

PHYSIOLOGICAL RESPONSES OF SCALLOPS AND MUSSELS TO

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Abstract

Puget Sound (Washington, USA) is a large estuary, known for its profitable shellfish aquaculture industry. However, in the past decade, scientists have observed strong acidification, hypoxia, and temperature anomalies in Puget Sound. These co-occurring environmental stressors are a threat to marine ecosystems and shellfish aquaculture. Our research assesses how environmental variability in Puget Sound impacts two ecologically and economically important bivalves, the purple-hinge rock scallop (*Crassodoma gigantea*) and Mediterranean mussel (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*). Our study examines the effect of depth and seasonality on the physiology of these two important bivalves to gain insight into ideal grow-out conditions in an aquaculture setting, improving the yield and quality of this sustainable protein source. To do this, we used Hood Canal (located in Puget Sound) as a natural multiple-stressor laboratory, which allowed us to study acclimatization capacity of shellfish in their natural habitat and provide the aquaculture industry information about differences in growth rate, shell strength, and nutritional sources across depths and seasons.

34 Bivalves were outplanted at two depths (5 and 30 m) and collected after 3.5 and 7.5 months. To
35 maximize mussel and scallop growth potential in an aquaculture setting, our results suggest
36 outplanting at 5 m depth, with more favorable oxygen and pH levels. Mussel shell integrity can be
37 improved by placing out at 5 m, regardless of season, however, there were no notable differences
38 in shell strength between depths in scallops. For both species, $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values were lowest at 5 m in
39 the winter and $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ was highest at 30 m regardless of season. Puget Sound's combination of
40 naturally and anthropogenically acidified conditions is already proving to be a challenge for
41 shellfish farmers. Our study provides crucial information to farmers to optimize aquaculture grow-
42 out as we begin to

43

44 Keywords: bivalve, acclimatization, temperature, oxygen, ocean acidification, aquaculture

45

46 **1. Introduction**

47 Coastlines are ideal habitats for most bivalves, where water is shallow, primary production is high,
48 and there is substrate to settle onto (Borges and Gypens, 2010). The natural complexity and
49 variability of coastal systems has allowed bivalves to evolve a wide tolerance to changing
50 environmental conditions over millennia. However, anthropogenic disturbances at global to
51 watershed scales across the last two centuries have caused dramatic changes in temperature,
52 fluctuations in the thermocline, shoaling of the aragonite saturation horizon, and reduced dissolved
53 oxygen (DO) with depth in marginal seas (Feely et al., 2012). Rising atmospheric CO_2
54 concentration is predicted to result in warmer ocean temperatures, hypoxia, ocean acidification
55 (OA), and extreme weather (Gruber et al., 2012; Melzner et al., 2011; Moritsch et al., 2022;
56 Rykaczewski and Dunne, 2010). OA is the process in which increased levels of atmospheric CO_2
57 dissolve into the ocean resulting in a more acidic environment (Jiang et al., 2023). This reduction

58 alters carbonate chemistry making it difficult for calcifiers to build their shells and results in the
59 dissolution of existing shell (Ekstrom et al., 2015; Melzner et al., 2020). Hypoxia, or lower
60 dissolved oxygen levels, often increase with depth and stratification, and can also be the result of
61 increased nutrient loads from runoff and upwelling, resulting in extreme algal blooms called
62 eutrophication (Gobler and Baumann, 2016). Local anthropogenic nutrient load from agriculture,
63 sewage, runoff, and other human activities have increased eutrophication, which exacerbates
64 hypoxia and OA in coastal areas (Borges and Gypens, 2010; Wallace et al., 2014).

65

66 In Washington state, USA, the shellfish aquaculture industry is an vital economic driver with an
67 estimated annual income of \$270 million (Barton et al., 2015). Puget Sound, Washington, is the
68 second largest estuary in the USA and home to numerous shellfish farms. Organisms living in the
69 Puget Sound have experienced acidified conditions, temperature anomalies, and hypoxia levels
70 that exceed levels predicted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, RCP 8.5)
71 global climate models for the end of the century over the past decade (Alin et al., 2023; IPCC,
72 2014; Wallace et al., 2014). Hood Canal, a large fjord-like channel on the west side of Puget Sound,
73 has recorded some of the most extreme oceanographic conditions in the Pacific Northwest (Alin
74 et al., 2021; Feely et al., 2010). Our study was conducted in Hood Canal, just offshore of the Taylor
75 Shellfish Hatchery (Figure 1), a large commercial bivalve aquaculture farm. In Hood Canal,
76 environmental variability is influenced by seasonal upwelling, snowmelt, riverine freshwater
77 inputs, anthropogenic activity, and relatively high water residence time. During colder months, the
78 water is well mixed, and the pycnocline is weakly defined (Feely et al., 2010). In contrast, during
79 warm months of the year the water column is characterized by a defined pycnocline, warm upper
80 layer, and cold, hypoxic, acidified bottom-waters. It is predicted that global warming will

