

Physiological effects of short- and long-term exposure to elevated carbon dioxide on a freshwater mussel, *Fusconaia flava*

Kelly D. Hannan, Jennifer D. Jeffrey, Caleb T. Hasler, and Cory D. Suski

Abstract: Zones of elevated carbon dioxide (CO₂) have the potential to deter the movement of fishes. Should CO₂ be used as a barrier, non-target organisms, such as freshwater mussels, have the potential to be impacted. In this study, the physiological responses of adult *Fusconaia flava* exposed to elevated partial pressures of CO₂ (pCO₂) over both short-term (6 h exposure with 6 h recovery) and long-term (4-, 8-, and 32-day exposure) periods were measured. A 6 h exposure to either ~15 000 μatm (1 atm = 101.325 kPa) or ~200 000 μatm caused an elevation in hemolymph Ca²⁺. Exposure to ~200 000 μatm resulted in a decrease in hemolymph Cl⁻, and exposure to ~15 000 μatm caused an increase in hemolymph Na⁺, whereas ~200 000 μatm caused a decrease. Exposure to elevated pCO₂ for long-term periods caused a decrease in hemolymph Mg²⁺ and an initial increase in hemolymph Ca²⁺. Body condition and hemolymph glucose were not significantly influenced by elevated pCO₂ for both experiments. This study shows that elevated pCO₂ had limited impacts on the physiological responses of adult freshwater mussels.

Résumé : Les zones de concentrations élevées de dioxyde de carbone (CO₂) pourraient faire entrave aux déplacements de poissons. L'utilisation éventuelle du CO₂ comme barrière pourrait avoir un impact sur des organismes non ciblés, comme les moules d'eau douce. Nous avons mesuré les réactions physiologiques de fusconaias jaunes (*Fusconaia flava*) adultes exposées à des pressions partielles de CO₂ (pCO₂) élevées pendant de courtes (exposition de 6 heures avec récupération de 6 heures) et longues durées (expositions de 4, 8 et 32 jours). Une exposition de 6 heures à des pCO₂ de ~15 000 μatm (1 atm = 101.325 kPa) ou ~200 000 μatm entraînait une hausse du Ca²⁺ hémolympatique. Une exposition à ~200 000 μatm se traduisait par une baisse du Cl⁻ hémolympatique et une exposition à ~15 000 μatm entraînait une hausse du Na⁺ hémolympatique, alors qu'une exposition à ~200 000 μatm entraînait sa baisse. L'exposition à de fortes pCO₂ pendant de longues périodes causait une baisse du Mg²⁺ hémolympatique et une baisse initiale du Ca²⁺ hémolympatique. Dans les deux expériences, des pCO₂ élevées n'ont pas eu d'influence significative sur l'embonpoint et le glucose hémolympatique. L'étude démontre que de fortes pCO₂ ont des effets limités sur les réactions physiologiques des moules d'eau douce adultes. [Traduit par la Rédaction]

Introduction

The introduction of non-native species can have long-lasting impacts on resident populations and “invaded” environments (Pimentel et al. 2005; Ricciardi et al. 2013). Many invaders have been concentrated in the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basin. Since 1840, more than 182 species have been introduced into this region, which is the highest introduction rate recorded for a freshwater system (Ricciardi 2006). Recently, two species of invasive fish, silver carp (*Hypophthalmichthys molitrix*) and bighead carp (*Hypophthalmichthys nobilis*) (hereinafter collectively referred to as bigheaded carps), have experienced dramatic increases in population size coupled with rapid range expansion throughout the Mississippi basin and are spreading towards the Great Lakes basin, causing substantial concern. Bigheaded carps have the potential to negatively affect the structure of the aquatic food web and transform aquatic invaded habitats (Sampson et al. 2009). The leading edge of bigheaded carps is about 75 km away from the Chicago Area Waterway System, an artificial, anthropogenic connection between the Mississippi River and Laurentian Great Lakes basin (Patel et al. 2011). One pillar of the current management strategy to impede the movement of bigheaded carps from their current range into the Great Lakes is a trio of electrified barriers in the Chicago Area Waterway System. While it is currently believed that no bigheaded carps have traversed this barrier, no nonphys-

ical barrier is 100% effective at stopping all fish movement (Noatch and Suski 2012), suggesting a need to develop additional, redundant technologies to contain bigheaded carps in the Mississippi basin.

Carbon dioxide gas (CO₂) added to water has the potential to be an effective tool to deter fish movements (Kates et al. 2012), which may be a promising option to supplement the current electric barrier system for deterring the spread of bigheaded carps. The concept behind a CO₂ barrier is that fish should avoid zones of elevated CO₂ once a target CO₂ level has been reached, thereby acting as a nonphysical barrier to influence movement (Noatch and Suski 2012). For example, Dennis et al. (2015b) used laboratory studies to show that several species of juvenile fishes, including bigheaded carps, would actively avoid zones of CO₂ once partial pressures had been elevated to approximately ~200 000 μatm (1 atm = 101.325 kPa). There are a number of potential methods by which CO₂ gas could be deployed in a real-world setting to act as a fish barrier, including both short-term (temporary) or long-term applications that may be installed at strategic movement locations frequented by bigheaded carps, such as in natural backwater habitats or at navigational structures (United States Army Corps of Engineers 2014). Should CO₂ barriers be deployed at a target area, it is likely that CO₂ gas would spread beyond the point of application, with CO₂ levels falling owing to dilution as distance from the application point increases. Despite the promise of CO₂

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as a novel barrier technology, many challenges exist prior to its deployment, including assessing the potential impacts of elevated partial pressures of CO₂ (pCO₂) on nontarget organisms.

One group of nontarget organisms that may be affected by the deployment of a CO₂ barrier is freshwater mussels, which can be found in a variety of aquatic habitats and are key components of freshwater ecosystems. Freshwater mussels serve many crucial ecological functions, influence many ecosystem processes in freshwater systems, and are often used as an indicator of ecosystem health (Williams et al. 1993). The volume of water filtered by mussels can equal or exceed daily stream discharge if there is a dense bed of unionids, and they can remove harmful particles from the environment (Vaughn and Hakenkamp 2001). Mussels influence phytoplankton abundance, water clarity, and nitrogen availability and can create nutrient productivity hotspots (Howard and Cuffey 2006). Freshwater mussels also provide links to higher trophic levels as food for fish, mammals, and birds (Williams et al. 1993). North American freshwater ecosystems contain the highest diversity of freshwater mussels in the world — 297 species, which is one-third of the entire freshwater fauna (Williams et al. 1993; Ricciardi et al. 1998). Unfortunately, even though North America has the highest diversity of freshwater mussels, more than half of these mussels — 213 species (71%) — are listed as endangered, threatened, or of special concern (Williams et al. 1993), and 7% are presumed extinct or functionally extinct (i.e., cannot reproduce), indicating their fragile nature and vulnerability to environmental perturbation. Importantly, there is a paucity of studies on the effects of elevated pCO₂ on mussels in fresh water, making it difficult to predict how these organisms might respond to exposure to elevated pCO₂.

