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A.C performed the experiment and data analyses; F.B developed and designed the experiment of the supplementary data; A.C, C.B, T.K developed and designed the experiment and data analyses; A.C, C.B, T.K wrote the manuscript; A.C, C.B, T.K, F.B proofread the manuscript.

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Alteration of predatory behaviour and growth in juvenile cuttlefish by fluoxetine and venlafaxine

Apolline Chabenat^{1,2}, Flavie Bidel^{1,3}, Thomas Knigge², Cécile Bellanger^{1*}

¹ *NORMANDIE UNIV, UNICAEN, UNIV RENNES, CNRS, EthoS (Éthologie animale et humaine) - UMR 6552, F-14000 CAEN, FRANCE*

² *NORMANDIE UNIV, UNILEHAVRE, FR CNRS 3730 SCALE, UMR-I02, Environmental Stress and Biomonitoring of Aquatic Environments (SEBIO), 76600 LE HAVRE, France*

³ *Department of Neurobiology, Silberman Institute of Life sciences, Hebrew University, Jerusalem 9190401, Israel*

* **Corresponding author:** Cécile Bellanger, NORMANDIE UNIV, UNICAEN, UNIV RENNES, CNRS, Ethos, Université de Caen Normandie, Esplanade de la Paix, CS 14032, 14032 CAEN cedex 5

E-mail address: cecile.bellanger@unicaen.fr

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Authors contribution

A.C performed the experiment and data analyses; F.B developed and designed the experiment of the supplementary data; A.C, C.B, T.K developed and designed the experiment and data analyses; A.C, C.B, T.K wrote the manuscript; A.C, C.B, T.K, F.B proofread the manuscript.

1 Alteration of predatory behaviour and growth in juvenile cuttlefish by 2 fluoxetine and venlafaxine

3 Apolline Chabenat^{1,2}, Flavie Bidel^{1,3}, Thomas Knigge², Cécile Bellanger^{1*}

4 ¹ NORMANDIE UNIV, UNICAEN, UNIV RENNES, CNRS, EthoS (Éthologie animale et humaine) - UMR
5 6552, F-14000 CAEN, FRANCE

6 ² NORMANDIE UNIV, UNILEHAVRE, FR CNRS 3730 SCALE, UMR-I02, Environmental Stress and
7 Biomonitoring of Aquatic Environments (SEBIO), 76600 LE HAVRE, France

8 ³ Department of Neurobiology, Silberman Institute of Life sciences, Hebrew University, Jerusalem
9 9190401, Israel

10 * **Corresponding author:** Cécile Bellanger, NECC-Ethos, Université de Caen Normandie, Esplanade
11 de la Paix, CS 14032, 14032 CAEN cedex 5

12 **E-mail address:** cecile.bellanger@unicaen.fr

13 **Keywords:** antidepressant; monoamines; cephalopod; *Sepia officinalis*; food intake;
14 development; maturation

15 Highlights

- 16 ● Very low ng·L⁻¹ concentrations of antidepressants impaired predatory behaviour
- 17 ● Cumulated fluoxetine and venlafaxine at 5 ng·L⁻¹ each decreased feeding motivation
- 18 ● Cumulated fluoxetine and venlafaxine at 5 ng·L⁻¹ each decreased successful prey capture
- 19 ● Cumulated fluoxetine and venlafaxine at 5 ng·L⁻¹ each decreased growth

20 Abstract

21 Antidepressants in coastal waters may affect ontogeny of predatory behaviour in cuttlefish, which may, as
22 a result, affect growth of newly-hatched cuttlefish. We investigated the effects of two of the most

23 prescribed antidepressants, fluoxetine (FLX) and venlafaxine (VEN) in environmentally realistic
24 concentrations on the predatory behaviour of hatchlings of *Sepia officinalis*. Newly-hatched cuttlefish
25 were exposed from 1 hour (*i.e.*, day 1) to 5 days after hatching to either FLX alone ($5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$) combined
26 with VEN ($2.5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ or $5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ each) to simulate an environmentally realistic exposure scenario. Their
27 predatory behaviour was analysed through several parameters: prey detection, feeding motivation and
28 success in catching the prey. All parameters improved in control animals over the first five days. The
29 combination of FLX and VEN at $5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ each altered the predatory behaviour of the hatchlings by
30 increasing the latency before attacking the prey, *i.e.*, reducing feeding motivation, as well as by reducing
31 the number of successful attacks. The changes in predatory behaviour tended to reduce food intake and
32 affected growth significantly at 28 days post-hatching. Exposures to either FLX at $5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ or FLX and
33 VEN in mixture at $2.5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ each tended to produce similar effects, even though they were not
34 statistically significant. It is likely that the antidepressants affect maturation of the predatory behaviour
35 and/or learning processes associated with the development of this behaviour. The slightest delay in
36 maturation processes may have detrimental consequences for growth and population fitness.

37 **1. Introduction**

38 Cuttlefish are active predators capable of catching diverse types of prey (Hanlon and Messenger, 2018),
39 such as small crustaceans and molluscs, but also fishes. *Sepia officinalis* becomes an efficient predator
40 over time by maturation of its nervous system and by learning whilst still in the egg and, notably,
41 beginning with hatching (Darmaillacq et al., 2008; Dickel et al., 1997). Indeed, hatchlings do not benefit
42 from parental care because the parents die before their offspring hatch. Juvenile cuttlefish, therefore, have
43 to forage independently (Hanlon and Messenger, 2018). To ensure their survival, they have to learn
44 quickly how to hunt efficiently, as newly-hatched cuttlefish can subsist without feeding only for a few
45 days by relying on the remainders of their internal yolk reserve (Dickel et al., 1997). To avoid any nutrient
46 deficiency, they usually begin to hunt before their yolk is entirely depleted (Wells, 1958). The critical
47 nature of these first days post hatching is underscored by their cuttlebone, which becomes positively

48 buoyant if juveniles do not eat by the fifth day after hatching. As a matter of consequence, the juveniles
49 become unable to hunt and they quickly perish (Boletzky, 1975; O'Brien et al., 2017). Furthermore,
50 newly-hatched cuttlefish will have to grow quickly to become efficient and less endangered predators as
51 growth is positively correlated to food intake. Reduced food intake and growth during the initial life stage
52 may persist at later life stages and throughout lifetime (Koueta and Boucaud-Camou, 1999).

53 Juvenile cuttlefish have to adapt their hunting method depending on the prey type (Hanlon and Messenger,
54 2018). With a crab in sight, cuttlefish will apprehend their prey by jumping from behind with partially
55 open arms and without using their tentacles (Duval et al., 1984). On the contrary, *S. officinalis* will attack
56 a shrimp by ejecting the two tentacles equipped with large suckers, to capture the prey and bring it to the
57 arms and mouth (Messenger, 1977). It appears that juvenile cuttlefish have a preference for shrimps as
58 first prey after hatching over crabs or young fish (Darmaillacq et al., 2006; Guibé et al., 2012). To
59 accomplish this hunting technique, newly-hatched cuttlefish need to (1) detect their prey, (2) assess the
60 distance between themselves and their prey, (3) and eject their tentacles in the right direction and fast
61 enough for successful seizure. These technical parameters need to be improved by maturing and learning
62 over the first few hours to days after hatching.

