

1 **Experimental effects of zebra mussels on crustacean communities under**
2 **eutrophic conditions**

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34 SUMMARY

35 Introduction

36 Zebra mussels are efficient filter feeders and the sizes of food particles that they consume
37 overlaps with those of crustaceans. A large body of research has shown that zebra mussels
38 can reduce algal biomass for crustaceans (Karatayev *et al.*, 1997, 2002; Vanderploeg *et al.*,
39 2002; Kelly *et al.*, 2010). Experimental studies showed high selectivity of zebra mussel
40 grazing (Baker *et al.*, 1998, 2000). Zebra mussels can also promote cyanobacteria which are
41 of poor nutritional quality, especially in systems with low trophic (Raikow *et al.*, 2004).
42 Therefore, introduction of zebra mussels has the potential to strongly influence algal
43 nutritional quality in terms of elements (mainly studied as carbon [C], nitrogen [N], and
44 phosphorus [P]) and/or polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA, mainly studied as
45 eicosapentaenoic acid [EPA]). For example, experimental studies in mesocosms under
46 mesotrophic conditions showed that zebra mussels increased the phosphorus content of the
47 seston thus favoring the development of large *Daphnia* species (Feniova *et al.*, 2015). In
48 support, a number of studies have shown that zebra mussels excrete nutrients, including
49 phosphorus, into the water column (Wilson, 2003; Wojtal-Frankiewicz & Frankiewicz, 2011).
50 In contrast, zebra mussels reduced the content of EPA in mesotrophic mesocosms (Feniova *et*
51 *al.*, 2015), and they have been shown to selectively consumed EPA-rich seston (Makhutova *et*
52 *al.*, 2013). -Therefore, zebra mussels can potentially suppress crustaceans through food
53 quantity as well as through food quality.

54 If zebra mussels alter the nutritional quality of algal resources, this could have
55 important implications for crustaceans. For example, zooplankton can exhibit reductions in
56 growth and reproduction when there is a mismatch between algal elemental quality and/or
57 EPA and the body requirements of individual taxa (Urabe & Sterner, 1996; Hessen &
58 Andersen, 2008). For example, copepods typically sequester more nitrogen in their tissue
59 (Elser & Urabe, 1999) while cladocerans sequester more phosphorus relative to nitrogen
60 (Sterner & Elser, 2002; Johnson & Luecke, 2012). Cladocerans such as *Daphnia* spp., which
61 have low body N:P (Andersen & Hessen, 1991), tend to occur in lakes with low seston N:P
62 (Hassett *et al.*, 1997). Conversely, copepods, with higher body N:P (Andersen & Hessen,
63 1991; Carrillo, Reche & Cruz-Pizarro, 1996; Villar-Argaiz *et al.*, 2000) tend to appear in
64 lakes with high seston N:P (Hassett *et al.*, 1997).

65 There also appear to be differences in nutritional quality between large and small-
66 bodied zooplankton (Andersen & Hessen, 1991). Large-bodied species are more likely to be
67 successful when carbon is limiting because they are more effective filterers than small-bodied

68 species (Brooks & Dodson, 1965; Gliwicz, 2003; Sikora & Dawidowicz, 2014). However,
69 large-bodied species may be more vulnerable to phosphorus limitation because phosphorus is
70 used for somatic growth (Sterner & Schulz, 1998). Sikora, Dawidowicz & von Elert (2014)
71 also showed that small-bodied *Daphnia* species were less vulnerable to temperature related
72 decreases in algal quality than large-bodied species in terms of EPA. Results of their
73 experiments with several species of *Daphnia* and their clones varying in body size showed
74 that the saturation threshold for EPA-dependent growth increased with increasing species
75 and/or clone body size (Sikora *et al.*, 2016). Combined, these studies suggest that zebra
76 mussel have the potential to modify crustaceans through bottom-up effects on the nutritional
77 quality (e.g., C:N:P ratio and PUFAs) of algae.

78 We conducted a mesocosm experiment under eutrophic conditions where we
79 manipulated the presence/absence of zebra mussels to determine how they influenced algal
80 food quality and quantity and the community structure of crustaceans. Under eutrophic
81 conditions, carbon is unlikely to be a limiting factor while phosphorus or EPA could be in
82 shortage. Therefore, we hypothesized that zebra mussels would alter algal composition and
83 nutritional quality for crustaceans with respect to dominance by cyanobacteria, C:N:P
84 stoichiometry and/or EPA concentrations. We anticipated that small- and large-bodied
85 cladoceran species would respond differently to changes in algal quality and quantity.
86 Therefore, we also added large-bodied *Daphnia* to the mesocosms to test the hypothesis that
87 zebra mussels positively influence their ability to establish by altering algal quality. Finally,
88 we conducted a concurrent life table experiment where crustaceans were grown in water from
89 the different mesocosms treatments to determine how zebra mussels affected algal structure
90 and individual crustacean life history characteristics.

