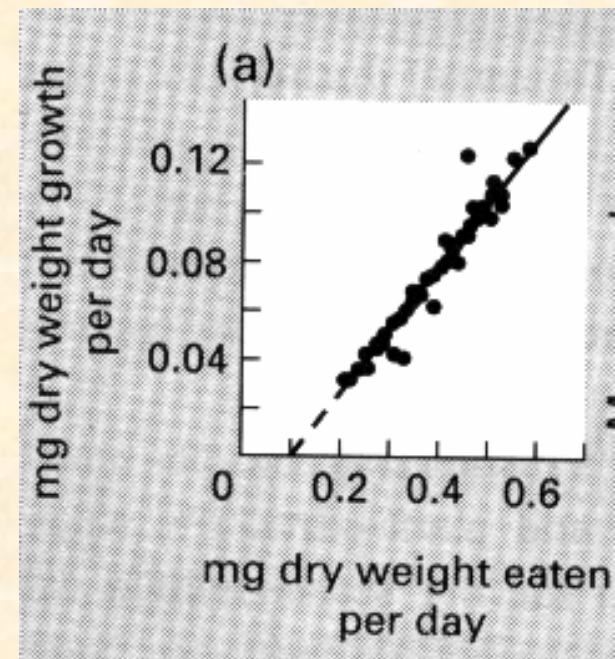- delayed response

Growth rate in *Linyphia*

▶ parasitoids - one host is sufficient
▶ predators, herbivores, parasites
- certain quantity of prey tissue is required
for basic maintenance = lower threshold

Turnbull (1962)

▶ **attraction of predators to prey aggregations**

- immediate response

- aggregated distribution makes search of predators more profitable

▶ conversion of prey into predator numbers

$$\frac{\mathrm{d}P}{\mathrm{d}t} = faHP - dP$$

f .. conversion efficiency
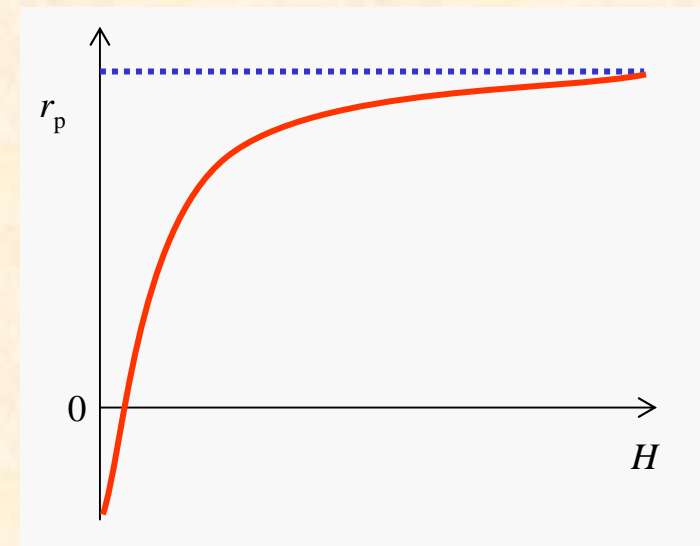d .. mortality of predators

▶ Ivlev (1955) model

$$r = a(1 - e^{-fV}) - d$$

V .. amount of prey
a .. search rate
f .. conversion efficiency
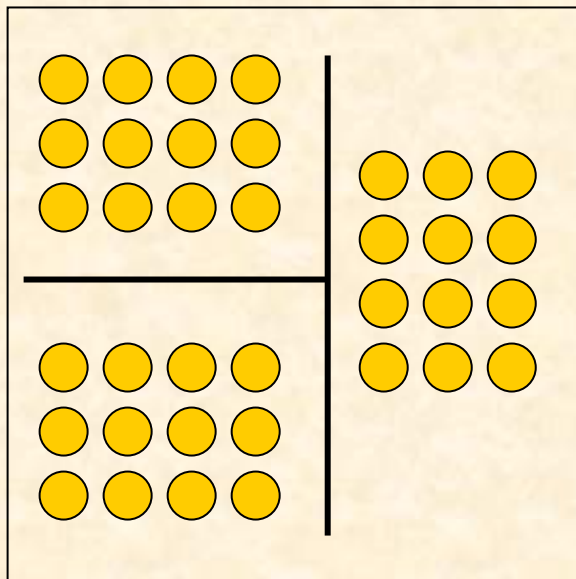d .. mortality of predators

Aggregation

▸ instead of concentration on profitable patches perspective predators and prey may play "hide-and-seek"

▸ Huffaker (1958): *Typhlodromus* captured *Eotetranychus* that fed upon oranges
- *Eotetranychus* maintained fluctuating density
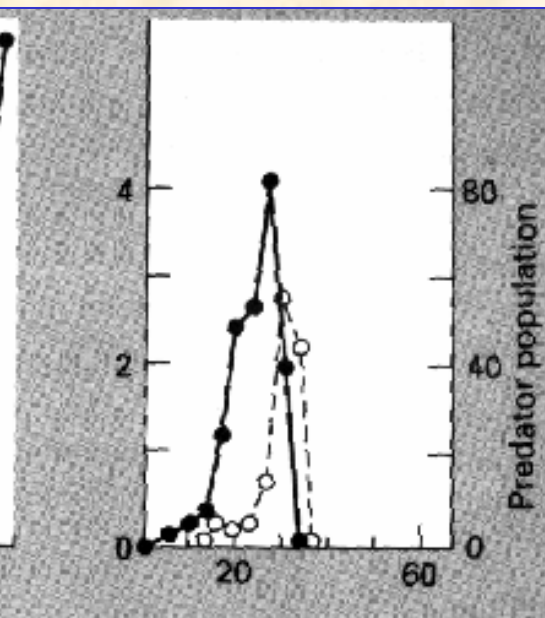- addition of *Typhlodromus* led to extinction of both

