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**INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG
FÜR THEORETISCHE UND ANGEWANDTE LIMNOLOGIE**

**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF THEORETICAL AND APPLIED LIMNOLOGY**

**ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE
DE LIMNOLOGIE THEORIQUE ET APPLIQUEE**

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Volume 24 · Part 5

Edited for the Association by V. Sládeček and A. Sládečková

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E. Schweizerbart'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung

(Nägele u. Obermiller)

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Optimal resource allocation in cladocerans

Wilfried Gabriel and Barbara E. Taylor

Introduction

The natural pattern for growth and reproduction of cladocerans results in continued growth during most or all of adult life. This reproductive strategy is not well understood because optimal control theory predicts simultaneous growth and reproduction only under very special conditions (SIBLY et al. 1985) which are unlikely to obtain for cladocerans. Theoretically preferred is the "bang-bang" strategy: no investment into reproduction until an optimal switching point is reached, then no further growth. TAYLOR & GABRIEL (1985) showed that indeterminate growth of *Daphnia pulex* and *D. pulicaria* is suboptimal under the assumption of constant mortality. To explain why *Simocephalus vetulus* (MÜLLER), another daphniid cladoceran, is not a "bang-bang strategist", PERRIN et al. (1987) proposed that structural constraints such as size of the brood chamber could require continued growth after first reproduction.

Because reproductive output is among the most important components of fitness, one can expect that the resource allocation pattern has been shaped by strong selection pressure during evolution. But there are many plausible excuses for disagreements between theory and nature. Genetic, developmental, physiological, or other factors that could constrain an organism from achieving optimal allocation are poorly known and thus difficult to include in a model. Before invoking such constraints to reconcile nature to theory in the case of resource allocation for *Daphnia*, we decided to analyse the problem further. From laboratory data for *Daphnia pulex*, we constructed a model in which adult growth and reproduction are functions of resource allocation. We numerically solved the model for optimal resource allocation patterns under various conditions. These optimal patterns are more similar to natural patterns than previous analyses led us to expect, and they indicate how selection may have shaped the life histories of cladocerans.

Methods and model

To describe growth and reproduction of cladocerans we used laboratory data for *Daphnia pulex* (TAYLOR 1985). From these measurements we estimated the various functions and parameters of the model, including net production as a function of body size and food concentration. Production is modelled as a continuous process

during the intermolt; reproduction and change in body size are implemented as discrete events at instar transitions. For each adult instar A the allocation α_A of net production P_A to reproduction determines growth and reproduction: the number of eggs produced is proportional to $\alpha_A P_A$ and the weight increment is proportional to $(1 - \alpha_A) P_A$. Measured values of α_A were used in this model to describe the natural allocation pattern. To find the optimal resource allocation patterns, we chose intrinsic growth rate r as our measure of fitness. For any specified size dependent mortality scheme, the life history parameters l_x (survival probability) and m_x (reproduction) are constants or functions of the α_A 's. Therefore, the discrete form of the renewal equation

$$1 = \sum l_x m_x \exp(-rx)$$

can be used to calculate numerically those α_A -values which maximize r . We assume three simple cases of mortality: i) size-independent, ii) survivorship linearly decreasing with body length to model a fish-like predation, and iii) survivorship linearly increasing with body length to represent invertebrate predation. For the results presented, the size-independent mortality is assumed to be 10% per adult instar and the size-dependent mortality is calculated as increasing or decreasing linearly with body length so that at 0.75 mm or 3.5 mm the mortality becomes 10% or 60%. A more detailed description of the model will be given elsewhere (TAYLOR & GABRIEL 1992).

Results and discussion

The natural pattern of growth and reproduction at abundant food is given in Fig. 1a. The frequency histogram below the figure represents the part α_A of net production that is allocated to reproduction. We count the last juvenile instar where allocation to reproduction can start as $A = 1$. (The eggs resulting from this allocation are laid at the beginning of instar 2 and hatch at end of instar 2.) At this instar already 76% of net production is devoted to reproduction. This allocation increases to over 95% at adult instar 10, resulting in small but continuous growth after first egg production. This natural pattern is contrasted by the model results in Fig. 1 b–d. With size-independent mortality