91

92 **Methods**

93 *Mesocosm setup*

94 We conducted our experiments in 12 mesocosms (0.94 × 0.64 × 0.50 m; 300 L, food safe, high
95 density polyethylene (HDPE) containers) from 26 June to 18 August, 2014 (54 days total).
96 The mesocosms were located on the shore of Lake Mikołajskie (Mazurian Lake District,
97 northeastern Poland, 21°35'E, 53°48'N) at the Hydrobiological Station of the Nencki Institute
98 of Experimental Biology, Polish Academy of Sciences. The mesocosms were filled with
99 unfiltered water from the eutrophic Lake Mikołajskie (Chróst, 2009) that contained *in situ*
100 phytoplankton, microzooplankton (rotifers, nanoflagellates, and ciliates) and
101 mesozooplankton that were the source of mineral and organic forms of nutrients (Eccleston-

102 Parry & Leadbeater, 1995; Dolan, 1997; Ejsmont-Karabin *et al.*, 2004). The cladoceran
103 community that was added to the mesocosms from Lake Mikołajskie included *Chydorus*
104 *sphaericus*, *Bosmina coregoni*, *Bosmina longirostris*, *Ceriodaphnia pulchella* and
105 *Diaphanosoma brachyurum*. The copepod community included *Eudiaptomus gracilis*,
106 *Eudiaptomus graciloides*, *Mesocyclops leuckarti*, *Thermocyclops oithonoides*, *Thermocyclops*
107 *crassus*.

108

109 *Experimental treatments*

110

111 We established 4 treatments by manipulating the presence of alien large-bodied
112 zooplankton and zebra mussels in a 2×2 factorial design. Each treatment was replicated in
113 triplicate mesocosms. The treatment with unfiltered lake water only served as the control (C).
114 The introduced alien zooplankton (Z) treatment was established by adding two large-bodied
115 cladoceran species that were reared in laboratory cultures: *Daphnia magna* Straus (originated
116 from Binnensee, Germany) and *Daphnia pulicaria* Forbes (originated from Lake Brome,
117 Canada). *Daphnia magna* and *D. pulicaria* are not found in Lake Mikołajskie; therefore, they
118 were alien to the zooplankton communities that were used to fill the mesocosms. We added
119 both *D. magna* and *D. pulicaria* to mesocosms in the Z treatments at densities of 1.0 ind. L⁻¹
120 for each species at the beginning of the experiment on Day 1. The zebra mussel (M) treatment
121 was established by adding zebra mussels at a wet weight of 250 g/m², or approximately 200
122 individuals per mesocosm. Similar levels of zebra mussel biomass have been reported in two
123 Polish lakes (lakes Licheńskie and Ślesińskie) where biomass ranged from 0.02-2.79 kg/m²
124 (Sinicyna & Zdanowski, 2007). The zebra mussels were collected from nearby Lake Boczne
125 and transported to the field station in coolers and added to the mesocosms within 24 hours of
126 collection on Day 1 of the experiment. The size range of mussels used in the experiment was
127 7-24 mm. Zebra mussel mortality was monitored on each sampling date and did not exceed
128 3% by the end of the experiment.

129

130 *Water quality analysis*

131 Temperature and dissolved oxygen concentrations were measured daily from the center of
132 each mesocosm using a WTW multi-parameter probe 3410 with optical sensor FDO925.
133 Water samples were collected for analyses of nutrient concentrations 4 times over the course
134 of the experiment (on Days 1, 4, 24 and 54). Samples were collected with a Limnos sampler

135 (2.6 L) from the center of each mesocosm after they were gently mixed for the analyses of
136 phosphates (P-PO₄), nitrate and nitrite nitrogen (N-NO₃, N-NO₂), and ammonium
137 concentrations (N-NH₄) according to the analytical procedures described in Standard Methods
138 (2005).

139

140 *Biological analysis*

141 Water samples were also collected (2.6 L Limnos sampler) from the center of each mesocosm
142 after they were gently mixed for the analysis of chlorophyll concentrations and zooplankton
143 identification and enumeration (on days 1, 4, 14, 24, 34, 44, and 54). Chlorophyll
144 concentration was estimated using a PHYTOPAM fluorometer (Walz, Germany) which
145 estimates total chlorophyll concentrations for three groups of algae individually
146 (cyanobacteria, brown (mostly diatoms), and green algae). Zooplankton samples were
147 preserved in a 4% formaldehyde solution and all crustaceans were identified to species. We
148 also measured the lengths of up to 100 individuals of each taxon for biomass estimates based
149 on length:weight relationships from Balushkina & Vinberg (1978).

150 Rotifers, nanoflagellates and ciliates were collected with a 1 L sampler from the center
151 of each mesocosm. Rotifers were concentrated using a 30 µm mesh net and preserved in
152 Lugol's solution and 4% formalin. We used length measurements (~10-25 inds./species) to
153 estimate rotifer biomass using length:wet weight relationships (Ejsmont-Karabin, 1998).
154 Nanoflagellates (NF) were fixed with formaldehyde (final concentration 2%), stained with
155 DAPI (Porter & Feig, 1980), filtered through 0.8 µm pore size polycarbonate membrane
156 filters and enumerated by epifluorescence microscopy (Nikon Optiphot 2). The NF biovolume
157 was calculated from measurements of cells size and their approximations to simple geometric
158 forms. Ciliate samples were fixed with Lugol's solution and then examined with a light
159 microscope (Nikon Optiphot 2). Biovolume was calculated from measurements of cell
160 dimensions and simple geometric shapes. Species identifications of ciliates were based mainly
161 on Foissner *et al.* (1991–1995).