81 strengthen and lengthen stratification in Puget Sound and may affect bivalve populations (Moore
82 et al., 2015). We chose Hood Canal to conduct our study because Taylor Shellfish Farm has
83 experienced challenges with bivalve production and survival since 2007 due to ocean acidification
84 (Barton et al., 2015). Currently the hatchery buffers incoming hatchery seawater to raise carbonate
85 ion availability for shellfish larvae and combat larval mortality due to acidification of the
86 surrounding waters (Barton et al., 2015; Hoegh-Guldberg et al., 2015). By studying acclimatization
87 (or the change in an organism's physiology based upon changes in the environment) of shellfish
88 at this commercial hatchery, we provide important information that can assist with the optimization
89 of shellfish aquaculture in the face of rapid ocean and climate change. In our study, we examined
90 shellfish acclimatization potential by looking at the effects of environmental variability on the
91 physiological performance of the purple-hinge rock scallop (*Crassodoma gigantea*) and the
92 Mediterranean mussel (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*). These species are considered ecologically
93 important because of their ability to filter water, sequester nitrogen and carbon, and their shells
94 form reefs and provide hard surfaces for other organisms to settle, thus increasing biodiversity
95 (Gutiérrez et al., 2003). *C. gigantea* is a native species to the North American Pacific Coast, and
96 the aquaculture industry has great interest in the potential commercial profitability of this species
97 (Culver et al., 2006; Leighton and Phleger, 1977; Walker, 2016). Its large edible adductor muscle
98 is considered a delicacy that is expected to sell at a high market value. Although there is much
99 interest in this species in the aquaculture industry, research on this species is very sparse when
100 compared to many other bivalves, and we are only beginning to understand its responses to
101 oceanographic stressors (Alma et al., 2020; Jackson, 2021). *M. galloprovincialis* is an edible
102 mussel which is extensively cultured in the aquaculture industry and is well-studied due to its
103 ecological and economic importance worldwide. This species of mussel is native to the

104 Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Ocean but was introduced to Puget Sound in the early 20th century
105 by the aquaculture industry.

106

107 We seek to explore an important question: what is the acclimatization potential of bivalves when
108 subjected to dynamic environmental conditions? Our study provides a snapshot of potential
109 product quality in a long-line aquaculture setting, which may assist the aquaculture industry in
110 optimally placing their shellfish for grow-out. The aquaculture industry has the ability to harness
111 the scope for acclimatization in bivalves and select for favorable characteristics by modulating *in*
112 *situ* grow-out conditions through space and time. They may be able to take advantage of this
113 plasticity to continue producing optimal product as conditions change into the future. Maximizing
114 growth and shell integrity is important to aquaculture because it can optimize profit and
115 marketability.

116

117 By holding the two ecologically and economically important species at either 5 m or 30 m depths
118 for 3.5 or 7.5 months in the inland fjord of Hood Canal, we used this dynamic “natural laboratory”
119 with multiple co-occurring climate change-related stressors. Our experiment spanned December
120 to June at two depths, allowing us to capture both seasonal mixing patterns (well-mixed and
121 stratified). While the quantity of climate change-related multiple stressor experiments has been
122 increasing in the literature, many experiments are performed in the laboratory within carefully
123 controlled conditions that fail to effectively represent the complexity of real-world scenarios where
124 multiple stressors interact and fluctuate (Hofmann et al., 2011; McElhany, 2017; Reum et al.,
125 2014). It is, therefore, critical to study physiological performance in the naturally variable
126 environment, where numerous parameters (e.g. temperature, pH, salinity, dissolved oxygen)

127 fluctuate simultaneously and interact with each other at various spatiotemporal scales to affect
128 organismal performance (Wernberg et al., 2012). To assess bivalve field acclimatization potential,
129 we measured physiological metrics including growth rate, shell strength, and isotopic composition,
130 and we associated their responses to estuarine conditions experienced during their deployment.
131 We hypothesized larger differences in physiological response metrics between depths in spring,
132 when there is less vertical mixing, as opposed to the well-mixed water column in the winter.
133 Climate change-related parameters like OA, hypoxia, and warming temperatures are expected to
134 vary across depths and seasons and affect the growth rate, shell strength, and stable isotope profiles
135 of mussels and scallops. We hypothesize that both growth rate and shell strength will be greater at
136 the 5 m depth in spring due to higher temperatures and more favorable oxygen and carbonate
137 chemistry conditions. Isotopic signatures can reflect subtle changes in physiology based on the
138 environment and can thus provide important information regarding bivalve grow-out placement.
139 We expect to see higher $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ and $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ at the deeper depths where the nutrient supply is rich, and
140 terrestrial food sources are not as prominent (Fry, 2006). Understanding how *in situ* environmental
141 variability affects bivalve skeletal properties, growth rate, physiological performance, and changes
142 in biochemistry is vital to accurately predicting the acclimatization potential of these economically
143 and ecologically important species.