63 Behaviour in many species is regulated by the nervous system and influenced by many neurotransmitters.
64 Amongst them, serotonin (5-HT), norepinephrine (NE) and dopamine (DA) are monoamines known to be
65 involved in several behaviours (Weiger, 1997), such as locomotor activity (Pavlova, 2001), aggressive
66 behaviour (Huber et al., 1997), as well as predatory behaviour and food intake (He et al., 2018; Palovcik et
67 al., 1982; Wang et al., 2002). Consequently, any change in the levels of these neurotransmitters may result
68 in modifications of diverse behaviours and bear the possibility of cognitive impairments during
69 development. Therefore, environmental chemicals that interfere with the serotonergic, as well as the
70 noradrenergic and dopaminergic system of non-target organisms, could disturb behavioural traits in
71 aquatic organisms such as cuttlefish. A group of pharmaceuticals, the antidepressants of the family of
72 selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRI) and serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRI),

73 could be of particular concern, as they interact with the pre-synaptic membrane transporters that help
74 regulating neurotransmitter levels in the synaptic cleft. Because of their continuous release into the aquatic
75 environments worldwide *via* wastewater effluents, these pharmaceuticals may be considered pseudo-
76 persistent micropollutants (Bueno et al., 2012; Nielsen and Gøtzsche, 2011; OECD Health Statistics 2019
77 - OECD). Indeed, antidepressants are persistently detected and quantified at low $\text{ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ concentrations in
78 surface waters (Bueno et al., 2012; Meador et al., 2016; Metcalfe et al., 2010; Paíga et al., 2016; Rúa-
79 Gómez and Püttmann, 2012a, 2012b). Our study combines two of the most prescribed antidepressants,
80 Prozac[®] and Effexor[®], and their respective active molecules fluoxetine (FLX) and venlafaxine (VEN)
81 (Fong and Ford, 2014). The antidepressants FLX and VEN have been typically detected at the lower $\text{ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$
82 ¹ range in aquatic environments (Kwon and Armbrust, 2006) and were found at 0.3 and 1.3 $\text{ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$,
83 respectively, in the coastal waters of Northwestern France (Minguez et al., 2016). Therefore, frequently
84 reported low $\text{ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ concentrations of single antidepressants do not effectively reflect the true load of these
85 pharmaceuticals, as several antidepressants are released simultaneously into the water bodies and add to
86 higher total concentrations (Klosterhaus et al., 2013; Meador et al., 2016; Richmond et al., 2016). Despite
87 their low toxicity and trace amounts, FLX and VEN released into the aquatic environment may affect
88 particularly sensitive behavioural traits in non-target organisms, such as hatchlings of cuttlefish. Indeed,
89 antidepressants have been shown to induce behavioural impairments in various aquatic species, such as
90 changes in maturing/learning capacities (Chabenat et al., 2019; Di Poi et al., 2013), camouflage (Bidel et
91 al., 2016a; Di Poi et al., 2014), locomotor activity (Barry, 2013; Guler and Ford, 2010; Mesquita et al.,
92 2011; Tan et al., 2020) or reproductive behaviour (Campos et al., 2016; Fong, 1998). Predatory behaviour
93 was also affected by the two psychoactive drugs in several aquatic species, such as striped bass (Bisesi et
94 al., 2016, 2014; Gaworecki and Klaine, 2008), fathead minnow (Stanley et al., 2007; Weinberger and
95 Klaper, 2014), goldfish (Forsatkar et al., 2014; Mennigen et al., 2010), or shore crab (Peters et al., 2017).

96 Cephalopods have the most developed brain amongst all molluscs, allowing for a complex behavioural
97 repertoire (Hanlon and Messenger, 2018). Because of their elevated cognitive capacities (Darmaillacq et

98 al., 2006; Dickel et al., 1997; Mather and Dickel, 2017), which mature during their first life stages, they
99 are particularly sensitive models to study the potential effects of psychotropic substances on animal
100 behaviour. Amongst the various behavioural traits displayed by juvenile cuttlefish, predatory behaviour
101 after hatching is fundamental for growth and survival of the hatchlings. Any modification of foraging that
102 reduces predation success due to pollutants present in the shallow coastal waters, where female cuttlefish
103 lay their eggs, could affect population recruitment. Moreover, a fundamentally impaired predatory
104 behaviour following antidepressant exposure may reduce hunting success and, consequently, food intake.
105 Reduced food intake, in turn, is likely to have an impact on other physiological or morphological aspects,
106 such as reduced growth (Koueta and Boucaud-Camou, 1999). Earlier studies showed that embryos of *S.*
107 *officinalis* do indeed bioaccumulate pollutants such as heavy metals or the antidepressant FLX (Bidel et
108 al., 2016a; Lacoue-Labarthe et al., 2016) and reported effects of antidepressants on juvenile cuttlefish. For
109 instance, Di Poi *et al.* (2013) demonstrated alterations of cognitive abilities of cuttlefish hatchlings and
110 Bidel *et al.* (2016) as well as Di Poi *et al.* (2014) found that camouflage was affected. Although studies on
111 the effects of single molecules, such as FLX and VEN, on predatory behaviour exist (Gaworecki and
112 Klaine, 2008; Mennigen et al., 2010; Stanley et al., 2007), few studies investigated the effects of
113 cumulated antidepressants on this particular behaviour (Bisesi et al., 2016) and no study investigated their
114 effects at a very early life stage, essential for growth and population survival. Yet, cumulated
115 concentrations of major antidepressants constitute a more realistic environmental scenario than testing
116 single antidepressants. Therefore, this study assesses the impact of two antidepressants at cumulated low
117 $\text{ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ concentrations, combining a SSRI (FLX) and a SNRI (VEN) on predatory behaviour and growth —
118 two fundamental ecological parameters— in highly sensitive hatchlings of *S. officinalis*.

119 **2. Material and methods**

120 **2.1. Animal rearing and experimental conditions**

121 Eggs of wild cuttlefish (*Sepia officinalis*) were collected in the English Channel (off the coast of Luc-sur-
122 mer, France) at different locations and several times to ensure genetic variability of eggs laid by different

123 females. They were randomly mixed and kept until hatching in filtered natural sea water in an open-loop
124 system under a natural summer photoperiod (16h light:8h dark) in a climate chamber ($15\pm 1^\circ\text{C}$) at the
125 'Centre de Recherches en Environnement Côtier' (CREC) of the University of Caen Normandy at Luc-
126 sur-mer, France. Egg laying days were unknown and spread out over time. Thus, eight hatchlings were
127 collected daily and isolated as explained below until a total of 60 cuttlefish between the 11th and 19th of
128 July 2017 was reached.

129 At hatching, cuttlefish were transferred immediately to glass beakers (\varnothing 11 cm, height 6 cm; one animal
130 per beaker, henceforth designated 'home tanks'), assigned randomly to four experimental groups and
131 exposed individually (n=15 per group) from their very first hours post-hatching to either (1) carbon-
132 filtered seawater (control), or (2) $5\text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ FLX alone (FLX5), or (3) $2.5\text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ FLX and $2.5\text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ VEN in
133 mixture (FLXVEN2.5) as well as (4) $5\text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ FLX and $5\text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ VEN in mixture (FLXVEN5). Cuttlefish
134 were reared over a period of 28 days in a semi-static system supplied with 250 mL carbon-filtered
135 seawater (FSW) to assess the effects of antidepressant exposure on growth. Temperature was maintained
136 at $15\pm 1^\circ\text{C}$ and the photoperiod was set 16h light:8h dark. Constant conditions during the exposures, *i.e.*,
137 waterborne antidepressant concentrations, salinity of 35 ± 1 PSU, O_2 -levels not less than 80%, as well as
138 nitrite and nitrate levels within acceptable levels ($[\text{NO}_2^-]_{\text{max}}=0.05\text{ mg}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$, $[\text{NO}_3^-]_{\text{max}}=0.15\text{ mg}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$), were
139 maintained by transferring each animal daily to a new home tank filled with renewed FSW and spiked
140 with the respective antidepressant concentrations. Cuttlefish were fed once a day during the predation test
141 with a sand shrimp (*Crangon crangon*). All shrimps were adapted to the size of the cuttlefish to be
142 properly caught and eaten, *i.e.*, a shrimps' length of about 3-6 mm relative to a dorsal mantle length of the
143 juvenile cuttlefish of 1 cm or less. After the predation tests were terminated at day 5, the animals were
144 exposed and fed as before with one shrimp per day over 28 days of exposure to assess the growth of the
145 animals. No mortality was observed during the test duration, *i.e.*, 28 days.

146 Animal hatchery and animal experiments were carried out in accordance with the guidelines of the EU
147 Directive 2010/63/EU for animal experiments (Protocol approved by the French National Ethical
148 Committee for Animal Experimentation, Agreement number: 035121.02).