162

163 *Bio-chemical analyses*

164 We collected seston (all the particles and live organisms that passed through a 115 µm mesh
165 sieve) and cladocerans on the first and final (Day 54) days of the experiment for elemental
166 and fatty acid analyses. In particular, we were interested in determining how zebra mussels

167 affected seston quality. Therefore, we analyzed seston at the starting point just after taking it
168 from Lake Mikołajskie and at the end of the experiments from the C, M, MZ treatments. We
169 focused on these three treatments specifically because large alien species did not develop in
170 the Z treatments; therefore, there was not an effect of the alien *Daphnia* on seston quality and
171 the Z treatments was similar to control for all response variables that were measured in this
172 study (see Results below). For seston analysis, we collected 7–15 L of water from each
173 mesocosm and filtered it onto precombusted glass-fiber GF/F filters (Whatman, USA). The
174 filters for fatty acid analysis were dried at ambient temperature for about 30 minutes, and then
175 placed into vials containing 3 mL of chloroform-methanol (2:1, v/v) and stored at -20°C until
176 further analysis. Filters for organic carbon and nitrogen were dried at 75°C overnight and
177 stored dry in a desiccator until further analyses. The samples for particulate phosphorus were
178 filtered onto membrane filters (Vladipor, Mytischki, Russia, pore size 0.75–0.85 µm) and kept
179 wet at 4°C.

180 Live individuals of three dominant species *D. magna* (100–150 ind.), *D. pulicaria*
181 (100–150 ind.) and *C. pulchella* (200–300 ind.) were collected from the zooplankton samples
182 for elemental and fatty acid analyses. The cladocerans were kept in filtered water from their
183 respective mesocosms for several hours before the analyses to allow them to empty their guts.
184 Animals were then collected onto a mesh sieve and placed on filter paper to remove the
185 surface moisture, and then they were subsampled for fatty acid analyses. The sample sizes
186 ranged in 8–20 mg and 4–10 mg of wet weight for fatty acid and organic carbon analyses,
187 respectively. The fatty acid subsamples were then transferred into a chloroform-methanol
188 mixture and frozen.

189 The procedure for fatty acid analyses of the seston and cladocerans is described in
190 detail elsewhere (Gladyshev *et al.*, 2015). Briefly, lipids from the seston and cladocerans were
191 extracted by chloroform-methanol (2:1, v/v). Prior to the extraction, a known volume of an
192 internal standard solution (free 19:0 in chloroform, 0.5 mg mL⁻¹) was added to the samples.
193 The total lipid extract was methylated in a mixture of methanol-sulfuric acid (20:1, v/v) at
194 85°C during 2 h. Fatty acid methyl esters (FAMES) were analyzed and identified using a gas
195 chromatograph-mass spectrometer (model 6890/5975C, ‘Agilent Technologies’, USA)
196 equipped with a 30 m long, 0.25 mm internal diameter capillary column HP-FFAP
197 (Gladyshev *et al.*, 2014).

198 We have used a common shorthand notation for fatty acids of the form A:Bn-X, where
199 A represents the number of carbon atoms in the molecule, B gives the number of double

200 carbon-carbon bonds and X gives the position of the double bond closest to the terminal
201 methyl group. Organic carbon (C) and nitrogen (N) were measured using a Flash EA 1112
202 NC Soil/MAS 200 elemental analyzer (ThermoQuest, Milan, Italy), as described in
203 Gladyshev *et al.* (2007). Calibration curves for the elemental analyzer were generated using
204 aspartic acid and standard soil reference material. Contents of particulate total phosphorus (P)
205 were estimated following the conventional photolorimetric method (Murphy & Riley,
206 1962). The background P content of the filters was preliminarily measured and subtracted
207 from the sample values.

208

209 *Life-table-experiments*

210

211 Life-table experiments were conducted to determine how demographic parameters of the alien
212 species (*D. magna*, and *D. pulicaria*) and a dominant small-bodied cladoceran species from
213 the initial zooplankton community (*C. pulchella*) changed under indirect effects of zebra
214 mussels via modification of phytoplankton composition and abundance. We did not want to
215 disturb the mesocosms in the experiment described above, therefore, we set up four additional
216 mesocosms to obtain water for the life-table experiments. Two mesocosms were established
217 without zebra mussels (i.e. the same as the control) and two were established with zebra
218 mussels (i.e. the same as the MZ treatment) exactly as described above. Life table
219 experiments were performed simultaneously with the mesocosm experiment.

220 Life-table experiments were conducted using a flow through system with 500 mL
221 bottles. To start the experiment, 20 to 30 new born individuals (less than 24 hours) of each
222 species were placed into bottles separately. Each species was grown in monoculture in
223 triplicate bottles in both waters with and without zebra mussels for a total of 6 bottles for each
224 species. The bottles were filled with water that was collected from the mesocosms and then
225 filtered through the sieve with a mesh size 50 μm to remove crustaceans and other large
226 material. The flow through system was designed so that the entire volume of each bottle was
227 replenished twice a day (e.g. 1 L flow through per day) to ensure that resource abundance was
228 similar to that in the mesocosms. We collected the following parameters every 2 days from
229 the start of the experiment until approximately the third clutch: the total number of individuals
230 of each species, clutch sizes, the time of maturation. We limited our observations to the third
231 clutch because previous studies on cladoceran life-histories have shown that later clutches
232 contribute negligibly to population growth rate (r) (Pijanowska *et al.*, 2006; Porter, Feig &
233 Vetter, 1983). We continued to collect data from the bottles over the course of two

234 generations of each species. The experiments with the first generation were conducted starting
235 on Day 1 and the second generation after Day 24, which was the day when generations of
236 each species reached the third clutch so these two generations did not overlap.