144

145 **2. Methods**

146 *2.1. Field Conditions*

147 Our study site was located just offshore of Taylor Shellfish Farms in Hood Canal, Puget Sound,
148 Washington (47.820°, -122.833°, Figure 1). *M. galloprovincialis* is often grown on long-lines,
149 which usually span 20–100 m depth and can experience a large breadth of oceanographic

150 conditions, leading to differences in aquaculture product quality along the long-line with depth
151 (Araújo et al., 2020; Aure et al., 2007; Smart, 2019). Furthermore, the depth range in our study is
152 consistent with the purple hinge rock scallop habitat, which spans the low-intertidal to 80 m
153 (Bourne, 1987; Whyte et al., 1990).

154

155 Chlorophyll-*a* (chl-*a*) data, used to quantify phytoplankton biomass, was not directly measured at
156 our field site, but we used fluorometer data measured *in situ* by the

157 buoy located 2.3 km from our study site. The ORCA buoy was not
158 functioning during our study period, so we averaged by day of year all available chl-*a* data from
159 2010 to 2021 at 5 and 30 m depth to approximate chl-*a* levels in the area.

160

161 2.2. Seawater Chemistry

162 Our two depths were chosen because they correspond to the shallow (5 m) and deep-water (30 m)
163 intake pipes at Taylor Shellfish Hatchery. At these depths, we were able to deploy cages and
164 measure environmental variables simultaneously. Water from the two depths was brought up to a
165 fixed shore platform, and weekly oceanographic data were recorded throughout the experiment
166 (temperature, salinity, and dissolved oxygen). Discrete water samples from each depth were
167 collected from the intake lines weekly and preserved with mercuric chloride for carbonate
168 chemistry analysis in accordance with ocean carbon community standard operating procedures
169 (Dickson et al., 2007). Carbonate chemistry bottle samples were processed at NOAA's Pacific
170 Marine Environmental Laboratory (PMEL), Seattle, Washington. Dissolved inorganic carbon
171 (DIC) concentrations were measured on analytical systems consisting of a coulometer (UIC, Inc.)
172 coupled with a Single Operator Multiparameter Metabolic Analyzer (SOMMA) developed to

173 extract DIC from seawater. Total alkalinity (TA) samples were analyzed according to the open-
174 cell titration standard operating procedure (SOP 3b in Dickson et al., 2007), using a custom
175 analytical system built at Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO). DIC instruments were
176 calibrated via gas loops. Instrument accuracy and precision for DIC and TA analyses were
177 monitored at regular intervals using Certified Reference Materials (CRMs), consisting of filtered
178 and UV-irradiated seawater supplied by the Dickson Lab (SIO). Uncertainty for DIC and TA
179 measurements is $\pm 0.1\%$ of measured values (roughly $\pm 2 \mu\text{mol/kg}$). More complete description
180 and references on DIC and TA analytical methods can be found in the metadata for (Alin et al.,
181 2021). Using DIC, TA, temperature, and salinity data, we calculated the saturation state of the
182 aragonite form of calcium carbonate (Ω_{ara}), partial pressures of CO_2 ($p\text{CO}_2$), and pH_T (pH on the
183 total scale) values using the CO_2SYS program (Pelletier et al., 2007) with Lueker et al. (2000)
184 dissociation constants.

185

186 2.3. Field Experiment and Growth

187 We obtained eight-month-old, purple-hinge rock scallops (*C. gigantea*) and one-year old
188 Mediterranean mussels (*M. galloprovincialis*) from Taylor Shellfish Farm. Scallops were bred in
189 the hatchery from wild broodstock. The non-native mussels are from an aquaculture hatchery line,
190 bred using ~1000 individuals from existing Taylor Shellfish farmed populations. We measured
191 shell height (from hinge to apex) using a caliper (0.1 mm precision) and tagged individuals by
192 adhering numbered “bee tags” (Betterbee, Greenwich, New York) to their shells with superglue
193 (Pacer Technology Zap-A-Gap Adhesives). At the beginning of the experiment, December 10,
194 2016 (T_0), we dissected $n = 10$ individuals from each species, flash froze their tissue, and placed
195 them in a $-80 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ freezer for storage. All individuals were measured before the start of the field

