



## Core Community Persistence Despite Dynamic Spatiotemporal Responses in the Associated Bacterial Communities of Farmed Pacific Oysters

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1 Original research to Microbial Ecology

2 Core community persistence despite dynamic  
3 spatiotemporal responses in the associated bacterial  
4 communities of farmed Pacific oysters

5

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23 **Key words:** *Magallana gigas*; *Crassostrea gigas*; microbiome, host-bacteria, holobiont.

24

25 **Abstract**

26 A breakdown in host-bacteria relationships have been associated with the progression of a  
27 number of marine diseases and subsequent mortality events. For the Pacific oyster,  
28 *Crassostrea gigas*, Summer Mortality Syndrome (SMS) is one of the biggest constraints to  
29 growth of the sector and is set to expand into temperate systems as ocean temperatures rise.  
30 Currently, a lack of understanding of natural spatiotemporal dynamics of the host-bacteria  
31 relationship limits our ability to develop microbial-based monitoring approaches. Here, we  
32 characterised the associated bacterial community of *C. gigas*, at two Irish oyster farms,  
33 unaffected by SMS, over the course of a year. We found *C. gigas* harboured spatiotemporally  
34 variable bacterial communities that were distinct from bacterioplankton in surrounding  
35 seawater. Whilst the majority of bacteria-oyster associations were transient and highly  
36 variable, we observed clear patterns of stability in the form of a small core consisting of six  
37 persistent Amplicon Sequence Variants (ASVs). This core made up a disproportionately large  
38 contribution to sample abundance ( $34 \pm 0.14$  %), despite representing only 0.034% of species  
39 richness across the study, and have been associated with healthy oysters in other systems.  
40 Overall, our study demonstrates the consistent features of oyster bacterial communities  
41 across spatial and temporal scales and provides an ecologically meaningful baseline to track  
42 environmental change.  
43

## 44 Introduction

45 Bacterial communities associated with animals and plants play an important role in  
46 mediating processes at the individual host and wider community and ecosystem scales [1–5].  
47 In marine systems, the surfaces of host organisms are in direct contact with seawater,  
48 providing a constantly changing bacterial community [6]. As such, marine hosts often have  
49 thousands of bacteria associations that are extremely responsive across various spatial and  
50 temporal scales, which makes them challenging to understand [7]. Recent attempts to simplify  
51 this complexity have focussed around identifying signatures of stability through space and  
52 time [8–11]. Here, by identifying core stable taxa, it may be possible to define components of  
53 the community that are important for host function, whilst also facilitating comparisons across  
54 individuals, populations and ecological contexts [12, 13]. Such considerations are important  
55 for understanding and interpreting future disturbances and environmental changes [14, 15]  
56 and there is increasing interest in developing microbial indicators to assess coastal ecosystem  
57 health [16].

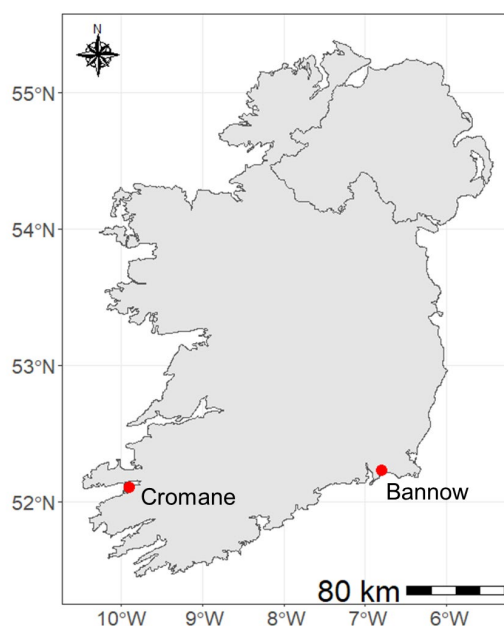
58 A range of stressors can disrupt host-bacterial relationships [10, 17–19], with wide-  
59 ranging implications for host performance, including enhanced susceptibility to pathogens  
60 [15]. Bivalve molluscs seem particularly vulnerable to stress-induced disease outbreaks,  
61 which often result in mass mortality events that can have serious and far-reaching ecological  
62 and economic ramifications [20, 21]. For example, Summer Mortality Syndrome (SMS) in the  
63 Pacific oyster, *Crassostrea gigas*, has become more common in recent decades and is an  
64 ever-increasing constraint to the expansion of the aquaculture sector [22, 23]. While the  
65 underlying mechanisms causing SMS are multifaceted and complex [24], the breakdown of  
66 the host-bacteria relationship has been frequently observed [23, 25–27]. However, microbial  
67 communities associated with oyster hosts are most often sampled when they are already in a  
68 state of dysbiosis, usually during a disease event [28]. This limits current ability to develop  
69 microbial-based monitoring approaches, as our understanding of natural seasonal dynamics  
70 (without periods of disease), are generally lacking (but see [29])

71 In the face of recent and projected ocean warming trends, a better understanding of  
72 host-bacteria relationships is even more pressing, given the increasing likelihood of disruption  
73 and detrimental host impacts [19, 27, 30, 31]. For *C. gigas*, warming can push previously safe  
74 areas into prevailing climates associated with SMS. Even in areas already affected, the  
75 additional stress burden imposed by more intense summer temperatures now elicits SMS with  
76 increasing frequency, intensity and without an obvious aetiological agent [27, 28, 32]. In the  
77 Northeast (NE) Atlantic, the Irish and Celtic Seas represent a transition zone for SMS (~ 19  
78 °C summer SST). Mortality events here are infrequent but risk increase dramatically with  
79 decreasing latitude and increasing temperatures [33]. Therefore, warming trends and  
80 associated mortality events may threaten the expansion of the industry over the coming  
81 decades [34]. With this in mind, we characterised the host-bacterial relationship at two *C.*  
82 *gigas* farms in the Irish/Celtic Seas over the course of a year. In doing so, we aimed to i)  
83 establish important baselines against which dysbiosis can be measured and ii) examine  
84 patterns of spatiotemporal variability in bacterial communities to elucidate possible drivers of  
85 structure and richness.

## 86 **Methods**

### 87 **Sampling Approach**

88 Sampling took place at two commercial oyster farms in Ireland (Figure 1) (Bannow Bay and  
89 Cromane) in spring (March/May), summer (June/July/August) and winter (December) 2018.  
90 Increased sampling frequency was conducted during summer to capture shifts in bacterial  
91 communities during periods of thermal stress and potential dysbiosis. During each sampling  
92 event, eight oysters were randomly taken from trestles at low shore height and three one litre  
93 replicates of seawater were collected in sterile Nalgene bottles. Oysters and seawater were  
94 frozen at – 20 °C until DNA extraction.