237 Life table experiments were used to calculate population growth rate: $r =$
238 $\ln\{\sum l(x)m(x)\}/T$, where $l(x)$ and $m(x)$ were the age of survival and fecundity, respectively, and
239 T was the mean generation time.

240

241 *Statistical analyses*

242

243 Since water quality and biological parameters in the mesocosms were measured 3 times
244 (nutrients) or 6 times (biomass of crustaceans and microzooplankton, chlorophyll
245 concentrations) two-ways repeated-measures of variance ANOVA (RM-ANOVA) were used
246 where treatment and time as the two factors. With respect to treatment, we analyzed three
247 levels including C, M and MZ. We excluded the Z treatment from the analyses because
248 *Daphnia* species failed to develop in this treatment and individuals that were added were only
249 observed at the start of the experiment. Therefore, we believe that the Z treatment did not
250 affect zooplankton dynamics in the mesocosms. In contrast, *Daphnia* did successfully
251 establish in the MZ treatment; therefore, we considered the M and MZ treatments in the
252 analyses.

253 If the data properties of symmetry according to Mauchley's criterion were violated in the
254 RM-ANOVA, the degrees of freedom of the F -test for Time and Time*Treatment factors
255 were adjusted using epsilon Greenhouse-Geisser corrections. If P in the Mauchley's test was
256 less than 0.05, we did corrections of the degrees of freedom for the F -test. If significant
257 treatment effects were detected with RM-ANOVA, we used Tukey's HSD post hoc test ($P <$
258 0.05) to determine which means differed. We also analyzed the effects of the two factor
259 combination (Time*Treatment) to determine whether the Treatment factor was dependent on
260 time. If the combined effects of two factors was insignificant, we assumed that there was no
261 interaction effect between the two factors and that their effects were additive.

262 Since data on water quality and biological parameters did not meet the requirements of
263 Leven criterion such as dispersion homogeneity of data and that the combined effects of two
264 factors were not additive, we made log-transformation of the data to adjust them for statistical
265 analysis. The figures of biological parameters dynamics were also made for log-transformed
266 data to make them correspond to statistical results. RM-ANOVA analysis was conducted
267 using Statgraphic XVII.II software.

268 Data on the juvenile development time violated the conditions of randomness of
269 measurements and equality of variances, thus we could not use parametric one-way ANOVA
270 of variance. Therefore, juvenile development time between *D. magna*, *D. pulicaria* and *C.*
271 *pulchella* and between control and zebra mussel treatments for two generations were
272 performed using nonparametric one-way ANOVA of variance on the basis of rank values
273 according to the Kruskal-Wallis test (KW). If KW showed significance difference between
274 means, we performed multiple Bonferroni post hoc procedure ($P < 0.05$) to determine which
275 means were significantly different. Statistical analysis of experimental data using one factor
276 ANOVA was performed using the integrated software Biosystem office (Petrosyan, 2014).

277 We used one-way ANOVA to compare values of the food quality indicators (C:N:P
278 and EPA) of seston and zooplankton. We used one-way ANOVA for these analyses because
279 we only collected these data from select treatments (C, M and MZ) on the final sample date.
280 In the absence of normal distribution (Kolmogorov-Smirnov one-sample test for normality
281 D_{K-S}), Kruskal-Wallis test was used. The number of all variables (3 replicates \times 4 treatments)
282 was equal to 12, since we compare the whole data set rather than pairs of variables. Fatty acid
283 composition of dominant cladoceran species was compared using principal component
284 analysis (PCA). The calculations were carried out using STATISTICA software, version 9.0
285 (StatSoft, Inc.).

286 In order to analyze the linear relationships between total chlorophyll concentrations
287 and the biomass of small cladocerans, *Daphnia* and copepods, we evaluated Pearson's
288 correlation coefficients, and conducted two-tailed hypothesis test of these coefficients using
289 Fisher's z -transformation.

290 For the life table experiment we used parametric one-way ANOVA to compare
291 parameters including clutch sizes and population growth rate between *D. magna*, *D. pulicaria*
292 and *C. pulchella* in the control and zebra mussel treatments for each species during the first
293 and second generations. If F (Fisher's test) gave significant difference between the means,
294 multiple Tukey's HSD post hoc tests ($P < 0.05$) were used to determine which means were
295 significantly different.

296 **Results**

297 *Mesocosm experiments*

298 Phosphorus (P- PO_4) and nitrogen concentrations (sum N- NO_3 , N- NO_2 and N- NH_4) were
299 significantly greater in the zebra mussel treatments (M and MZ) than they were in the control
300 (Table 1, Fig. 1). The greatest differences between the control and zebra mussel treatments

301 were observed during the middle of the experiment for both nutrients. There were no
302 significant differences between the M and MZ treatments for either nutrient.

