

1 **Resource variation generates positive correlations between pre- and post-copulatory**  
2 **sexually selected traits**

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12 **Running head:** Resources determine covariance among sexual traits

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23 **Lay summary**

24 To produce offspring, males must win a mate and successfully fertilize an egg, both of  
25 which require energy. This leads to the expectation that species whose males invest more  
26 into winning mates invest less into egg fertilization and vice versa. We show, however,  
27 that reproductive investment is often not an either-or proposition. An increase in the  
28 amount of energy invested into reproduction often results in additional investment into  
29 both winning mates and fertilizing eggs.

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45 **Abstract** Male fertilization success depends on investment in both pre- and post-  
46 copulatory sexually selected traits, and considerable attention has recently been paid to  
47 quantifying the strength and direction of covariance between pre- and post-copulatory  
48 trait expression. Here, building upon previous sperm competition models, we  
49 theoretically investigate how variation in total investment into fertilization success, as  
50 well as differences in the form of pre-copulatory competition, influence the correlation  
51 between pre- and post-copulatory traits across species. We found that whenever species  
52 differ in the total investment into fertilization, optimal partitioning of investment  
53 typically generates positive correlations between sexual traits and this prediction holds  
54 when competition is between multiple males or between just two males . This contrasts  
55 with the general expectation of a negative correlation based on the trade-off between  
56 investment in pre- and post-copulatory traits at the level of an individual. Nonetheless,  
57 negative correlations do arise under some conditions, notably when total investment into  
58 fertilization is similar across species, but species differ in the form of pre-copulatory  
59 male-male competition. These results imply that the assessment of underlying trade-offs  
60 between pre- and post-copulatory trait investment requires an evaluation of how overall  
61 investment into total fertilization success varies across species.

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63 **Keywords** acquisition, allocation, contest competition, life-history trade-offs, scramble  
64 competition, sperm competition

65

## 66 **Introduction**

67 Male fertilization success, that is the number of offspring sired by a male, depends on  
68 pre-copulatory traits that influence mating success, such as ornaments and armaments, as  
69 well as post-copulatory traits that influence success in fertilizing ova when in competition  
70 with ejaculates from rival males (Parker 1998; Kvarnemo and Simmons 2013; Devigili et  
71 al. 2015). Theoretical models of sperm competition assume a trade-off between  
72 investment in pre- and post-copulatory sexually selected traits such that increased  
73 investment into pre-copulatory traits decreases investment in post-copulatory traits, and  
74 vice versa (Parker 1990; Parker 1998; Parker and Pizzari 2010; Parker et al. 2013). Such  
75 trade-offs are expected because producing and maintaining weapons and ornaments, as  
76 well as ejaculate traits, can be energetically expensive (Dewsbury 1982; Olsson et al.  
77 1997; Emlen 2001; Hayward and Gillooly 2011). However, empirical studies of pre- and  
78 post-copulatory trait covariance have reported both positive and negative correlations, as  
79 well as a lack of correlation, between traits at both the intra- and inter-specific level  
80 (reviewed in Mautz et al. 2013; Lüpold et al. 2014; Simmons et al. 2017). Attempts to  
81 explain these inconsistent results focus on a range of additional life-history, ecological,  
82 and mating system variables; for example, positive correlations are frequently discussed  
83 in the context of resource variation (Lüpold et al. 2014; Buzatto et al. 2015; Simmons et  
84 al. 2017; Supriya et al. 2018). However, how such variation in resource availability might  
85 influence sexual trait covariance has yet to be explored theoretically. More generally,  
86 there has been a call for studies that provide a predictive framework for understanding

87 how extrinsic factors modify the strength and direction of the correlation between pre-  
88 and post-copulatory sexual traits (Evans and Garcia-Gonzalez 2016).

89         The impact of resource variation on pre- and post-copulatory trait covariance is  
90 generally framed within the context of the model of van Noordwijk and de Jong (1986),  
91 who noted how differences in individual quality can result in positive correlations  
92 between life-history traits across individuals, even if the traits trade-off at the within-  
93 individual level. They introduced the terms acquisition i.e. amount of total resources  
94 available to individuals, and allocation, i.e. partitioning of resources between life-history  
95 components. Importantly, these models predict that when variance in acquisition is large  
96 with respect to variance in allocation, components of fitness covary positively, for  
97 example, richer individuals own larger houses and more expensive cars; but when  
98 variance in acquisition is relatively small, components of fitness covary negatively, for  
99 example, within a given fixed income class those who spend less on houses are able to  
100 spend more on a car (Van Noordwijk and de Jong 1986). Thus, given assumptions about  
101 how resource investment translates to fitness, one can model the expected negative  
102 covariance between components, and hence the variance in acquisition required to turn an  
103 association between two components of fitness from negative to positive (Price et al.  
104 1993).