The goal of the present study was to quantify the physiological responses of freshwater mussels to elevated pCO₂ exposure. Because of the potential for a CO₂ barrier to take different forms and the exposure of mussels to occur at different distances from the application site, mussels were exposed to elevated pCO₂ levels for both a short- and long-term period. To reflect exposure to a pulse of CO₂, adult Wabash pigtoe mussels (*Fusconaia flava*) were exposed to elevated pCO₂ (~15 000 and ~200 000 µatm) for 6 h and then returned to control water for an additional 6 h to assess recovery potential. To examine the impacts of an extended exposure to elevated pCO₂ that may be experienced by mussels downstream of a barrier, mussels were also exposed to 4, 8, and 32 days of elevated pCO₂ (~20 000 µatm). It was hypothesized that mussels would experience ionic and energetic disturbances in response to elevated pCO₂ exposure consistent with regulating acid–base disturbances. Exposure to elevated pCO₂ in marine bivalves (Michaelidis et al. 2005) and exposure of freshwater bivalves to strong acidification (i.e., sulfuric acid; Pynnönen 1994) and emersion (i.e., exposure to air; Byrne and McMahon 1994; Byrne et al. 1991) elicits a number of acid–base regulatory mechanisms, such as a decrease in hemolymph pH and an increase in HCO₃[−], and exposure to elevated pCO₂ was expected to invoke a similar response for freshwater mussels. Finally, as elevated pCO₂ may act as a stressor, it was predicted that glucose levels would increase and hemolymph Mg²⁺ would decrease (Fritts et al. 2015). Thus, mussels were sampled for hemolymph ions (Ca²⁺, Na⁺, Cl[−], Mg²⁺) and glucose concentrations after short- and long-term pCO₂ exposure and assessed for body condition index (BCI) during the long-term exposure. Responses of freshwater mussels to short- and long-term exposure to elevated pCO₂ levels may differ, and therefore attaining a broad understanding of mussel responses to different levels and durations of pCO₂ exposure will help inform management and policy makers on the potential impacts of CO₂ barriers on native freshwater mussels.

Methods

Mussel collection and husbandry

Fusconaia flava were collected by benthic grab from Big Four Ditch, Paxton, Illinois, USA, in September 2014. Following collection, mussels were transported to the Aquatic Research Facility at the University of Illinois, Champaign–Urbana, Illinois, USA, in coolers (travel time <1 h). Upon arrival, mussels were cleaned of epibionts, tagged for individual identification with Queen Marking Kit tags (The Bee Works, Orillia, Ontario, Canada) (Neves and Moyer 1988), and divided among three separate 128.7 L recirculating tank systems supplied with 64.4 L of fresh water every 7 days from a 0.04 ha naturalized, earthen-bottom pond. Prior to commencement of experimental treatments, mussels remained in this recirculation system for at least 1 week to recover from transport and handling stressors and to acclimate to laboratory conditions (Horohov et al. 1992; Dietz et al. 1994). The recirculating system consisted of the three plastic holding containers, a UV sterilizer (TMC Vecton 8 W, 11 L·min^{−1} flowrate, Pentair, Apopka, Florida, USA), a Teco 500 aquarium heater–chiller (TECO-US, Aquarium Specialty, Columbia, South Carolina, USA), 5 cm of sand, and a low-pressure air blower (Sweetwater, SL24H, Pentair). Mussels were fed a commercial shellfish diet with multiple particle sizes: *Nannochloropsis* sp. 1–2 µm and a mixed diet of *Isochrysis*, *Pavlova*, *Thalassiosira*, and *Tertraselmis* spp. 5–12 µm (Instant Algae, Reed Mariculture Inc., Campbell, California, USA) every other day (Wang et al. 2007). Mussels did not receive supplemental food 48 h prior to sampling for hemolymph. Dissolved oxygen (DO) and temperature were recorded daily across all holding tanks with a portable meter (YSI 550A, Yellow Springs Instruments, Irvine, California, USA) and averaged 8.02 ± 0.6 mg·L^{−1} and 17.5 ± 0.2 °C, respectively (mean ± standard error, SE).

Short-term pCO₂ exposure

To quantify physiological disturbances due to short-term pCO₂ exposure, mussels (N = 48) were placed individually into eight 0.71 L plastic containers held within one of two raceways, and all experiments were run over 4 consecutive days. Running the experiments on 4 days made it possible to run controls alongside elevated pCO₂ treatments. Each raceway contained pond water (described above) that was pumped from a central basin into the eight containers, allowed to overflow from the containers into the raceway, and then drain back into the central basin, forming a closed, recirculating system (Vanglandeghem et al. 2010; Dennis et al. 2015a). Each individual container was supplied with an air stone to maintain DO levels. Mussels were introduced to individual containers 24 h prior to experimentation, after which water quality in the central basin was recorded. Temperature and DO were measured as stated above, and pH was measured using a handheld meter (WTW pH 3310 m, Cole Palmer, Vernon Hills, Illinois, USA) calibrated regularly throughout the study. Free CO₂ and total alkalinity levels were measured using digital titration kits (Hach Company, Loveland, Colorado, USA). Temperature and pH data were entered into CO2Calc to define pCO₂ (Robbins et al. 2010).

