Impact of winter enclosures on the gut bacterial microbiota of red deer in the Bavarian Forest National Park

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High numbers of red deer *Cervus elaphus* pose a challenge for natural forests because of their high browsing intensities, especially during winter months. To mitigate this human–wildlife conflict, conservation management in central Europe involves luring red deer into fenced winter-feeding sites. The supplementary food provided in these so-called winter enclosures strongly differs from the natural diet of red deer. Dietary shifts, however, can lead to an imbalance of the gut microbiota, which could promote bacterial pathogens. Moreover, increased inter-individual contact in winter enclosures enhances the exchange of symbiotic but also pathogenic bacteria. In this study, we used high-throughput sequencing of the 16S rRNA gene in fecal samples of red deer inhabiting the Bavarian Forest National Park to investigate differences in the gut bacterial microbiota between individuals in winter enclosures and individuals that ranged freely in the forests in winter. We also investigated the occurrence of potential zoonotic bacterial pathogens in both study groups. Our results revealed that proportions of bacterial taxa, alpha- and beta-diversities, and relative abundances of amplicon sequence variants in the gut bacterial microbiota of the two groups differed. These differences were attributed to the enrichment of bacterial taxa involved in the digestion of the supplementary food and to different natural diets consumed before entering the winter enclosures. We detected sequences with high similarities to known red deer pathogens in both study groups, but their relative abundances were low, which suggests that the population of red deer of the Bavarian Forest National Park is healthy.

Keywords: 16S rRNA gene, supplementary food, wildlife management
Research into the impact of such winter enclosures and supplementary feeding has revealed both positive and negative results (Putman and Staines 2004). Positive aspects include increased winter survival (Peterson and Messmer 2007), less forest damage (Gundersen et al. 2004), more efficient population control (Heurich et al. 2011), and better trophic quality (Putman and Staines 2004). Negative aspects, in addition to the high costs related to the maintenance of winter enclosures and food provision (Putman and Staines 2004), include increased browsing activity close to the winter enclosures (Putman and Staines 2004, Möst et al. 2015), altered spatial behavior (Sahlsten et al. 2010, Ossi et al. 2017), increased stress (Li et al. 2007), and risk of disease transmission attributable to the high animal densities at shared feeding sites (Santín-Durán et al. 2004, Cotterill et al. 2018). In addition to these acknowledged impacts, this management tool might also cause alterations in the symbiotic gut microbiota of these large herbivores. Ruminants have evolved a special digestive compartment, the so-called forestomach, in which symbiotic microbes produce essential enzymes that are needed to degrade plant material before it enters the true stomach (Soest 1994). It has been observed that animals coming to winter enclosures develop a reliance on food supplements, change their feeding strategies (Felton et al. 2017), and hardly feed on natural food sources (Putman and Staines 2004). Therefore, supplementary feeding in winter enclosures could cause significant shifts in the gut microbial community of herbivores that even exceed the normal range of individual variation within a population, with unknown consequences for their health.

Recent studies of the bacterial microbiota of humans and wildlife have demonstrated that a balanced host–bacteria relationship is important for host health (Carding et al. 2015, Jiménez and Sommer 2016, Thomason et al. 2017, Wasiuddin et al. 2018). In homeostasis, bacterial communities can, among many other beneficial functions, facilitate the uptake of vital nutrients from the diet, counteract infections (Jiménez and Sommer 2016, Walke and Belden 2016, Wasiuddin et al. 2017), degrade/decompose toxic plant secondary compounds (Kohl et al. 2014), and even signal the membership of a host to a certain social group via bacterial-derived odors (Leclaire et al. 2014).

In a state of dysbiosis, however, the gut microbiota can cause an increase in potential pathogens, which can have adverse effects on host health (McKenna et al. 2008, Kinross et al. 2011, Amato et al. 2013, Althani et al. 2016). The susceptibility of red deer to pathogenic bacteria could also be affected by the elevated intra-specific contact at shared feeding sites (Miller et al. 2003). For example, reintroduced red deer in Slovakia, Hungary and Poland carry zoonotic pathogenic taxa (Gnat et al. 2015). Thus, the close contact to humans at winter enclosures might also increase the likelihood of zoonosis transmission. In addition, in contrast to the vast amount of research on dietary effects on the gut microbiota and dysbiosis-associated diseases (David et al. 2014, Althani et al. 2016), surprisingly little work has been carried out on the impact of supplementary feeding on the gut bacterial community of our most abundant large herbivores (but see: Li et al. 2017a, Gnat et al. 2018).

