

**Do positive interactions between marine invaders increase likelihood of invasion into natural and artificial habitats?**

Journal:	<i>Oikos</i>
Manuscript ID	OIK-07862.R3
Wiley - Manuscript type:	Research
Keywords:	Austrominius modestus, biotic homogenization, epibiosis, Magallana gigas, Patella vulgata, artificial structure
Abstract:	<p>Positive species interactions such as facilitation are important for enabling species to persist, especially in stressful conditions, and the nature and strength of facilitation varies along physical and biological gradients. Expansion of coastal infrastructure is creating hotspots of invasive species which can spillover into natural habitats, but the role of positive species interactions associated with biological invasions remains understudied. Theory suggests that stronger biotic pressure in natural habitats inhibits invasion success. In space-limited marine systems, sessile organisms can overcome this limiting resource by settling as an epibiont on a substrate organism - basibiont. Using a series of spatially extensive surveys, we explored the role of invasive and native basibionts in providing habitat for other invasive and native epibionts, and tested whether environmental context (i.e. if the receiving habitat was natural or artificial), altered ecological outcomes. Overall, provision of space by basibionts was more important for invasive epibionts than for native epibionts but was dependent on the environmental context. Invasive basibionts facilitated invasive epibionts in natural habitats, and appeared to be more important for native epibionts in artificial habitats respectively. Native basibionts facilitated invasive, but not native epibionts in both natural and artificial habitats. These results advance our understanding of facilitation and highlight the idiosyncratic nature of biofouling and epibiosis, and the potentially important influence of environmental context. The degree to which native habitat-forming species vs. invasive habitat-forming species either do or do not facilitate other native or non-native species is a rich area for investigation. Experimental work is required to disentangle the processes underpinning these patterns.</p>

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4 **Abstract**

5

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26 underpinning these patterns.

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28 **Keywords:** artificial structure, *Austrominius modestus*; biotic homogenisation; epibiosis;  
29 *Magallana gigas*; oyster, *Patella vulgata*

30

### 31 **Introduction**

32 A central goal in ecology is to understand the processes underlying community assembly  
33 (Hutchinson 1961; McArthur and McArthur 1961; Kraft et al. 2008). A long history of study  
34 demonstrates that negative biological interactions (competition and predation) are important  
35 determinants of species' abundances and distributions (Robertson 1947; Connell 1961; Paine  
36 1966), the importance of positive interactions such as facilitation has only been more recently  
37 considered and incorporated into ecological models (Bruno et al. 2003; Bracken et al. 2014).  
38 The strength of positive interactions can vary across physical (Wright and Gribben 2017; Uyá  
39 et al. 2020) and biological (Bulleri et al. 2011; Clements and Hay 2015) gradients with  
40 facilitation via amelioration of abiotic conditions more important under higher physical  
41 stress, whereas under benign conditions facilitation via amelioration of biotic stress (e.g.  
42 predation, competition) can be more important (Bertness et al. 1999). Advancing our  
43 understanding of how facilitation differs in different environmental contexts will not only aid  
44 in targeting conservation efforts but will also advance our understanding of marine  
45 community ecology.

46 In space-limited marine ecosystems, such as natural rocky shores, space is often  
47 limited and characterised by high biotic pressure. Bare substrate on which to settle is rare,  
48 requiring disturbance and mortality events to make space available (Paine and Levin 1981).  
49 Sessile organisms, however, can overcome this limiting resource by settling on other

50 organisms - a phenomenon referred to as epibiosis (Wahl 1997). Epibiosis is a spatial  
51 association whereby an ‘epibiont’ is attached to the surface of a substrate-organism  
52 (‘basibiont’) without trophically depending on it (Wahl 2009). Both positive and negative  
53 effects have been identified for both epibiont and basibiont, however, the main advantage for  
54 epibionts is that they can colonise an unoccupied space (Wahl 1989; Harder 2009; Gribben et  
55 al. 2019). There is evidence to suggest that invasive species are more likely employ epibiosis  
56 as a mechanism of recruitment than native species (Hewitt 1993; Reise 1998; Gribben et al.  
57 2020). For instance, Leonard et al. (2017) compared bryozoan larval settlement and found  
58 that invasive species settled on any surface, whereas natives avoided settling as epibionts.  
59 Furthermore, studies have also shown that basibiont species may facilitate the spread of  
60 invasive species who settle on them as epibionts (Mendez et al. 2014; Harding et al. 2011),  
61 potentially contributing to invasion success (Morgan and Richardson 2009; Mieszkowska et  
62 al. 2013). Should these interactive consequences prove pervasive, then ‘invasional  
63 meltdowns’ (*sensu* Simberloff and Von Holle 1999) may become increasingly prevalent,  
64 especially under future environmental change scenarios.