303 Concentrations of green algae were significantly higher, while concentrations of
304 cyanobacteria were significantly lower, in the zebra mussel treatments compared to the
305 control (Table 1, Fig. 2). Concentrations of brown algae were significantly higher in zebra
306 mussel treatments only after day 24 of the experiment. Total chlorophyll concentrations were
307 not affected by zebra mussels and did not differ between the treatments (Table 1, Fig. 2 g, h).

308 Copepods, cladocerans, and small bodied species did not differ between the treatments
309 and the control (Fig. 3 a, b, c, d, e, f). However, there were significant time effects for these
310 variables (Table 1). There was a gradual increase in cladoceran biomass over the course of the
311 experiment regardless of treatment. The biomass of *Daphnia* was significantly greater in the
312 ZM treatment than it was in the Z treatment (Table 1, Fig. 3 g, h). *Daphnia* biomass increased
313 in the ZM treatment, while it decreased in the Z treatment until day 24, after which no
314 *Daphnia* were observed in this treatment. Furthermore, no *Daphnia* neonates were observed
315 in the mesocosms from the Z treatment at any time during the experiment.

316 Microzooplankton biomass was the highest at the beginning of the experiments and
317 gradually decreased in all the treatments (Fig. 3 i, j). There were no significance differences
318 between microzooplankton in the zebra mussel treatments and the control, although the *P*-
319 value was close to being significant ($P=0.058$) (Table 1).

320 Chlorophyll concentrations were not significantly correlated with the abundance of
321 either copepods or *Daphnia* (Table 2). However, there was a significant negative correlation
322 between total chlorophyll and the biomass of small species in the control and Z treatments
323 (Table 2).

324

325 *Nutritional quality of seston*

326 Concentrations of eicosapentaenoic acids (EPA, 20:5n-3) were significantly higher at the start
327 than at the end of the experiments in all of the treatments (Table 3). When comparing
328 concentrations at the end of the experiments between the treatments, concentrations of EPA
329 were significantly higher in the control than in both of the zebra mussel treatments (Table 3).
330 Concentrations of particulate organic carbon (C) and particulate organic nitrogen (N) in the
331 seston were significantly higher at the start of the experiment compared to the end of the
332 experiment in all of the treatments (Table 3). In contrast, concentration of particulate organic
333 phosphorus (P) showed the opposite pattern and were lower at the start than they were at the

334 end of the experiment. C:N values were significantly higher in MZ treatments indicating
335 feasible limitation in nitrogen in this treatments (Table 3). C:P and N:P values decreased by
336 more than an order of magnitude from the start to the end of the experiments in all the
337 treatments indicating that food quality in terms of phosphorus content improved (Table 3).
338 EPA:C values did not differ between the start and end of the experiments for any treatment
339 (Table 3).

340

341 *Fatty acid composition of dominant cladoceran species*

342 Using PCA, the dominant cladoceran species were represented in two-dimensional space
343 based on two factors corresponding to the largest eigenvalues from their fatty acid levels (Fig.
344 4). Factor 1 accounted for 55.0 % of the total variance and the highest contributions to Factor
345 1 were provided by 18:3n-3 and 16:2n-6 on the one hand, and by i17:0 and 15:0 on the other.
346 The second factor accounted for 17.9% of the total variance and the highest contributions to
347 Factor 2 were provided by 20:4n-6 and 20:5n-3 on the one hand, and by ai15:0 and 18:4n-3
348 on the other. According to the PCA, at the start of experiment, *D. magna* and *D. pulicaria*
349 were close to each other in Factor 1, although differed moderately in Factor 2. At the end of
350 the experiment in the mesocosms with zebra mussels *D. magna* shifted significantly upward
351 Factor 2 while *D. pulicaria* moved left along Factor 1 (Fig. 4) and became close to *C.*
352 *pulchella*, which were far from both *Daphnia* species at the start of experiment.

353 In general, the above results of the PCA suggest why *D. magna* and *D. pulicaria* did
354 not displace one another and coexisted throughout the experiment (Fig. 5). Although when
355 reared in the culture both *Daphnia* fed primarily on green algae, in the experiment *D. magna*
356 added diatoms to their diet, and *D. pulicaria* dramatically switched to bacteria. Indeed, at the
357 end of the experiment, the percentages of bacterial acids (i15:0, ai15:0, i15:1, 15:0, 17:0)
358 significantly increased in *D. pulicaria* (Table 4). It does not concern cyanobacteria since they
359 have different fatty acids (FA) composition. Thereby, FA composition of *D. pulicaria* at the
360 end of the experiments was closer to that of *C. pulchella* because percentages of these
361 bacterial acids, which differed significantly at the start of experiment, were similar at the end
362 (Table 4). In contrast, the percentages of some of the bacterial FAs (ai15:0) significantly
363 decreased in *D. magna* (Table 4). In both *Daphnia* species at the end of the experiments
364 percentage of 16:2n-6, 16:3n-3, 18:3n-3 significantly decreased (Table 4) indicating a decrease
365 in the contribution of green algae in their diet. Besides in *D. pulicaria* at the end of
366 experiment percentages of 18:2n-6 decreased indicating a stronger decrease in algal diet

367 compared to that of *D. magna* (Table 4). Percentages of 20:4n-6 increased significantly at the
368 end of the experiments in both *Daphnia* species indicating an increase of proportion of
369 allochthonous organic matter in their diet (Table 4). In *D. magna*, percentages of 20:5n-3 at
370 the end of experiments increased significantly by about an order of magnitude indicating an
371 abrupt increase in the proportion of diatoms in their diet (Table 4). In contrast, in *D. pulicaria*
372 the percentage of 20:5n-3 increased by only 1.4 times (Table 4). In *D. magna* percentages of
373 18:0 and 18:1n-7 increased significantly (Table 4), providing a moderate left moving along
374 Factor 1 (Fig. 4).