Following the 24 h introduction period, elevations in pCO₂ were achieved by the common technique of bubbling compressed CO₂ gas (commercial grade, 99.9% purity) into the central basin through an air stone (Summerfelt and Sharrer 2004; Clingerman et al. 2007), until one of two target dissolved pCO₂ levels was reached: ~200 000 µatm (188 114 ± 12 669 µatm) or ~15 000 µatm (14 772 ± 1685 µatm). Previous work has shown that a level of approximately ~200 000 µatm is a conservative pCO₂ that caused active avoidance in several species of juvenile fishes, including bigheaded carps, making this a potential target for nonphysical fish barriers (Dennis et al. 2015b). The second pCO₂ level of ~15 000 µatm was used because previous work by Dennis et al. (2015b) found that for fish, extended holding at pressures above ~15 000 µatm began to

induce negative physiological changes, thereby suggesting that this would be a conservative $p\text{CO}_2$ value that would permit extended holding of mussels without resulting in mortality. In addition, the lack of knowledge of the speed of CO_2 dissipation makes using different ranges of lower $p\text{CO}_2$ values important, and $\sim 15\,000\ \mu\text{atm}$ is a possible $p\text{CO}_2$ value that would be expected downstream of a CO_2 barrier for mussels not residing immediately within a CO_2 addition zone. Because the addition of CO_2 to fresh water results in the formation of carbonic acid and thus a concomitant decrease in pH, values of $p\text{CO}_2$ within the central basin were maintained with a pH controller (PINPOINT, American Marine Inc., Connecticut, USA) that automatically added CO_2 to the basin should the pH rise above a target level during the 6 h exposure (Reynaud et al. 2003). Mussels were removed from their containers and sampled after either a 6 h exposure to one of the two $p\text{CO}_2$ levels ($N = 8$) or after a 6 h exposure to elevated $p\text{CO}_2$ followed by an additional 6 h recovery period in control conditions ($\sim 300\ \mu\text{atm}$; $N = 8$). A third group of control animals were handled in an identical manner as the CO_2 -treated mussels but did not receive supplemental CO_2 additions and were held at control $p\text{CO}_2$ of $\sim 300\ \mu\text{atm}$ ($273 \pm 30\ \mu\text{atm}$) for the duration of the experiment.

Mussel sampling included measurements for length, width, depth, mass of the whole animal, and volume. Length, width, and depth were measured using a digital caliper (Traceable digital carbon fiber calipers, Fisher Scientific, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA), and whole animal mass (tissue + shell) was collected to the nearest 0.01 g using a waterproof balance (HL-300WP, A&D, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA). Whole animal volume was collected by immersing the mussel in a graduated cylinder with a known volume of water and quantifying displacement, and shell cavity volume was generated by immersing just the shell in a graduated cylinder with a known water volume and subtracting from the volume of the whole animal. Hemolymph was extracted from the anterior adductor muscle with a 1 mL syringe and 26 G needle (Gustafson et al. 2005; Al-Subiai et al. 2009; McCartney et al. 2009) and centrifuged at $12\,000 \times$ gravity (g) for 2 min. Following centrifugation, the supernatant was removed, flash-frozen in liquid nitrogen, and stored at $-80\ ^\circ\text{C}$ until processing.

Long-term $p\text{CO}_2$ exposure

To define the impacts of prolonged exposure to elevated $p\text{CO}_2$, mussels ($N = 48$) were first separated into one of two 128.7 L recirculating tank systems (identical to the ones described above). Throughout the long-term experiment, mussels were fed every other day, as stated above, which did not affect the pH of the recirculating tank systems. Mussels were then held at either control ($\sim 1000\ \mu\text{atm}$; $994 \pm 62\ \mu\text{atm}$) or elevated ($\sim 20\,000\ \mu\text{atm}$; $22\,712 \pm 2482\ \mu\text{atm}$) $p\text{CO}_2$ for up to 32 days (note that the difference in $p\text{CO}_2$ for the two control conditions in the short- and long-term experiments was due to natural fluctuations in the $p\text{CO}_2$ levels of the pond water; Hasler et al. 2016). The $\sim 20\,000\ \mu\text{atm}$ $p\text{CO}_2$ level was targeted because it was unknown if mussels would survive extended holding at higher levels, as previous work by Dennis et al. (2015b) found that for fish, extended holding at pressures above $\sim 15\,000\ \mu\text{atm}$ began to induce negative physiological disturbances related to $p\text{CO}_2$ exposure. Target $p\text{CO}_2$ levels were achieved by bubbling CO_2 gas into the water to a pH that corresponded to the target $p\text{CO}_2$ level, as described in the short-term experiment. Water quality was monitored similarly to the experiment described above. Mussels ($N = 8$) were sampled as described above on days 4, 8, or 32 of exposure to $\sim 20\,000\ \mu\text{atm}$ $p\text{CO}_2$ or control conditions.

Laboratory analyses

Hemolymph Cl^- , Mg^{2+} , and Ca^{2+} concentrations were assayed in duplicate using commercially available kits (QuantiChrom assay kits: Cl^- , catalogue No. DICL-250; Mg^{2+} , catalogue No. DIMG-250; Ca^{2+} ,

catalogue No. DICA-500; BioAssay Systems, Hayward, California, USA). Hemolymph Na^+ levels were measured by the diagnostic clinical pathology lab at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, using a Beckman chemistry analyzer (Beckman Coulter AU680, Beckman Coulter, Brea, California, USA); quality control testing for this analyzer was performed at least every 24 h. Hemolymph glucose concentrations were assayed in duplicate according to the method of Bergmeyer (1974) using a 96-well microplate and a plate spectrophotometer (Molecular Devices, SpectraMax Plus 384, Sunnyvale, California, USA), and all inter- and intra-assay coefficients of variation were less than 10%.

Body condition index (BCI)

BCI, a traditional metric used to quantify bivalve condition (Widdows and Johnson 1988; Lundebye et al. 1997), was calculated as follows:

$$\text{BCI} = \frac{1000 \times \text{soft tissue dry mass}}{\text{shell cavity volume}}$$

Soft tissue dry mass (mg) was determined by removing mussel soft tissues and drying them at $99\ ^\circ\text{C}$ for 24 h prior to weighing (Widdows et al. 2002).

Statistical analyses

The effect of $p\text{CO}_2$ exposure on hemolymph ion and glucose levels, as well as dry mass, wet mass, length, and BCI was assessed using two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), with $p\text{CO}_2$ (elevated or control), sampling time, and their interaction ($p\text{CO}_2 \times$ sampling time) entered into each model as fixed effects. If at least one of the main effects in the ANOVA model was significant, or if the interaction term was significant, a Tukey-Kramer honestly significant difference (HSD) post hoc test was applied to separate means (Rohlf and Sokal 1995). When the interaction term was significant, the resulting multiple comparisons were examined, regardless of whether the main effects on their own were significant. In the absence of a significant interaction term, group differences were examined for significant individual main effects (i.e., $p\text{CO}_2$ or sampling time).