In this study, we used a 16S rRNA gene high-throughput sequencing approach 1) to describe the gut bacterial microbiota of red deer in the Bavarian Forest National Park, 2) to test whether the gut bacterial microbiota of red deer that spend the winter in enclosures differs from that of those that freely range in the forest, and 3) to study whether potential zoonotic pathogenic bacterial taxa occur in Bavarian red deer. An understanding of the effects of such regimes on the gut bacterial microbiota might add new but so far neglected aspects to the discussion of whether winter enclosures and supplementary feeding are good tools of red deer and forest health management.

Material and methods

Fecal sampling

The Bavarian Forest National Park (Bavaria, Germany) currently maintains four winter enclosures, namely Ahornschachten, Buchenau, Neuhüttenwiese and Riedlhäng (Fig. 1), which harbor approximately 0.86 to 4.2 red deer ha\(^{-1}\) during the winter months (Table 1). The supplementary food provided to red deer in these winter enclosures consists mainly of silage fodder with added apple pomace and sugar beets.

Fresh fecal samples from red deer in the four winter enclosures were collected randomly from 9 to 16 March 2017 (Ahornschachten, \(n=24\); Buchenau, \(n=25\); Neuhüttenwiese, \(n=25\); and Riedlhäng, \(n=25\)). In addition, fecal samples were collected during the same period from free-ranging deer at two locations outside of the winter enclosures, namely Reschbachtal (\(n=23\)) and Hochberg (\(n=14\)) (Fig. 1); these sites were chosen based on information obtained from experienced game wardens.

To avoid environmental bacterial contamination, fresh samples were opened in the field with sterile equipment, and the inner part of each fecal dropping was retrieved and transferred to a cryo tube containing RNAlater to preserve the samples. Samples were then stored at \(-20^\circ\text{C}\) at the laboratory facilities of the Bavarian Forest National Park until they were sent to the Univ. of Ulm for DNA isolation, library preparation, high-throughput sequencing, and bioinformatic analyses.

DNA extraction, library preparation and sequencing

Prior to DNA extraction, samples were pre-treated to remove excess RNAlater and to remove non-bacterial matter. Finger-nail-sized portions of fecal matter were transferred to 1.5 ml Eppendorf tubes using a spatula. Ice-cold phosphate-buffered saline (PBS; 400 µl) was added to each tube, and the tubes were vortexed for 10–15 s. The samples were lightly centrifuged at 700 rpm for 2 min. The supernatants were transferred to new 1.5 ml Eppendorf tubes, taking precautions to minimize the transfer of pelleted plant material, and centrifuged again, but this time at 14 000 rpm for 10 min. The supernatants were
discarded, and the remaining pellets were used as the starting material for the NucleoSpinFood kit (Macherey-Nagel, Düren, Germany), following the user manual from July 2014/Rev.11. An additional bead-beating step (ceramic beads; beating twice for 20 s) to mechanically lyse bacterial cells was incorporated between the chemical lysis of sample cells with the provided CF Buffer and the DNA-binding step. After beating, the samples were centrifuged at 11 000 rpm for 2 min, and the clear supernatants were transferred to 2 ml Eppendorf tubes. The DNA concentration in each tube was normalized to 3 ng µl$^{-1}$ based on measurements with a TECAN infinite F200PRO fluorescence plate reader. The DNA library of each sample was prepared as recommended by Illumina (Miseq Reagent Kit v2 Denature and Dilute Libraries Guide, no. 15039740 v05); 7.5 pm DNA was loaded into a MiSeq flowcell with a 10% PhiX spike. Paired-end sequencing was performed over 2 × 251 cycles.

**Bioinformatic analyses and statistics**

Sequencing reads were pre-processed using qiime2 (ver. 2017.10) (Caporaso et al. 2010, <https://qiime2.org>) and its plugins. Specifically, we used the ‘demux’ plugin (<https://github.com/qiime2/q2-demux>) to import the demultiplexed paired-end sequencing reads and to create the ‘artefact’ file (i.e. qiime2 data format required for subsequent analyses). We applied the ‘dada2’ plugin (Callahan et al. 2016) using the default parameter settings for quality filtering and chimera filtering to trim primers (--p-trim-left-f 23, --p-trim-left-r 20), to truncate forward and reverse reads (--p-trunc-len-f 200, --p-trunc-len-r 200), and to collapse reads into representative sequences, the so-called amplicon sequence variants (ASVs). We assigned taxonomy to these ASVs using the Greengenes database (ver. 13_8) and the ‘feature-classifier’ plugin (<https://github.com/qiime2/q2-feature-classifier>) with the ‘fit-classifier-sklearn’ method and produced taxa summary bar plots (<https://github.com/qiime2/q2-taxon>) according to sample groupings.