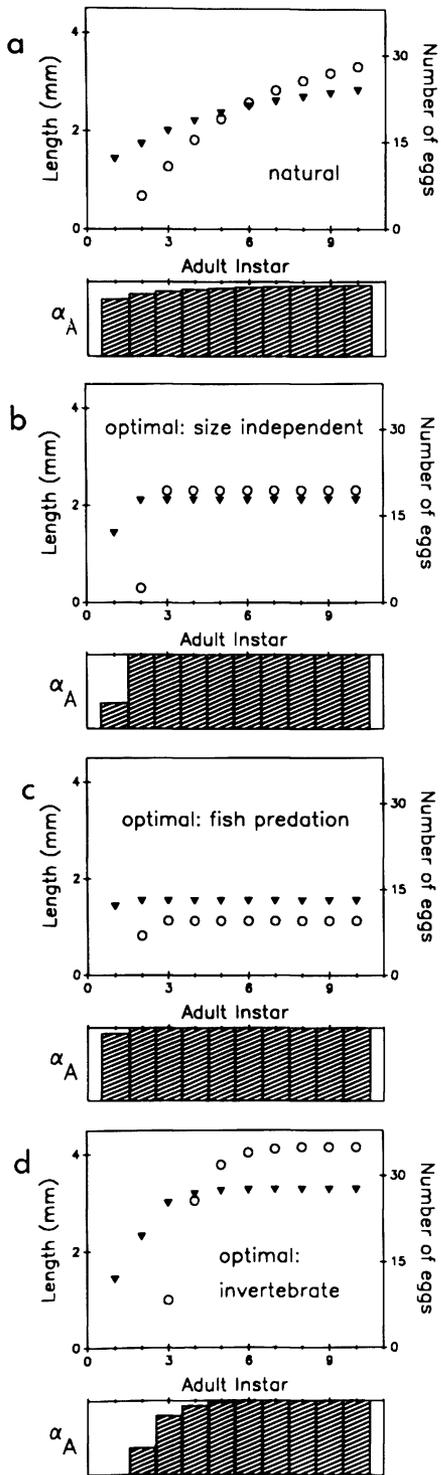


Fig. 1 a-d.
(Legends of Figs. 1 + 2 see next page)

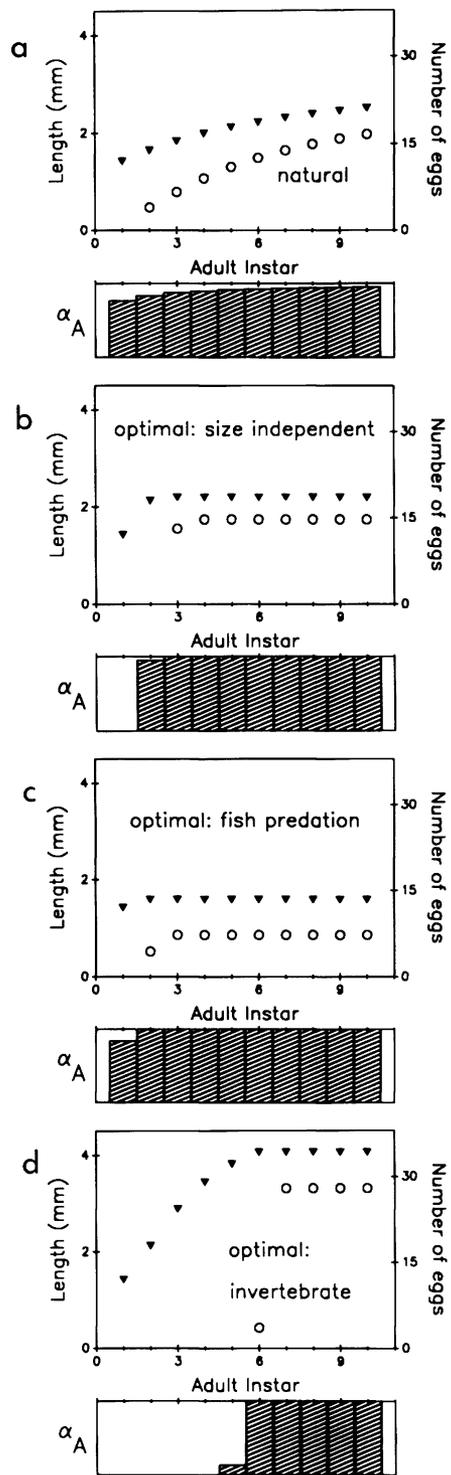


Fig. 2 a-d.
(Legends of Figs. 1 + 2 see next page)

Table 1. Intrinsic growth rates r for the best "bang-bang strategy" and comparison of r under natural resource allocation with the optimal values achievable for assumed size-independent mortality, fish-like and invertebrate-like predation risks under abundant and limited food conditions.

food	predation	optimal $r [d^{-1}]$	natural $r [d^{-1}]$	difference		bang-bang $r [d^{-1}]$
				abs.	rel. [%]	
high	independent	0.3412	0.3368	0.0044	1.3	0.3389
	fish	0.2710	0.2592	0.0118	4.3	0.2702
	invertebrate	0.1909	0.1460	0.0449	23.5	0.1897
low	independent	0.2314	0.2247	0.0067	2.9	0.2313
	fish	0.1665	0.1607	0.0058	3.5	0.1648
	invertebrate	0.0873	0.0183	0.0690	79.0	0.0864

(Fig. 1 b) the optimal strategy is to cease growing after one intermediate allocation to reproduction. Qualitatively the same is predicted if the mortality increases with body length (Fig. 1 c), but the first intermediate allocation to reproduction is higher and consequently the final body size is smaller than for size-independent mortality. Under invertebrate predation (Fig. 1 d) it is optimal to postpone the first reproduction by one instar and to have four intermediate allocations before investing all into reproduction. The largest final body size would be attained with this allocation pattern.