65 In disturbed marine environments, artificial structures such as harbour walls, pilings and  
66 coastal defences are ubiquitous features that replace natural habitats (Thiagarajah et al. 2015;  
67 Knights et al. 2016; Chee et al. 2017; Bugnot et al. 2020) with vast swathes of novel habitat  
68 potentially suitable for colonisation by rocky reef species (Moschella et al. 2005; Firth et al.  
69 2013). Invasive species are often the first colonisers of this novel substrate (Airoldi et al.  
70 2015), which can facilitate ‘spillover’ and spread to adjacent natural rocky habitats (Epstein  
71 and Smale 2018). Whilst negative biotic interactions may act as a biotic filter to invasive  
72 species overspilling into adjacent natural habitats (Elton 1958, Jeschke et al. 2013),  
73 basibionts may indeed facilitate invasion success in natural habitats (Ruesink 2007; Altieri et

74 al. 2010; Gribben et al. 2019, 2020) through either physical stress amelioration or  
75 associational defence from competitors or consumers.

76 The Pacific oyster, *Magallana gigas* (formerly *Crassostrea gigas*, but see Bayne et al.  
77 2017) is a well-known global invader, occurring in >70 countries worldwide (Ruesink et al.  
78 2005). It was originally introduced to Europe from Asia for aquaculture and has facilitated  
79 the spread of a number of invasive ‘hitch-hikers’ (Blanchard 1997) with widespread negative  
80 ecological impacts (Krassoi et al. 2008, see Herbert et al. 2016 for review). In sedimentary  
81 environments, *Magallana* is an important ecosystem engineer (*sensu* Jones et al. 1997) that  
82 provides a complex three-dimensional habitat for many other species, which can modify the  
83 physico-chemical properties of the receiving environment (Markert et al. 2010). Once  
84 established, these species may alter environmental conditions in favour of other invaders,  
85 such as creating positive feedbacks that accelerate self-recruitment (Simberloff and Van  
86 Holle 1999, Diedrich 2005), propagule retention (Lim et al. 2020), and recruitment of other  
87 invasive species (e.g. the barnacle *Austrominius modestus*). In Britain, *Magallana* is  
88 particularly prevalent in artificial habitats (McKnight and Chudleigh 2015) and is present on  
89 many natural bedrock rocky shores albeit at lower abundances (Firth, pers. obs.). Preliminary  
90 observations of epibiotic communities associated with *Magallana* in Britain revealed mixed  
91 barnacle communities including the non-native *Austrominius modestus* (*Austrominius* herein)  
92 and native *Semibalanus balanoides*, *Chthamalus montagui* and *Chthamalus stellatus* (Firth,  
93 pers. obs.). Recent studies have shown that in artificial habitats, sheltered and estuarine  
94 conditions, not only is *Austrominius* more prevalent than in exposed natural habitats (Gomes-  
95 Filho et al. 2010), but it can also completely dominate the barnacle assemblage (Bracewell et  
96 al. 2013; Gallagher et al. 2016). Conversely, in natural habitats, *Austrominius* remains  
97 relatively sparse where native species richness (Firth et al. 2016a) and biotic pressure (i.e.  
98 competition and predation, Gallagher et al. 2015) are greater which may convey biotic

99 resistance (Elton 1958). The novel biogenic substrate provided by rising numbers of  
100 *Magallana* could further facilitate *Austrominius* in natural habitats where they are less  
101 abundant, but not in artificial habitats where they are typically more abundant.

102 Here, using a combination of surveys, we set out to answer the following three questions:

103 (i) To what extent do native and non-native basibionts facilitate native and non-native  
104 barnacle epibionts? and; (ii) Do relationships differ depending on whether the interaction  
105 between native/non-native basibionts and native/non-native epibionts occurs in natural or  
106 artificial habitats?

107

## 108 **Materials and Methods**

### 109 ***Study locations***

110 This study was carried out at six intertidal locations across 1.54° longitude (~114 km) of  
111 coast in SW Britain between March and July 2018 (Fig. 1). At each location, both natural and  
112 artificial habitats were present in close proximity to one another and thus, characterised by  
113 similar environmental conditions. Artificial habitats comprised vertical seawalls (constructed  
114 of smooth natural rock and >20 years old) and adjacent (<20 m) natural habitats were  
115 characterised by flat smooth vertical/near-vertical bedrock.

116

### 117 ***Surveys comparing invasive and native taxa between natural and artificial habitats***

118 Preliminary observations indicated that two basibiont species were suitable for this study:  
119 the native limpet *Patella vulgata* (*Patella* herein), and the invasive oyster *Magallana gigas*  
120 (*Magallana* herein). These two species were selected because they co-occur at the same tidal  
121 height in both natural and artificial habitats, have relatively large shells for the attachment of  
122 barnacle epibionts, and have been observed to support mixed epibiotic barnacle communities  
123 on their shells (Firth, pers. obs.). Whilst, the congeneric limpet *P. depressa* does occur in

124 both natural and artificial habitats, it is much smaller and is often devoid of epibionts (Firth,  
125 pers. obs.). Throughout this study, the term ‘substrate/substrata’ refers to the substrate to  
126 which an organism is directly attached (i.e. rock, *Patella*, *Magallana*), and ‘habitat’ refers to  
127 whether the substrate is located in a natural (i.e. rocky shore) or artificial (i.e. seawall)  
128 environment.