196 experiment to define starting size. For mussels ($n = 54$), average shell length \pm S.E. was $49.7 \pm$
197 0.40 mm, shell width was 27.40 ± 0.22 mm, and weight was 9.80 ± 0.31 g. For scallops ($n = 46$),
198 average shell length was 40.85 ± 0.34 mm, shell width was 40.05 ± 0.36 mm, and weight was 9.41
199 ± 0.24 g. For the field experiment, $n = 300$ shellfish were placed into mesh oyster bags made of
200 semirigid HDPE plastic and secured with zip ties to form a bag ~ 0.4 m³. On December 11, 2016,
201 shellfish ($n = 600$ shellfish per species) were deployed to our study sites at 5 and 30 m below the
202 surface using SCUBA. We collected subsets of scallops and mussels 3.5 and 7.5 months after
203 deployment (March 22, 2017, and June 27, 2017, respectively). We quantified growth rate by
204 measuring the shell height of individuals, subtracting the initial shell height, and dividing by time
205 deployed (Gobler et al., 2017; Hiebenthal et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2013; Riascos and Guzman,
206 2010). We cleaned all remaining tissue off shells with terrycloth and stored them at room
207 temperature for future shell strength analysis. We then flash froze tissue samples and stored them
208 at -80 °C for further analysis.

209

210 2.4. Shell Strength

211 We measured shell thickness and point-crushed the shell with a hydraulic press to quantify the
212 force it took to puncture the shell. Dry shells ($n = 50$ for mussels, $n = 46$ for scallops) were
213 rehydrated in seawater for 24 hours prior to crushing. We used a micro-caliper to measure shell
214 thickness to the nearest 0.01 mm. An Instron Universal Testing Machine measured the force (in
215 newtons, N) needed to create a hole in the shell (Wilkie and Bishop, 2012). We punctured two
216 holes into the shell (one at 1 cm from the edge of the shell and the other in the middle of the shell)
217 at 30 mm/min using a steel pin with a diameter of 2.5 mm. We averaged the puncture forces for
218 each individual shell and calculated S , which is shell strength expressed in megapascals (N mm⁻²).

219 S can be calculated by normalizing F (the maximum penetrating force, in N), by t (shell thickness,
220 in mm), and d (diameter of the punch, in mm) (Carnarius et al., 1996; Ikejima et al., 2003; Tyler,
221 1961).

222

223 2.6. Isotopic Signatures

224 We freeze-dried (VirTis Co.) the visceral mass of scallops and mussels and homogenized them
225 using a ball-mill (Wig-L-Bug Model MSD). To measure $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ stable isotope values, we
226 weighed $600 \pm 10 \mu\text{g}$ of freeze-dried and ground shellfish tissue ($n = 10$ per cohort) using a
227 microbalance (sensitivity $10 \mu\text{g}$) and packed it into a small tin. Glutamic Acid I, II ($0.42 \mu\text{g}$) and
228 Bristol Bay salmon ($0.339 \mu\text{g}$) standards of known isotopic composition were packed into tins and
229 interspersed with our samples. Samples were processed at University of Washington's IsoLab on
230 a Finnigan MAT253 mass spectrometer connected to a Costech elemental analyzer in continuous-
231 flow mode (<https://isolab.ess.washington.edu/laboratory/solid-CN.php>) in accordance with
232 methods highlighted in Fry et al. (1992). $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ results are reported as parts per thousand
233 relative to the reference standard Vienna PeeDee Belemnite (VPDB) and atmospheric air,
234 respectively.

235

236 2.7. Statistical Analysis

237 Prior to analysis, a Shapiro-Wilks Test was performed to assess normality, and if needed, values
238 of analysis were \log_{10} , arcsine, or square root transformed to achieve normality assumptions before
239 a model was run. We ran ANOVA and Tukey-HSD tests in *R* version 1.0.53 to determine
240 significant differences in growth, shell strength, and isotopic signatures among collection times,
241 depths, and species. A correlation matrix was created to determine co-varying oceanographic

242 conditions using the *corrplot* package in *R* (Taiyun, 2014). Data for this project can be accessed at
243 <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.21809631.v1> (Alma, 2023).