For all statistical analyses, a visual analysis of fitted residuals using a normal probability plot (Anscombe and Tukey 1963) was used to assess normality, while a Hartley's F_{max} test (Hartley 1950), combined with visual inspection of the distribution of fitted residuals, was used to assess homogeneity of variances. If either normality or homogeneity of variance assumptions were violated (Siegel and Castellan 1988), data were rank-transformed and then reanalyzed within the same parametric model described above, and the assumptions of both normality and equal variances were confirmed (Conover and Iman 1981; Iman et al. 1984; Potvin and Roff 1993). All data have been presented as means \pm SE where appropriate, all tests were performed using JMP Pro 11 (SAS Institute Inc., Cary, North Carolina), and differences were considered significant at $\alpha < 0.05$.

Results

Short-term $p\text{CO}_2$ exposure

Following a 6 h exposure, mussels held at both elevated $p\text{CO}_2$ levels ($\sim 15\,000$ and $\sim 200\,000\ \mu\text{atm}$) exhibited nearly a 1.5-fold increase in hemolymph Ca^{2+} when compared with mussels exposed to $\sim 300\ \mu\text{atm}$, and these elevated levels returned to baseline levels following exposure to control conditions for 6 h (Table 1; Fig. 1A). In contrast, the concentration of Cl^- in mussel hemolymph was only affected by exposure to a $p\text{CO}_2$ level of $\sim 200\,000\ \mu\text{atm}$ and decreased by approximately 33% from control levels (Table 1; Fig. 1B). Owing to the lack of a significant interaction (Table 1), we cannot separate the effect of $p\text{CO}_2$ treatment and recovery on hemolymph Cl^- ; however, hemolymph Cl^- levels did not appear to return to baseline levels following a 6 h recovery

Table 1. Results of two-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) examining the impact of a short-term exposure to elevated CO₂.

Measured variable	Main effect	SS	df	F	p
Dry mass (g)	Entire model	0.24	5	0.95	0.218
	pCO ₂	0.08	2	0.18	0.837
	Time	0.01	1	0.05	0.831
	pCO ₂ × time	0.15	2	0.34	0.711
	Error	9.44	42		
Wet mass (g)	Entire model	4.85	5	0.01	1.000
	pCO ₂	1.07	2	0.01	0.995
	Time	1.14	1	0.01	0.921
	pCO ₂ × time	2.64	2	0.01	0.988
	Error	4769.23	42		
Length (cm)	Entire model	18.60	5	0.08	0.955
	pCO ₂	0.19	2	17.78	0.828
	Time	0.30	1	0.30	0.937
	pCO ₂ × time	0.52	2	0.52	0.995
	Error	1993.06	42		
Ca ²⁺ (mg·mL ⁻¹)	Entire model	0.02	5	9.92	<0.001
	pCO₂	0.01	2	8.15	0.001
	Time	0.02	1	25.37	<0.001
	pCO₂ × time	0.01	2	3.98	0.026
	Error	0.02	42		
Cl ⁻ (mg·mL ⁻¹)	Entire model	0.07	5	7.75	<0.001
	pCO₂	0.06	2	16.70	<0.001
	Time	<0.01	1	0.17	0.678
	pCO ₂ × time	0.01	2	2.60	0.087
	Error	0.08	42		
Na ⁺ (g·L ⁻¹)	Entire model	0.006	5	8.410	<0.001
	pCO₂	0.006	2	19.370	<0.001
	Time	<0.001	1	0.001	0.976
	pCO ₂ × time	<0.001	2	2.460	0.104
	Error	0.004	33		
Mg ²⁺ (mg·mL ⁻¹)	Entire model	<0.001	5	1.47	0.219
	pCO ₂	<0.001	2	2.03	0.144
	Time	<0.001	1	1.86	0.180
	pCO ₂ × time	<0.001	2	0.72	0.491
	Error	<0.001	42		
Glucose (μmol·L ⁻¹)	Entire model	719.25	5	0.71	0.618
	pCO ₂	370.50	2	0.63	0.433
	Time	126.75	1	0.92	0.408
	pCO ₂ × time	222.00	2	0.55	0.582
	Error	9212.00	42		

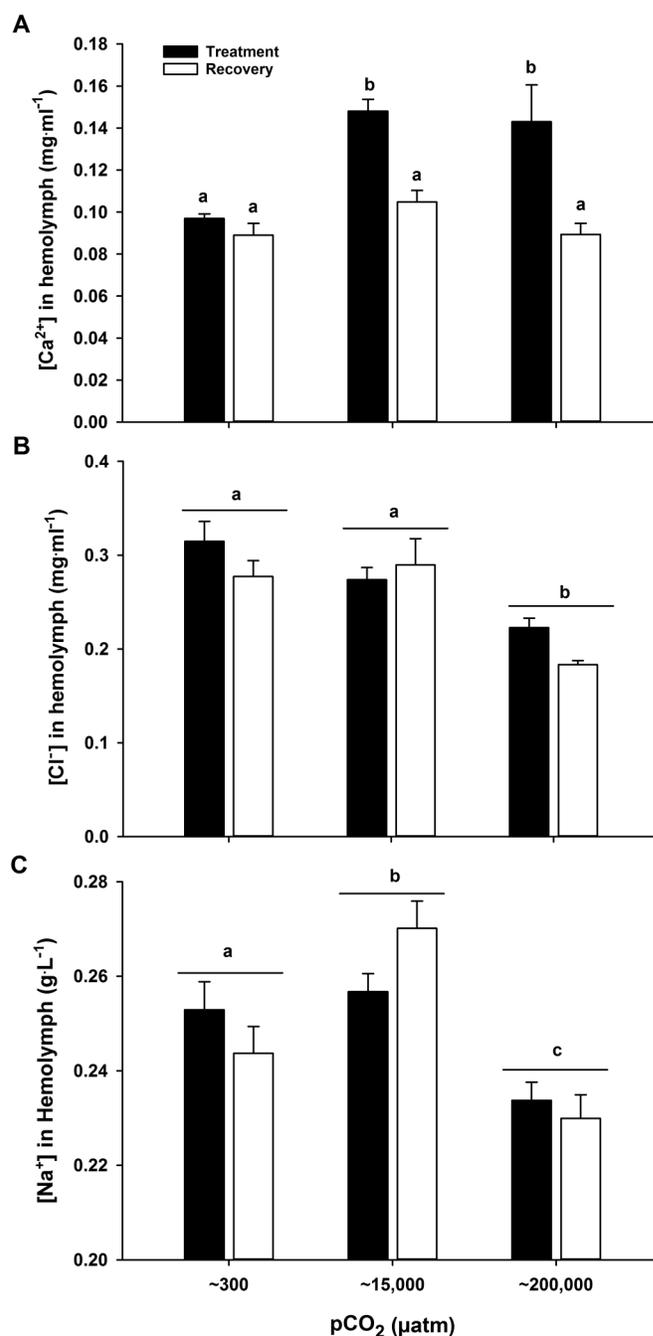
Note: *Fusconaia flava* were exposed to one of three different pCO₂ treatments (~300 μatm (control), ~15 000 μatm, or ~200 000 μatm; 1 atm = 101.325 kPa) for 6 h and following a 6 h recovery period at control pCO₂ (~300 μatm). Bold rows indicate statistical significance across treatment groups within a measured variable.