The natural allocation pattern seems to be quite independent of food level (TAYLOR 1985, LYNCH 1989), and it seems to be mainly a function of weight and/or age. At least for the *Daphnia pulex* clone used in the experiments by TAYLOR, the natural α_A values are a function only of the instar number. Therefore, limited food implies retarded growth and fewer eggs without any qualitative change in the natural allocation pattern (Fig. 2 a). The optimal strategy under size-independent mortality delays reproduction by one instar (Fig. 2 b), as compared to the high food situation. Food shortage does not change the optimal strategy under fish predation very much (Fig. 2 c), but the intermediate α_A is lower, i.e. allocation gives a higher proportion to growth, so that the final body size is similar. Under invertebrate predation

the optimal strategy strongly depends on the food level. Optimization with limited food postpones the first reproduction further, and there is only one intermediate allocation before reaching the final body size, which is larger than under abundant food.

Table 1 compares the intrinsic growth rates for natural and optimal allocations and the best "bang-bang" allocation for various predation schedules and food levels. The simple optimal control model obviously does not predict intermediate allocations and its "bang-bang strategy" can result in higher r values than natural allocation. The fitness under this strategy is very close but always below the optimum which our model reaches with intermediate allocations. The natural resource allocation seems to be suboptimal under all conditions tested. Invertebrate predation produces the largest deviations from the optimal values. In most cases, however, the realized fitness is very close to its maximum, so that indeterminate growth seems not to be very expensive. Similar results are obtained with more complicated predation schedules, such as arctangent or parabolic functions. A weak point of any such optimization is the underlying assumption of constant environmental conditions within and between generations.

But ponds and lakes are temporally variable, and thus cladocerans perceive a variety of environments even during one growing season. One can question whether the intrinsic growth rate is the appropriate fitness measure under variable environmental conditions. Optimizing the total reproductive output can lead to indeterminate growth as shown by GABRIEL (1982) in a different model approach. Other measures of fitness will be discussed elsewhere in detail; e.g. for non-overwintering cladocerans the number of adults able to produce resting eggs at the end of the season might be a better fitness measure.

If the environment changes from generation to generation one has to maximize the geometric mean fitness over successive generations. The re-

Fig. 1. Body size (= triangles) and fecundity (= circles) at abundant food resulting from allocation α_A of net production to reproduction (histogram below figure) for adult instars A starting with $A = 1$ as the last juvenile instar where first allocation to reproduction can occur. a) Natural allocation. b - d) Model results under the assumption of size-independent mortality (b), fish (c), and invertebrate predation (d).

Fig. 2. Same as Fig. 1 but for limited food (30% below the incipient limiting level).

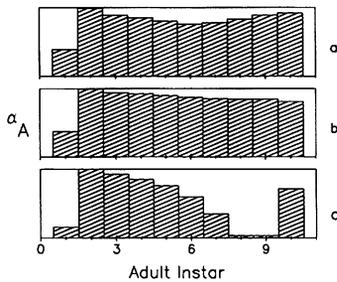


Fig. 3. Optimal resource allocation α_A of net production to reproduction if mortality varies between generations. a) Equal probability is assumed for fish and invertebrate predation at abundant food. b) As a) but with size-independent mortality as a third equal probable predation schedule. c) As b) but for limited food (30% below the incipient limiting level).

sulting optimal resource allocation is then not just a superposition of the results under constant conditions. This is demonstrated in Fig. 3 for the simple case that food is always constant but predation changes between generations. In reality we must of course consider that food conditions and kind and intensity of predation may change between generations and as well within generations. Depending on the frequency of the various environments this probably can result in almost any optimal resource allocation pattern.

More detailed measurements on resource allocations and its correlation with other life history parameters of different clones and species would be helpful to gain more insight into the selective forces shaping the observed growth and reproduction patterns. From our model we conclude: The natural resource allocation pattern with its consequences of indeterminate growth is suboptimal for any constant environment, but it can be under-

stood as adaptive to variable environments which change between generations in food availability and predation risk.

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