244

245 **3. Results**

246 *3.1. Field Conditions and Seawater Chemistry*

247 Hood Canal seawater chemical and physical properties varied greatly by depth and season (Table
248 1). Throughout the winter (December 11, 2016, to March 22, 2017), water at 30 m depth was ~
249 1.5 °C warmer than water at 5 m depth; however, in the spring (March 23 to June 27, 2017), water
250 at the shallow depth was ~ 3.8 °C warmer (Figure 2A, Table 1) than at 30 m. We found higher
251 variability in temperature at 5 m than 30 m (Figure S1). Water temperature at 5 m fluctuated
252 between 6.8 and 18.8 °C throughout the seven-month study, while temperatures at 30 m remained
253 more consistent at 7.8–11.3 °C. The minimum and maximum temperatures recorded in this study,
254 6.8 and 18.8 °C, were obtained at the shallow depth in January and June, respectively (Figure 2A).
255 Salinity was lower and more variable at 5 m depth (22.7–29.4) than at 30 m (28.3–30.3) (Figure
256 2B, Figure S1). Salinity fluctuations at both depths were more prominent in winter, likely a
257 reflection of storm mixing or runoff events. Dissolved oxygen levels were higher at 5 m than 30
258 m throughout the experiment; however, we observed more stable and consistently low dissolved
259 oxygen readings at 30 m during the spring due to increased water column stratification preventing
260 vertical mixing (Figure 2C, Figure S1, Figure S2). Chl-*a*, data collected from the Dabob Bay
261 ORCA monitoring buoy over the last ten years was used as a proxy for phytoplankton biomass
262 (Figure S3). There are several years of data missing, and in some instances, there were no data or
263 only one year worth of data for a particular day of the year, namely in December and January. The
264 spike in chl-*a* at 5 m in January may be an artifact of a single year of data and may not be

265 representative of the annual patterns. Overall, 30 m often has lower chlorophyll than 5 m, and most
266 spikes (representing potential algal blooms) were seen in April and May. $p\text{CO}_2$ levels were
267 consistently higher at the 30 m depth, especially during the spring when levels reached $3738 \mu\text{atm}$
268 ($\text{pH}_T = 7.09$, $\Omega_{\text{ara}} = 0.20$) at 30 m and $1002 \mu\text{atm}$ ($\text{pH}_T = 7.62$, $\Omega_{\text{ara}} = 0.70$) at 5 m on May 30,
269 2017. $p\text{CO}_2$ levels were lower at 5 m than 30 m during both seasons (Figure 2D, Figure S1). Both
270 pH_T and aragonite saturation state remained higher throughout the experiment at 5 m depth than
271 30 m (Figure 2E and 2F, Table 1). pH_T at the 5 m depth ranged between 7.62 to 8.42, and at 30 m
272 depth pH_T ranged between 7.09 to 7.81. Ω_{ara} ranged between 0.7 and 2.7 at 5 m and between 0.2
273 and 0.7 at 30 m.

274

275 3.2. Growth

276 Growth rates based on shell height were 129% and 125% higher across seasons at 5 m than that at
277 30 m depth in mussel and scallops, respectively ($F_{2,213} = 316.3$, $F_{2,182} = 231$, $p < 0.001$, $p < 0.001$,
278 Figure 4A and 4B). Mussels and scallops at 5 m depth showed higher growth rates in the spring
279 compared to the winter ($p = 0.022$, $p = 0.017$, Figure 4A and 4B) and no seasonal differences in
280 growth rates were observed at 30 m depth ($p = 0.99$, $p = 0.35$). Growth rates in mussels were 124%
281 and 132% greater at the 5 m depth than at the 30 m depth in winter and spring. Growth rates in
282 scallops were 136% and 115% greater at 5 m depth than at the 30 m depth in winter and spring.

283

284 3.3. Shell Strength

285 Shell strength differed based on seasons and depth for mussels (season – $F_{1,247} = 152.49$, $p < 0.001$,
286 depth – $F_{1,247} = 52.34$, Figure 4C). Mussel shells acclimatized to 5 m depth were 40% and 22%
287 stronger than deep-acclimatized mussels in the winter and spring, respectively ($p < 0.001$, $p <$

288 0.001, Figure 4C). In scallops, shell strength differed between seasons but not depths (season –
289 $F_{1,231} = 6.08, p = 0.002$, depth – $F_{1,231} = 2.31, p = 0.13$, Figure 4D). Shell strength in scallops only
290 differed between two cohorts, i.e., organisms collected at 30 m in the spring were 37% stronger
291 than those collected from 5 m in the winter ($p = 0.013$, Figure 4D).

292

293 3.5. Isotopic Signatures

294 Isotopic signatures of mussels changed with both season and depth for $\delta^{13}\text{C}$, but only with depth
295 for $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ ($\delta^{13}\text{C}$ season – $F_{2,45} = 128.1, p < 0.001$, depth – $F_{1,45} = 407.8, p < 0.001$; $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ season – $F_{2,45}$
296 $= 1.17, p = 0.2$, depth – $F_{1,45} = 241.9, p < 0.001$, Figure 5A, Table S1, Figure S4). Mussels at 5 m
297 in spring had higher $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values than at 5 m in the winter. Overall higher $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values were found
298 at 30 m than 5 m. $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ values in mussels differed between depths; higher $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ values were found
299 at 30 m than 5 m (both seasons, Figure S4). At 5 m, $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ values were higher in the spring than the
300 winter; however, at 30 m, $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ values were higher in the winter than the spring ($p < 0.001, p =$
301 0.03 , respectively, Figure 5C, Table S1, Figure S4). $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ isotopic signatures of scallops
302 placed at 30 m were not different from isotopic signatures measured at the beginning of the
303 experiment (T_0 , December 10, 2016). C:N ratios (Figure S4) were affected by both depth and
304 season (depth – $F_{1,36} = 215.2, p < 0.001$, season – $F_{1,36} = 222.7, p < 0.001$), and had the highest
305 ratio in the 5 m spring cohort.