95

96 **Figure 1.** Locations of study sites for collection of seawater and Pacific oyster, *Crassostrea gigas*, samples in  
 97 southeast and southwest Ireland

98 After defrosting, each oyster was shucked into a 50 ml falcon tube, mixed with equal volume  
 99 (v:v) sterile artificial seawater and blended using a tissue homogeniser. Defrosted seawater  
 100 was concentrated by filtering through a 0.22 µm nitrocellulose filter. DNA was extracted from  
 101 one ml of oyster homogenate and whole seawater filters using Qiagen DNeasy Powersoil  
 102 extraction kits, following the manufacturers instructions. DNA was then weighed using a qubit  
 103 fluorimeter and re-suspended to 2 ng/µl.

104 Library preparation and sequencing of the V4 region of the 16S rDNA gene using primers  
 105 (515f - GTGCCAGCMGCCGCGGTAA + 806r - GGACTACHVGGGTWTCTAAT) was  
 106 conducted by StarSEQ (StarSEQ GmbH, Mainz, DE) following an optimised protocol of [35].  
 107 At least one negative PCR control was run on each plate and demonstrated runs were free  
 108 from contamination.

### 109 **Sequence processing**

110 All processing and analysis was conducted in the R statistical environment. Paired-end reads  
 111 were processed according to the BIOCONDUCTER workflow for microbiome data analysis  
 112 [36]. Sequences were trimmed and truncated using the “filterAndTrim” function in DADA2 with  
 113 the following parameters: truncLen, f = 240, r = 160; truncQ = 2; trimLeft, f = 20, r = 19, to

114 remove primers and low quality reads. Amplicon Sequence Variants (ASVs) were resolved  
115 using DADA2 [36]. Chimeras (0.97% of sequences) were removed using the  
116 “removeBimeraDenovo” function in DADA2. Sequence taxonomy was assigned using the  
117 RDP naïve Bayesian classifier against the SILVA release 132 database [37] using the  
118 “assignTaxonomy” function in DADA2. Sequence read counts, taxonomic assignments and  
119 metadata were assembled as an object in the r package “PHYLOSEQ” and was used in  
120 downstream analysis [38]. Samples containing < 10,000 reads, taxa contributing < 0.01% of  
121 the reads in the dataset and ASVs identified as mitochondria, chloroplast or Archaea were  
122 then removed from the PHYLOSEQ object. Sequence counts were then expressed as relative  
123 abundance (in proportion to the total sample count). Sequences are accessible through the  
124 EMBL database (accession no. PRJEB52444). ASV table and metadata are available at  
125 (<https://figshare.com/s/b36ed8e1872f496d437a>).

## 126 **Statistical Analysis**

127 After sequence processing three seawater samples had to be discarded from the dataset. Due  
128 to this, replication was too low for some of the interaction terms between Sample Type, Month  
129 and Season. As the focus of this study was to track the shifting oyster bacterial community  
130 through time, we made initial comparisons between oyster and seawater samples as a single  
131 dataset to determine overall differences between the two sample types. We then based  
132 subsequent analyses on differences between sites and months solely on the oyster samples.  
133 To account for differences in sequence depth between samples in alpha diversity estimates,  
134 the dataset was rarefied to the minimum sample depth (12430 reads), using the  
135 “rarefy\_even\_depth” function in PHYLOSEQ. Alpha diversity for each sample was estimated  
136 through the Chao1 index [39] implemented through the “estimate\_richness” function in  
137 PHYLOSEQ. The Chao1 index estimates ASV richness, and the standard error surrounding  
138 this estimate, based on the observed number of ASVs, the observed number of ASVs  
139 occurring only once, and the observed number of ASVs occurring only twice [39]. Alpha  
140 diversity was compared using a two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Model factors

141 consisted of Site (fixed factor; two levels: Bannow, Cromane) and Month (fixed factor; six  
142 levels: March, May, June, July, August, December). Differences in community structure were  
143 determined using PERMANOVA (Anderson, 2001) based on Bray-Curtis dissimilarity and  
144 implemented through the “Adonis” function in the package “VEGAN” [40]. This analysis was  
145 repeated across all taxonomic levels. *Post-hoc* pairwise comparisons were performed to  
146 determine where the differences in community structure lay (at  $p < 0.05$ ). Model design was  
147 the same as that for alpha diversity. Differences in multivariate dispersion between  
148 communities were examined using the “betadisper” function in “VEGAN”. A similarity of  
149 percentage (SIMPER) procedure was conducted to determine which taxa contributed the most  
150 to any observed dissimilarities.

151 We defined core taxa at the ASV level and used a compositional dataset. There is no  
152 consistent definition of a “core” in the literature with authors setting prevalence thresholds from  
153 50 – 100 %. Here, we used a prevalence threshold of 80 % (of the total dataset with all months  
154 and sites included).

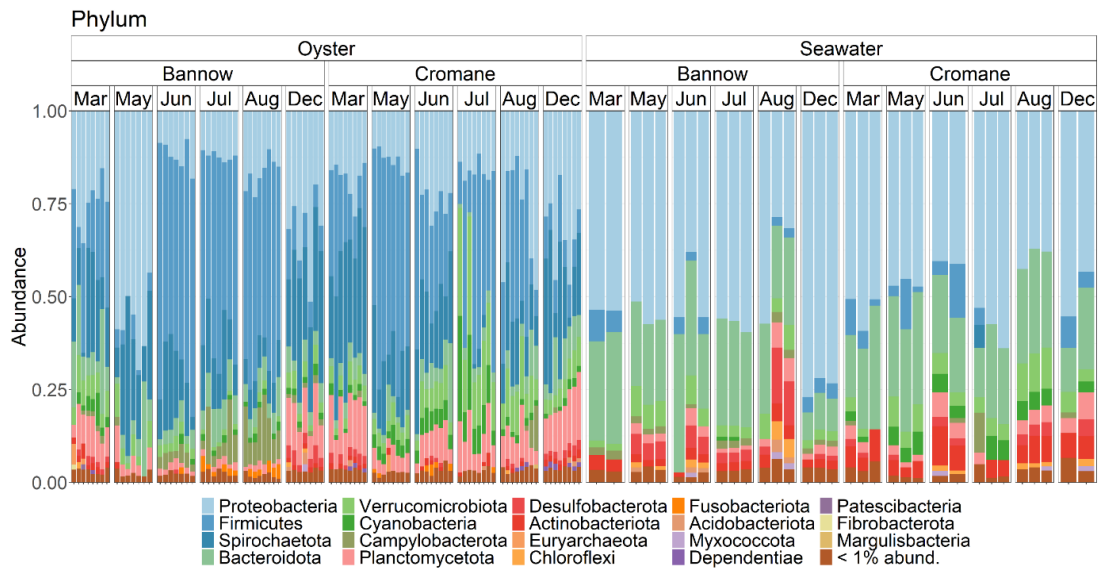
## 155 **Results**

### 156 **General Patterns**

157 In total, we sampled bacterial communities from 95 oysters and 33 water samples, which  
158 resulted in 4689972 paired end reads with an average coverage of 37519 reads per sample.  
159 After processing, we identified 17533 ASVs from 70 Phyla, 188 Classes, 342 Orders, 659  
160 Families and 1831 Genera. The most diverse phyla were Proteobacteria (aka  
161 Pseudomonadota) (5153 ASVs), Planctomycetota (2805 ASVs), Bacteroidota (2607 ASVs),  
162 Firmicutes (aka Bacillota) (1556 ASVs) and Verrucomicrobiota(1419 ASVs), which accounted  
163 for 76% of all ASVs recorded. There were key differences in the phyla dominating the relative  
164 abundances of the bacterial communities of oyster and seawater. Seawater samples were  
165 dominated by Proetobacteria (52%) and Bacteroidota (23.2%) whereas oyster samples were



166 dominated by Firmicutes (32%), Proteobacteria (22.5%) and Spirochaetota (16.8%) (Figure  
 167 2).