149 **2.2. Chemical contamination**

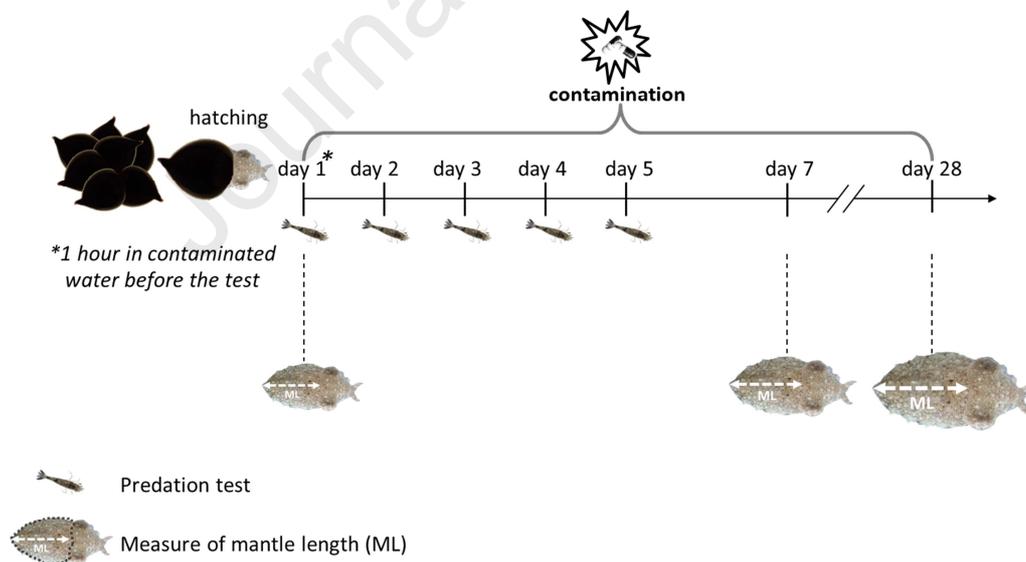
150 A set of stock solutions at $10 \mu\text{g}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ of either FLX hydrochloride (CAS 56296-78-7, Sigma Aldrich, St.
151 Louis, USA) or VEN hydrochloride (CAS 99300-78-4, Sigma Aldrich) was prepared in distilled water and
152 kept at -80°C until use. For daily water renewals of the cuttlefish home tanks, stock solutions were diluted
153 in FSW to the appropriate final concentrations. Preliminary studies confirmed that the actual
154 concentrations after 24 hours were not less than 75% of the nominal concentration. Waterborne FLX and
155 VEN concentrations were chosen to approximate measured surface water concentrations quantified along
156 the Northwestern coast of France, *i.e.*, 0.3 and $1.3 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ for FLX and VEN respectively (Minguez et al.,
157 2016). The FLX5-treatment was used as a reference to compare the results of the present study to those of
158 previous studies, as FLX represents the model antidepressant, which was first SSRI released into the
159 environment and has therefore been used in many studies over the last decades to study its effects and
160 similar antidepressants on physiological and behavioural responses in aquatic animals. In comparison, the
161 effects of VEN alone at $5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ (VEN5) have been assessed in a separate experiment with slightly
162 different settings, the results of which can be found in the supplementary data.

163 **2.3. Predation test**

164 **2.3.1. Experimental setup**

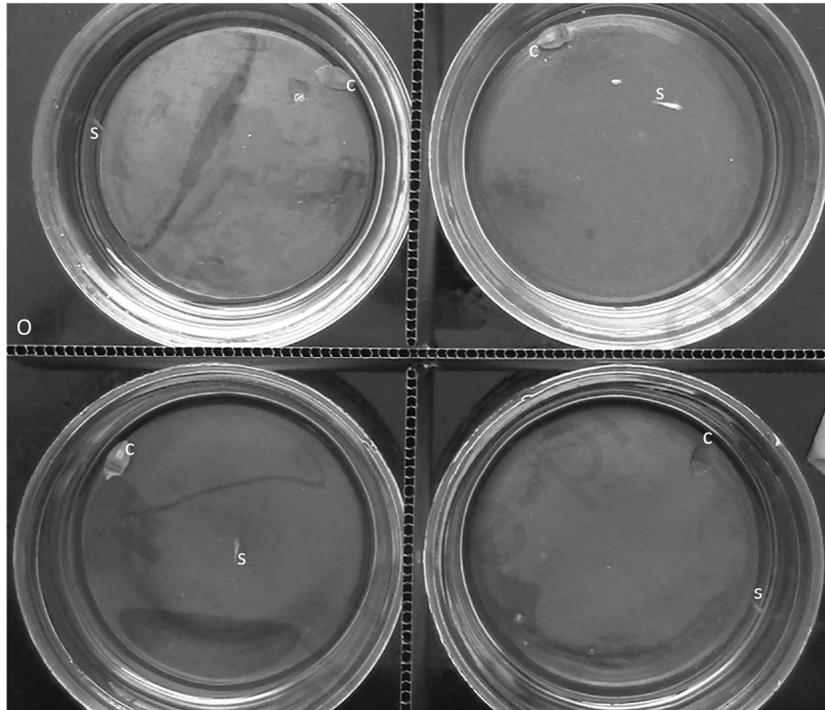
165 Predatory behaviour of each individual cuttlefish was assessed at five time points: from 1 day post-
166 hatching (dph) corresponding to an exposure of 1h in contaminated FSW until 5 dph (Fig. 1) using the
167 predation test described in the following. Recordings were conducted at the same hours (between 9 and
168 11am) to avoid any influence of circadian rhythms on feeding behaviour and to maintain equal exposure
169 durations between the tests, *i.e.*, 24 hours. Each day, cuttlefish were moved within their home tanks (to

170 avoid additional stress) inside a custom-made black tent for predation test recording, in order to avoid any
 171 external stimuli. A circular LED lamp (Neewer[®], Guangdong, China) served as light source. The lamp
 172 was adjusted in an oblique position 60 cm above the tanks with the inner part of the tent being lined with
 173 white fabrics so as to reflect the light in order to avoid direct light on cuttlefish. The camera (Legria HF
 174 R506, Canon Camera Co. Inc., Tokyo, Japan) was installed on a stand adjacent to the lamp. Four
 175 cuttlefish, one from each of the conditions, passed the test simultaneously (Fig. 2). Opaque walls separated
 176 the tanks in order to avoid visual inter-individual influence (*e.g.*, mimic) (Fig. 2). The test recording began
 177 when a shrimp was inserted in the centre of the home tank with the cuttlefish tending to remain close to
 178 the tank's walls. The video recording lasted 10 min, after which each animal was returned to its
 179 experimental exposure zone. If the cuttlefish did not eat the shrimp within the 10 min test period, the
 180 shrimp was removed from the tank and excluded from the common batch to avoid any cross
 181 contamination or habituation from the shrimp. The experimental setup for VEN5 is described in the
 182 methods to the supplementary data.



183
 184 **Figure 1.** Timeline of the experiments. The day of hatching, the cuttlefish were placed in contaminated
 185 water one hour before the first test and the exposure lasted 28 days. Each cuttlefish passed the predation

186 test each day for 5 days. Growth was monitored by measuring mantle length (ML) at three time points,
 187 i.e., day 1, 7 and 28 post-hatching.



188
 189 **Figure 2.** Experimental set-up of the predation test. Cuttlefish passed the test within their home tanks. c:
 190 cuttlefish; s: shrimp; O: opaque walls.

191 2.3.2. Behavioural analyses

192 Video-recordings were analysed manually *a posteriori*. Predatory behaviour of juvenile cuttlefish was
 193 assessed on the basis of (i) whether the prey was actually detected by the cuttlefish, (ii) the cuttlefish
 194 showed feeding motivation, i.e., attacked the prey it detected and (iii) feeding behaviour, which was
 195 defined as a successful attack and eating the prey.

196 *Prey detection* was estimated through six different criteria that were either associated with the
 197 presence of the prey, or with the behaviour of cuttlefish. Prey-associated criteria, which accounted for
 198 likely detection of the shrimp by the cuttlefish, were assessed as: (i) the shrimp was moving in the beaker,
 199 (ii) the shrimp was less than 3 cm away from the cuttlefish, (iii) the shrimp was in the cuttlefish's field of

200 vision, which covers a total of 320°. At least two of these prey-associated criteria had to be observed
201 simultaneously in order to accept a prey as detected, even if no obvious behaviour of the cuttlefish
202 towards the shrimp could be observed. Predator-associated criteria, which confirmed that shrimp were
203 detected by the cuttlefish were assessed as: (i) the cuttlefish positioned itself towards the prey, (ii) the
204 cuttlefish attempted an attack, but missed the prey (*i.e.*, miscalculated the distance), (iii) the cuttlefish
205 attempted an attack, but the prey escaped. If either of these predator-associated criteria, alone or combined
206 with any other prey- or predator-associated criteria occurred, prey detection could be established with
207 certainty. Eventually, prey detection was expressed as the percentage of one of the following categories
208 relative to the total number of observations: firstly, cuttlefish that successfully detected, attacked and ate
209 the shrimp (detection + success), secondly, cuttlefish that detected the prey but did not perform a
210 successful attack (detection + no success), and thirdly, cuttlefish that did not detect the shrimp (no
211 detection).