105         Here, we extend these concepts of acquisition and allocation to correlations of  
106 species mean values to theoretically examine male investment into pre and post-  
107 copulatory sexually selected traits. Importantly, variance in acquisition or the amount of  
108 resources invested into fertilizations can vary considerably across species; males of some

109 species are under selection to invest more heavily into gaining fertilizations than males of  
110 other species. This variation may arise due to differences in the operational sex ratio or  
111 breeding density (Emlen and Oring 1977; Janicke and Morrow 2018) or variation in the  
112 distribution and abundance of resources in the breeding season. For example, in  
113 polygynous systems, males classically invest a great deal into post-copulatory  
114 fertilization success, whereas in monogamous ones, males invest more into raising  
115 offspring (Requena and Alonzo 2017). In turn, acquisition variation is expected to  
116 generate a positive covariance between two subcomponents of fertilization success (e.g.  
117 pre- and post-copulatory episodes of selection), counteracting the negative covariance  
118 resulting from a trade-off induced by energetic constraints.

119         In this paper, we used specific fitness functions (i.e. models that determine how  
120 allocation translates to fitness), including those developed by Parker et al. (2013), to ask  
121 how much variation in investment into total fertilization success is required to shift  
122 across-species correlations from negative to positive. We find it is surprisingly little.  
123 Indeed, in the simplest case, *any* variation in total investment generates a perfect positive  
124 correlation across species. This is contrary to the general sentiment that when  
125 components of fitness strongly trade-off, they should be negatively correlated across  
126 species. We consider the consequences of these results for recent tests of evolutionary  
127 trade-offs between pre- and post-copulatory sexual selection, as well as more generally.

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## 129 **Model 1: Modelling resource variation using linear fitness functions**

130 We first consider models of resource allocation where a male's success in both pre- and  
 131 post-copulatory competition increases linearly with his investment (e.g. Parker and Ball  
 132 2005). Following Parker et al. (2013), we symbolize total male investment into obtaining  
 133 fertilizations as  $R$  (i.e. acquisition).  $R$  can reflect any unit of energy or resource, the exact  
 134 definition of which can be difficult to pin down (Metcalf 2016). However, given that we  
 135 are examining how variation in  $R$  affects allocation to pre- and post-copulatory  
 136 investment, it is the relative values of  $R$ , and not the absolute values, that are of  
 137 importance. For example, males of a species with  $R = 10$  are investing twice the total  
 138 energy budget for fertilization as males of a species with  $R = 5$ , and half as much as  
 139 males of a species with  $R = 20$ . We set  $k$  to be the proportion invested into pre-copulatory  
 140 sexually selected traits and hence  $(1-k)$  is the proportion invested into post-copulatory  
 141 sexually selected traits. As in most other models of sperm competition, fitness,  $w$ , is the  
 142 product of the probability of mating,  $w_m$ , and the probability of a fertilization given a  
 143 mating,  $w_{f/m}$ , both of which are assumed to contribute independently. Given these  
 144 conditions:

$$145 \quad w_m = akR \quad [1a]$$

$$146 \quad w_{f/m} = b(1-k)R \quad [1b],$$

147 where  $a$  and  $b$  are positive constants that determine returns on investment to fitness in  
 148 relation to expenditure on pre- and post-copulatory competition, respectively. We follow  
 149 Parker et al. (2013) in calling  $a$  the mate competition loading coefficient, which  
 150 determines the extent to which investment in pre-copulatory competition translates into  
 151 mating success (i.e. the payoff on investment). Similarly,  $b$  determines the extent to

152 which investment in post-copulatory competition translates into success at fertilizing ova.  
153 Differentiating the product of equations (1a) and (1b) with respect to  $k$  and setting the  
154 result equal to 0, shows that male reproductive fitness is maximized at  $k = 0.5$ ,  
155 independent of  $R$ ,  $a$  and  $b$ . Thus, a species in which males invest more into achieving  
156 fertilizations should invest any additional resources equally into both pre- and post-  
157 copulatory sexually selected traits. Consequently, any interspecific variation in allocation  
158 into fertilization success leads to a perfect positive correlation between pre- and post-  
159 copulatory trait investment across species (Fig. 1).