period at control conditions (Table 1; Fig. 1B). Similarly, there was no significant interaction of pCO₂ treatment and sampling time on hemolymph Na⁺, but there was a significant impact of pCO₂ treatment (Table 1). Overall, hemolymph Na⁺ decreased relative to control levels following an exposure to ~200 000 μatm pCO₂, but hemolymph Na⁺ increased relative to controls following exposure to a pCO₂ level of ~15 000 μatm (Table 1; Fig. 1C). No changes in hemolymph Mg²⁺ or glucose concentrations were observed when mussels were exposed to either pCO₂ treatment during the short-term experiment (Tables 1 and 2). Mussel size did not vary significantly across treatments or pCO₂ levels (Table 1).

Long-term pCO₂ exposure

Mussels held at ~20 000 μatm for 4 days exhibited no change in hemolymph Mg²⁺ concentration relative to animals held at control pCO₂ levels, but after 8 days of treatment, mussels exhibited a 40% decline in hemolymph Mg²⁺ relative to control mussels and a subsequent 70% decline from control levels after 32 days of treatment (Table 3; Fig. 2A). In contrast, hemolymph Ca²⁺ increased by approximately 1.5-fold after 4 and 8 days of elevated pCO₂ expo-

Fig. 1. Concentrations of Ca²⁺ (A), Cl⁻ (B), and Na⁺ (C) in the hemolymph of *Fusconaia flava* exposed to three treatments of pCO₂ (~300 (control), ~15 000, and ~200 000 μatm; 1 atm = 101.325 kPa) for 6 h (solid bars) followed by a subsequent 6 h recovery in water at control pCO₂ (~300 μatm; open bars). Data are presented as means + SE (N = 8). Groups that do not share a letter are significantly different from one another (two-way ANOVA; see Table 1). Lines over multiple bars represent an overall significant effect of pCO₂ treatment but not sampling time.



sure relative to control animals, but Ca²⁺ concentrations returned to control levels by 32 days of treatment (Table 3; Fig. 2B). At 8 days of CO₂ treatment, hemolymph Na⁺ was elevated by approximately 13% in mussels exposed to pCO₂ of ~20 000 μatm compared with mussels held at control conditions for the same length of time, and then these levels were no longer different from mussels held at control conditions at 32 days of treatment (Table 3; Fig. 2C).

Table 2. Concentrations of hemolymph Mg^{2+} and glucose.

Measured variable	Treatment	~300 μatm	~15 000 μatm	~200 000 μatm
Mg^{2+} (mg·mL ⁻¹)	CO ₂ exposure	0.02±0.002	0.02±0.002	0.02±0.001
	Recovery	0.02±0.001	0.02±0.002	0.02±0.001
Glucose (μmol·L ⁻¹)	CO ₂ exposure	106.0±17.0	104.3±22.3	97.9±7.7
	Recovery	161.7±60.2	80.0±10.0	84.0±14.1

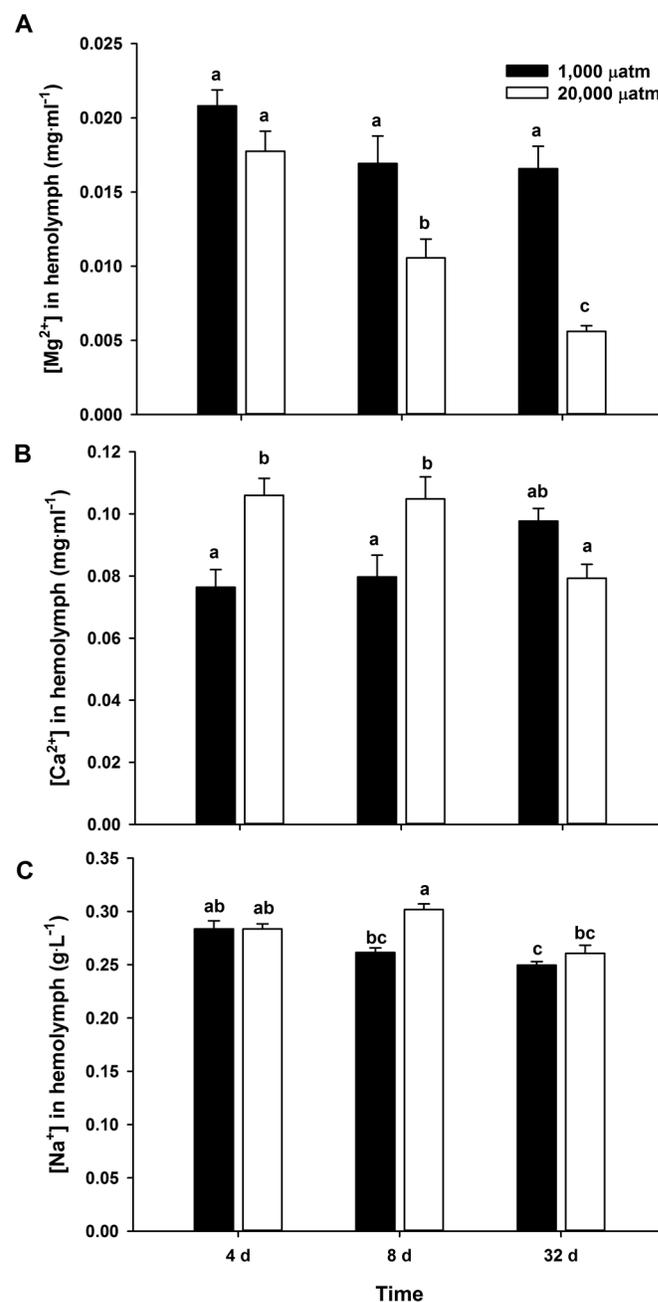
Note: *Fusconaia flava* were exposed to one of three different elevated $p\text{CO}_2$ treatments (~300 μatm (control), ~15 000 μatm , or ~200 000 μatm ; 1 atm = 101.325 kPa) and for a 6 h recovery period at control $p\text{CO}_2$ (~300 μatm). Data are presented as means ± SE (N = 8). No statistical differences were detected across treatments within a measured variable (two-way ANOVA; Table 1).