129 In the first instance, we used surveys at each location to quantify the prevalence of all taxa  
130 (i.e. barnacles, *Magallana*, and *Patella*) on natural rocky shore and on artificial seawall  
131 habitats. The abundance of *Magallana* and *Patella* on rock substrata was quantified using 15  
132 haphazardly-placed quadrats (50 × 50 cm) on flat vertical/near-vertical surfaces within a  
133 10m<sup>2</sup> area at mid-shore elevation. Concurrently, a 3 × 3 cm photo-quadrat was taken within  
134 the larger quadrat, then imported into image analysis software (Fiji Cell Counter Tool,  
135 Schindelin et al. 2012) and used to quantify the abundance and relative proportion of invasive  
136 *Austrominius* and native barnacles living directly on the rock substrata (not as epibionts). In  
137 all surveys described below, native barnacles comprised *S. balanoides*, *C. montagui* and *C.*  
138 *stellatus* and were identified to species to assign them as native barnacles, but their identity  
139 was not considered further as we were interested in the relative differences between native  
140 and invasive groups rather than the species themselves. As such, we refer to the native  
141 barnacle community as simply 'native barnacles' herein ignoring species identity.

142 Generalized linear mixed models (GLMM; glmer function) with a binomial (logit-link)  
143 error distribution was used to assess the probability of presence or absence of all taxa in  
144 natural and artificial habitats (fixed) among locations (random factor).

145

#### 146 ***Comparison of facilitation between basibiont species and habitat types***

147 To investigate the relative importance of positive interactions of native and invasive  
148 basibionts in natural and artificial habitats, photographs of all *Patella* and *Magallana*

149 individuals encountered within quadrats were taken, alongside a photograph of the adjacent  
150 rock substrata. Photo-quadrats ( $3 \times 3$  cm) were placed over the section of the shell with  
151 barnacle epibionts. The abundance and relative proportions of invasive and native barnacles  
152 within photo-quadrats were counted using the same image analysis process as above.

153 To assess the relative strength of facilitation of invasive barnacle epibionts by invasive  
154 and native basibionts in artificial and natural habitats, we compared the percentage difference  
155 in invasive epibiont abundance on each basibiont relative to their abundance on rock  
156 substrata within both habitat types. To do this, we first calculated the mean abundance of  
157 invasive barnacles on rock and then determined the percentage change in invasive barnacle  
158 abundance on each basibiont compared to the mean of rock basibionts within each habitat  
159 (following Wright and Gribben 2017). For each habitat, we then calculated the mean  
160 percentage change and confidence intervals around that mean.

161 Three analyses were performed. (1) A 3-factor linear-effects mixed model (lme) was used  
162 to compare the log abundance of invasive and native barnacles on different substrata (i.e.  
163 rock, *Patella*, *Magallana*; fixed factor) and habitats (natural, artificial, fixed factor) at each  
164 location (random factor). Differences among groups were compared using posthoc Tukey  
165 HSD multiple pairwise comparisons. Photo-quadrats with no barnacles were removed from  
166 the analysis. (2) A 3-factor negative binomial regression was used to predict the percentage  
167 of the barnacle community (relative abundance of invasive and native barnacles in a quadrat  
168 where present) on (i) rock substrata or on (ii) a basibiont (*Patella* vs. *Magallana*) in natural  
169 and artificial habitats. The maximal model was simplified using the step() function in R with  
170 the best model determined using Akaike Information Criterion (AIC). (3) Two-way ANOVA  
171 (sqrt transformed) was used to compare differences in facilitation strength between habitat  
172 type (natural vs. artificial) and basibiont origin (invasive vs. native). All statistical analyses  
173 described above were carried out using the open source software, R (R Core Team 2019).



174

175 **Results**176 ***Comparison of invasive and native taxa between natural and artificial habitats***

177 All taxa were found on rock substrata at all locations in both artificial and natural habitats.  
178 For three of the taxa, there was a significant effect of habitat (*Magallana*  $-z=-5.72$ ,  $p<0.001$ ;  
179 *Austrominius*  $-z=-5.44$ ,  $p<0.001$ ; native barnacles  $-z=8.31$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), but not location, on the  
180 probability of occurrence in a quadrat between artificial and natural habitats (Fig. 2). There  
181 was a significantly greater probability of invasive taxa occurring in artificial than natural  
182 habitats (*Magallana*; 40% vs. 22%, respectively; *Austrominius*; 75% vs. 57%, respectively).  
183 For native taxa, there was either a reduced likelihood of presence in artificial than natural  
184 habitats (native barnacles on rock substrata; 69% vs. 90%, respectively) or no significant  
185 difference between habitats (*Patella*,  $z=0.86$ ,  $p=0.39$ ).