212 For *feeding motivation*, two indicators were established:

- 213 (i) The latency before the first attack corresponded to the time between the shrimp's entry into
214 the home tank and the first time the cuttlefish ejected its tentacles towards the shrimp. If the
215 animals did not attack, the maximum latency of 600 s was assigned.
- 216 (ii) The number of attempts to catch the prey until the cuttlefish succeeded to seize the shrimp,
217 *i.e.*, accomplishing a successful attack, or until the 10 min test ended (removal of the shrimp).

218 *Feeding behaviour* was determined by the number of successful attacks, *i.e.*, the shrimp were attacked
219 and eaten by the cuttlefish within the 10 min test, for each of the treatment groups at each time point.

220 Behavioural endpoints for VEN5 alone differed to some extent from the above-described analyses and
221 are explained in the methods to the **supplementary data**.

222 2.3.3. Food intake

223 Food intake was determined as the total of shrimps eaten by each cuttlefish over the first five dph, hence
224 the maximum number being five, *i.e.*, one per predation test and time point.

225 **2.4. Growth**

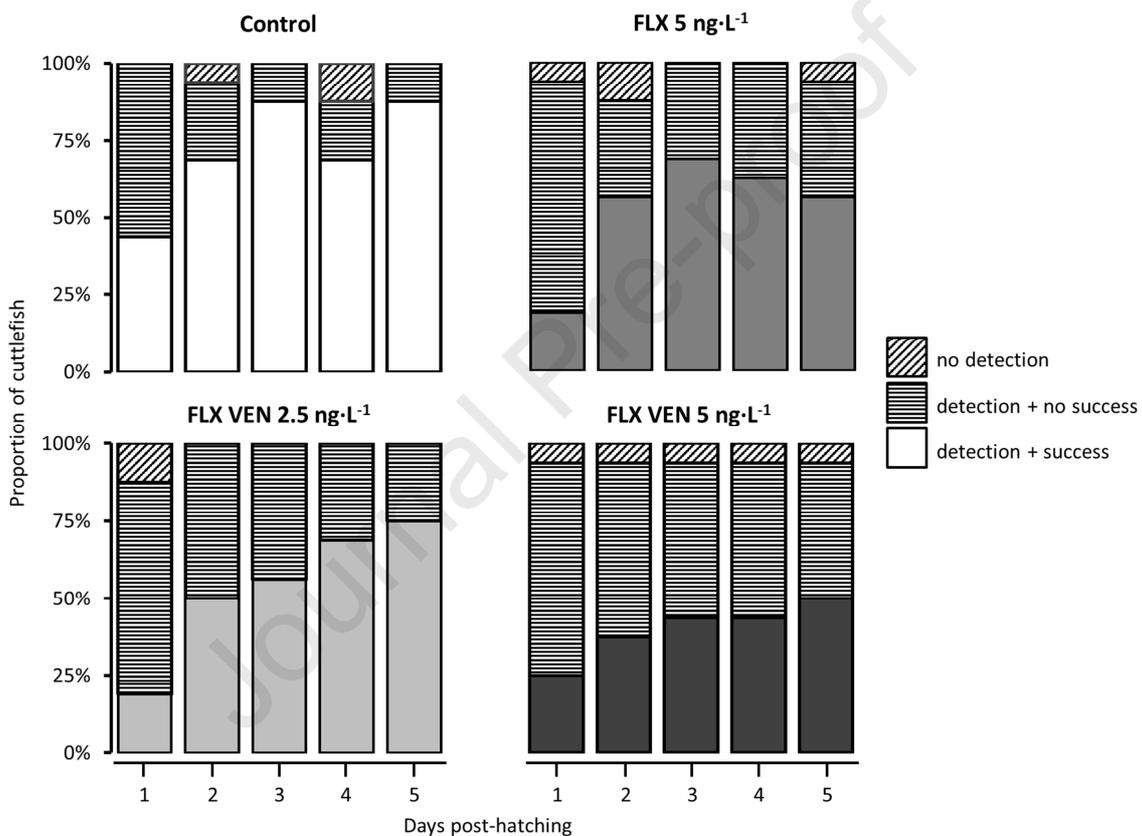
226 Growth was evaluated by measuring the mantle length (ML) of the cuttlefish from the dorsal end to back
227 of the eyes on still pictures (Fig. 1) at 1, 7 and 28 dph, until significant size differences became apparent
228 between groups. Each animal's ML was measured in triplicate, *i.e.*, on three different pictures using
229 ImageJ[®] (Bethesda, Maryland, USA), for each age and the mean of the three values was taken as its ML.
230 To guarantee that ML was randomly distributed and cuttlefish started from the same growth distribution
231 for all treatment groups, ML on day 1 was compared across all groups. That being the case, an analysis
232 across all groups and ages was performed, as described in the statistical analyses, to reveal any difference
233 between treatments and ages.

234 **2.5. Statistical analysis**

235 All statistical tests were performed using R Studio (Version 1.1.453, RStudio Inc., Boston, USA,
236 <http://www.r-project.org>). As data did not meet the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of
237 variance, we used nonparametric permutation test analyses of data from factorial experiments (function
238 `ezPerm`; "ez" package). The number of iterations was set to 1000. We used mixed within-and-between Ss
239 designs (*i.e.*, repeated factors: age; independent factor: experimental groups) to analyse feeding behaviour
240 (*i.e.*, successful attacks), feeding motivation (*i.e.*, latency before the first strike; number of attempts to
241 catch the prey) and growth (*i.e.*, mantle length) at each age. Prey detection was analysed with Friedman
242 test (function `friedman_test`; "coin" package) on raw data. Additionally, a Kruskal-Wallis test was
243 performed for growth in order to verify the equal distribution of ML among cuttlefish at 1 dph (function
244 `kruskal_test`; "coin" package). For all types of analysis, if the null hypothesis was rejected ($p \leq 0.05$), post-
245 hoc permutation tests were performed to highlight any differences between experimental groups and
246 between ages, using the "RVAidememoire" package (function `pairwise.perm.t.test`). We adjusted the false
247 discovery rate using the Benjamini-Hochberg procedure (Benjamini and Hochberg, 1995).

248 **3. Results**249 **3.1. Predation test**

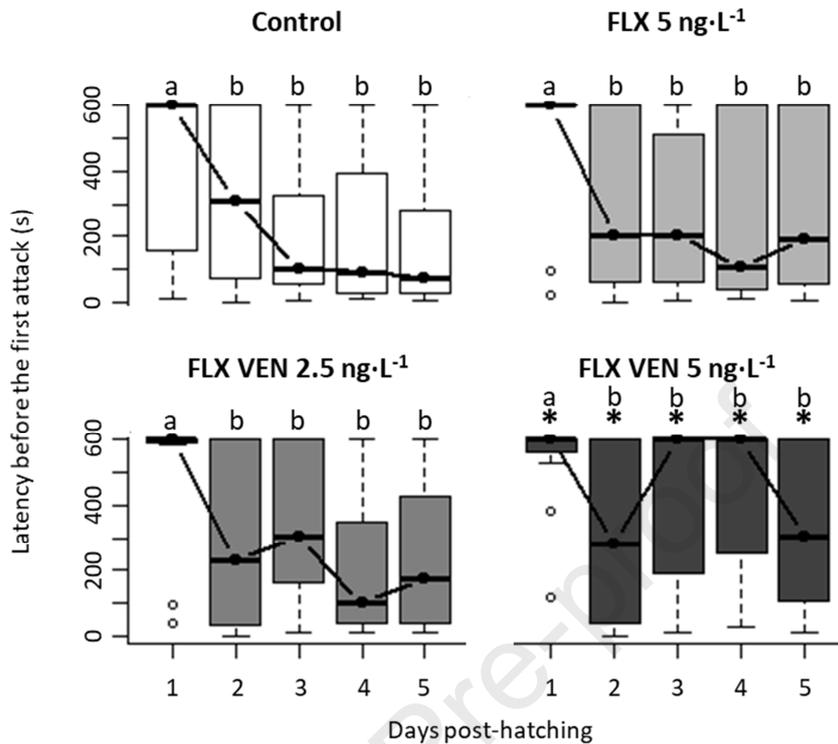
250 *Prey detection* did neither differ significantly among treatment groups (Friedman test: $p=0.413$), nor
 251 among ages (Friedman test: $p=0.698$) (Fig. 2). Each group had a very high detection rate, *i.e.*, more than
 252 87.5% of the animals detected the prey regardless of treatment group or age.