Table 3. Results of two-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) quantifying the impact of long-term exposure to elevated $p\text{CO}_2$.

Measured variable	Main effect	SS	df	F	p
Dry mass (g)	Entire model	0.28	5	0.30	0.911
	$p\text{CO}_2$	0.01	1	0.07	0.797
	Time	0.18	2	0.46	0.633
	$p\text{CO}_2 \times \text{time}$	0.10	2	0.25	0.78
	Error	7.99	42		
Wet mass (g)	Entire model	4.27	5	0.006	1.000
	$p\text{CO}_2$	0.08	1	0.001	0.981
	Time	3.31	2	0.011	0.989
	$p\text{CO}_2 \times \text{time}$	0.87	2	0.003	0.997
	Error	6110.67	42		
Length (cm)	Entire model	15.56	5	0.06	0.998
	$p\text{CO}_2$	2.76	1	0.05	0.820
	Time	0.60	2	0.01	0.994
	$p\text{CO}_2 \times \text{time}$	12.20	2	0.12	0.891
	Error	2206.87	42		
Ca^{2+} (mg·mL ⁻¹)	Entire model	0.008	5	5.66	<0.001
	$p\text{CO}_2$	0.002	1	6.62	0.014
	Time	<0.001	2	0.23	0.798
	$p\text{CO}_2 \times \text{time}$	0.005	2	10.61	<0.001
	Error	0.020	42		
Cl^- (mg·mL ⁻¹)	Entire model	0.02	5	6.10	<0.001
	$p\text{CO}_2$	<0.001	1	1.17	0.285
	Time	0.01	2	9.52	<0.001
	$p\text{CO}_2 \times \text{time}$	0.01	2	5.14	<0.001
	Error	0.04	42		
Na^+ (g·L ⁻¹)	Entire model	0.013	5	13.38	<0.001
	$p\text{CO}_2$	0.002	1	14.28	<0.001
	Time	0.007	2	16.18	<0.001
	$p\text{CO}_2 \times \text{time}$	0.003	2	7.53	0.002
	Error	0.020	40		
Mg^{2+} (mg·mL ⁻¹)	Entire model	0.001	5	22.99	<0.001
	$p\text{CO}_2$	<0.001	1	48.65	<0.001
	Time	<0.001	2	26.99	<0.001
	$p\text{CO}_2 \times \text{time}$	<0.001	2	6.17	0.005
	Error	<0.001	42		
Glucose (μmol·L ⁻¹)	Entire model	2773.00	5	3.62	0.008
	$p\text{CO}_2$	363.00	1	2.37	0.131
	Time	1848.88	2	6.03	0.005
	$p\text{CO}_2 \times \text{time}$	561.13	2	1.83	0.173
	Error	9212.00	42		
Body condition index (g·mL ⁻¹)	Entire model	1407.17	5	0.61	0.692
	$p\text{CO}_2$	571.60	1	1.24	0.272
	Time	76.24	2	0.08	0.921
	$p\text{CO}_2 \times \text{time}$	751.60	2	0.82	0.446
	Error	20755.76	42		

Note: *Fusconaia flava* were exposed to either control $p\text{CO}_2$ (~1000 μatm ; 1 atm = 101.325 kPa) or ~20 000 μatm for 4, 8, or 32 days. Bold rows indicate statistical significance across treatment groups within a measured variable.

However, Na^+ decreased in control mussels over time (Fig. 2C). Hemolymph Cl^- and glucose moderately decreased over time in mussels held at both control and elevated $p\text{CO}_2$ conditions; however, these levels did not differ significantly between treatment groups, although there was a significant effect of time (Tables 3

Fig. 2. Concentration of Mg^{2+} (A), Ca^{2+} (B), and Na^+ (C) in the hemolymph in *Fusconaia flava* held at either control (~1000 μatm (1 atm = 101.325 kPa); solid bars) or ~20 000 μatm $p\text{CO}_2$ (open bars) for 4, 8, or 32 days. Data are presented as means + SE (N = 8). Groups that do not share a letter are significantly different from one another (two-way ANOVA; see Table 3).

and 4). Body condition index did not vary significantly across treatments (Tables 3 and 4), and mussel size did not vary across time or $p\text{CO}_2$ treatment (Table 3).

Discussion

Acute exposure to elevated $p\text{CO}_2$ caused a number of physiological disturbances in the freshwater unionid mussel *F. flava*. As the level of environmental $p\text{CO}_2$ increases, CO_2 enters the animal via diffusion until a new steady-state gradient is reached and is sufficient to allow CO_2 excretion (Seibel and Walsh 2003). A rise in $p\text{CO}_2$ of the hemolymph results in a concomitant increase in H^+

Table 4. Levels of hemolymph Cl^- , glucose, and body condition index (BCI) of *Fusconaia flava* exposed to either control ($\sim 1000 \mu\text{atm}$; $1 \text{ atm} = 101.325 \text{ kPa}$) or $\sim 20\,000 \mu\text{atm } p\text{CO}_2$ for 4, 8, or 32 days.