186

187 ***Facilitation of barnacle epibionts by native and invasive basibionts in natural and artificial***  
188 ***habitats***

189 When considering the observed numbers of barnacles, there was a significant interaction  
190 between substrate type (on rock vs. on *Magallana* vs. on *Patella*) and habitat type (artificial  
191 vs. natural) on the number of invasive ( $F_{2,678} = 8.48$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and native barnacles ( $F_{2,770} =$   
192  $4.34$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) recorded. In natural habitats, whilst not significantly different, *Austrominius*  
193 tended to be more prevalent on basibionts compared to rock. In artificial habitats,  
194 *Austrominius* was most abundant on *Patella*, followed by rock, followed by *Magallana* (Fig.  
195 3). Native barnacles were more prevalent on rock than as epibionts in both habitat types, but  
196 when occurring as epibionts, they were recorded in greater numbers on *Magallana* than on  
197 *Patella* in artificial habitats, and in similar numbers between basibionts in natural habitats  
198 (Fig. 3).

199 When considering the percentage of the barnacle community that was invasive, there was  
200 a significant 3-way interactive effect of substrate type, habitat type, and overall barnacle  
201 density (all species) on the number of invasive *Austrominius* predicted to occur within the  
202 community ( $\chi^2_{59}=59$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) with significant differences between habitat depending on  
203 basibiont identity (Figure 4a). In natural habitats, epibiosis by invasive barnacles on  
204 *Magallana* increased exponentially, comprising 100% of the epibiont community when  
205  $>\sim 48\%$  of the surface was occupied. In contrast, in artificial habitats, invasive barnacle  
206 epibiosis was relatively low, accounting for  $\sim 10\%$  of the barnacle community, and only  
207 marginally increasing in prevalence with increasing percentage cover (Fig. 4a). The  
208 percentage of invasive barnacles as epibionts on *Patella* increased exponentially with  
209 increasing barnacle population size in both natural and artificial habitats; 100% were  
210 invasive, even when percentage cover of the shell was relatively low ( $\sim 25\text{-}38\%$  cover). On  
211 rock substrata, invasive barnacles were typically less common (ordinarily  $<10\%$  of the  
212 community), and instead dominated by native barnacles in both natural and artificial habitats.

213 Considering the mean strength of facilitation, invasive epibiosis was  $\sim 2$ -fold higher on the  
214 invasive basibiont *Magallana* in natural habitats than all other comparisons ( $F_{1,1219}=12.63$ ,  
215  $p<0.001$ ) but strength was also highly variable (Fig. 4b). Further, the role of native and  
216 invasive basibionts as facilitators of *Austrominius* reversed between natural and artificial  
217 habitats (Fig. 4b); *Magallana* showing positive facilitation strength values in natural habitats  
218 and negative facilitation strength values in artificial habitats, and vice versa for *Patella*.

219

## 220 Discussion

221 The relative importance of biotic and abiotic processes governing interactions within and  
222 among native and invasive species can vary in time and space (Byers et al. 2010; Green and  
223 Crowe 2014). Both of our invasive species (*Magallana* and *Austrominius*) were more

224 prevalent in artificial than natural habitats. Distribution patterns were less consistent for native  
225 species, with *Patella* found in similar numbers in both natural and artificial habitats, and  
226 native barnacles were typically more likely to occur in natural habitats over artificial. Whilst  
227 basibionts were more important for invasive than native epibionts overall, we also found that  
228 invasive basibionts facilitated invasive epibionts in natural habitats, and appeared to be more  
229 important for native epibionts in artificial habitats respectively. Native basibionts facilitated  
230 invasive, but not native epibionts in both natural and artificial habitats.

231 These findings build on the evidence base that artificial substrata represent poor habitats  
232 for native species (Firth et al. 2013, 2016b; Airoidi et al. 2015), but they can represent good  
233 habitats for invasive species (Bishop et al. 2015; O'Shaughnessy et al. 2020a; see Mineur et  
234 al. 2012 for review). A growing body of research suggests that artificial substrata are too  
235 homogeneous and lack the necessary topographic complexity at a range of spatial scales that  
236 is required for successful settlement and recruitment of native taxa (Moschella et al. 2005;  
237 Firth et al. 2013; Loke and Todd 2016). Many invasive taxa have broader environmental  
238 tolerances enabling them to colonise and dominate artificial substrata. In this way,  
239 homogenous artificial substrata may function as the 'initial' abiotic environmental filter  
240 (Olyarnik et al. 2009) for native taxa but not for invasive taxa.