375

376 *Life-table experiments*

377 Clutch sizes of the three study species responded differently to the presence of zebra mussels
378 (Table 5). In the first generation, clutch sizes of *D. magna* were significantly higher in water
379 from the M mesocosms than from the control. In contrast, clutch sizes were lower for *C.*
380 *pulchella* grown in the M treatment. In *D. pulicaria* clutch sizes were not significantly
381 different between the treatments. During the second generation, clutch sizes of *C. pulchella*
382 and *D. pulicaria* did not significantly differ between control and zebra mussel treatment while
383 *D. magna* clutch sizes were significantly greater in zebra mussel treatment than in control
384 (Table 5). In comparing clutch sizes between the first and second generations in control,
385 clutch sizes of *D. magna* and *D. pulicaria* were significantly greater during the second
386 generation, while in *C. pulchella* the difference in clutch size between generations were not
387 significant. Clutch sizes of all three species did not differ between generations in the M
388 mussel treatments.

389 The juvenile development time in the first generation was much longer in *D. magna*
390 than in *D. pulicaria* which was also significantly longer than in *C. pulchella* both in control
391 and zebra mussel treatments (Table 5). In the second generation, juvenile development time of
392 *D. magna* did not differ from that of *D. pulicaria* in control. *Ceriodaphnia pulchella*
393 developed equally fast in the first generation in zebra mussel treatment and control while in
394 the second generation it developed a little bit longer in zebra mussel treatment.

395 Mortality was low and did not exceed 0.04 – 0.08 per capita a day which was in the
396 limits of minimal physiological mortality for cladoceran species (Romanovski & Feniova,
397 1985) in either treatment for any study species.

398 The population growth rate in both *Daphnia* species was lower in the control than in
399 the M treatment in the first generation (Table 5). *Ceriodaphnia pulchella* showed the opposite

400 trend as its population growth rate was greater in the control than in the M treatment in the
401 first generation. In the second generation, population growth rates of both *Daphnia* species
402 were greater in both the control and M treatment compared to the corresponding population
403 growth rates in the first generation. In the control, *Ceriodaphnia pulchella* grew faster as
404 compared to *Daphnia* species in the both generations but in zebra mussel treatment, its growth
405 rate was slower or similar than that of *Daphnia* (Table 5).

406

407 **Discussion**

408 Zebra mussels may have affected crustacean abundances and promoted the introduction of
409 *Daphnia* by either altering the quantity or the quality of algal resources in the mesocosms.
410 Zebra mussels can out compete crustaceans if they reduce algal concentration below
411 crustacean threshold levels (0.5 – 2.0 µg/L) (Semenchenko *et al.*, 2007). Yet, no significant
412 relationships were detected between chlorophyll and crustacean abundances in our experiment
413 and concentrations of chlorophyll were always above the threshold levels for crustaceans.
414 Therefore, we suggest that competition for food was not important for crustacean dynamics in
415 the mesocosms. There is also a large body of research showing that zooplankton biomass is
416 not always related to food concentrations, but instead related to the nutritional quality
417 (McCauley, Murdoch & Nisbet, 1990; Müller-Navarra & Lampert, 1996). As such, we
418 believe that food quality rather than food quantity helped to regulate crustacean dynamics in
419 the mesocosms.

420 Zebra mussels significantly increased phosphorus and nitrogen in the mesocosms.
421 Increases in nutrient concentrations via zebra mussel excretion have been reported in several
422 studies (Wilson, 2003; Feniova *et al.*, 2015). Zebra mussels were also recently found to
423 selectively consumed EPA-rich seston (Makhutova *et al.*, 2013). In response to changes in
424 nutrient or EPA concentrations, phytoplankton nutritional value can alter. In fact, in zebra
425 mussel treatments, abundance of green algae increased while that of cyanobacteria decreased,
426 i.e. there was a shift in the phytoplankton structure although total chlorophyll concentration
427 was not affected. Since cyanobacteria and green algae are of different nutritional value for
428 crustaceans, we anticipated that food quality in terms of EPA or C:N:P ratios could cause the
429 changes in zooplankton structure in zebra mussel treatments in relation to control.