For diversity analyses based on bacterial phylogeny, we produced a mid-point-rooted bacterial phylogenetic tree by aligning ASVs using MAFFT (Katoh and Standley 2013) and removing non-informative positions in the alignment with the ‘mask’ command (<https://github.com/qiime2/q2-alignment>); and a phylogenetic tree was constructed with FastTree 2 (Price et al. 2010). The ‘diversity’ plugin (<https://github.com/qiime2/q2-diversity>) was used to calculate alpha-diversity (phylogenetic diversity; Faith 1992) based on 13 900 reads per red deer gut bacterial microbiota.

**Table 1. Number of red deer that spent winter 2017 in the four winter enclosures of the Bavarian Forest National Park.**

| Winter enclosure | Total red deer | n ≥ 3 years | 3–10 years | >10 years | Total males | >2 years | 1–2 years | >1 year | Total females |
|------------------|----------------|------------|------------|-----------|-------------|----------|-----------|---------|--------------|
| Ahornsachten     | 25             | 5          | 1          | 9         | 6           | 9        | 4         | 6       | 19           |
| Buchenau         | 52             | 10         | 9          | 1         | 20          | 10       | 8         | 14      | 32           |
| Neuhüttenwiese   | 137            | 23         | 25         | 12        | 60          | 44       | 15        | 18      | 77           |
| Riedlhäng        | 68             | 16         | 9          | 3         | 28          | 21       | 9         | 10      | 40           |
For further analyses and creation of figures in R (<www.r-project.org>), we exported the non-rarefied ‘feature-table’, bacterial phylogenetic tree, representative sequences, and bacterial taxonomy from qiime2 ‘artifacts’. Using the R-package ‘phyloseq’ (McMurdie and Holmes 2013), we imported the exported files (<http://biom-format.org>；McDonald et al. 2012) and added metadata information to our class object. We also exported values of phylogenetic diversity to R and tested for significant differences in phylogenetic diversity between sites and overwintering areas using a Kruskal–Wallis rank sum test. Within ‘phyloseq’, we calculated a beta-diversity matrix (Bray–Curtis; Somerfield 2008) based on 13 900 reads per gut bacterial microbiota and tested whether overwintering areas (enclosure versus forest) and sampling sites differed significantly using a PERMANOVA approach with the ‘adonis’ function of the R-package ‘vegan’ (Dixon 2003). Furthermore, we tested for within and between differences of beta-diversity distances using the ‘anosim’ function of the ‘vegan’ package in R (Dixon 2003).

In addition, we applied a DESeq2 analysis to identify bacterial ASVs whose relative abundances significantly differed between the gut microbiota of red deer in enclosures and that of free-ranging red deer (McMurdie and Holmes 2013, Love et al. 2014). Finally, we checked for potentially pathogenic bacteria in the red deer gut microbiota and specifically searched for bacterial taxa known to contain pathogens that had been detected in red deer from Slovakia, Hungary and Poland (Gnat et al. 2015) using BLAST searches (Johnson et al. 2008) of the respective ASVs against the NCBI nucleotide database.

Data deposition

Sequencing data is available in the Dryad Digital Repository: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5061/dryad.7r22vb1> (Menke et al. 2018).

Results

Sequencing of the bacterial 16S rRNA gene in fecal samples of 99 red deer in enclosures and 37 free-ranging red deer resulted in 10 053 298 reads. After preprocessing, the remaining 6 988 136 reads (min: 13 929; median: 51 607; mean: 51 383; max: 88 217) were collapsed into 11 105 ASVs (mean: 629.28 reads per ASV).