241 These findings also build on the evidence base that invasive species are more likely to  
242 settle as epibionts on the surface of another organism than native species (Hewitt 1993; Reise  
243 1998). In both natural and artificial habitats, *Austrominius* was facilitated by the native  
244 basibiont, *Patella*. In contrast, comparatively fewer native barnacles occurred as epibionts on  
245 *Patella. Magallana*, in particular, strongly facilitated *Austrominius* in natural habitats, but not  
246 artificial habitats, where instead they supported native barnacles. Both natural and artificial  
247 rock substrata were typically colonised by native barnacles, which were occupied by  
248 comparatively fewer invasive *Austrominius*. This highlights the importance of novel substrata

249 (i.e. basibionts) as potential vectors for invasion into natural habitats where space-limitation  
250 and enhanced predation may mediate invasion success (Arenas et al. 2006).

251 Previous studies suggest complex decision-making processes undertaken by barnacles and  
252 other early-life history stages of marine taxa during settlement in response habitat features  
253 including surface roughness (e.g. Berntsson et al. 2004, Herbert & Hawkins 2006),  
254 biochemical signals (Dreanno et al. 2007), surface orientation, and other biological cues  
255 (Harrington et al. 2004, Hanlon et al. 2018). Selection of 'preferred' habitat at small spatial  
256 scales may therefore be less likely (James et al. 2019), with larval retention and recruitment  
257 patterns instead, determined by physical processes associated flow characteristics created by  
258 surface rugosity (Lim et al. 2020). Our results suggest a degree of selectivity for a specific  
259 basibiont is apparent between barnacle species that cannot be explained by this study, but  
260 might include surface environment chemistry (McManus et al. 2018), surface rugosity of the  
261 basibiont shell and surrounding rock, or the diversity of the surrounding community  
262 providing chemical cues (Huggett et al. 2005). Clearly, a suite of complex interactions  
263 between incoming organisms and the receiving environment may be at play, but additional  
264 work is required to disentangle potential drivers of these differences.

265 Invasive species can augment the receiving environment resulting in positive impacts on  
266 organisms in marine (Simberloff and Van Holle 1999), coastal (Demopoulos and Smith  
267 2010) and terrestrial environments (Tecco et al. 2006). For instance, Jordan et al. (2008)  
268 found that the invasive plants not only self-facilitated but they also had positive effects on  
269 other invasives through soil modification. We found that *Magallana* appeared to facilitate  
270 *Austrominius* particularly in natural habitats where biotic pressure is greater than artificial  
271 ones. The physical structure of the basibiont shell itself may increase attachment points  
272 increasing post-settlement stability (Gribben et al. 2011) and/or act as a refuge from  
273 predation for new recruits; its complexity restricting foraging efficiency, an effect shown

274 elsewhere for oysters (Grabowski and Powers 2004) and other taxa such as parasitoids (Gols  
275 et al. 2005), birds (Adams et al. 2008) and insects (Yanoviak et al. 2017). The surface  
276 complexity (rugosity) of shells and the reefs they form can alter boundary layer dynamics  
277 over the surface of the shell, creating turbulence that can entrain weakly-swimming (passive)  
278 early life-history stages over the shell's surface (Lim et al. 2020) that enhances recruitment  
279 success (Koehl and Hadfield 2010).

280 Natural intertidal rocky habitats are generally characterised by high taxonomic and  
281 functional richness (Darwin 1839; Firth et al. 2013) and space is often a limiting resource in  
282 these typically highly competitive environments (Worm and Karez 2002). On investigating  
283 the differential effects of native competitors and predators on *Magallana* across a range of  
284 environmental contexts, Ruesink (2007) found that environmental stress can increase  
285 competitive interaction strength reducing individual growth rates of the invasive oyster while  
286 facilitating its survival. We found that the additional substrate offered by *Magallana* shells,  
287 especially in natural habitats, may offer a refuge from competition pressure, thus facilitating  
288 invasive epibionts in this environment.

289 Here, we show how the invasion of natural habitats by the oyster *Magallana* can facilitate  
290 the invasive barnacle, *Austrominius modestus*, into a community as an epibiont. When  
291 *Magallana* is not present, recruitment of *Austrominius* is limited. This study was carried out  
292 in Britain where both invasive taxa are still relatively infrequent in natural rocky intertidal  
293 habitats (Gallagher et al. 2016) such that facilitation of invasion into natural shores perhaps  
294 remains limited. Coupled with the continued proliferation of artificial structures in the marine  
295 environment, and the increased likelihood of spillover of invasive species into surrounding  
296 natural habitats (Epstein and Smale 2018), an increase in 'novel habitat' for 'novel taxa' may  
297 be expected (Glasby and Connell 1999).