160

## 161 **Model 2: Modelling resource variation using non-linear fitness functions**

162 Male mating success does not always increase linearly with investment (Hosken and  
163 House 2011). For example, in the case of contest competition between males, many  
164 males may not receive any matings despite their investment into pre-copulatory sexually  
165 selected traits and thus variance in male mating success is highly skewed (e.g. Dubuc et  
166 al. 2014). Therefore, as a next step, we modeled covariance between pre- and post-  
167 copulatory traits using nonlinear fitness functions. Parker et al. (2013) recently  
168 introduced a model incorporating variation in the form of pre-copulatory male-male  
169 competition (i.e. from direct contest to scramble competition), and showed how relative  
170 investment between pre- and post-copulatory traits varies with (1) the level of sperm  
171 competition, (2) the payoff per unit of investment in pre-copulatory traits (termed the  
172 “mate competition loading”), and (3) the number of males competing for each mating. In  
173 these models benefits depend on the form of pre-copulatory male-male competition and



174 may increase either asymptotically or exponentially (Fig. 2). We extend Parker et al.'s  
 175 (2013) models by also allowing  $R$  (i.e. total male investment into fertilization success) to  
 176 vary. We assume that the average number of matings per male is two ( $n = 2$ ) and the  
 177 population is at equal sex ratio, so average number of ejaculates received by a female is  
 178 also two ( $N = 2$ ). However, we obtained similar results using different values of  $N$  (e.g.  $N$   
 179 = 1.5, 5 and 10; data not shown) reflecting variation in the level of sperm competition  
 180 faced by males.

181         Following Parker et al. (2013), we compared the effects of male-male (contest)  
 182 competition with that of mate searching (scramble competition). In contest competition,  
 183 pre-copulatory competition for matings is typically between two or a few males (see Fig.  
 184 2a for fitness functions under contest competition), with a high degree of female  
 185 monopolization leading to a strong skew in male mating success. As per Parker et al.  
 186 (2013), we model dyadic contest competition (hereafter simply referred to as contest  
 187 competition). Specifically, for contests between two males, the number of matings,  $n$ ,  
 188 obtained by a mutant male investing  $kR$  resources into mate attraction is (eqn 7 of Parker  
 189 et al. (2013) substituting  $T$  and  $\hat{T}$  with  $kR$  and  $\widehat{kR}$  respectively) :

$$190 \quad n = 2\hat{n} \frac{1}{1+(\widehat{kR}/kR)^{\alpha}} \quad [2a].$$

191 Here,  $k$  is the proportion invested into pre-copulatory traits and  $\hat{n}$  is the average number  
 192 of matings per male. In these models, the fitness benefit gained by a mutant male by  
 193 altering his investment into mate attraction depends upon the investment strategy of other  
 194 males in the population, i.e. benefits are frequency dependent, with  $\widehat{kR}$  denoting the

195 average male investment into pre-copulatory traits (equivalent to  $\hat{T}$  in Parker et al.  
 196 (2013)). Because investment is written in arbitrary units, we can set  $\widehat{kR}$  equal to 1 ( $R$  is  
 197 now measured in units of  $\widehat{kR}$ ) so that:

$$198 \quad n = 2\hat{n} \frac{1}{1+(1/kR)^a} \quad [2b].$$

199 In models of scramble competition, an infinite number of males effectively compete for  
 200 each copulation and the ability of males to monopolize females tends to be low.

201 Following Parker et al. (2013), we model scramble competition as  $M \rightarrow \infty$ , and  
 202 mating success increases with effort spent in acquiring matings (see Fig. 2b for fitness  
 203 functions under scramble competition), such that the number of matings,  $n$ , obtained by a  
 204 mutant male is (eqn 8 of Parker et al. (2013):

$$205 \quad n = \hat{n} (kR)^a \quad [2c].$$

206

207 As before,  $a$  denotes the ‘mate competition loading’ term or the payoff on investment  
 208 into pre-copulatory competition (i.e. the extent to which investment in pre-copulatory  
 209 competition translates into mating success),  $k$  is the proportion invested into pre-  
 210 copulatory traits, and  $\hat{n}$  is the average number of matings per male. Here again, we  
 211 substituted  $T$  and  $\hat{T}$  with  $kR$  and  $\widehat{kR}$  respectively and set  $\widehat{kR}$  equal to 1.