168  
 169 **Figure 2.** Relative abundance of bacterial phyla associated with the Pacific oyster, *Crassostrea gigas* and  
 170 bacterioplankton (seawater) from two oyster farms (Cromane and Bannow Bay) in Ireland. Samples were taken  
 171 over the course of one year (March – December 2018).

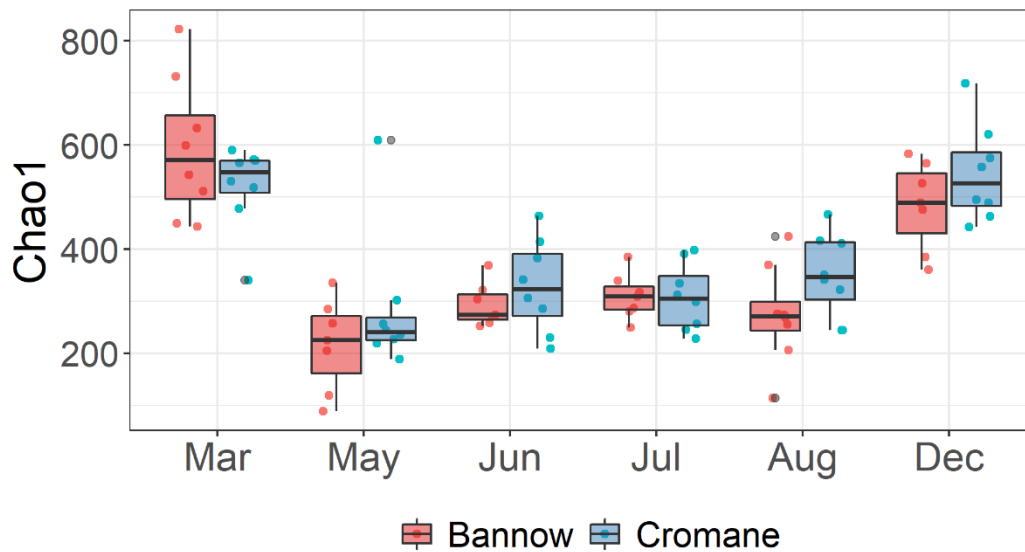
172 **Alpha Diversity**

173 Overall, alpha diversity (Chao1 index) ranged from  $377 \pm 15.4$  in oysters to  $413 \pm 9.5$  in  
 174 seawater but there was no significant difference between the two sample types ( $F_{(1, 123)} = 2.6$ ,  
 175  $p = 0.14$ ). When oysters were analysed separately, alpha diversity differed by Month but there  
 176 was no significant effect of Site or the interaction term (Table 1). *Post hoc* analysis showed  
 177 that March ( $561 \pm 27.9$ ) and December ( $519 \pm 24$ ) were significantly greater than all other  
 178 months (May -  $258 \pm 31$ , June -  $311 \pm 18$ , July -  $309 \pm 13$  and August -  $312 \pm 23$ ) but were  
 179 similar to one another (Figure 3). Alpha diversity also differed significantly by Month in  
 180 seawater samples ( $F_{(5,27)} = 3.27$ ,  $p = 0.02$ ). *Post hoc* analysis showed that the only significant  
 181 difference was observed between March and May (Figure S1).

182 **Table 1.** Results of univariate (ANOVA) for alpha diversity and multivariate community structure (PERMANOVA)  
 183 between Site, Month and their interaction.

	Alpha diversity (Chao1 index)			Multivariate structure (PERMANOVA)		
	df	F	p	df	Pseudo-F	p
Site	1	1.8	0.180	1	16.6	0.001
Month	5	30.2	<0.0001	5	8.1	0.001
Site*Month	5	1.6	0.17	5	7.5	0.001

185



186

187 **Figure 3.** Box plots representing alpha diversity (Chao1 index) for bacterial communities associated with the  
188 oyster *Crassostrea gigas* from two oyster farms in Ireland. Site locations can be seen in Figure 1.  
189

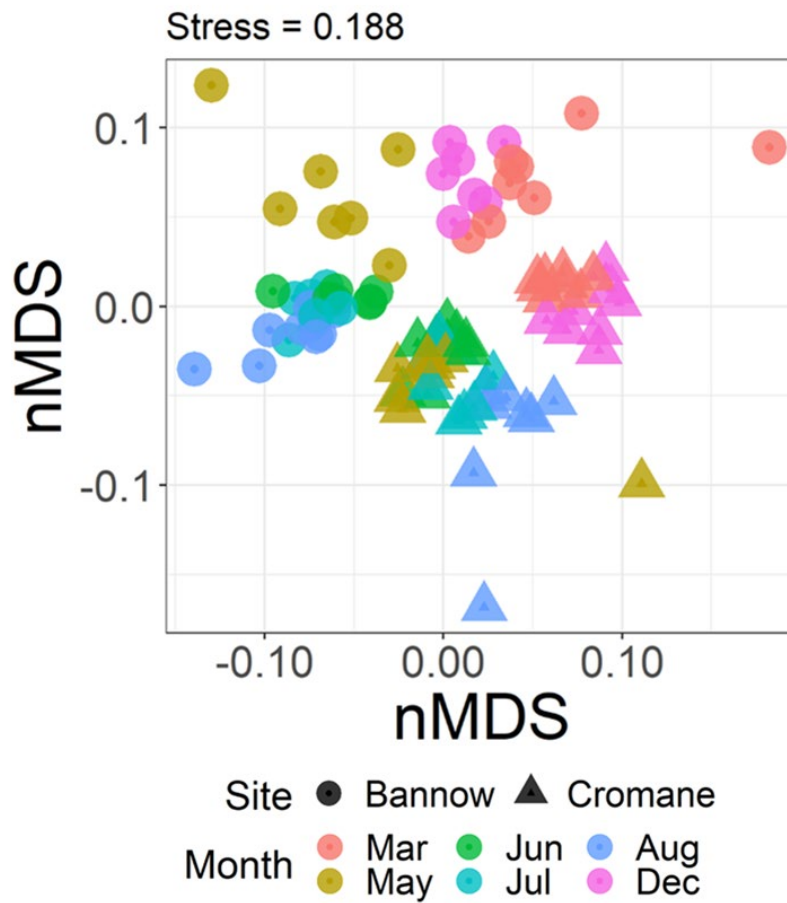
## 190 Shared ASVs

191 Out of the 17533 ASVs recorded across this study, 2014 ASVs (11.5%) were shared between  
192 seawater and oysters. The majority of ASVs were found in oysters, which hosted 12945 ASVs  
193 compared to 2574 ASVs recorded solely in seawater. Across the oyster samples, 2189 ASVs  
194 (15%) were shared between sites, and this was similar irrespective of the sampling month.  
195 Here, shared ASVs between sites ranged from 226 ASVs (7.6%) in August to 314 ASVs  
196 (12.8%) in June. A large component of the bacterial community was temporally very transient.  
197 Overall, only 275 ASVs (~ 2%) were found between all months and each month harboured a  
198 considerable unique portion of overall observed ASVs. This ranged from 1037 ASVs (7%) in  
199 June to 3625 ASVs (25.4 %) in March. In total, the number of ASVs that were only associated  
200 with a single sampling month accounted for 77.7% of all ASVs observed in oysters across the  
201 entire study.