298 Given that once established, invasive species are notoriously difficult to eradicate (Mack  
299 and Lonsdale 2002) and the cost of invasion can be extremely high (Pimentel et al. 2005),  
300 understanding to what extent the occupation of space by native and non-native species, and  
301 subsequent potential to further accelerate invasion are needed. Our results further reinforce  
302 the body of evidence that reports artificial habitats as enablers of invasion. But importantly,  
303 they also reveal the importance of 'pioneer colonisers' in first occupying newly available free  
304 space, as well as their potential to increase invasion by providing habitat for species that  
305 ordinarily appears unsuitable. Worldwide, efforts to enhance biodiversity of artificial  
306 structures are on-going (see Morris et al. 2018 and O'Shaughnessy et al. 2020b for reviews),  
307 including the use of transplantation of ecosystem-engineer species to enhance biodiversity of  
308 ordinarily depauperate surfaces (e.g. Ferrario et al. 2015, Ng et al. 2015). To date, these  
309 efforts have received relatively little attention, but trials have indicated promising (e.g.  
310 Perkol-Finkel et al. 2012), but variable results (Strain et al. 2020). Whilst the use of habit-  
311 forming species for restoration efforts has been advocated and may well lead to positive  
312 biodiversity outcomes (e.g. Byers et al. 2006), care must also be taken advocating the use of  
313 invasive and non-native species, without full consideration of the wider environmental  
314 implications (see Sotka & Byers' (2019) criticism of Ramus et al. (2017)) which may yield  
315 unexpected results.

316

### 317 ***Conclusions***

318 The degree to which native habitat-forming species vs. invasive habitat-forming  
319 species either do or do not facilitate other native or non-native species is a rich area for  
320 investigation. There is growing evidence that positive interactions between native and  
321 invasive species are important determinants of their local distribution and abundance  
322 (Rodriguez, 2006; Bulleri et al. 2008; Northfield et al. 2018; Gribben et al 2020). Here we

323 show that these interactions may vary strongly with environmental context. It is possible that  
324 abiotic environmental filters may be more important for inhibiting the establishment of native  
325 taxa in disturbed environments, but that biological filters may be more important for  
326 inhibiting the establishment of invasive taxa in natural and undisturbed environments. The  
327 type (abiotic stress reduction or associational defence) and strength of facilitation may differ  
328 depending on the response variables considered and environmental context. Future research  
329 should consider responses of both native and invasive epibionts to native and invasive  
330 habitat-forming species across a range of physical and biological contexts. We suggest that  
331 particular attention should be given to the role of habitat-forming species in underpinning  
332 both facilitation and habitat cascades, with wider ecosystem effects. Experimental work is  
333 required to disentangle the processes underpinning these patterns.

334

335

### 336 **Data Storage**

337 Data will be made available through the Temperate Reef Base Portal.

338 <https://temperatereefbase.imas.utas.edu.au/static/landing.html>

339

### 340 **Declarations**

341 Acknowledgements – Thank you to Richard Ticehurst and many others for supported with  
342 fieldwork.

343 Funding - PEG was supported by the Australian Research Council Future Fellowships  
344 (FT140100322).

345 Author contributions – The idea was conceived by LF. Fieldwork was conducted by LD.

346 Statistics were performed by AMK. All authors contributed to the writing of the paper that  
347 was led by LF.

348

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582 **Figure Titles**

583 Figure 1. (a) Location of the six survey locations in southwest UK where pairs of natural and  
584 artificial sites were exposed to similar environmental conditions.

585

586 Figure 2. Predicted probability of presence in quadrats by the invasive oyster, *M. gigas*, the  
587 native limpet, *P. vulgata*, and invasive, *A. modestus* and native barnacles (on rock only, not  
588 as epibionts) in artificial and natural habitats. Letters over bars indicate same or different  
589 groupings between habitat type. Bars around the means represent 95% confidence intervals.

590

591 Figure 3. The effect of habitat type (natural, artificial) and substrate type (rock, invasive  
592 habitat-former (*Magallana*), native basibiont (*Patella*)) on invasive (*Austrominius*) and native  
593 barnacles (median, x,y,z).

594

595 Figure 4. (a) Predicted percentage of overall barnacle community that are invasive  
596 (*Austrominius*) on native (*Patella*, left) and invasive (*Magallana*, middle) basibionts and rock  
597 substrata (right) in artificial (grey shading) and natural (blue shading) habitats based on  
598 negative binomial fits. Shading indicates 95% Confidence Intervals. (b) Relative strength of  
599 facilitation of the total abundance of invasive barnacles (*Austrominius*) by native  
600 (*Patella*) and invasive (*Magallana*) basibionts between artificial (grey bars) and natural (blue  
601 bars) habitats. Letters over bars indicate same or different groupings between habitat type.