Experimental setup

Eotetranychus population dynamic
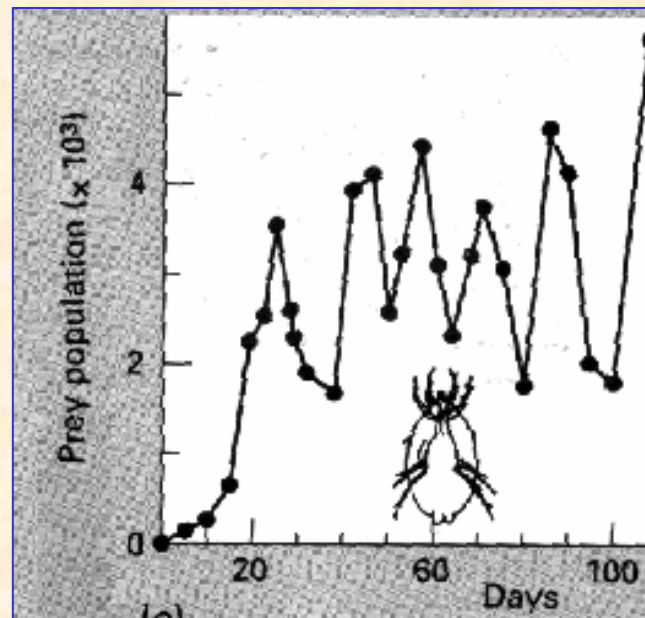
Predator-prey dynamic

▸ making environment patchy
- by placing Vaseline barriers
- facilitating dispersal by adding sticks

▸ each patch was unstable but whole microcosmos was stable
- patch with prey only → rapid increase of prey
- patches with predators only → rapid death of predator
- patches with both → predator consumed prey

Altered experimental setup
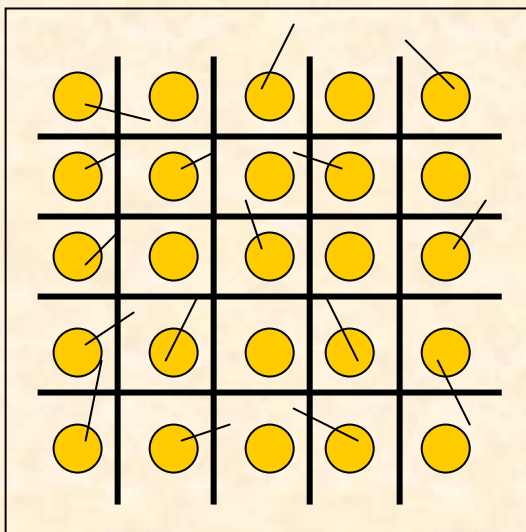
Sustained oscillations of the predator-prey system
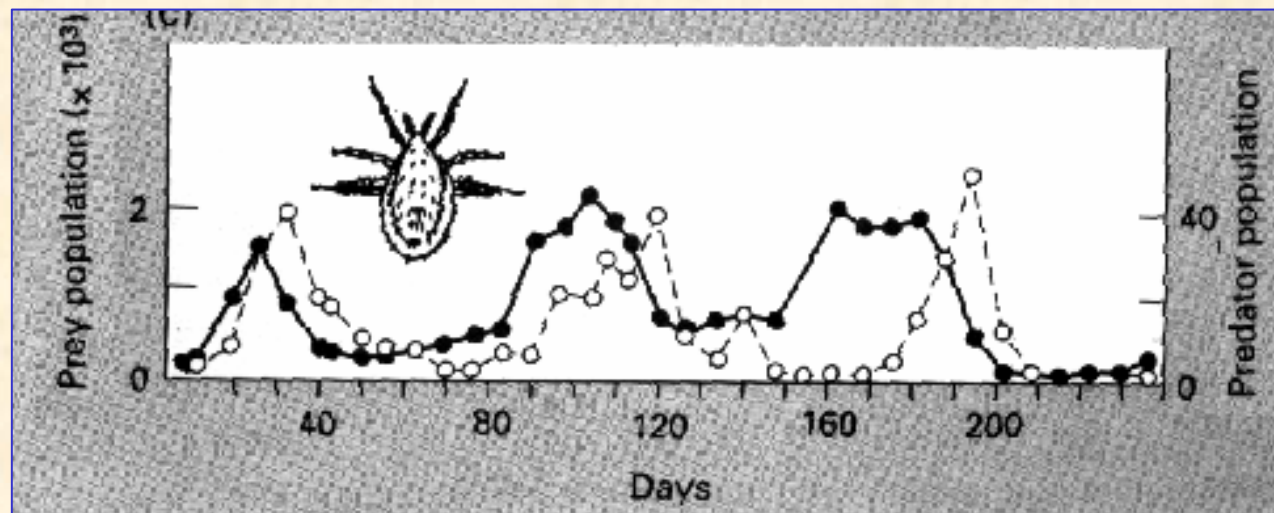
Refuge

▸ <u>For fixed proportion of prey</u> - certain proportion of *Ephestia* caterpillars buried deep enough in flour are not attacked by *Venturia* with short ovipositors

▸ <u>For fixed number of prey</u>
- adult *Balanus* occur in the upper zone where *Thais* can not get during short high tide thus consumes only juveniles
- a fixed number of *Balanus* is protected from predation irrespective of *Thais* density

▸ both refuge types stabilise the interaction

Connell (1970)