The gut bacterial microbiota of the red deer of both groups consisted mainly of the bacterial phyla (average proportion across all individuals >1%) Firmicutes (71.50%), Bacteroidetes (15.55%), Proteobacteria (4.90%), Actinobacteria (3.68%), and Cyanobacteria (1.21%) (Fig. 2). The gut bacterial microbiota of red deer in enclosures contained on average higher proportions of Firmicutes (W = 3039, p < 0.001) and Actinobacteria (W = 1314, p = 0.011), but particularly lower proportions of Proteobacteria (W = 1141, p < 0.001) than that of free-ranging red deer (Table 2). A summary of the best taxonomic assignments of the bacterial phyla in the feces of all individuals is presented as a table in the supplementary information (Supplementary material Appendix 1 Table A1).

Alpha-diversity, expressed as phylogenetic diversity (Faith and Baker 2007), was higher in the gut bacterial microbiota of red deer in enclosures than that of free-ranging red deer (Kruskal–Wallis: χ² = 6.96, p = 0.008, Fig. 3A). Phylogenetic diversity of all red deer ranged from 19.69 to 64.12 and was highest in the gut bacterial microbiota of red deer in the winter enclosures Ahornschachten (E) and Riedlhäng (E), intermediate in Reschbachtal (F) and Buchenau (E), and lowest in Neuhüttenwiese (E) and Hochberg (F) (Fig. 3B).

Red deer in enclosures and free-ranging red deer also differed in beta-diversity. An NMDS plot based on the Bray–Curtis distance matrix revealed clear separation of the two groups of red deer (PERMANOVA: F = 14.42, p = 0.001; Fig. 4A) and clustering according to sampling sites (PERMANOVA: F = 16.68, p = 0.001; Fig. 4B). The distances between the gut bacterial microbiota (within a 95% confidence interval) of red deer in Neuhüttenwiese (E) and Hochberg (F) were higher than those of all other sampling sites, and some gut bacterial microbiotas were far removed from the respective cluster centers (Fig. 4). In addition, distances between the gut bacterial microbiota of the two groups were higher than the distances within each group (ANOSIM: permutations = 999, R = 0.623, p = 0.001; Fig. 5A) and the distances were also higher within sampling sites (PERMANOVA: F = 4.53, p = 0.018; Fig. 5B) and overwintering areas (enclosure versus forest) (PERMANOVA: F = 6.96, p = 0.008; Fig. 5C).

Figure 2. Proportions of bacterial phyla present in the gut microbiota of red deer from winter enclosures and forest sites of the Bavarian Forest National Park.
sites than the distances between the sampling sites (ANO-
SIM: permutations = 999, R = 0.418, p = 0.001; Fig. 5B).

DESeq2 analysis revealed that the relative abundance
of several ASVs in the gut bacterial microbiota of red
deer in enclosures significantly differed (p < 0.001) from that
of free-ranging red deer (Fig. 6). In particular, the relative
abundance of ASVs of the genera Bacillus, Paenibacillus and
Prevotella was higher in the gut of red deer in enclosures, and
the relative abundance of ASVs of the genera Akkermansia, Bacteroides and Ruminococcus were higher in the gut of free-
ranging red deer.

Finally, we compared ASVs of bacterial genera that
potentially contain zoonotic pathogenic bacterial species, as
identified in Gnat et al. (2015), with the NCBI nucleotide
database. The relative abundance of the genera Escherichia,
Yersinia, Enterococcus and Staphylococcus was low (9%, 5%,
4% and 0.7%, respectively). BLAST results of ASVs of
these genera revealed hits to known pathogens in red deer
(Table 3).

Discussion

This is the first study to apply high-throughput sequencing
to describe the gut bacterial microbiota of wild red deer
and to compare the gut bacterial microbiota of individuals that
stay in winter enclosures and feed on supplementary fodder
with that of individuals that remain in the forest and
feed only on natural resources. In general, the gut bacterial
microbiota of red deer in the Bavarian Forest National Park
was similar to that of other ruminants (Donnell et al. 2017)
and also other Cervidae, such as elk Cervus canadensis, white-
tailed deer Odocoileus virginianus (Gruninger et al. 2014),
and white-lipped deer Cervus albirostris (Li et al. 2017b), at
least at the bacterial phylum level, with high proportions of
the phyla Firmicutes and Bacteroidetes (Fig. 2).