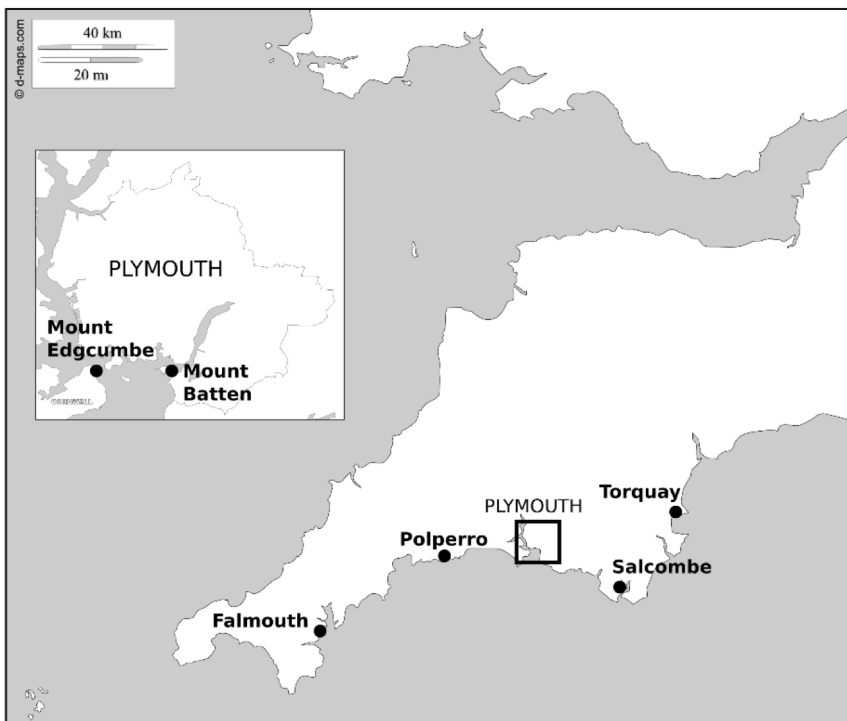


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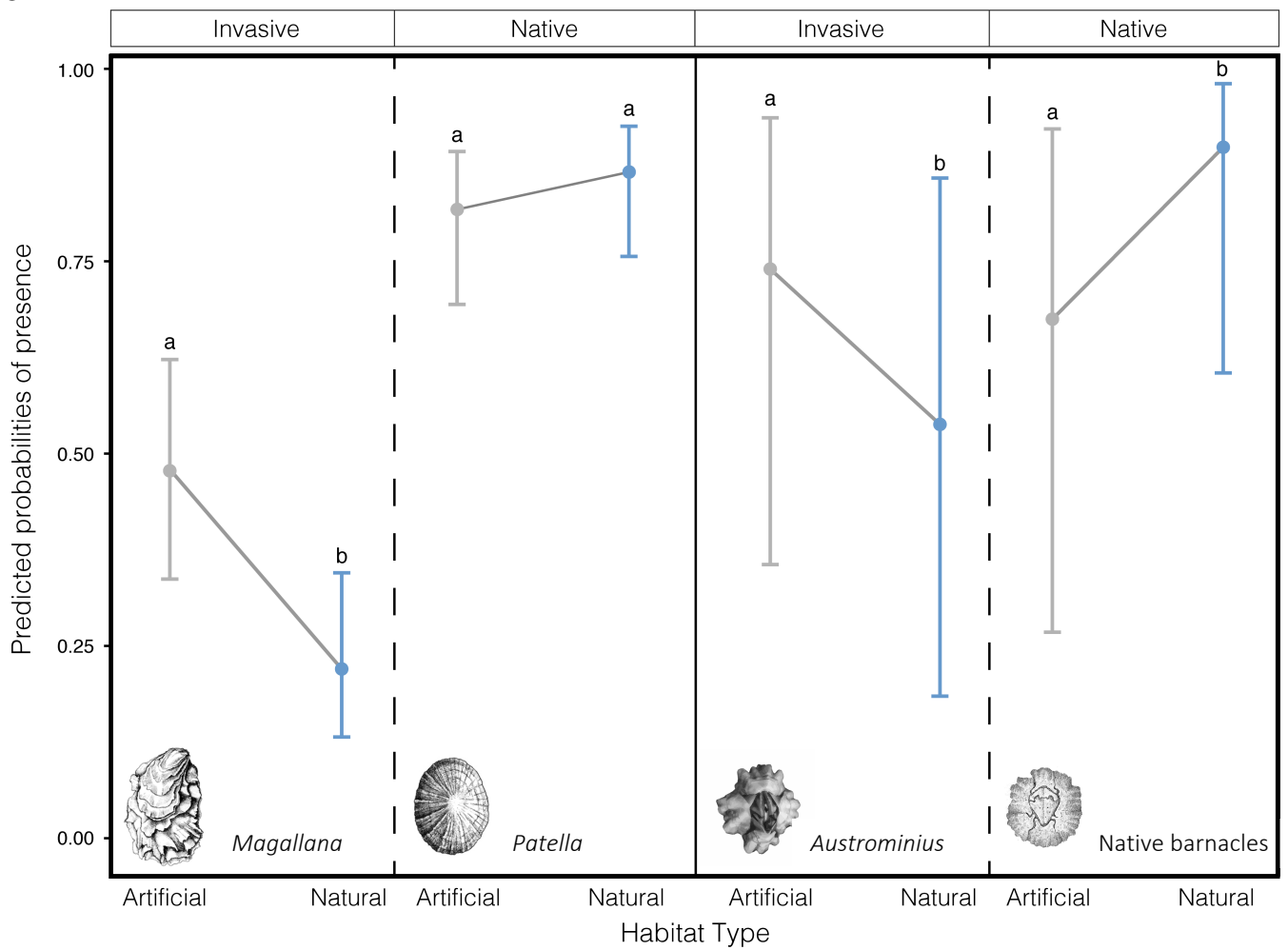


