Foraging results

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The most parsimonious model for explaining foraging efforts of control hares was that which included soluble biomass and temperature as fixed effects (Table 2, model D2). We found that hares foraged 26.4 ± 5.4 minutes more per day for every 10 kg increase in available soluble willow biomass per hectare (t = 4.7; Figure 4A). For every 10 degree C increase in temperature, hares foraged 46.8 ± 3.6 minutes more per day (t = 12.37; Figure 4B). The second most parsimonious model also included mortality rate in addition to soluble biomass and temperature (Table 2, model T1), but mortality rate did not have an effect on foraging (t = 0.94).

After incorporating food treatment into the top performing model (D2), results partially changed. Mainly, we found no effect of available biomass on foraging effort cross both controls and food supplemented individuals (t = -0.63; Figure 4C). However, in line with the top control model, we found that foraging effort increased 49.2 ± 5.4 minutes per day for every 10 kg increase in available biomass (t = 9.41; Figure 4D). Overall, food supplemented individuals foraged 15 ± 34.8 minutes less than controls, but this effect was not significant (t = -0.43).