Particularly the phylum Firmicutes was present in higher
proportions in red deer in enclosures than in free-ranging red
deer. This is in concordance with a study in Poland in which
red deer that were not fed with supplementary food during
winter had a lower abundance of bacteria than red deer
that were fed with supplementary food (Gnat et al. 2018).
Recent studies on the microbiota of silage (Duniere et al.
2017, Peng et al. 2018) have revealed that certain bacterial
taxa within the Firmicutes increase during ensiling when
aerobic spoilage occurs (Driehuis et al. 2018). Thus, the
Firmicutes probably increased in the gut microbiota of red
deer in enclosures because they fed on silage. Interestingly,
the relative abundances of phyla in the gut of red deer at
two sites strongly differed from those of the other sites; the
feces of red deer at the winter enclosure Neuhüttenwiese had
higher proportions of Actinobacteria and lower proportions

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Table 2. Average proportions of the main bacterial phyla (average proportion ≥ 0.5%) present in the gut bacterial microbiota of red deer in enclosures and free-ranging red deer in the Bavarian Forest National Park. The full list of phylum assignments is presented in the supplement (ST 1). Values in boldface are significant.

| Phylum         | Average proportion (%) of bacterial phyla of all red deer | Average proportion (%) of bacterial phyla of red deer in enclosures | Average proportion (%) of bacterial phyla of free-ranging red deer | Wilcoxon rank sum test (red deer in enclosures versus free-ranging red deer) |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Firmicutes     | 68.11 ± 13.54                                           | 75.55 ± 7.45                                                     | 60.66 ± 19.24                                                   | W = 3039, p < 0.001                                                    |
| Bacteroidetes  | 16.32 ± 8.42                                            | 14.65 ± 7.26                                                     | 17.98 ± 10.70                                                   | W = 1432, p = 0.051                                                    |
| Proteobacteria | 7.47 ± 12.45                                            | 1.83 ± 1.67                                                      | 13.10 ± 21.89                                                   | W = 1141, p < 0.001                                                    |
| Actinobacteria | 3.56 ± 9.96                                             | 3.83 ± 9.98                                                      | 3.29 ± 10.02                                                    | W = 1314, p = 0.011                                                    |
| Cyanobacteria  | 1.34 ± 1.36                                             | 1.06 ± 0.59                                                      | 1.61 ± 2.39                                                     | W = 1729, p = 0.618                                                    |
| Planctomycetes | 0.89 ± 0.72                                             | 0.71 ± 0.55                                                      | 1.06 ± 1.01                                                     | W = 1628, p = 0.321                                                    |
| Verrucomicrobia| 0.79 ± 0.54                                             | 0.63 ± 0.41                                                      | 0.94 ± 0.75                                                     | W = 1460, p = 0.070                                                    |
| Tenericutes    | 0.54 ± 0.32                                             | 0.55 ± 0.30                                                      | 0.50 ± 0.36                                                     | W = 2181, p = 0.088                                                    |

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Figure 3. Phylogenetic diversity of the red deer gut bacterial microbiota. (A) Phylogenetic diversity of the gut bacterial microbiota was higher in individuals kept in enclosures than in red deer free-ranging in the forest (Kruskal–Wallis: χ² = 6.96, p = 0.008). (B) The phylo-
genetic diversity between all pairs of sites significantly differed (Kruskal–Wallis test, all p < 0.05) except for that of Ahornschachten versus Riedlhäng.
of Bacteroidetes, and the feces of free-ranging red deer at Hochberg had higher proportions of Proteobacteria. Members of Actinobacteria play a central role in cellulose and lignin degradation (Le Roes-Hill et al. 2011, Zhu et al. 2011, Hanshew et al. 2015, Lewin et al. 2016), which is one of the most important functions provided by bacteria to large herbivores (Fang et al. 2012). Hunters in the Hochberg area attract red deer with apple pomace, which in combination with natural food sources might have created a distinct gut bacterial microbiota profile.

We found that both sampling site and overwintering area strongly affect alpha- and beta-diversities and that the overwintering area strongly affects the bacteria present in the red deer guts at the ASV level. Alpha-diversity differed between sampling sites and was higher in the gut of red deer in enclosures than in that of free-ranging red deer (Fig. 3), the gut bacterial microbiota of the two groups of red deer separated accordingly (Fig. 4), and the bacterial ASVs that strongly drove the observed differences between the two groups belonged to the genera Bacillus, CF231, Paenibacillus and Prevotella (more abundant in the gut of red deer in enclosures), and Akkermansia, Bacteroides and Ruminococcus (more abundant in the gut of free-ranging red deer).