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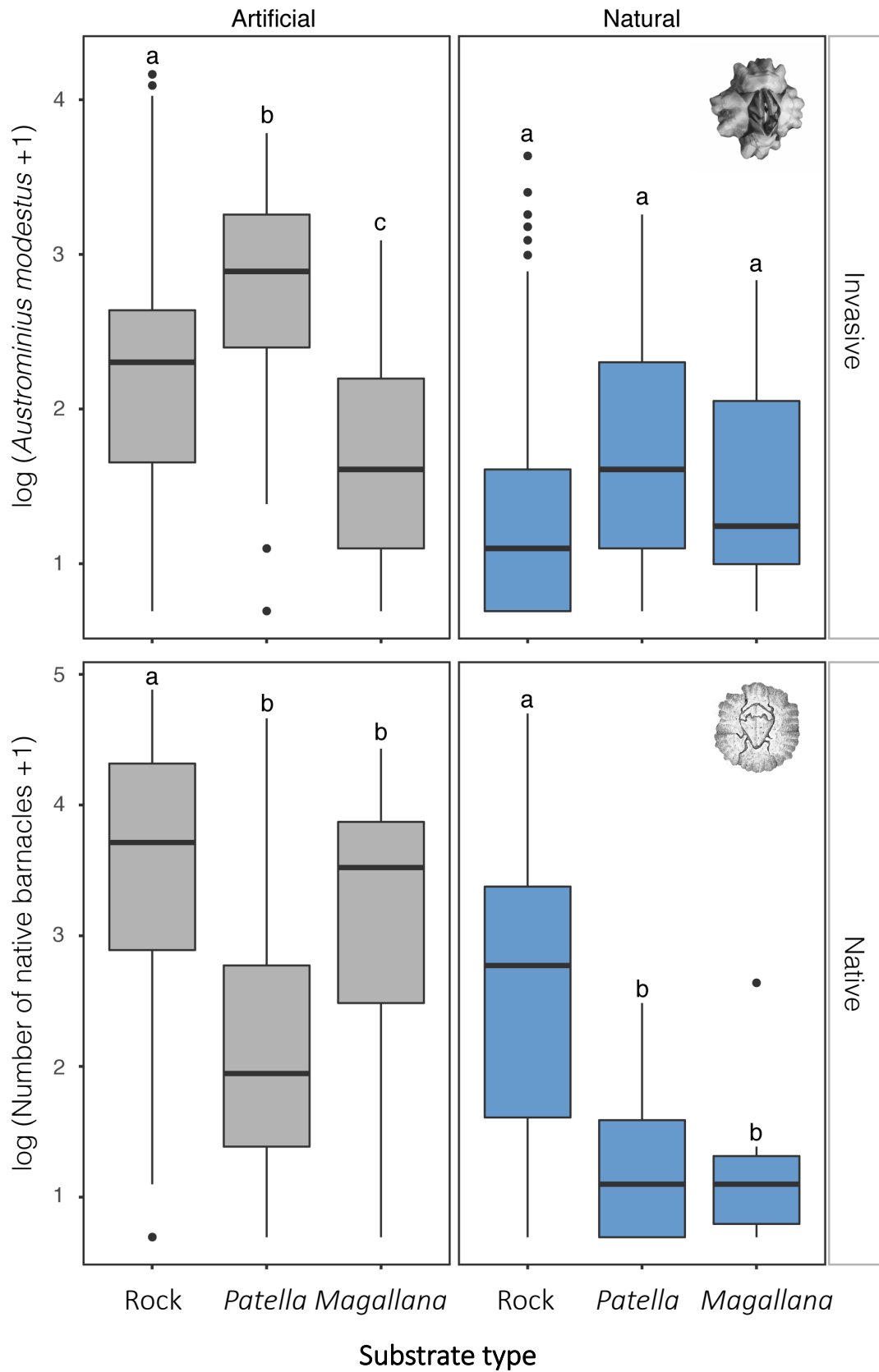


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