253
 254 **Figure 2.** *Prey detection during a 10 min predation test by juvenile cuttlefish exposed to four conditions:*
 255 *control (non-exposed group), fluoxetine (FLX) at 5 ng·L⁻¹, fluoxetine and venlafaxine in combination*
 256 *(FLX VEN) at 2.5 ng·L⁻¹ or 5 ng·L⁻¹ each. Predation test was conducted at five time points of exposure (1,*
 257 *2, 3, 4 and 5 days post-hatching). Friedman test showed no significant difference in detection in any*
 258 *group at any age (n=15 per treatment group).*

259 *Latency before the first attack* was significantly different among groups (permutation test across all
260 groups: $p=0.040$). Pairwise comparisons showed that the latency was significantly greater in the
261 FLXVEN5 than in the control group (post-hoc permutation test: $p=0.024$; Fig. 3). A greater latency was
262 also found for VEN5 (Wilcoxon-Mann Withney test: $p=0.008$) (Fig. S1, supplementary data). Even if no
263 significant difference did clearly emerge between the FLX5 and the FLXVEN2.5, respectively and the
264 FLXVEN5 group, their latencies tended to be lower than the latter (post-hoc permutation test: FLX5-
265 FLXVEN5, $p=0.072$; FLXVEN2.5-FLXVEN5, $p=0.072$). Similar trends were observed between the
266 control group and either of the FLX5 and FLXVEN2.5 groups (post-hoc permutation test: control-FLX5,
267 $p=0.075$; control-FLXVEN2.5, $p=0.089$).

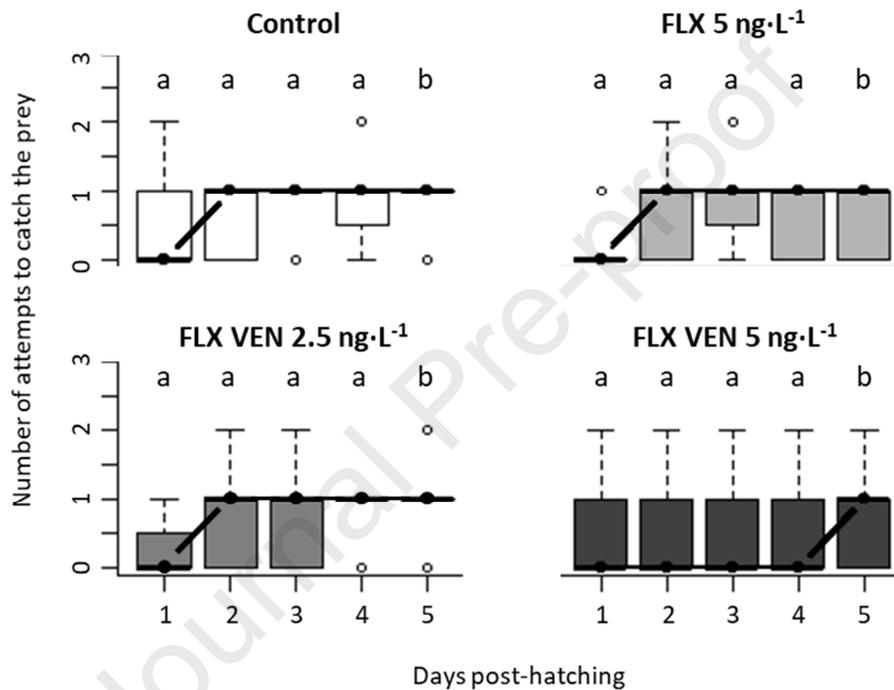
268 Importantly, latency evolved with age (permutation test across all groups: $p<0.001$). Indeed, pairwise
269 comparisons showed that latency decreased drastically between the first day after hatching and day 2
270 (post-hoc permutation test: d1-d2 $p=0.005$), followed by a more moderate decrease between day 2 and day
271 3 as well as day 4 and day 5, which were, however, statistically non-significant (post-hoc permutation test:
272 $p>0.05$). This pattern is easily observed in the control group (Fig. 3). Within the treatment groups, latency
273 also decreased very rapidly between day 1 and day 2, but developed less steadily in the FLX5 and,
274 notably, in the FLXVEN2.5 groups or even oscillated from day 2 to day 5 in the FLXVEN5 group (Fig.
275 3). Remarkably, in all treatment groups, animals rarely attacked one hour after hatching, *i.e.*, at day 1, but
276 attacks by hatchlings after 1 hour were more frequent in the control group.



277
 278 **Figure 3.** Latency before the first attack towards the prey, a sand shrimp (*Crangon crangon*), over a 10
 279 min predation test. Newly-hatched cuttlefish were tested at five time points of exposure, i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4 and
 280 5 days post-hatching. Four groups of cuttlefish were exposed to either fluoxetine (FLX) at 5 ng·L⁻¹, or
 281 fluoxetine and venlafaxine in combination (FLX VEN) at 2.5 ng·L⁻¹, or 5 ng·L⁻¹ each, with non-exposed as
 282 controls. Boxplots show medians (horizontal bars), upper and lower interquartile ranges (boxes) as well
 283 as highest and lowest values (whiskers); circles represent outliers. Post-hoc permutation tests adjusted
 284 with FDR correction (Benjamini-Hochberg procedure) were performed for inter-group and inter-age
 285 comparisons: a and b indicate significant differences among ages within groups ($p < 0.05$); * shows
 286 significant differences among the exposed groups and the control group ($p < 0.05$; $n = 15$ per treatment
 287 group)

288 The number of attempts made to attack was not significantly different among groups (permutation test
 289 across all groups: $p = 0.359$), but it was significantly different among ages (post-hoc permutation test:
 290 $p = 0.001$; Fig. 4). Pairwise comparison confirmed that cuttlefish from each group attacked more often at

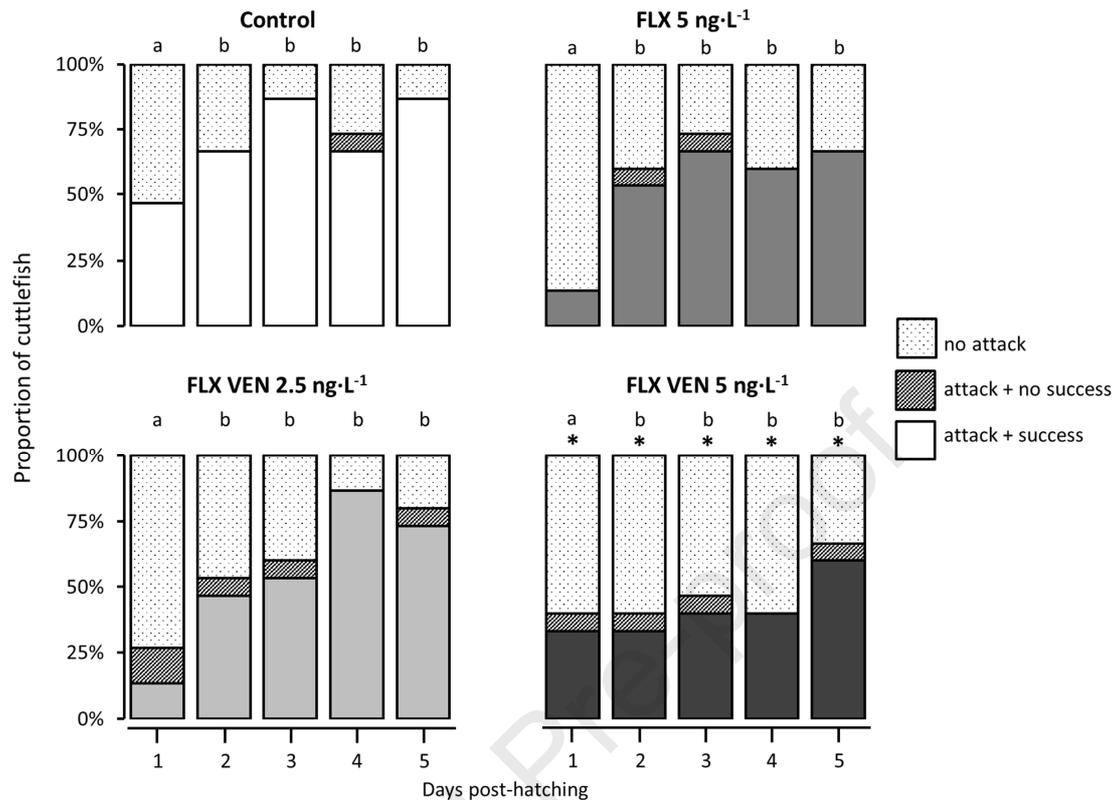
291 day 5 than during the first 4 dph (post-hoc permutation test: $p=0.04$). Even if the results did not show any
 292 statistical difference, it may be noticed that gradually, more and more cuttlefish attacked their prey each
 293 day, no matter what the treatment conditions were (post-hoc permutation test: d1-d3, $p=0.08$; d1-d4,
 294 $p=0.08$). Indeed, the same pattern was seen in successful attacks, with an increasing proportion of
 295 cuttlefish attacking their prey each dph (Fig. 5).