212 With respect to post-copulatory investment, the value of a mating for a male is the  
 213 fraction of matings that result in a fertilization,  $\nu$ . Here, we use the intensity model of  
 214 sperm competition in which all males receive on average the same number of matings  
 215 (i.e.  $n = 2$ ), and following Parker et al. (2013) define the average value of a mating as:

216

$$217 \quad v = \frac{(1-k)R}{(1-k)R+(N-1)} \quad [2d]$$

218 where  $N$  is the mean number of ejaculates received by a female and  $k$  is again the  
 219 proportion invested into pre-copulatory traits (see Fig. 2c for fitness function for  
 220 fertilization success given sperm competition). Here, we substituted  $(1-k)R$  for  $s$  the  
 221 male's ejaculate size and  $(1-\widehat{k})R$  for  $\hat{s}$  which is the average population-level ejaculate  
 222 size for a male and set  $(1-\widehat{k})R$  equal to 1. We used the intensity model in which all  
 223 females mate with  $N$  males where  $N \geq 2$ , and not the alternative risk model where  
 224 females either mate once per clutch with a probability  $1-q$  or twice with the probability  
 225  $q$ . We chose the intensity model because both of these models perform similarly within  
 226 the risk range (i.e. between  $N = 1$  and  $2$ ) and the intensity model is more broadly  
 227 applicable (Parker and Ball 2005; Parker et al. 2013).

228 To find optimal investment into pre- and post-copulatory traits, we solved for the  
 229 maximum of the product of equations 2b and 2d (for contest competition) and of 2c and  
 230 2d (for scramble competition) for various values of  $a$  and  $R$  as a function of  $k$  using the  
 231 "*optimize*" function in the R package 'stats' (R Core Team 2014). We found that across a  
 232 wide range of parameter space, correlations between investment into pre- and post-  
 233 copulatory traits are positive, although not generally equal to one. Specifically, positive  
 234 correlations are always present when  $R$  varies and the form of pre-copulatory male-male  
 235 competition is held fixed (i.e. solid and dashed lines, Figs 3a-c). Moreover, for a fixed  
 236 value of  $R$ , investment into post-copulatory traits is always higher for contest competitors  
 237 (solid line) than scramble competitors (dashed line), who have more to gain by increasing

238 investment into post-copulatory traits that secure fertilizations. The difference between  
 239 contest competitors and scramble competitors is most evident when the mate loading  
 240 coefficient,  $a$ , is high (Fig. 3c).

241 More generally, we found that positive correlations are inevitable if  $R$  varies and  
 242 the form of pre-copulatory competition is invariable, whereas negative correlations are  
 243 inevitable if the form of pre-copulatory competition varies and  $R$  is fixed (Fig. 3).  
 244 Importantly, this leads to a rich realm of possibilities in the strength and direction of the  
 245 correlation in empirical data. For example, consider two species, one of which is  
 246 investing  $R = 10$  total units, and the other,  $R = 20$  total units, and a high mate loading  
 247 coefficient (see e.g. Fig. 3c). While variation in  $R$  should generally result in a positive  
 248 correlation between pre- and post-copulatory investment, if the investor of 20 units is a  
 249 scramble competitor (far right point on dashed line in Fig. 3c) and the investor of 10 units  
 250 a contest competitor, pre- and post-copulatory investment will be negatively correlated.

251 Next, in order to evaluate the relative impact of variation in resource investment  
 252 and the form of pre-copulatory male-male competition (denoted by the number of males  
 253 competing for a mating,  $M$ ) on trait covariance, we explored the effect of simultaneous  
 254 variation in both  $R$  and  $M$ . We utilized the common equation for pre-copulatory benefits,  
 255 derived from equation [6] of (Parker et al. 2013), so that:

$$256 \quad n = M\hat{n} \frac{1}{1+(M-1)(1/kR)^a} \quad [3]$$

257

258 Here, varying the value of  $M$  implies moving from a dyadic contest competition scenario  
 259 ( $M = 2$ ) to scramble ( $M \rightarrow \infty$ ) competition in an infinite population. We maximized the

260 product of equations 2d and 3 with respect to  $k$ , fixing  $a = 3$ . We specified variation in  
261 values of  $R$  and  $M$  using random number generators from a uniform distribution over the  
262 following intervals:  $R$  varies between 100:105, 100:150, 100:200, 100:250 and 100:300;  
263  $M$  varies between 2:3, 2:5, 2:10, 2:100 and 2:1000 (Fig. 4). We calculated the correlation  
264 between investment in pre- and post-copulatory traits for 1000 random values of  $R$  and  $M$   
265 for each pairwise combination of the intervals in  $R$  and  $M$ . We allowed for an up to  
266 threefold difference across species in the amount of total resources invested by males in  
267 gaining fertilizations (i.e.  $R$  varied from 100-300) and included variation in the total  
268 number of males competing for each mating opportunity ranging from dyadic contest  
269 (here defined as  $M = 2$ ) to scramble (here defined as  $M = 1000$ ) competition. We plotted  
270 the average values from the correlation between  $M$  and  $R$  for each of the 1000 iterations  
271 after running it through a lowess smoother. All analyses were done in the R statistical  
272 package (R Core Team 2014) and plotted with the R package ‘lattice’ (Sarkar 2008).