## 202 Community Structure

203 Initial comparisons between oyster and seawater samples showed bacterial communities to  
204 be clearly differentiated (Figure S2), and further analysis focussed solely on oyster associated

205 communities. PERMDISP showed no significant differences in within-factor multivariate  
206 dispersion for either Month ( $F_{(5, 86)} = 2.24$ ,  $p = 0.06$ ) or Site ( $F_{(1, 90)} = 0.05$ ,  $p = 0.81$ ). Bacterial  
207 community structure exhibited a Month x Site interaction (Table 1) suggesting the magnitude  
208 of difference between sites was not consistent between months or vice versa. This pattern  
209 was evident when the dataset was aggregated to coarser taxonomic resolutions (Table S1).  
210 *Post hoc* analysis showed all pairwise comparisons within this interaction term to be  
211 significant. nMDS ordination showed a clear division between sites and differentiation between  
212 March and December and all other months. SIMPER analysis revealed that this was largely  
213 due to a shift in the most dominant taxa. In warmer months (May, June, July and August)  
214 ASVs belonging to the genus *Mycoplasma* were far more abundant, while AS1 from the family  
215 Spirochaetaceae was consistently present in far lower abundance (Table S2). Together, these  
216 ASVs accounted for up to 41% of observed dissimilarity between monthly comparisons. nMDS  
217 ordination also showed communities at Bannow in May to be more structurally dissimilar than  
218 those sampled in other warmer months (June, July and August), a pattern not observed at  
219 Cromane. SIMPER analysis revealed that this was largely driven by a dominance (~ 45 %) of  
220 ASV-7 from the genus *Pseudomonas* at Bannow during May.



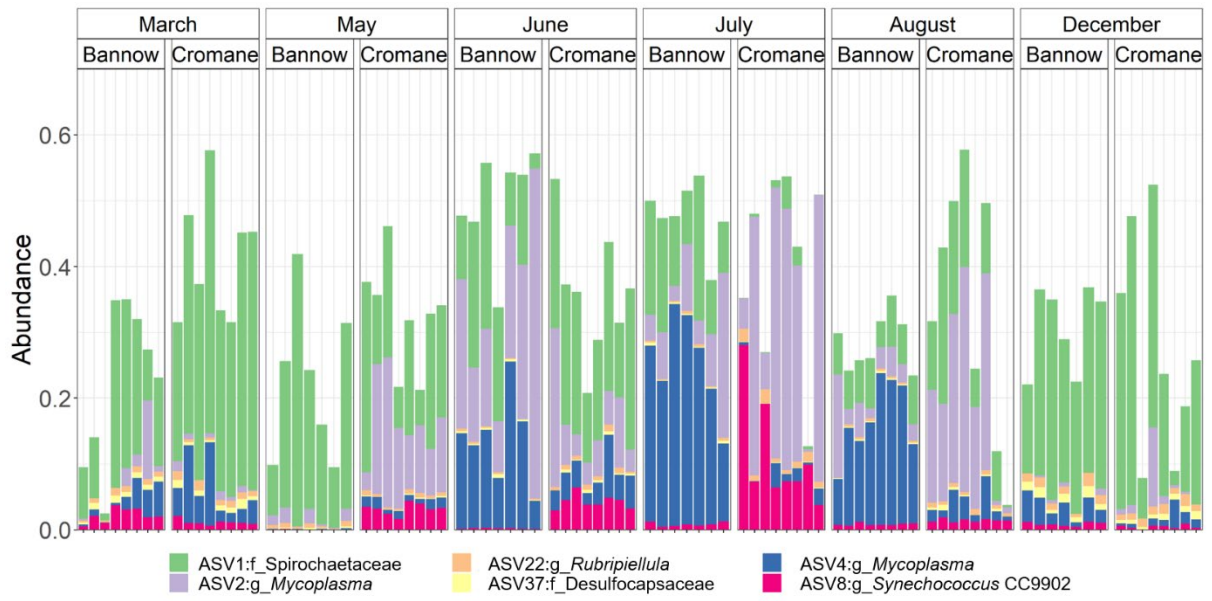
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222 **Figure 4.** nMDS plots depicting the structure of bacterial communities associated with the Pacific oyster,  
 223 *Crassostrea gigas* from oyster farms in Ireland. Data are based on Bray-Curtis similarity between untransformed  
 224 relative abundance data.

225

## 226 Core community

227 We observed six ASVs that occurred in at least 80% of oyster samples: ASV1 (Family –  
 228 Spirochaeyaceae), ASV2 & ASV4 (Genus - *Mycoplasma*), ASV22 (Genus - *Rubripirella*) ASV  
 229 37 (Family - Desulfocapsaceae) and ASV8 (Genus - *Synechococcus*) (Figure 5). Together, this  
 230 'core' contributed  $34 \pm 0.14$  % to overall sample abundance, despite representing only 0.034  
 231 % of overall bacterial diversity found in oyster samples.



232

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235

**Figure 5.** Relative abundance of the core bacteria community (defined at taxa present in > 80% of samples at a relative abundance > 0.1%) associated with the Pacific oyster, *Crassostrea gigas*. Abundance is expressed as proportion of entire sample.

## 236 Discussion

237 The host-bacteria relationship is important for the healthy functioning of benthic  
238 organisms, but understanding the complex and dynamic nature of microbial communities  
239 remains challenging. For the Pacific oyster, *Crassostrea gigas*, such understandings are  
240 crucial given this species' vulnerability to disease outbreaks and subsequent dysbiosis of this  
241 relationship. Here, we characterised the associated bacterial communities at two Irish, *C.*  
242 *gigas* farms, over the course of a year. We found *C. gigas* harboured spatiotemporally variable  
243 bacterial communities that were distinct from bacterioplankton in surrounding seawater.  
244 However, despite high variation, we observed clear patterns of stability in the form of a small  
245 core component that was persistent across space and time.