306

307 Scallops showed similar patterns in $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ levels to mussels (season – $F_{2,45} = 96.73, p < 0.001$, depth
308 – $F_{1,45} = 180.50, p < 0.001$, Figure 5B, Table S1, Figure S4). Scallops from 5 m in spring had
309 higher $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values than at 5 m in the winter ($F_{2,45} = 96.73, p < 0.001$). Higher $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values were
310 found at 30 m than 5 m. $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ values in scallops differed between seasons and depth (season – $F_{2,45}$

311 = 11.41, $p < 0.001$, depth – $F_{1,45} = 196.01$, $p < 0.001$). Similar to $\delta^{13}\text{C}$, higher values of $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ were
312 observed at 30 m than 5 m ($p = 0.003$, $p < 0.001$, respectively, Figure 5B, Table S1, Figure S4).
313 T_0 scallops had similar signatures to the 30 m depths for $\delta^{15}\text{N}$, and for $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ signatures were similar
314 to all cohorts except 5 m winter. C:N ratios were higher in the spring than winter (season – $F_{1,45} =$
315 14.09, $p < 0.001$,) and were higher at 5 m than 30 m in both seasons (depth – $F_{1,45} = 20.57$, $p <$
316 0.001).

317

318 4. Discussion

319 4.1. Seawater Chemistry

320 Puget Sound's Hood Canal experiences seasonal hypoxia and strong stratification due to warming,
321 upwelling, riverine, and anthropogenic nutrient inputs (Khangaonkar et al., 2018). Our results
322 show a relatively well-mixed water column in the winter and increasing stratification as the water
323 warms in the spring. Temperatures experienced by shellfish in our experiment were as high as 18.8
324 °C and as low as 6.8 °C. In Hood Canal, salinity is typically affected by external freshwater input
325 and precipitation (Reum et al., 2014). The lower salinity values at 5 m in spring are likely due to
326 the outflow of snowmelt and terrestrial runoff, which creates a freshwater lens containing high
327 nutrient load (Khangaonkar et al., 2018). Strong spring stratification and warmer surface waters in
328 Hood Canal can lead to increased phytoplankton blooms on the surface and metabolic influences
329 on oxygen concentrations and carbonate chemistry at all depths (Lowe et al., 2019).

330

331 For the majority of the experiment, $p\text{CO}_2$ values were above 1000 μatm ($\Omega_{\text{ara}} = 0.2$ to 0.6, $\text{pH}_T =$
332 7.09 to 7.60) at the 30 m depth, which exceeds the global surface ocean average $p\text{CO}_2$ levels
333 projected by IPCC (2014) for year 2100. An aragonite saturation state less than 1 is of concern

334 because bivalves biomineralize aragonite to form their hard shells and prolonged undersaturation
335 may lead to shell corrosion, and deployed mussels and scallops experienced these conditions at 5
336 m in winter and at 30 m throughout the experiment (Feely et al., 2008; Miller et al., 2009). Oxygen
337 concentrations were relatively high at 5 m in both season, while they were more variable but tended
338 to be lower at 30 m during winter, although levels observed never fell to values where widespread
339 shellfish mortality might be expected (Vaquer-Sunyer and Duarte, 2008).

340

341 4.2. Growth and Shell Strength

342 Growth of mussels and scallops acclimatized to 5 m was > 100% higher than those from the 30 m
343 depth. In a similar study, the giant scallop, *Placopecten magellanicus*, held at different depths in
344 Newfoundland, Canada, had higher growth rates at the shallow 10 m depth when compared to
345 deeper depths (20 and 30 m) (MacDonald and Thompson, 1985). In our study, higher growth at
346 shallow depths is likely due to a combination of multiple factors such as higher aragonite saturation
347 state, DO, food availability, and overall warmer temperatures, especially during the spring.
348 Similarly, *P. magellanicus* had faster growth rates in shallower water (10 m) where temperatures
349 and food availability were higher. If growers seek fast shellfish growth, it is advisable to place
350 bivalves for grow-out in the top few meters of the water column, where temperatures and carbonate
351 chemistry are more favorable. In our study, shellfish from “spring” season had acclimatized longer
352 than shellfish from the “winter” season, potentially confounding the interaction between
353 acclimatization time and season.