Measured variable	CO_2	Day 4	Day 8	Day 32
Cl^- ($\text{mg}\cdot\text{mL}^{-1}$)	$\sim 1\,000 \mu\text{atm}$	$0.25 \pm 0.01\text{a}$	$0.23 \pm 0.01\text{abc}$	$0.20 \pm 0.01\text{c}$
	$\sim 20\,000 \mu\text{atm}$	$0.23 \pm 0.01\text{ab}$	$0.21 \pm 0.01\text{bc}$	$0.22 \pm 0.01\text{abc}$
Glucose ($\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$)	$\sim 1\,000 \mu\text{atm}$	$92.38 \pm 10.48\text{ab}$	$194.88 \pm 35.05\text{a}$	$95.87 \pm 29.55\text{b}$
	$\sim 20\,000 \mu\text{atm}$	$219.41 \pm 48.38\text{ab}$	$179.20 \pm 37.42\text{a}$	$86.94 \pm 15.13\text{b}$
BCI ($\text{g}\cdot\text{mL}^{-1}$)	$\sim 1\,000 \mu\text{atm}$	99.73 ± 4.70	102.15 ± 5.51	90.03 ± 8.45
	$\sim 20\,000 \mu\text{atm}$	102.89 ± 5.18	101.74 ± 5.29	107.99 ± 12.92

Note: Data are presented as means \pm SE ($N = 8$). For Cl^- , there was a significant interaction term, and groups that do not share a letter are significantly different from one another; for glucose, there was only a significant effect of sampling time, which are represented by "days" that do not share a letter (two-way ANOVA; see Table 3).

ions and thus a reduction in pH (acidosis) of the internal body fluids (Wicks and Roberts 2012). The buffering of fluids is primarily achieved by increasing HCO_3^- concentrations through the dissolution of calcium carbonate (CaCO_3) exoskeletons in calcified animals (Lindinger et al. 1984), as well as mechanisms that actively transport acid-base relevant ions across cell and epithelial membranes to remove H^+ and accumulate HCO_3^- (reviewed by Gazeau et al. 2013). As a result of acidosis, marine calcified organisms have displayed a suite of physiological disturbances similar to those reported in the current study, including an increase in hemolymph Ca^{2+} and Na^+ , as well as a decrease in hemolymph Cl^- (Michaelidis et al. 2005; Dissanayake et al. 2010). Although not directly measured, the results from the present study suggest that *F. flava* likely experienced a reduction in internal pH due to an influx of environmental CO_2 via diffusion, similar to what has been observed with marine mussels (Gazeau et al. 2013; Heuer and Grosell 2014). Mussels appeared to elicit a range of processes to buffer acidosis resulting from elevated $p\text{CO}_2$, including excreting H^+ and increasing hemolymph HCO_3^- (Bibby et al. 2008). The production of HCO_3^- from the dissolution of CaCO_3 would result in equimolar production of Ca^{2+} (Heming et al. 1988; Michaelidis et al. 2005; Bibby et al. 2008) and is likely the source of the increased hemolymph Ca^{2+} observed in the present study. An additional strategy to buffer acidosis is the down-regulation of $\text{Cl}^-/\text{HCO}_3^-$ exchangers to retain HCO_3^- , resulting in a concomitant decrease in Cl^- uptake (Byrne and Dietz 1997), which is likely the mechanism for the net decrease in Cl^- observed in mussels exposed to $p\text{CO}_2$ of $\sim 200\,000 \mu\text{atm}$ (Byrne and Dietz 1997). Finally, an increase in the activity of Na^+/H^+ exchangers to excrete H^+ is a common strategy used by aquatic animals experiencing acidosis, which can result in an increase in hemolymph Na^+ (Byrne and Dietz 1997; Lannig et al. 2010), and provides a likely mechanism for the observed increase in hemolymph Na^+ in the $\sim 15\,000 \mu\text{atm } p\text{CO}_2$ treatment. In response to $\sim 200\,000 \mu\text{atm } p\text{CO}_2$, there may be a shift from less to more ATP-efficient ion transporters, resulting in a reduction of the electroneutral exchange of Na^+ transporters, which involves an active ion pump, resulting in a decrease in Na^+ in the hemolymph (Bibby et al. 2008; Dissanayake et al. 2010; Lannig et al. 2010). In freshwater bivalves, there have been conflicting reports of Na^+ and Cl^- responses to acidosis experienced due to emersion. In some cases, no change in hemolymph Na^+ and Cl^- levels were detected, suggesting the importance of maintaining these ions within strict limits to maintain stability (Byrne and McMahon 1994). However, in the present study, the observed responses more similarly mirrored those of marine bivalves, suggesting that emersion and exposure to water with elevated $p\text{CO}_2$ result in different physiological responses. Interestingly, following a return to control $p\text{CO}_2$ for 6 h after an exposure to both $\sim 15\,000$ and $\sim 200\,000 \mu\text{atm } p\text{CO}_2$, hemolymph Ca^{2+} returned to control levels, suggesting that once the CO_2 stimulus is removed, mussels may be able to recover from the stressor. In summary, results from the short-term experiment indicate that freshwater

mussels exposed to elevated $p\text{CO}_2$ experienced a suite of physiological disturbances intended to regulate acid-base balance, and there was some evidence for recovery of hemolymph Ca^{2+} levels once $p\text{CO}_2$ was returned to control conditions.

Mussels exposed to elevated $p\text{CO}_2$ for an extended period of time demonstrated changes to hemolymph ion levels relative to control, but some disturbances had returned to control levels after 32 days of exposure. More specifically, long-term exposure to increased $p\text{CO}_2$ at $\sim 20\,000 \mu\text{atm}$ caused a decrease in Mg^{2+} compared with control animals, along with higher Na^+ and Ca^{2+} compared with controls, with Na^+ and Ca^{2+} disturbances returning to control levels by day 32. Similar to the results from the present study, a decrease in hemolymph Mg^{2+} has previously been observed in response to other stressors in mussels, such as elevated temperature (Fritts et al. 2015) and exposure to heavy metals (Hemelraad et al. 1990), and may represent an indicator of stress. Interestingly, there is a limited amount of information on the role of Mg^{2+} in freshwater mussels despite its use as a bioindicator (Dietz et al. 1994), but Mg^{2+} is thought to play a role in stabilizing cell membranes (Shumway 1977). Increases in hemolymph Ca^{2+} and elevated Na^+ compared with control mussels in response to elevated $p\text{CO}_2$ were similar to the responses in the short-term study and likely were caused by the similar mechanisms related to acid-base regulation to increase HCO_3^- and excrete H^+ , respectively. However, it is important to note that both hemolymph Na^+ and Cl^- decreased in mussels held at control conditions over the holding period, making it difficult to parse out the effects of acid-base regulation and holding. Thus, the Na^+ concentration of mussel hemolymph did not increase throughout the treatment period in response to elevated $p\text{CO}_2$; rather, mussels held in control conditions had decreased Na^+ throughout time and compared with mussels held at $\sim 20\,000 \mu\text{atm}$ on day 8. Even with the impact of holding on control mussels, at 8 days of exposure, mussels held at $\sim 20\,000 \mu\text{atm } p\text{CO}_2$ exhibited hemolymph Na^+ levels that were significantly higher than mussels held at control conditions for the same length of time, suggesting that the effect of $p\text{CO}_2$ exposure may have superseded the impact of holding at this time point. When exposed to $p\text{CO}_2$ levels of $\sim 20\,000 \mu\text{atm}$ over an extended period, hemolymph Ca^{2+} levels returned to control levels by 32 days, suggesting that mussels may have been able to correct acid-base disturbances during extended exposures. Together the results of the long-term study suggest that although mussels showed signs of stress, as demonstrated by the drop in Mg^{2+} , they were still attempting to achieve acid-base balance using similar mechanisms as during short-term exposure to elevated $p\text{CO}_2$.