### 246 *Spatial structuring*

247 We found clear structuring between sites that was evident in every sampling period.  
248 This is consistent with the spatial structuring observed in *C. gigas* [29] and Sydney Rock  
249 Oyster, *Saccostrea glomerata* [41] in Australian farms and the eastern oyster, *Crassostrea*  
250 *virginica*, across the east coast of the USA [42]. Whilst we do not have the necessary  
251 environmental data to examine potential underlying mechanisms, a range of processes  
252 operating over the geographic scale covered here (i.e. ~ 400 km) may be important drivers of  
253 variability. These include deterministic factors such as temperature [43], pH [19], nutrient loads  
254 [44] and sediment characteristics [45] or neutral processes (e.g. isolation) that facilitate  
255 ecological drift [46]. The clear structuring between sites is in contrast to the high within-site  
256 variability and small (albeit significant) site level differences observed between 'wild' *C. gigas*  
257 populations in the north and south Wadden Sea [47]. Greater similarity open coast "wild"  
258 Wadden Sea populations, compared to our estuarine sites, may be related to greater  
259 connectivity, homogenising any selection pressures or drift at that spatial scale. Future studies  
260 coupling high resolution *in situ* environmental data with microbial community structure are  
261 needed to better understand mechanistic drivers of pattern.

## 262 *Temporal structuring*

263           The structure of bacterial communities associated with *C. gigas* varied markedly  
264 across sampling periods. In particular, communities sampled in the cooler months (March and  
265 December) were distinct and harboured greater diversity compared with those in the warmer  
266 months (May, June, July and August). Patterns in alpha diversity mirrored the prevailing  
267 patterns of the bacterioplankton (seawater), where greater mixing of the water column and  
268 elevated coastal run off may elevate diversity in winter, as has been recorded in many  
269 temperate seas [48–51]. The clear structuring between warm and cool months is similar to  
270 that reported in the oysters, *C. virginica* [52] and *S. glomerata* [41]. A large proportion of  
271 variation between months was consistently driven by ASV4 (genus - *Mycoplasma*) and ASV1  
272 (family - *Spirochaetaceae*) that were also members of the core component (see below). These  
273 taxa displayed clear seasonal dynamics with ASV4 overrepresented in warmer months and  
274 ASV1 in cooler months. Differences between months was also driven by a transient  
275 component of bacterial communities that was unique to any given sampling month. It is likely  
276 that temporal structuring is driven by both stochastic effects associated with passively  
277 acquiring ASVs from a dynamic and shifting planktonic community, as well as deterministic  
278 processes imposed by the host on resident/core taxa.

## 279 *Core component*

280           Despite clear differences between site and sampling month, there was a small  
281 temporally and spatially stable 'core', which contributed disproportionately to overall sample  
282 abundance. Many of these core taxa have also been observed in *C. gigas* from other systems  
283 [29, 47, 53]. For example, taxa from the Spirochaetaceae family were found across six  
284 estuaries spanning ~ 500km along Australia's east coast and the genera's *Mycoplasma* and  
285 *Synechococcus* were consistently found across 12 sites in Port Stevens estuary [28, 29].  
286 Moreover, they have also been observed in other oyster species around the world [41, 44, 52,  
287 54, 55] and may, therefore, represent part of a consistent core component for oysters  
288 generally. Core taxa are hypothesised to be associated with a "healthy" microbiome and may

289 be critically important to the host [9, 11]. Whilst the role they play for function of the host  
290 remains largely unknown, they are consistently associated with healthy (when compared to  
291 diseased) individuals. Lasa et al. (2019) [26] compared healthy *C. gigas* to those symptomatic  
292 with SMS during mortality events in populations across Europe. They found taxa within our  
293 persistent core (*Mycoplasma*, *Synechococcus* and Spirochaetaceae) to dominate healthy  
294 (non-infected) individuals, suggesting a role in oyster health and fitness. Similarly, a decrease  
295 in *Mycoplasma* has been associated with infection of the protozoan, *Martelia sydneyi*, in the  
296 Sydney rock oyster, *S. glomerata* [56] and a reduction in the wider class Mollicutes in eastern  
297 oysters, *C. virginica* infected with the avleolate, *Perkinsus marinus* [55]. However, further  
298 studies incorporating other hosts and a greater understanding of the functional profiles of  
299 these core taxa is required before the ubiquity and utility of this core can be determined.

### 300 *Conclusion*

301 In summary, we identified stable and variable features of the host-bacteria relationship  
302 of Pacific oysters, which with their extensive introduced distribution (> 50 countries) and  
303 commercial dominance in many regions, are perhaps the world's most globalised bivalve.  
304 Microbial communities are increasingly recognised for their role in mediating host resilience to  
305 environmental perturbations and there is increasing interest in developing microbial indicators  
306 to assess ecosystem health. Importantly, no mortalities associated with SMS were reported  
307 by farms during the study, which means these communities represent "healthy" and "normal"  
308 baselines. This represents a crucial first step towards identification of microbial indicators to  
309 assess the health of oyster farms. Future studies may build upon this and document how the  
310 breakdown of this relationship may impact host condition. This may lead to robust microbial  
311 indicators in response to a range of climatic and local stressors.

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319 **Author Contribution**

320 NGK and SKM conceived the designed the study. JT conducted all laboratory work. RB and  
321 AA conducted all fieldwork. NGK lead the manuscript preparation and all authors contributed  
322 equally to subsequent edits. All authors read and approved the final manuscript

323 **Data Accessibility**

324 Sequences are accessible through the EMBL database (accession no. PRJEB52444). ASV  
325 table and metadata are available at (<https://figshare.com/s/b36ed8e1872f496d437a>)

326 **Statements and Declarations**

327 **Conflict of interest** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

328 **Ethical Declaration** No approval of research ethics committees was required to accomplish  
329 the goals of this study.