273         These analyses show that positive correlations between investment in pre- and  
274 post-copulatory traits are more widely predicted than negative ones (Fig. 4a). Negative  
275 correlations arise only when there is less than two-fold variation in resources invested  
276 coupled with substantial variation in the number of males competing for a mating  
277 opportunity (Fig. 4b). We found similar results when we used different values of  $a$  ( $a = 1$   
278 or 5; see Figs. S1 & S2), though negative correlations between pre- and post-copulatory  
279 traits were slightly more prevalent when  $a$  was lower (i.e.  $a = 1$ , Fig S1). Nonetheless  
280 positive correlations still dominated the parameter space, regardless of the value of  $a$ , and

281 negative correlations were still found only when there was low variation in  $R$  (Fig. S1 &  
282 S2).

283

## 284 **Discussion**

285 Here, we theoretically examined how variation in both total resources invested in  
286 fertilization (i.e. the sum of pre- and post-copulatory trait investment) and the form of  
287 pre-copulatory male-male competition influences the strength and direction of covariance  
288 between pre- and post-copulatory sexual traits. Using specific fitness functions developed  
289 for sperm competition theory, we quantitatively predict when life-history traits that trade-  
290 off within species result in positive correlations across species in the context of sexual  
291 selection and relative investment in male sexual traits. We show that even a 1.5-fold  
292 difference between species in the amount of resources invested into total fertilization  
293 success generally results in positive correlations between pre- and post-copulatory trait  
294 investments across species. Moreover, we find that correlations between pre- and post-  
295 copulatory traits are expected to be positive under both contest and scramble competition,  
296 and only become negative under limited conditions. That is, when inter-specific variation  
297 in resource allocation to total fertilization success is low and the form of pre-copulatory  
298 competition varies across species (i.e. species vary in the average number of males  
299 competing for each mating along a continuum from dyadic contest competition to  
300 scramble competition) (Fig. 4).

301 Comparative studies in a range of taxa have frequently reported a positive  
302 correlation between the expression of pre- and post-copulatory traits (Wedell 1993; Dunn

303 et al. 2001; Greig and Pruett-Jones 2009; Lüpold et al. 2014; Simmons and Fitzpatrick  
304 2016; Supriya et al. 2018). Most notably, Lüpold et al. (2014) evaluated the correlation  
305 between testes size (a measure of post-copulatory investment) and either weaponry or  
306 sexual size dimorphism (a measure of pre-copulatory investment) in 10 taxa and found  
307 mostly positive correlations between testes size and weaponry (5/5 taxa examined) and  
308 testes size and sexual size dimorphism (5/9 taxa examined). In that study, four of the taxa  
309 (4/10) were classified as having an invariant mating system (i.e., all species were  
310 considered either monopolizing or non-monopolizing species) and these taxa were  
311 generally associated with the largest positive correlations between pre- and post-  
312 copulatory trait investment. Assuming species with female monopolization approximate  
313 contest competitors and species exhibiting low or no female monopolization are often  
314 scramble competitors, these empirical findings are generally consistent with our model  
315 results. The major exception was the Acanthocephala (also known as the thorny-headed  
316 worms) which showed a negative correlation between sexual size dimorphism and testes  
317 size despite all species being classified as able to monopolize females. Lüpold et al.  
318 (2014) classified all acanthocephalans this way because males appear to fight over access  
319 to females and use copulatory plugs, which presumably prevent copulations from rival  
320 males and restrict the potential for multiple mating. However, we suggest that it is  
321 plausible that the mating system of acanthocephalans may actually be more variable than  
322 assumed by Lüpold et al. (2014). This is because it is unknown if copulatory plugs are a  
323 universal feature of the Acanthocephala and, even when present, they may not prevent  
324 multiple mating by females (Amin et al. 2011). Additionally, considerable inter-specific

325 variation in the degree of female bias in the adult sex ratio (Poulin 1997) suggests that the  
326 ability of males to monopolize females is likely to be variable across species. As such, we  
327 suggest that a variable mating system, and thus variation in the form of pre-copulatory  
328 competition, might explain the weak (c.f. Voordouw 2001) negative relationship  
329 observed in the Acanthocephala.

