To Dr. Gareth Jenkins, Editor in Chief, Ecology and Evolution

Subject: Response to Review – ECE-2021-04-00540

We appreciate the work of the editorial team at *Ecology and Evolution* as well as the thoughtful feedback to this manuscript provided by the two anonymous reviewers. The authors agree that the suggested changes will improve the quality and clarity of the study and have attempted to address them through revision. We have attempted to increase clarity by 1) clarifying word-use throughout, specifically specifying what the aim of the surface sterilization treatment was, that it was applied to the consumer samples, and that it was performed on full, non-dissected body parts (each consumer’s opisthosoma), and 2) providing further ecological explanation of sample collection as well as the types of diet items contained in the diet DNA metabarcoding samples. We also made editorial changes based on feedback provided by each reviewer. For responses to these specific comments, please see attached document. All author responses to comments are italicized.

Thank you,

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