354

355 With unfavorable carbonate chemistry, more energy may be expended on shell formation and there
356 may be a disruption in extra- and intracellular acid-base equilibria, causing a trade-off of metabolic

357 energy away from growth (Michaelidis et al., 2005; Pörtner et al., 2005; Stevens and Gobler, 2018;
358 Wittmann and Pörtner, 2013). Low DO levels at deeper depths (generally around 2 – 3 mg/L for
359 bivalves) may reduce the ability of shellfish’s ctenidia to extract oxygen from the water to sustain
360 basic cellular function, possibly redirecting energy away from growth and toward acclimatory and
361 somatic maintenance processes (Carrington et al., 2015; Froehlich et al., 2016; Moullac et al.,
362 2007; Sokolova et al., 2012; Stevens and Gobler, 2018). A similar study found that scallop
363 (*Argopecten irradians*) experienced significantly lower growth rates when exposed to water
364 collected from Forge River Estuary, New York, which has naturally low DO and pH levels (Gobler
365 et al., 2014).

366

367 Mussels acclimatized to 5 m depth had considerably stronger shells than those from 30 m depth.
368 This is possibly due to favorable aragonite saturation states at the surface. These results are
369 consistent with previous studies in which calcifying species, a snail (*Austrocochlea porcata*) and
370 the blue mussel (*Mytilus edulis*), had weaker shells when exposed to acidified conditions (Coleman
371 et al., 2014; Li et al., 2015). In Washington, it is predicted that increased uptake of anthropogenic
372 CO₂ in the future will cause the aragonite saturation horizon to shoal further than it already has,
373 making suitable habitat for calcifiers scarce (Feely et al., 2012). As suggested by Green et al.
374 (2009), “death by dissolution” is a very real possibility for bivalves as climate change progresses.

375

376 In contrast to mussels, the strongest scallop shells were found at 30 m depth in the spring, whereas
377 the most fragile shells were found at 5 m during the winter. Similar results have been seen in the
378 gastropod mollusk, *Subnivalia undulata*, whose shell strength was not directly related with pH
379 treatments of 8.2 and 7.7 after 65 days of exposure (Coleman et al., 2014). A previous study

380 subjected *C. gigantea* to 1050 μatm and 365 $\mu\text{atm } p\text{CO}_2$ for six weeks and shells were subsequently
381 CT-scanned to measure shell density (Alma et al., 2020). Scallops from this study had a
382 significantly lower periostracum density in the high $p\text{CO}_2$ treatments suggesting that this outer
383 layer dissolves first when compared to inner shell layers. We did not measure the thickness of the
384 periostracum (organic outermost layer of the shell) layer in our study, however, it is probable that
385 the scallops from our experiment were protected from dissolution due to their thick periostracum,
386 which may explain the compromised growth rates but not shell strength (Gazeau et al., 2013). *C.*
387 *gigantea* is known to be more abundant at deeper depths, up to 80 m deep, where aragonite
388 saturation in Hood Canal reaches levels of ~ 0.5 in the colder, well-mixed months, and ~ 0.6 in the
389 warmer highly stratified months (Feely et al., 2010; Whyte et al., 1990). In comparison, *M.*
390 *galloprovincialis* can be found up to 40 m deep where aragonite saturation in Hood Canal can
391 reach ~ 0.7 in the cold months and ~ 0.8 in the warm months (CABI, 2020; Feely et al., 2010), so it
392 is possible that the native *C. gigantea* has evolved better biomineralization mechanisms to cope
393 with acidified conditions than the more shallow-adapted *M. galloprovincialis*.

394

395 4.4. Isotopic Signatures

396 Analysis of stable isotope signatures can provide a time-integrated assessment of an individual's
397 diet origin and insight into the influence of the environment on their assimilation rate (Gaillard et
398 al., 2017; Galimany et al., 2017; Lowe et al., 2019). A small change in the C:N ratio may be
399 indicative of environmental stress and alterations in the system's food web dynamics (Patterson
400 and Carmichael, 2018). $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ can be used as an indicator of primary production sources, while $\delta^{15}\text{N}$
401 can be used as a proxy for trophic position and sub-lethal stress (Michener and Lajtha, 2008).
402 Differences in $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ manifested as lower (more negative) $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ levels in both species at the 5 m