330 More generally, large variation in the number of males competing for a mating  
331 may explain the negative correlations between pre- and post-copulatory traits in a range  
332 of taxa (Lüpold et al. 2014; Kahrl et al. 2016). For example, in a study of pinnipeds,  
333 approximately two-thirds of the species were classified as contest competitors (n=19 with  
334 harems) and one-third of the species were classified as showing variation in the number  
335 of males competing for a mating (n=14 without harems), and across all species there was  
336 a negative relationship between sexual size dimorphism and relative testes size  
337 (Fitzpatrick et al. 2012; Lüpold et al. 2014). Lüpold et al. (2014) noted that the degree of  
338 female monopolization is a major determinant of the among species correlation between  
339 pre- and post-copulatory trait expression. Our results build on this and suggest that the  
340 correlation is affected by the extent to which the number of males competing for each  
341 mating varies across species and, even more importantly, by variation among species in  
342 the total amount of resources invested into acquiring fertilizations.

343 Consistent with our results, a recent study of the frog *Crinia georgiana* shows a  
344 negative correlation between relative arm girth (a pre-copulatory sexually selected trait  
345 influencing the number of matings obtained) and testes size across populations  
346 (Dziminski et al. 2010; Parker et al. 2013). In this species, studies examining male



347 fertilization success in relation to male density suggest this pattern may arise from  
348 density-dependent patterns of sexual selection acting on pre- and post-copulatory trait  
349 investment, with some populations more or less approximating conditions of contest  
350 competition and others approximating conditions of scramble competition and thus  
351 differing in allocation strategy (Buzatto et al. 2015; Buzatto et al. 2017). In this case then,  
352 these populations may approximate one of the negative slopes (grey contour lines) in  
353 Figure 3 where resource variation is less influential than variation in the form of pre-  
354 copulatory male-male competition. Another recent study recovered a trade-off between  
355 pre- and post-copulatory sexually selected traits using experimental manipulations in a  
356 crusader bug species (*Mictis profana*), but found a positive correlation between the traits  
357 in the natural population, which may be explained by variation in the amount of resources  
358 invested into fertilizations by different males (Somjee et al. 2018). Moreover, a study of  
359 three-spined sticklebacks (*Gasterosteus aculeatus*) found evidence for a negative  
360 correlation between investment in pre- and post-copulatory traits in food-restricted males,  
361 whereas a positive correlation was observed among males that were well-fed (Mehlis et  
362 al. 2015). Thus, empirical studies are beginning to show the importance of variation in  
363 both the number of males competing for a mating opportunity and resource investment on  
364 the correlation between pre- and post-copulatory trait expression at the intra-specific  
365 level. Our model shows that similar patterns would be expected across groups of closely  
366 related species.

367           In addition to both positive and negative correlations, studies have reported a lack  
368 of correlation between pre- and post-copulatory traits (Ferrandiz-Rovira et al. 2014;

369 Lüpold et al. 2015). Such a lack of correlation may arise if one or both traits under study  
370 are not reflective of total investment in either pre- or post-copulatory investment. Under  
371 these conditions, it is likely there would be considerable noise in the data and this would  
372 reduce or obscure any correlation. Such an effect would be particularly relevant when  
373 investment into the traits measured represents just a small fraction of the resources  
374 available for that fitness subcomponent, and this may be further confounded by trade-offs  
375 within each. For example, sperm size and sperm number trade off (Parker 1982; Immler  
376 et al. 2011), and as such it is unlikely that either of these traits alone reflects total post-  
377 copulatory investment. In addition, a lack of correlation may also arise if the species  
378 examined vary in mating system and resource availability such that a line fitted through  
379 the data points has a slope of zero (Fig. 3), which is perhaps most plausible when  
380 considering a small, taxonomically-restricted dataset.

381         In conclusion, we emphasize that empirical studies need to consider the potential  
382 contribution of variation in investment into major fitness components (here, total  
383 fertilization success) when measuring the relationship between fitness subcomponents. In  
384 the case of interacting episodes of pre- and post-copulatory sexual selection,  
385 consideration of the potential contribution of variation in total investment and energy  
386 availability is critical to our understanding of evolutionary trade-offs. As such we  
387 theoretically confirm the arguments of Simmons et al. (2017), who noted that  
388 consideration of additional life-history, ecological, and mating system variables is  
389 necessary when considering the strength and direction of correlations between pre- and  
390 post-copulatory sexually selected traits.

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522 **Figure legends**

523 **Figure 1.** Optimum pre- and post-copulatory investment (filled circles) for a given fixed  
524 level of total resources,  $R$ , invested into fertilization by a species, assuming linear fitness  
525 functions (eqns 1). For a taxon with fixed resource acquisition,  $R$ , allocation in pre- and  
526 post-copulatory trades-off according to the grey lines.