430 EPA content (µg EPA mg C⁻¹) is an important indicator of the quality of natural
431 phytoplankton for cladoceran species (Müller-Navarra, 1995; Müller-Navarra *et al.*, 2000;
432 Gladyshev *et al.*, 2008; Wacker & von Elert, 2001; Hartwich *et al.*, 2012) and potentially

433 could be the determinant of the zooplankton dynamics in the experiment. Noteworthy is that
434 small and large-bodied cladoceran species can differently respond to EPA concentrations. In
435 fact, Sikora *et al.* (2016) showed that EPA-saturation thresholds, which were defined as the
436 minimal content of EPA per organic carbon above which the juvenile growth rate becomes
437 saturated, increased significantly with increasing body size of the tested species. For the
438 small-sized *D. longispina* complex, the content of EPA resulting in 75 % of the asymptotic
439 growth rate varied between 0.74 – 1.80 ($\mu\text{g EPA mg C}^{-1}$), for the medium-sized *D. pulicaria*
440 it varied between 2.21 – 3.49, and for large-sized *D. magna* it varied between 5.83 – 7.33
441 (Sikora *et al.*, 2016). According to other published data for the medium-bodied *D. pulex*
442 (similar in size as *D. pulicaria*) a lower EPA threshold for 90 % saturation was 1.3 $\mu\text{g EPA}$
443 mg C^{-1} (Ravet, Persson & Brett, 2012), and for the large-bodied *D. magna* it was 2.0–4.9 μg
444 EPA mg C^{-1} (Sperfeld & Wacker, 2011). Based on these thresholds, EPA contents ($\mu\text{g EPA}$
445 mg C^{-1}) at the start and at the end of our experiments were not limiting for small-bodied
446 species, but were close to the limiting threshold for large-bodied cladocerans. While EPA
447 content ($\mu\text{g EPA mg C}^{-1}$) was not variable over the course of the experiments nor did it differ
448 between the treatments, population growth rates of the study species differed distinctly.
449 Therefore, we believe that these data suggest that EPA content per organic carbon did not
450 cause the differences between the treatments with zebra mussels and those without zebra
451 mussels. However, regarding sestonic EPA concentrations in the mesocosms ($\mu\text{g L}^{-1}$), it is
452 worth noting that the threshold concentration for *Daphnia* was found to be 13 mg L^{-1}
453 (Gladyshev *et al.*, 2008). In the present study, the EPA concentrations were far below this
454 threshold and therefore it may have constrained *Daphnia* growth rates. In support, *Daphnia*
455 grown in the life table experiment never had clutch sizes greater than 3 eggs/clutch even when
456 content of phosphorus in the seston was above threshold concentrations.

457 Copepods and cladocerans differentially recycle inorganic nutrients based on nutrient
458 demands for their tissues. Copepods typically sequester more nitrogen in their tissue (Elser &
459 Urabe, 1999) while cladocerans sequester more phosphorus relative to nitrogen (Sterner &
460 Elser, 2002; Johnson & Luecke, 2012). Cladocerans such as *Daphnia* spp., which have low
461 body N:P (Andersen & Hessen, 1991), tend to occur in lakes with low seston N:P (Hassett *et*
462 *al.*, 1997). Conversely, copepods, with higher body N:P (Andersen & Hessen, 1991; Carrillo,
463 Reche & Cruz-Pizarro, 1996; Villar-Argaiz *et al.*, 2000) tend to appear in lakes with high
464 seston N:P (Hassett *et al.*, 1997). In our experiments, N:P ratio decreased over 10-fold from
465 the start to the end of the experiments both in the zebra mussel treatments and control.
466 Therefore, at the beginning of our experiments high molar N:P ratios (216) could have

467 favored copepod abundance, until the N:P ratio decreased afterwards cladocerans could
468 increase their abundance. In fact, in the experiments, there was a shift of domination from
469 copepods to cladocerans as seen in Fig. 5.

470 The N:P ratio in the tissues of cladocerans also depends on body size. Small-bodied
471 species have been shown to have a higher percentage of nitrogen and a lower percentage of
472 phosphorus content in their dry weight than larger daphnids (Bergström *et al.*, 2015).

473 Therefore, the phosphorus demand is higher in large-bodied species due to their higher
474 somatic growth rate than in small-bodied species that grow more slowly (Sterner & Schulz,
475 1998). Because daphnids have a relatively higher P content in their body tissues than most
476 other freshwater zooplankton (Sterner & Hessen, 1994), stoichiometric theory predicts that
477 daphnids should be more sensitive to P limitation than other taxa (DeMott & Gulati, 1999).
478 For example, small-bodied cladocerans are predicted to be less sensitive than *Daphnia* to P
479 limitation because they have lower percentage of body P content but they are more sensitive
480 to N-limitation (Urabe & Watanabe, 1992; Schulz & Sterner, 1999). In mesocosm
481 experiments, Elser *et al.* (1988) showed that when manipulating zooplankton community
482 composition towards smaller sized herbivores, N-limitation in phytoplankton was induced.
483 According to N:P measurements in seston at the beginning and at the end of the experiment,
484 N:P ratio decreased over 10-fold in the course of the experiments. We can presume that N:P
485 ratio gradual decreased provoking a shift of dominance from microzooplankton to copepods
486 and afterwards from copepods to cladocerans. Since zebra mussels enhanced inorganic
487 phosphorus concentration in the water, N:P ratio in seston could decrease faster in zebra
488 mussel mesocosms, thus, favoring the development of large *Daphnia* species. Indeed, in the
489 life-table experiments, large *Daphnia* species had higher population growth rates than in
490 control, while the small-bodied species *C. pulchella* exhibited a higher growth rate in the
491 control.