403 depths, especially in winter, likely as a reflection of increased terrestrial C3 plant input, which has
404 a lower $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ signature. Similar seasonal differences have also been seen in wild-sampled Hood
405 Canal Pacific oysters, *Crassostrea gigas*, who exhibited lower $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ in the winter (November–
406 December) when compared to summer (June–August) (Conway-Cranos et al., 2015), suggesting
407 that the oysters collected in summer had less terrestrial-based organic food sources than those
408 collected in winter. The isotopic pattern seen in the shallow winter cohort may point to increased
409 runoff due to snowmelt or precipitation, directing more terrestrial food sources into Hood Canal
410 (Simenstad and Wissmar, 1985). Differences across depths can be seen in both $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $\delta^{15}\text{N}$, in
411 which the 30 m depth had higher isotopic values than the 5 m depth, for both species. A similar
412 isotopic signature to our study was seen in the oyster *C. gigas*, where those grown close to the
413 bottom near a seagrass bed had higher $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ when compared to oysters grown offshore
414 (Hori et al., 2019). Oysters grown offshore had a more pelagic-based diet, while those grown on
415 tidal flats ingested a diet of both benthic and pelagic matter, resulting in higher nitrogen content
416 and higher quality protein. *C. gigas* acclimated to Hood Canal conditions (15 km from our site)
417 are suggested to have relied on a diet of predominantly salt marsh vegetation-derived carbon,
418 resulting in a reduced $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ signature (Conway-Cranos et al., 2015). It can also be postulated that
419 cohorts with higher $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ were acclimatized to environments with more terrestrial C4 plant
420 particulates (e.g., grasses), marsh grass, algal primary productivity, eelgrass, and marine
421 particulate organic matter (POM), all of which are relatively enriched in ^{13}C compared to terrestrial
422 C3 plants (e.g., trees). Consumers integrate the carbon isotopic composition of their diet into their
423 bodies, and can thus reflect changing food sources through time (Hama et al., 1983; Michener and
424 Lajtha, 2008). This is a plausible explanation for the carbon isotopic signatures observed in
425 mussels and scallops, as conditions at 5 m in the spring likely had higher phytoplankton

426 productivity than in the winter, and the 30 m locations had a high abundance of marine POM,
427 while the 5 m location in the winter had mainly terrestrial POM.

428

429 Higher $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ values at 30 m may be correlated with higher denitrification at depth, in which
430 microbial metabolic activity preferentially uses lighter nitrogen isotopes, leaving the surroundings
431 enriched in $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ (isotopic fractionation) (Schlesinger and Bernhardt, 2013). Lower dissolved
432 oxygen at depth may have created a more favorable environment for denitrification and further
433 increased $\delta^{15}\text{N}$. Subsequently when phytoplankton uptake nutrients associated with denitrification,
434 their $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ signature increases which may be reflected in bivalves who consume them due to the
435 trophic enrichment factor (Zhang et al., 2010). Bivalves at deeper depths may also consume a
436 higher proportion of POM, which is comprised largely of denitrified particles and organic debris,
437 which will often contain an enriched $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ signature (Michener and Lajtha, 2008). Additionally,
438 sub-lethal environmental stress responses in bivalves can prompt an increase in metabolic
439 processes and disrupt nitrogen processing resulting in increased preferential excretion of light
440 nitrogen isotopes into the environment leaving tissues enriched with $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ (Patterson and
441 Carmichael, 2018). For example, in the Eastern oyster *Crassostrea virginica*, those who were field-
442 acclimatized to 3.66 mg/L DO had lower growth and a higher $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ signature when compared to
443 those acclimatized to 6 mg/L. This suggests excess excretion of lighter $\delta^{14}\text{N}$ by bivalves due to
444 stressful conditions may be also be correlated with changes in metabolic processes like growth or
445 starvation (Patterson and Carmichael, 2018). Changes in environmental $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ may also be
446 attributed to a multitude of factors including changes in agricultural runoff, increased storm
447 activity, or anthropogenic pollution (Piola et al., 2006); therefore, it is difficult to trace changes in
448 organismal $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ without measurements of source end-members. A longer- term study of tissue-

449 specific and environmental end-member isotopic signatures may provide further insight into our
450
451

452 **5. Conclusion**

453 We identified major differences in shellfish growth, shell strength, and stable isotopes across
454 seasons and depths. Both of our study species showed faster growth at 5 m than 30 m. Shell
455 strength changed with depth in mussels (higher at 5 m than 30 m) but did not change with depth
456 in the scallops. Both mussels and scallops had low $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ levels at the 5 m depth in winter.
457 The acclimatization capacity of scallops and mussels has been shown in this study, and this
458 information may inform shellfish farmers to optimize marketable attributes, especially as climate
459 change progresses. Our results are especially relevant for the burgeoning rock scallop aquaculture
460 market, farms who grow mussels on long lines, and aquaculture locations that are already starting
461 to experience the effects of climate change. Future research that acclimatizes bivalves for a longer
462 period of time, and that examines transgenerational effects, metabolism, isotopic endmembers, and
463 genetic expression should be implemented.

464

465 **Declaration of Competing Interests**

466

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

469

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486

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