527 **Figure 2.** Illustrations of the fitness functions developed by Parker et al. (2013) in order  
528 to define returns on investment in pre-copulatory (a & b) and post-copulatory traits  
529 (c). (a) Pre-copulatory contest competition (Parker et al.'s (2013) eqn 7), here between  
530 two males, and (b) pre-copulatory scramble competition (Parker et al.'s (2013) eqn 8).  
531 For pre-copulatory competition, the “mate loading function”,  $a$ , is a measure of the  
532 returns for investment. In all cases, each female is assumed to mate on average twice. (c)  
533 Sperm competition. There are two models: risk model, where some females mate twice  
534 and some once (solid line, here the proportion of females mating twice was set to 0.5), or  
535 the intensity model, where all females mate with  $N$  males and  $N \geq 2$ , here set to  $N = 2$   
536 (dashed line, all analyses in this paper use this model). No sperm precedence was  
537 allowed.

538 **Figure 3.** Effect of variation in the form of pre-copulatory male competition and resource  
539 investment on the relationship between pre- and post-copulatory investment (based on  
540 solutions to eqns (2)) for different values of the mate competition loading coefficient,  $a$ .  
541 Contest competition is given by the solid black line and scramble competition by the  
542 dashed line. When  $R$  is fixed, negative correlations are found across species as the form  
543 of pre-copulatory competition moves from scramble to contest (each gray line is a

544 contour of equal acquisition,  $R = 5, 10, 15, 20$  with the size of the circle indicating the  
545 increase in acquisition).

546 **Figure 4.** Predicted correlation between pre- and post-copulatory sexual traits as a  
547 function of variation in the number of males competing for each mating ( $M$ ) and total  
548 investment ( $R$ ). The correlation between pre- and post-copulatory investment (color bar  
549 on the right in (a) and Y-axis in (b)) is negative only when there is variation in  $M$ ,  
550 combined with little variation in  $R$ . In these analyses, the mate loading coefficient ( $a$ ) was  
551 set to 3. (a) Axis values give the interval from which randomly generated values were  
552 drawn; the lower value for the X axis interval in all cases is equal to 1. (b) X-axis reflects  
553 a move from dyadic contest competition ( $M = 2$ ) to scramble competition ( $M = 1000$ )  
554 with intermediate values of  $M$  allowed to vary between the specified range and thus  
555 reflecting differences in mating system across species.

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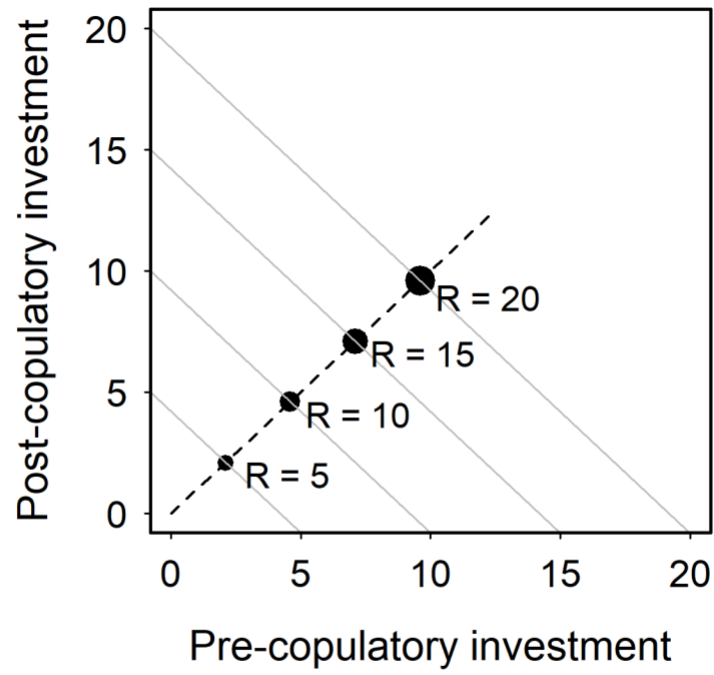
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565 **Figure 1.**