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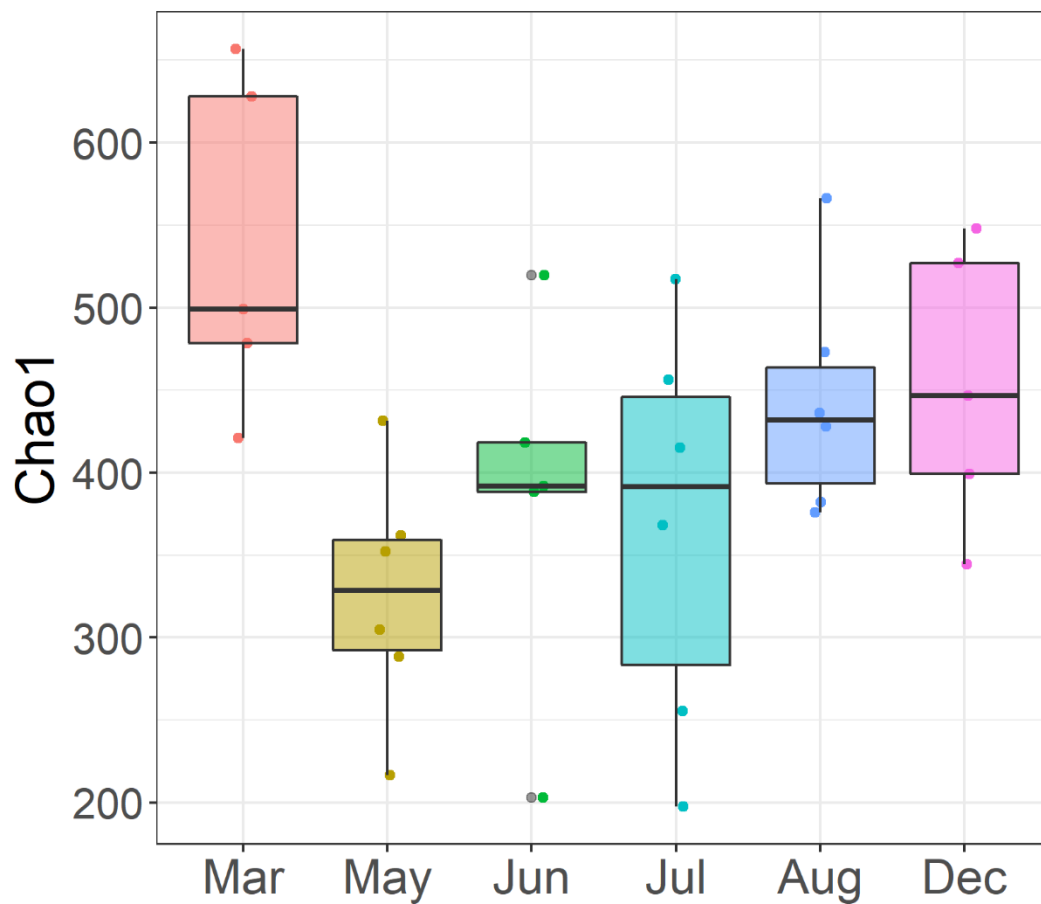
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486 **Supplementary Information**

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489 **Figure S1.** Box plots representing alpha diversity (Chao1 index) for bacterial communities of bacterioplankton  
490 from two *Crassostrea gigas* farms in Ireland. Site locations can be seen in Figure 1.

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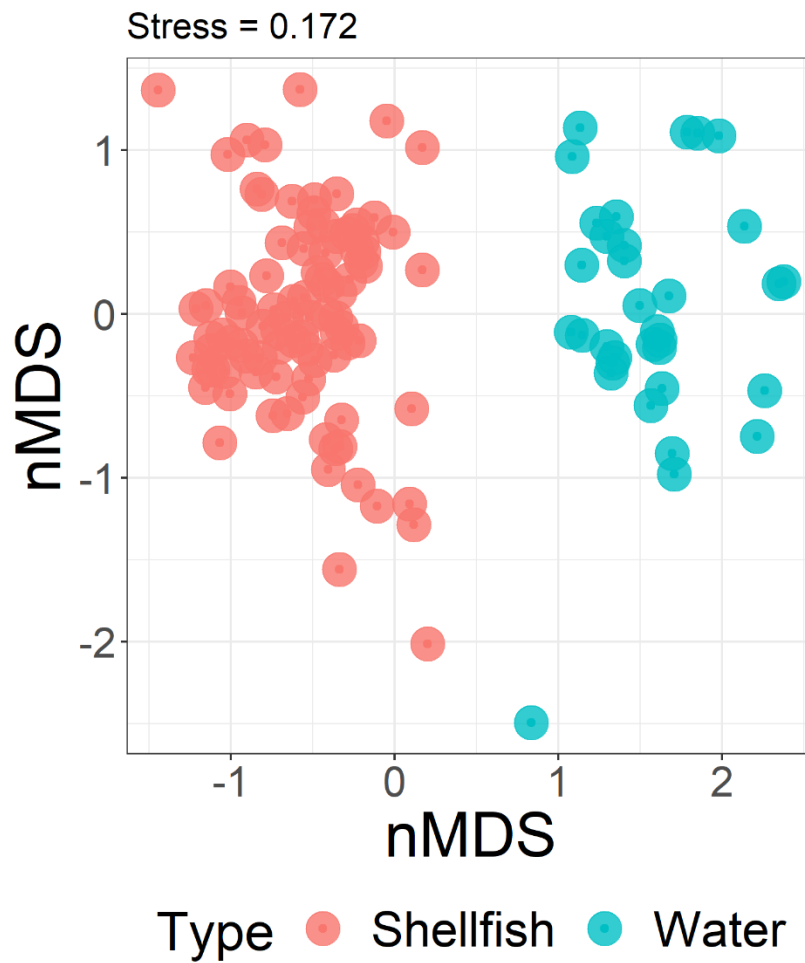
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499 **Figure S2.** nMDS plots depicting Bray-Curtis dissimilarity between bacterial communities associated with the  
 500 Pacific oyster, *Crassostrea gigas* and bacterioplankton. Sampling locations can be seen in Figure 1.

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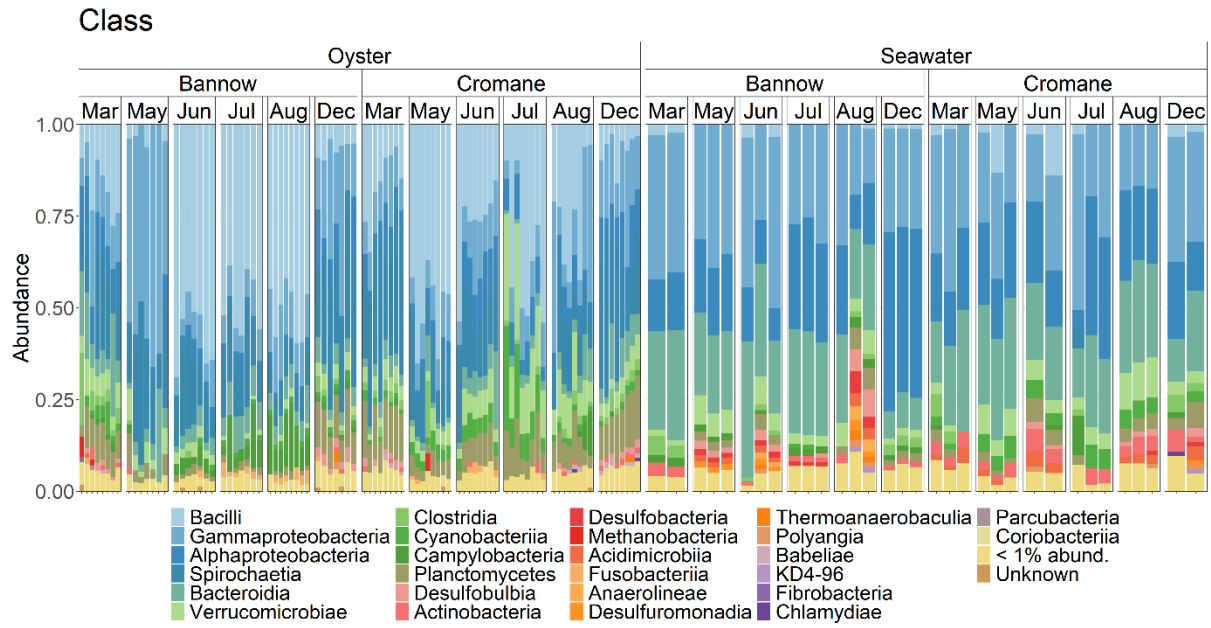
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513 **Figure S3.** Relative abundance of bacterial classes associated with the Pacific oyster, *Crassostrea gigas* and  
 514 bacterioplankton (seawater) from two oyster farms (Cromane and Bannow Bay) in Ireland. Samples were taken  
 515 over the course of one year (March – December 2018). Locations of oyster farms can be seen in Figure 1.