296
 297 **Figure 4.** Number of attempts made to catch the prey, a sand shrimp (*Crangon crangon*), over a 10 min
 298 predation test. Newly-hatched cuttlefish were tested at five time points of exposure, i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
 299 days post-hatching. Four groups of cuttlefish were exposed to either fluoxetine (FLX) at 5 ng·L⁻¹, or
 300 fluoxetine and venlafaxine in combination (FLX VEN) at 2.5ng·L⁻¹, or 5 ng·L⁻¹ each, with non-exposed
 301 animals as controls. Boxplots show medians (horizontal bars), upper and lower interquartile ranges
 302 (boxes) as well as highest and lowest values (whiskers); circles represent outliers. Post-hoc permutation
 303 tests adjusted with FDR correction (Benjamini-Hochberg procedure) were performed for inter-group and
 304 inter-age comparisons: a and b indicate significant differences among ages ($p<0.05$; $n=15$ per treatment
 305 group)

306 *Successful attacks* were significantly different among groups (permutation test across all groups:
307 $p=0.018$). Whereas, the control group showed the highest overall rate of successful attacks (except for d4,
308 Fig. 5), the FLXVEN5 group had the lowest rate of successful attacks (post-hoc permutation test:
309 FLXVEN-control, $p=0.024$). The FLX5 and FLXVEN2.5 tended to have a lower rate of successful
310 attacks, as compared to the control group, but these differences did not attain statistical significance (post-
311 hoc permutation test: FLX5-control, $p=0.084$; FLXVEN2.5-control, $p=0.084$). The lack of statistical
312 significance may be explained by a high intra-group variability within FLX5 and FLXVEN2.5 groups.

313 As with the latency, the rate of successful attacks differed among ages (permutation test across all groups:
314 $p<0.001$). In fact, pairwise comparisons showed an increase in successful attacks with age between d1 and
315 d2, d3, d4, d5 (post-hoc permutation test: d1-d2, $p=0.015$; d1-d3, d1-d4 and d1-d5, $p=0.007$, respectively)
316 for each group. Although this statistically significant increase with age was obtained for all groups, the
317 FLXVEN5 treatment stood out as the group with the lowest progressive increase (at d5: 56.25% against
318 87.5% for control; 62.5% for FLX5; 75% for FLXVEN2.5). In the experiment that tested VEN alone, the
319 success rate was lowered by 20 percentage points as compared to the control (VEN5=76.66% \pm 13.19%
320 SEM against 96.15 \pm 3.84% SEM for control; for details see supplementary data). This resulted in
321 significantly lower proportion of cuttlefish that ate a shrimp within the 20 min test in animals exposed to
322 VEN alone at 5 ng·L⁻¹ (Fisher's exact test: $p<0.001$) (Fig. S2, supplementary data), suggesting a reduction
323 of food intake when exposed to VEN5.

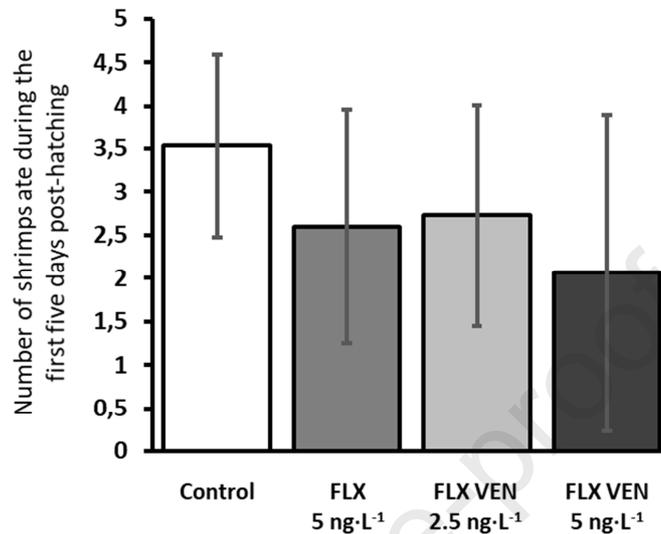


324

325 **Figure 5.** Proportion of cuttlefish which did (i) attack the prey with success, did (ii) attack the prey
 326 without success, or did (iii) not attack the prey at all over a 10 min predation test. Four groups of
 327 cuttlefish were exposed to either fluoxetine (FLX) at 5 ng·L⁻¹, or fluoxetine and venlafaxine in combination
 328 (FLX VEN) at 2.5 ng·L⁻¹, or 5 ng·L⁻¹ each, with non-exposed animals as controls. Post-hoc permutation
 329 tests (n=15 per treatment group) adjusted with FDR correction (Benjamini-Hochberg procedure) were
 330 performed for inter-groups and inter-age comparisons: a and b indicate significant differences among
 331 ages within groups (p<0.05); * shows significant differences between the control group and either of the
 332 exposed groups (p<0.05)

333 The food intake, i.e., number of shrimps eaten throughout the first five dph was not significantly different
 334 among groups, even though a trend may be noticed (Kruskal-Wallis test, p=0.068). Cuttlefish from the
 335 control group ate in average 3.5±1.1 shrimps during the first five dph, whereas cuttlefish exposed to

336 antidepressants such as FLX5, FLXVEN2.5 and FLXVEN5 groups ate in average 2.6 ± 1.4 , 2.7 ± 1.3 ,
 337 2.1 ± 1.8 shrimps, respectively.

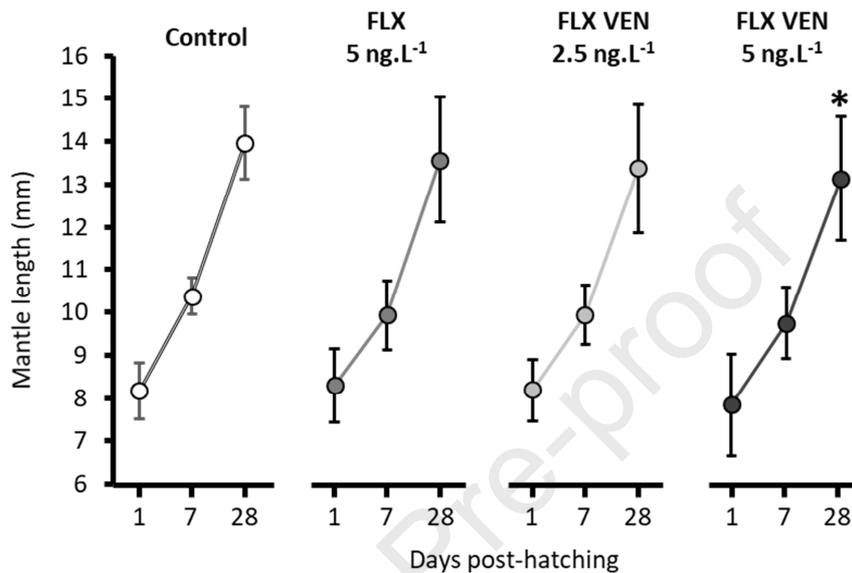


338
 339 **Figure 6.** Food intake represented by the number of shrimps eaten during the first five days post-hatching
 340 by cuttlefish exposed or not (control) to either fluoxetine (FLX) at $5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$, or fluoxetine and venlafaxine
 341 in combination (FLX VEN) at $2.5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$, or $5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ each. Means \pm SEM; $n=15$ per treatment group.