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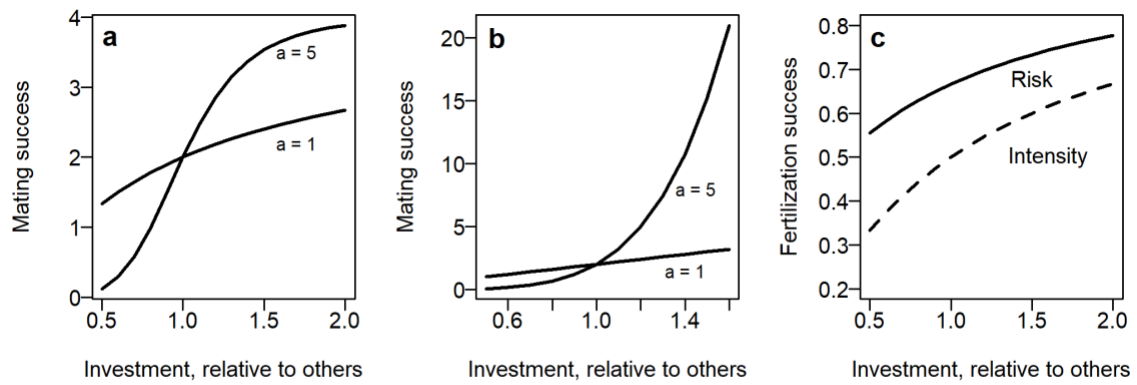
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575 **Figure 2.**

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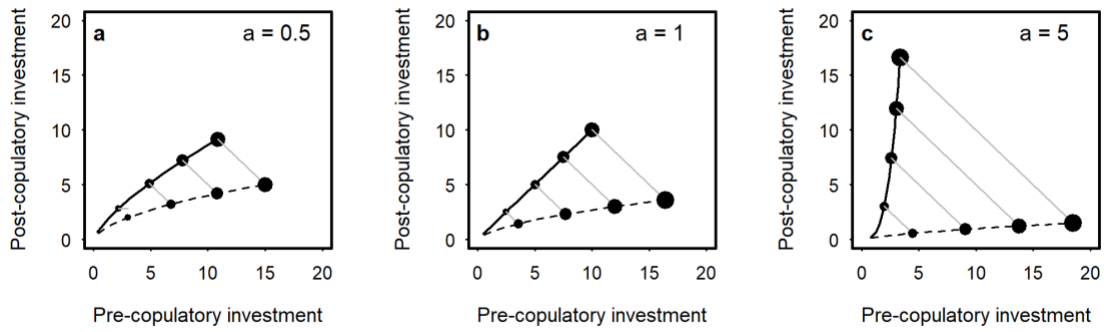
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591 **Figure 3.**

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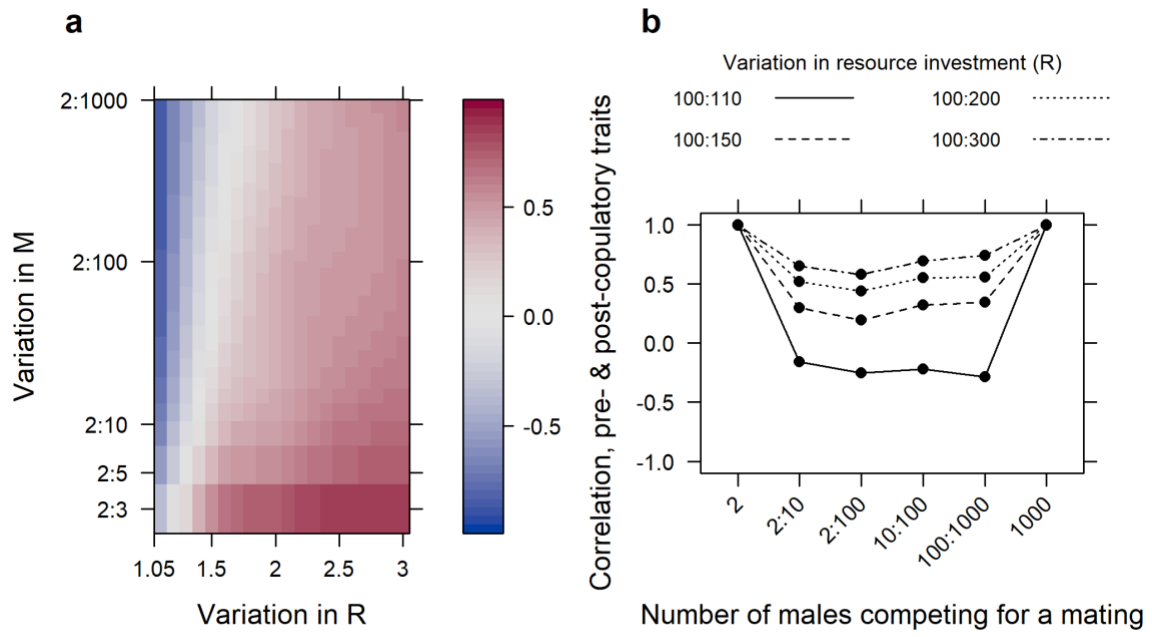
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607 **Figure 4.**

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