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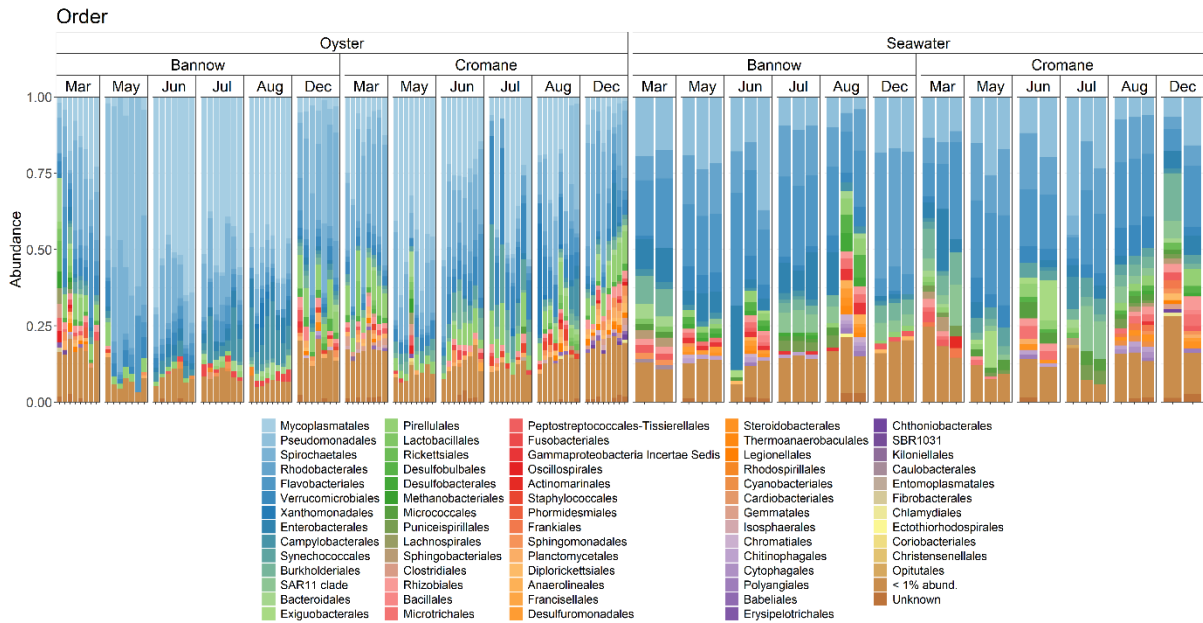
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529 **Figure S4.** Relative abundance of bacterial orders associated with the Pacific oyster, *Crassostrea gigas* and  
 530 bacterioplankton (seawater) from two oyster farms (Cromane and Bannow Bay) in Ireland. Samples were taken  
 531 over the course of one year (March – December 2018). Locations of oyster farms can be seen in Figure 1.

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554 **Table S1.** Results of multivariate community structure (PERMANOVA) between Sites and Sampling months in the  
 555 Pacific oyster *Crassostrea gigas*. Analysis is based on Bray-Curtis dissimilarity and was performed on data  
 556 agglomerated back to the taxonomic ranks of class, order and family.

	df	Phylum		Class		Order		Family	
		Pseudo-F	p	Pseudo-F	p	Pseudo-F	p	Pseudo-F	p
Site	1	15.6	<0.001	15.6	<0.001	16.2	<0.001	15.0	<0.001
Month	5	19.4	<0.001	17.9	<0.001	16.2	<0.001	15.8	<0.001
Site*Month	5	17.7	<0.001	14.3	<0.001	11.9	<0.001	11.8	<0.001

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558 **Table S2.** SIMPER analysis on significant pairwise comparisons identified by PERMANOVA analysis. Presented  
 559 taxa represent those that contributed to 50% of observed dissimilarity between comparisons. Letter represents  
 560 lowest resolved taxonomic rank C = Class, F = Family, G = Genus

Contrast	average	sd	ratio	ava	avb	cumsum	p	best_hit
<b>December vs June</b>								
	0.15	0.09	1.73	0.05	0.34	0.23	0.01	ASV2:g__ <i>Mycoplasma</i>
	0.07	0.04	1.52	0.26	0.17	0.34	0.37	ASV1:f__ <i>Spirochaetaceae</i>
	0.04	0.04	0.98	0.00	0.07	0.39	0.91	ASV5:f__ <i>Mycoplasmataceae</i>
	0.03	0.05	0.56	0.06	0.01	0.44	0.04	ASV27:g__ <i>Psychrobacter</i>
	0.01	0.02	0.61	0.03	0.02	0.46	0.04	ASV67:f__ <i>Rhodobacteraceae</i>
	0.01	0.01	1.33	0.01	0.02	0.48	0.76	ASV8:g__ <i>Synechococcus</i> CC9902
	0.01	0.01	0.75	0.01	0.02	0.50	0.16	ASV26:g__ <i>Polynucleobacter</i>
<b>December vs July</b>								
	0.18	0.09	1.99	0.05	0.39	0.24	0.01	ASV2:g__ <i>Mycoplasma</i>
	0.10	0.06	1.69	0.26	0.08	0.38	0.01	ASV1:f__ <i>Spirochaetaceae</i>
	0.04	0.04	0.95	0.00	0.08	0.43	0.01	ASV20:g__ <i>Roseibacillus</i>
	0.03	0.06	0.53	0.06	0.00	0.47	0.03	ASV27:g__ <i>Psychrobacter</i>
<b>December vs August</b>								
	0.13	0.07	2.01	0.05	0.30	0.19	0.02	ASV2:g__ <i>Mycoplasma</i>
	0.08	0.05	1.71	0.26	0.11	0.30	0.01	ASV1:f__ <i>Spirochaetaceae</i>
	0.03	0.04	0.77	0.00	0.06	0.35	1.00	ASV5:f__ <i>Mycoplasmataceae</i>
	0.03	0.05	0.54	0.06	0.01	0.39	0.05	ASV27:g__ <i>Psychrobacter</i>
	0.02	0.04	0.38	0.00	0.03	0.41	0.01	ASV47:g__ <i>Stenotrophomonas</i>
	0.01	0.02	0.84	0.00	0.03	0.43	0.01	ASV74:g__ <i>Persicirhabdus</i>
	0.01	0.02	0.62	0.03	0.01	0.45	0.01	ASV67:f__ <i>Rhodobacteraceae</i>
	0.01	0.02	0.70	0.01	0.02	0.47	0.01	ASV66:g__ <i>Vibrio</i>
	0.01	0.02	0.76	0.00	0.03	0.49	0.07	ASV24:lekithochrous
<b>December vs March</b>								
	0.07	0.05	1.39	0.26	0.24	0.13	0.28	ASV1:f__ <i>Spirochaetaceae</i>
	0.03	0.04	0.98	0.00	0.07	0.20	0.91	ASV5:f__ <i>Mycoplasmataceae</i>
	0.03	0.05	0.69	0.06	0.03	0.27	0.01	ASV27:g__ <i>Psychrobacter</i>
	0.03	0.02	1.06	0.05	0.07	0.32	1.00	ASV2:g__ <i>Mycoplasma</i>
	0.01	0.02	0.61	0.03	0.01	0.34	0.01	ASV67:f__ <i>Rhodobacteraceae</i>
	0.01	0.01	0.72	0.02	0.00	0.36	0.01	ASV56:g__ <i>Halomonas</i>
	0.01	0.02	0.31	0.01	0.00	0.37	0.42	ASV66:g__ <i>Vibrio</i>
	0.01	0.01	1.08	0.01	0.01	0.38	0.83	ASV26:g__ <i>Polynucleobacter</i>