342 3.5. Growth

343 On the first dph, the size-distribution of MLs of cuttlefish was statistically equal (Kruskal-Wallis test,
 344 $p=0.662$) among all groups. Indeed, at 1 dph all groups were exhibiting similar mean MLs (\pm SEM):
 345 8.17 ± 0.66 mm for the controls, 8.30 ± 0.86 mm for FLX5, 8.18 ± 0.73 mm for FLXVEN2.5 and 7.88 ± 1.17
 346 mm FLXVEN5. By the end of the experiment, at 28 dph, the ML of cuttlefish had significantly increased
 347 at each time point, *i.e.*, 1, 7 and 28 dph (permutation test: $p < 0.001$; post-hoc permutation test: $p = 0.002$
 348 between each of the time points). There was no obvious difference between the four groups in growth of
 349 ML at any age (permutation test: $p = 0.217$). Nevertheless, it may be noticed that the mean ML at 28 dph of
 350 the FLXVEN5 group appears to be slightly lower than in the control group: 13.10 ± 1.44 mm against
 351 13.97 ± 0.82 mm, respectively. Indeed, a post-hoc permutation test between FLXVEN5 and the control

352 group demonstrated a significant difference (post-hoc permutation test: $p=0.032$), highlighting a shorter
 353 ML.
 354



355
 356 **Figure 7.** Growth as assessed by mantle length over three consecutive time points (1, 7, 28 days post-
 357 hatching) of cuttlefish exposed to fluoxetine (FLX) alone at 5 ng·L⁻¹, or fluoxetine and venlafaxine in
 358 combination (FLX VEN) at 2.5 ng·L⁻¹, or 5 ng·L⁻¹ each, with non-exposed animals as controls. Means ±
 359 SEM; n=15 per treatment group. Post-hoc permutation tests adjusted with FDR correction (Benjamini-
 360 Hochberg procedure) were performed for inter-group: * shows significant differences between the control
 361 group and FLXVEN 5 ng·L⁻¹ ($p<0.05$)

362 4. Discussion

363 The first unconditional step of hunting is to detect the prey. At hatching, cuttlefish are still maturing their
 364 visual acuity, which begins to develop already at late egg stages (Romagny et al., 2012), enabling them to
 365 detect and to gauge their environment (O'Brien et al., 2017). Before attacking, the cuttlefish needs to
 366 evaluate the distance to the prey correctly, if the attack shall be successful. Most of the juvenile cuttlefish
 367 showed a stable detection of the shrimp from day 1 to day 5, no matter the treatment group. These results

368 suggest that the presence of neither FLX alone, nor the combined exposure with VEN impacted their
369 visual acuity and ability to detect the prey. A previous study from Hedgespeth *et al.* (2014) using the SSRI
370 sertraline showed a decrease of the detection rate after eight days of exposure, thus, a decrease of feeding
371 rate in juvenile Eurasian perch, *Perca fluviatilis*. But this impaired detection rate could only be
372 demonstrated at much higher concentrations of 89 and 300 $\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$, whereas at the lowest concentration of
373 0.12 $\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ no significant decrease in detection was observed. This corroborates our findings that the
374 capacity to detect a potential food source is unlikely to be impacted by antidepressants at low
375 environmental concentrations, as was the case with a ten times lower concentration in our experiments
376 with juvenile cuttlefish. Hence, any reduction in feeding activity would necessarily derive from effects
377 other than prey detection.

378 Maturation of predatory behaviour is essential for newly-hatched cuttlefish since they rely on themselves
379 to satisfy their food requirements. To hunt prey efficiently and successfully, they have to attack their prey
380 fast to avoid possible escapes, once the prey is detected. This necessity of improving their feeding
381 behaviour within the first five days after hatching is corroborated by their high feeding motivation, which
382 is characterised by a progressive decrease in the latency before the first attack as well as an increasing
383 number of attacks over this critical period. The attacks observed in the control group were faster and more
384 frequent with time, and highlight a continuously increasing feeding motivation as well as a sensory-motor
385 maturation that is likely to reflect the neural maturation and learning process (Dickel *et al.*, 2000, 1997;
386 Messenger, 1977). The exposure to the antidepressants FLX and VEN may, therefore, have either delayed
387 the maturation process of the predatory behaviour, the feeding motivation and/or affected learning
388 processes. Indeed, cuttlefish exposed to a combination of FLX and VEN at 5 $\text{ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ each showed a much
389 greater latency to attack their prey for the first time than the control group during the first five days of
390 exposure. When testing VEN at 5 $\text{ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ alone a greater latency before the first attack compared to the
391 control could also be observed ($p=0.008$) (Fig. S1). Similarly, cuttlefish exposed to FLX alone at 5 $\text{ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$
392 and FLX and VEN at 2.5 $\text{ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$, although not displaying a significantly prolonged latency, did neither

393 show the same clear decrease of latency as observed in the controls. This may be indicative of a similar,
394 but weaker delay in maturation of predatory behaviour, as for the FLX and VEN at 5 ng·L⁻¹ group. These
395 results are consistent with earlier studies exposing *S. officinalis* to antidepressants. Di Poi *et al.* (2013)
396 demonstrated that FLX was likely to affect memory processing, as perinatal exposure to 1 ng·L⁻¹
397 significantly altered acquisition and retention performances in a passive avoidance learning test. In a
398 previous study, we also observed a delay in maturation processes associated with burying behaviour in
399 juvenile cuttlefish when exposed to FLX and VEN at 2.5 ng·L⁻¹ each (Chabenat *et al.*, 2019).
400 Investigations of the brain structures involved in learning, *i.e.*, the vertical lobe and the optic lobes,
401 showed that FLX and VEN induced a decrease in cell proliferation. The results obtained by Bidel *et al.*
402 (2016a, 2016b) suggest that a decreased cell proliferation may explain the delay in maturation of
403 predatory behaviour in juvenile cuttlefish (Dickel *et al.*, 1997).

404 As in our experiments the feeding motivation increased with age, the latency before the first attack
405 decreased, whilst the number of attacks generally increased. Despite, day-by-day group comparisons did
406 not turn out statistically significant differences, because of high individual variation in each of the groups,
407 the group exposed to FLX and VEN at 5 ng·L⁻¹ maintained a lower number of attacks over the entire five-
408 day exposure period, suggesting a low feeding motivation in this treatment group. In humans, one of the
409 common side-effects related to SSRIs and SNRIs is the loss of appetite (“Antidepressants - Side effects,”
410 2018; Capasso and Milano, 2008; Santarsieri and Schwartz, 2015). Furthermore, FLX and VEN are also
411 prescribed for binge-eating disorders and *Bulimia nervosa* because they are considered as appetite
412 suppressants (Carter *et al.*, 2003). In rats, a decrease of food intake is also observed after an exposure with
413 SSRIs or SNRIs (de Oliveira *et al.*, 2004; Jackson *et al.*, 1997; Russ and Ackerman, 1988).