492 The most likely critical molar C:P ratio in seston above which daphnid production will
493 be limited by seston P content is ~300 (Urabe, Clasen & Sterner, 1997; Sterner 1997, 1998;
494 Brett, Müller-Navarra & Park, 2000). At the start of our experiment the C:P ratio was much
495 higher than threshold C:P ratios. Therefore, large *Daphnia* species could not develop
496 successfully without zebra mussels. We assumed that zebra mussel could cause very abrupt
497 decrease of C:P thus allowing *Daphnia* abundance to grow. Similar effects were observed in
498 mesotrophic conditions (Feniova *et al.*, 2015) where P-PO₄ enrichment by zebra mussels was
499 found to facilitate the successful development of large-bodied *Daphnia* only in mesocosms
500 with zebra mussels. C:P decreased over the course of the experiment and by the end it had

501 reached ratios which were below the threshold ratios not only in zebra mussel treatments but
502 also in control. We suggest that such decreases in C:P in the control were provided by
503 regeneration of phosphorus by microzooplankton groups such as ciliates, nanoflagellates,
504 rotifers which commonly excrete nutrients although not as intensively as zebra mussels
505 (Vanni, 2002). We suggest that introduced large-bodied *Daphnia* species could not increase in
506 population abundance in the treatment without zebra mussel at the start of the experiments
507 because regeneration of phosphorus by microzooplankton occurred more slowly than it did in
508 the zebra mussel treatments. It is possible that during the second half of the experiments,
509 large-bodied species could have successfully developed in the control if they had been
510 introduced later as indicated from life table experiments.

511 Based on the PCA analysis we found that two closely related species of *Daphnia* (*D.*
512 *pulicaria* and *D. magna*) exhibited differences in resource use. These species were reared in
513 culture and fed with *Scenedesmus quadricauda*: however, in the experiments *D. magna*
514 mainly grazed on diatoms while *D. pulicaria* dramatically switched to bacteria. Such a
515 divergence in their diet is likely to weaken potential competition between *Daphnia* species.
516 Similar diet pattern was also observed in mesotrophic conditions (Feniova *et al.*, 2015) where
517 *D. pulicaria* also preferred bacteria while *D. magna* preferred diatoms. Cladocerans are
518 known as nonselective filter feeders whose diet is constrained by food particle size (DeMott,
519 1986). Their diet spectrum varies from 1 to 20–30 μm (Sommer & Sommer, 2006). However,
520 they could differently retain or assimilate particulate food items. In support, Taipale *et al.*
521 (2016) found that cladoceran $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values did not correlate with seston $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values and instead
522 correlated with the $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values of the different phytoplankton taxa, indicating that *Daphnia*
523 selectively assimilated phytoplankton. Selective feeding of *Daphnia* on natural microalgal
524 assemblages was also demonstrated experimentally by Gladyshev *et al.* (2000).

525 Life table experiments supported that these two *Daphnia* species could coexist and
526 according to the population growth rates they could have equal chances to develop in the
527 experimental conditions. However, the relative abundance of these two species which was 1:2
528 (*D. pulicaria* : *D. magna*) in the mesocosms could be affected by copepod predation and/or
529 other factors. These findings contradict the niche theory stating that the closely related species
530 could experience more severe competition (Chesson, 2000; Shea & Chesson, 2002; Tilman,
531 2004). However, it gives one more reason for the ‘plankton paradox’ phenomenon for
532 zooplankton (Ghilarov, 1981) where more than one potentially competitive species coexist in
533 the plankton community.

534 In conclusion, the main driver of cladocerans in our experiment was likely food
535 quality in terms of the phosphorus content in the food. The introduction of zebra mussels
536 appeared to enhance phosphorus in the seston due to the excretion of inorganic phosphorus. In
537 the treatments without zebra mussels phosphorus enrichment could be provided by
538 regeneration processes of microzooplankton. C:P and N:P ratios were the most variable
539 indicators of food quality and could operate as drivers of the shift in domination from
540 microzooplankton to copepods, and then from copepods to cladocerans.

541

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790

791 **Figure legends**

792 **Fig. 1** Dynamics of nutrient concentrations in control (A), in Z treatment with introduced
793 large-bodied *Daphnia* species (B), in M treatment with introduced zebra mussels (D) and in
794 MZ treatment with introduced large-bodied *Daphnia* species and zebra mussels (D).

795 **Fig. 2** Dynamics of chlorophyll concentrations in control (A), in Z treatment with introduced
796 large-bodied *Daphnia* species (B), in M treatment with introduced zebra mussels (D) and in
797 MZ treatment with introduced large-bodied *Daphnia* species and zebra mussels (D).

798 **Fig. 3** Dynamics of zooplankton biomass in control (A), in Z treatment with introduced large-
799 bodied *Daphnia* species (B), in M treatment with introduced zebra mussels (D) and in MZ
800 treatment with introduced large-bodied *Daphnia* species and zebra mussels (D).

801 **Fig. 4** Principal component analysis of FA levels in zooplankton from mesocosms: Dms -
802 *Daphnia magna*, start; Dps - *Daphnia pulicaria*, start; DmM – *D. magna* + mollusks, end;
803 DpM – *D. pulicaria* + mollusks, end; cC –*Ceriodaphnia pulchella* control.

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