

PHILOSOPHY

WHAT IS A PREDATORY JOURNAL?

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[Nature](#) reports a new definition for predatory journals

Predatory journals and publishers are entities that prioritize self-interest at the expense of scholarship and are characterized by false or misleading information, deviation from best editorial and publication practices, a lack of transparency, and/or the use of aggressive and indiscriminate solicitation practices.

This definition is much broader than I would have expected.

Smaller scientific societies prioritize of course their self-interest and even middle and top tier journals occasionally provide misleading information.

There is also a lack of transparency whenever an anonymous referee or editor decides on your paper without any explanation (or justification (as happened to me this morning. "Lack of space" is ridiculous in the internet age).

So what is a predatory journal? I can't put the answer into one sentence without annoying also serious journals.

And there is already some considerable literature on the inner workings of true predatory journals. I would there suggest for for a scoring system, for example

- publication costs >1000€
- turn around time <4 weeks
- less than 3 experienced referees
- ...

and many more details as specified in the Nature report sums up to a predatory likelihood. All journals passing a threshold, should be officially listed as "predatory".

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