414 After attacking, which in some cases may need to be repeated several times, the prey has to be seized, and
415 secured by the cuttlefish’s tentacles and arms to be eaten. Over time, newly-hatched cuttlefish become
416 more and more successful in catching their prey and, as a matter of consequence, are able to eat each day.
417 Cuttlefish exposed to FLX and VEN at 5 ng·L⁻¹ presented the lowest increase of successful attacks over

418 the five days of exposure, meaning that only a few cuttlefish of this group have actually eaten every day.
419 This resulted in a lower food intake over the five-day period compared to the control group. On the other
420 hand, the group exposed to VEN at $5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ presented a significantly lower proportion of cuttlefish with
421 successful attacks than the control group (**supplementary data**). As observed with the latency before the
422 first strike, the two other groups exposed to FLX alone at $5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$, or in mixture with VEN at $2.5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$
423 displayed a similar tendency towards less successful attacks and lower food intake than the control. This
424 suggests that the generally low number of attacks in juvenile cuttlefish exposed to antidepressants is likely
425 to be related to an altered maturation of predatory behaviour, because this behaviour was improved with
426 age in the control group. A previous study by Melnyk-Lamont *et al.* (2014) showed that after seven days
427 of exposure to VEN at $1 \mu\text{g}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$, rainbow trout presented a reduced total feed intake per day. Overall,
428 reduced feeding behaviour and food intake in several animal species agree with the known side-effects of
429 SSRIs and SNRIs on human nutrition. Whether they have similar underlying mechanisms remains,
430 however, to be demonstrated. The low improvement of the efficiency of the predatory behaviour may also
431 be related to learning impairments. This and earlier studies of our laboratory consistently point to possible
432 effects of SSRIs and/or SNRIs on learning processes in cuttlefish (Bidel, 2015; Chabenat et al., 2019; Di
433 Poi et al., 2013).

434 These effects of SSRI/SNRI antidepressants on behavioural traits in juvenile cuttlefish might be related to
435 changes in the cerebral levels of monoamine neurotransmitters, but differently from what could be
436 expected. In cuttlefish, SSRIs and SNRIs seem to act rather on DA and NE than on 5-HT. Especially VEN
437 seems to modulate the NE system (Bidel et al., 2016a), whereas FLX seems to affect the DA system
438 (Bidel et al., 2016b; Di Poi et al., 2014) of cuttlefish in a yet unknown manner. Indeed, both
439 neurotransmitters have a role in feeding behaviour and both are involved in food intake in fish and
440 mammals (He et al., 2018; Kulczykowska and Vázquez, 2010; Wang et al., 2002; Wellman, 2000).
441 Although not established in the present study, the modifications of monoamine levels in the brain of
442 cuttlefish resulting from the exposure to environmental concentrations of SSRIs and SNRIs confirmed by

443 earlier studies could provide an explanation for the lower feeding motivation and feeding success, thus
444 lower food intake of juvenile cuttlefish exposed to antidepressants.

445 While feeding was reduced during the first days of the cuttlefish life, growth was significantly altered by
446 the presence of antidepressants FLX and VEN at $5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$. A previous study from Di Poi *et al.* (2014)
447 could not demonstrate effects of FLX at 1 or $100 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ on growth in juvenile cuttlefish over two weeks
448 after hatching. Here at 28 dph, *i.e.*, after 4 weeks of exposure, the data indicated an effect of combined
449 FLX and VEN towards reduced growth. Several studies pointed to deleterious effects of FLX on growth in
450 different species. Juvenile guppies, for instance, showed decreased growth after a chronic exposure of 35
451 days to $30 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ (Pelli and Connaughton, 2015). Tadpoles of *Xenopus laevis* exposed to FLX at 10
452 $\text{ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ for a period of 70 days exhibited a reduced growth, probably linked to a decreased food intake
453 (Connors *et al.*, 2009). The amphipod *Hyaella azteca* displayed reduced growth after an exposure to FLX
454 at $33 \mu\text{g}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ for 15 days (Péry *et al.*, 2008), while Brooks *et al.* (2003) determined the lowest observed
455 effect concentration for growth to be $5.6 \text{ mg}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}$ in the same species. In the rotifer *Brachionus koreanus*,
456 growth was reduced after exposure to FLX at 750 to $1000 \mu\text{g}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ after only three days of exposure (Byeon
457 *et al.*, 2020). In the polychaete *Capitella teleta*, however, no effect was observed after 18 days of exposure
458 to FLX at 0.001, 0.03, 0.3 or $3.3 \mu\text{g}\cdot\text{g}^{-1}$ dry weight of spiked sediment. Only one study, to the best of our
459 knowledge, demonstrated a stimulation of growth by exposure to FLX: in crayfish, exposure to FLX at
460 $500 \mu\text{g}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ enhanced growth, resulting in a greater carapace length of post-moult animals (Tierney *et al.*,
461 2016). Concerning VEN, no effects on growth could be demonstrated to date. For instance, 0.88 to 80
462 $\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ VEN did not affect growth of fathead minnows (Parrott and Metcalfe, 2017). Similarly, no effect
463 on growth was observed in zebrafish or xenopus embryos after short term exposure to VEN, *i.e.*, 144 hours
464 post-fertilization at $0.3 \mu\text{g}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ and 48 hours at $3 \text{ mg}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$, respectively (Sehonova *et al.*, 2018).
465 Consequently, the literature indicates a greater impact of FLX on growth than VEN. Notwithstanding,
466 quite high concentrations of FLX were generally necessary to negatively affect growth in most of the
467 studies. In our study, a significant decrease of feeding motivation and feeding behaviour in cuttlefish

468 caused by an early exposure to antidepressants at low environmental concentrations, *i.e.*, 5 ng·L⁻¹ FLX
469 and VEN each, resulted in a trend towards decreased food intake and diminished growth.

470 5. Conclusion

471 In view of the reportedly low ng·L⁻¹ concentrations of single antidepressants in estuarine and coastal
472 waters more distant from wastewater treatment plants or pharmaceutical industries (Birch et al., 2015;
473 Klosterhaus et al., 2013; Meador et al., 2016; Minguéz et al., 2016), it may be questioned if aquatic
474 animals are at risk by the contamination of the water bodies with antidepressants. The increased use and
475 diversity of antidepressants (Nielsen and Gøtzsche, 2011) are likely to result in cumulative concentrations
476 that are higher than those reported for single antidepressants. The combined concentrations at a cumulated
477 10 ng·L⁻¹ of two major antidepressants were able to alter predatory behaviour in hatchlings of cuttlefish by
478 reducing feeding motivation through increased latency before the first attack of the prey and the number
479 of successful attacks. The lack of feeding motivation led to a lower food intake and consequently, lower
480 growth. Exposures to either FLX at 5 ng·L⁻¹ (and VEN at 5 ng·L⁻¹) or FLX and VEN in mixture at 2.5
481 ng·L⁻¹ each tended to reduce feeding motivation and successful attacks alike, but to a lesser extent.
482 Importantly, the continuous decrease in latency before the first attack and the increase in the number of
483 attacks observed in the controls suggest that the hatchlings considerably improve predatory behaviour
484 within the first days after hatching. This improvement may derive from neural maturation as well as from
485 experience and learning. One may, therefore, assume that the antidepressant exposure affects these
486 maturation and learning processes. Whichever way the antidepressants affect feeding behaviour, whether
487 they act on the neuronal system or on the levels of neurotransmitters, or both, the significant reduction in
488 feeding behaviour, a trait that is fundamental for survival, shows that the generally very low ng·L⁻¹
489 concentrations of antidepressants in the environment give reason for concern. This holds true particularly
490 if sensitive stages of animals with advanced cognitive abilities are exposed to residues of the varying
491 antidepressants in their aquatic environment. Even a minor delay in the maturation and learning processes

492 related to predatory behaviour or a reduced growth can potentially reduce fitness of populations
493 confronted with the accumulated antidepressant pollution of the aquatic environments.

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501 **Authors contribution**

502 A.C performed the experiment and data analyses; F.B developed and designed the experiment of the
503 supplementary data; A.C, C.B, T.K developed and designed the experiment and data analyses; A.C, C.B,
504 T.K wrote the manuscript; A.C, C.B, T.K, F.B proofread the manuscript.

505 **Notes**

506 The authors declare no competing interest.

507 **Abbreviations**

508 5-HT, 5-hydroxytryptamine (serotonin); DA, dopamine; DOPAC, 3,4-dihydroxyphenylacetic acid; NE,
509 norepinephrine; FLX, fluoxetine; VEN, venlafaxine; SSRI, Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor; SNRI,
510 Serotonin, Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitor

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Highlights

- Very low $\text{ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ concentrations of antidepressants impaired predatory behaviour
- Cumulated fluoxetine and venlafaxine at $5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ each decreased feeding motivation
- Cumulated fluoxetine and venlafaxine at $5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ each decreased successful prey capture
- Cumulated fluoxetine and venlafaxine at $5 \text{ ng}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ each decreased growth

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Declaration of interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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