Interestingly, two important parameters measured in the current study did not change following the different $p\text{CO}_2$ treatments. More specifically, despite the magnitude of $p\text{CO}_2$ exposure and period of exposure, glucose concentrations in hemolymph remained unchanged from control levels for both the short- and long-term experiments. Additionally, BCI was unaffected by long-

term exposure to elevated $p\text{CO}_2$. In both freshwater and marine ecosystems, mussels have been used as an indicator of pollution, heavy metal contamination, and overall ecosystem health and recovery (Simmons and Reed 1973; Viarengo and Canesi 1991; Hellou and Law 2003). Mussels are filter feeders and presumably one of the first species to show negative effects of a changing or unhealthy ecosystem (Viarengo and Canesi 1991; Van Hassel and Farris 2006), and BCI, as well as other parameters that assess growth and shell condition, are used as indicators of overall health of the ecosystem (Roper and Hickey 1994; Damiens et al. 2007). The BCI is a measure of soft tissue mass compared with the inner shell volume, and a low BCI score has been linked to physiological stress and thus used as a proxy for ecosystem health (Bayne et al. 1979; Widdows and Johnson 1988; Damiens et al. 2007). Similarly, glucose is the primary energy store in bivalves and fuels aerobic processes (de Zwaan and Wijsman 1976). Importantly, glucose used as part of the stress response comes at a cost to nonvital functions such as growth, reproduction, and movement, and changes in hemolymph glucose are used as a traditional stress indicator for aquatic invertebrates (Patterson et al. 1999; Fritts et al. 2015). While a lack of a change in body condition in the current study could be due to the relatively short duration of the study compared with other more long-term studies (i.e., a noticeable change in BCI may take longer than 32 days to manifest; Van Hassel and Farris 2006), the lack of a change in the glucose response relative to control animals would suggest that mussels are not showing activation of the stress response in a traditional way following $p\text{CO}_2$ exposure. Taken together, a lack of change in hemolymph glucose and BCI may indicate that within the timeframe and $p\text{CO}_2$ exposure of this study, overall mussel stress and body condition may not have been impacted.

In the present study, although differences between the control conditions and the intermediate $p\text{CO}_2$ were present, some overarching similarities between experiments emerged. The different control $p\text{CO}_2$ values of the short-term ($\sim 300 \mu\text{atm}$) and long-term ($\sim 1000 \mu\text{atm}$) experiments were artifacts of using ponds as the water source that have natural fluctuations in $p\text{CO}_2$ (Maberly 1996). As freshwater systems can be quite variable in their $p\text{CO}_2$, these control levels are still within the range of what a mussel may naturally experience because of daily or seasonal variation (Maberly 1996). The differences in the targeted “intermediate” $p\text{CO}_2$ ($\sim 15\,000$ and $\sim 20\,000 \mu\text{atm}$) between experiments also make comparisons between the short- and long-term studies difficult; however, in the context of a CO_2 barrier, they both provide an example of what mussels may experience downstream of a barrier injection site. Even with these differences in $p\text{CO}_2$ between experiments, similar physiological responses (e.g., hemolymph Ca^{2+}) were observed. Although these differences in control and treatment $p\text{CO}_2$ made comparisons between studies difficult, the present study provides useful information about the effects of different durations and levels of CO_2 exposure on a freshwater mussel that may reflect their exposure to a CO_2 barrier.

Results from this study represent some of the first data on the physiological impacts of elevated $p\text{CO}_2$ on freshwater mussels. Other studies have shown that $p\text{CO}_2$ in freshwater environments demonstrates daily and seasonal variation (Maberly 1996) and also changes across landscapes, with low-order streams experiencing a wide variation in $p\text{CO}_2$ values dependent on forest cover, precipitation, and surface area (in particular freshwater environments, mean $p\text{CO}_2$ can be nearly 20 times atmospheric levels; Butman and Raymond 2011; Kokic et al. 2015). Similarly, global mean $p\text{CO}_2$ for lakes is $\sim 1000 \mu\text{atm}$ (Cole et al. 1994), with variation in $p\text{CO}_2$ driven by various factors, including surface area, biotic processes, terrestrial primary productivity, and atmospheric $p\text{CO}_2$ (reviewed by Hasler et al. 2016). In addition, while future levels of $p\text{CO}_2$ in fresh water are difficult to predict, some freshwater systems are predicted to have heightened $p\text{CO}_2$ due to climate change (Phillips et al. 2015; Pilcher et al. 2015; Hasler et al. 2016). Should freshwater

mussels be exposed to elevated $p\text{CO}_2$, either from natural processes or through the deployment of a CO_2 barrier, they would be expected to respond to acidosis by adjusting hemolymph ion levels to excrete H^+ and retain HCO_3^- in the short term. Should CO_2 stressors be extended or removed, mussels would likely recover from or correct disturbances induced by elevated $p\text{CO}_2$ with little evidence for negative impacts to overall stress and health (e.g., BCI and glucose). Future research should focus on studying other age classes of freshwater mussels, other species, as well as the measurement of other parameters such as growth and reproductive success, to provide a more complete picture of the overall impacts of elevated $p\text{CO}_2$ on nontarget freshwater mussels. The present study provides evidence that a CO_2 barrier used to prevent the movement and spread of invasive fish species may have limited physiological impacts on nontarget freshwater mussel species.

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