Several interacting factors might be responsible for these observations. In a study of Limousin and Jinan cross-bred steers, silage rich in nitrate led to an increase in the relative abundance of the bacterial taxon CF231 in the gut (Zhao et al. 2015). We did not check the nitrate level of the supplementary food in our study, but if nitrate levels were high because of incomplete reduction during ensiling or if they were higher than in natural food sources, this might have caused the observed increase of this genus in the gut of red deer in enclosures. As has been shown in studies on silage production, members of the phylum Firmicutes, especially

Figure 4. NMDS plot based on the Bray–Curtis distance matrix of the gut bacterial microbiota of red deer in enclosures. Significant differences in beta-diversity were found between sampling sites (PERMANOVA: F = 16.68, p = 0.001) and overwintering area (PERMANOVA: F = 14.42, p = 0.001).

Figure 5. Bray–Curtis distances of the gut bacterial microbiota of red deer. (A) Bray–Curtis distances for gut bacterial microbiota of red deer in winter enclosures and free-ranging red deer at forest sites. (B) Bray–Curtis distances of gut bacterial microbiota of red deer within and between overwintering areas.
spores of *Bacillus* (Duniere et al. 2017) and *Paenibacillus* (Tohno et al. 2016), can increase in silage production during aerobic spoilage (Borreani et al. 2013). As red deer in enclosures fed almost exclusively on supplementary food, they probably ingested large amounts of spores of these bacteria, which we then detected in red deer feces. Spores of toxin-producing species of these genera present a huge problem in dairy milk production because of their ability to survive pasteurization and subsequent germination in the product (Gopal et al. 2015). However, in animals, spores usually only pass through the digestive system of the host and, to the best of our knowledge, do not affect host health (Driehuis and Elferink 2000).

Moreover, the proportion of *Ruminococcus* was higher in free-ranging red deer than in red deer in enclosures. Species of the genus *Ruminococcus* are important for the degradation and fermentation of dietary polysaccharides in ruminants (Julliand et al. 1999, La Reau et al. 2016) and require fermentable carbohydrates for growth (Rainey 2009). Fermentation during silage production might have led to a food source that is lower in fermentable carbohydrates compared to fresh food sources. The higher relative abundance of *Akkermansia* in the gut of free-ranging red deer is in contrast to results of a study on musk deer *Moschus berezovskii* in which the gut of captive individuals had a higher relative abundance of this bacterial genus than that of free-ranging deer (Li et al. 2017a). Nevertheless, the differences in the gut bacterial microbiota of red deer between the overwintering areas in our study were less pronounced than the differences identified in studies that compared wild and captive forest musk deer (Li et al. 2017a) and wild and captive sika deer *Cervus nippon hortulorum* (Guan et al. 2017). Thus, the difference in the gut bacterial microbiota among sampling sites is driven by a combination of local

**Table 3.** NCBI BLAST results (only the first result is shown) of ASVs of bacterial genera that contain pathogenic bacterial species (Gnat et al. 2015) in the guts of red deer.

| Genus and ASVs | Number of individuals with taxon present in red deer in enclosures (n = 99) versus free-ranging red deer (n = 37) | BLAST hit | E-value | Identity | Accession |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------|----------|-----------|
| *Escherichia* | ASV: d46e2205f0c6ecf67b51f83d11c509c 11 versus 2 | *Escherichia coli* | 3e-128 | 100% | MH588300.1 |
| *Yersinia* | ASV: 3481fa43fe5ba6aeecd7f9aee6ed9c0 6 versus 2 | *Yersinia enterocolitica* | 3e-128 | 100% | MH245052.1 |
| *Enterococcus* | ASV: 556864a5da3a811b67b9c73488e926 2 versus 0 | *Enterococcus thailandicus* | 3e-128 | 100% | MH473433.1 |
| | ASV: 569653b1659271a290f0aczced60de061 1 versus 0 | *Enterococcus gallinarum* | 3e-128 | 100% | MH532500.1 |
| | ASV: a443e786f67086749f29ce0bab94c9e 1 versus 0 | *Enterococcus gilvum* | 3e-128 | 100% | MH493694.1 |
| | ASV: e5e2076556ac09f9b18e99c982a375e75 1 versus 0 | *Enterococcus asini* | 3e-128 | 100% | KX688628.1 |
| *Staphylococcus* | ASV: c837e078de7918b20eda786357d1eef 1 versus 0 | *Staphylococcus epidermis* | 6e-125 | 99% | KY623325.1 |
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Supplementary material (available online as Appendix wlb-00503 at <www.wildlifebiology.org/appendix/wlb-00503>). Appendix 1

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