0.01	0.02	0.32	0.00	0.01	0.39	0.28	ASV63:g__ <i>Polaribacter</i>
0.01	0.00	1.25	0.01	0.02	0.40	1.00	ASV8:g__ <i>Synechococcus</i> CC9902
0.01	0.01	0.39	0.00	0.01	0.41	0.22	ASV72:g__ <i>Wolbachia</i>
0.01	0.00	1.26	0.01	0.01	0.42	0.02	ASV201:f__ <i>algae</i>
0.00	0.00	1.21	0.02	0.02	0.43	0.98	ASV73:g__ <i>Blastopirellula</i>
0.00	0.01	0.35	0.00	0.01	0.44	0.19	ASV111:g__ <i>Streptococcus</i>
0.00	0.00	1.35	0.01	0.01	0.45	0.01	ASV328:f__ <i>Gemmataceae</i>
0.00	0.01	0.64	0.01	0.00	0.46	0.02	ASV128:g__ <i>Neptunomonas</i>
0.00	0.00	1.24	0.02	0.01	0.47	0.42	ASV37:f__ <i>Desulfocapsaceae</i>
0.00	0.00	1.32	0.02	0.02	0.47	0.97	ASV123:f__ <i>Pirellulaceae</i>
0.00	0.00	1.39	0.01	0.01	0.48	0.84	ASV244:f__DEV007
0.00	0.00	1.31	0.02	0.01	0.48	0.81	ASV22:g__ <i>Rubripirellula</i>
0.00	0.01	0.57	0.00	0.01	0.49	0.09	ASV380:f__ <i>Flavobacteriaceae</i>
0.00	0.00	1.36	0.01	0.01	0.50	0.08	ASV1663:g__ <i>Legionella</i>

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#### December vs May

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0.11	0.12	0.92	0.00	0.21	0.16	0.01	ASV7:g__ <i>Pseudomonas</i>
0.08	0.08	0.97	0.00	0.16	0.28	0.01	ASV5:f__ <i>Mycoplasmataceae</i>
0.07	0.05	1.50	0.26	0.19	0.39	0.21	ASV1:f__ <i>Spirochaetaceae</i>
0.05	0.04	1.18	0.05	0.11	0.46	1.00	ASV2:g__ <i>Mycoplasma</i>

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#### June vs July

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0.10	0.07	1.42	0.34	0.39	0.20	0.50	ASV2:g__ <i>Mycoplasma</i>
0.06	0.04	1.61	0.17	0.08	0.32	0.77	ASV1:f__ <i>Spirochaetaceae</i>
0.04	0.04	0.96	0.01	0.08	0.39	0.01	ASV20:g__ <i>Roseibacillus</i>
0.04	0.04	0.99	0.07	0.02	0.47	0.86	ASV5:f__ <i>Mycoplasmataceae</i>

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#### June vs August

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0.09	0.06	1.46	0.34	0.30	0.18	0.96	ASV2:g__ <i>Mycoplasma</i>
0.04	0.03	1.56	0.17	0.11	0.26	1.00	ASV1:f__ <i>Spirochaetaceae</i>
0.04	0.04	1.14	0.07	0.06	0.34	0.73	ASV5:f__ <i>Mycoplasmataceae</i>
0.02	0.04	0.38	0.00	0.03	0.37	0.02	ASV47:g__ <i>Stenotrophomonas</i>
0.01	0.01	0.94	0.01	0.03	0.40	0.01	ASV74:g__ <i>Persicirhabdus</i>
0.01	0.02	0.78	0.00	0.03	0.43	0.04	ASV24:f__ <i>Iekithochrous</i>
0.01	0.03	0.38	0.00	0.02	0.45	0.06	ASV19:g__ <i>Endozoicomonas</i>
0.01	0.01	1.81	0.02	0.01	0.47	0.69	ASV8:g__ <i>Synechococcus</i> CC9902
0.01	0.01	0.92	0.01	0.02	0.49	0.01	ASV44:f__ <i>Helicobacteraceae</i>

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#### June vs March

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0.14	0.09	1.60	0.34	0.07	0.23	0.01	ASV2:g__ <i>Mycoplasma</i>
0.06	0.04	1.49	0.17	0.24	0.34	0.52	ASV1:f__ <i>Spirochaetaceae</i>
0.04	0.03	1.19	0.07	0.07	0.41	0.83	ASV5:f__ <i>Mycoplasmataceae</i>
0.02	0.01	1.08	0.01	0.03	0.43	0.68	ASV27:g__ <i>Psychrobacter</i>
0.01	0.02	0.73	0.02	0.01	0.45	0.09	ASV26:g__ <i>Polynucleobacter</i>
0.01	0.01	1.66	0.02	0.02	0.47	0.70	ASV8:g__ <i>Synechococcus</i> CC9902
0.01	0.00	1.60	0.01	0.02	0.48	0.05	ASV73:g__ <i>Blastopirellula</i>
0.01	0.02	0.39	0.01	0.01	0.49	0.12	ASV63:g__ <i>Polaribacter</i>

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#### June vs May

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0.12	0.08	1.50	0.34	0.11	0.21	0.04	ASV2:g__ <i>Mycoplasma</i>
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0.11	0.12	0.92	0.00	0.21	0.39	0.01	ASV7:g_ <i>Pseudomonas</i>
<b>July vs August</b>							
0.10	0.07	1.38	0.39	0.30	0.18	0.69	ASV2:g_ <i>Mycoplasma</i>
0.04	0.03	1.53	0.08	0.11	0.25	1.00	ASV1:f_ <i>Spirochaetaceae</i>
0.04	0.04	0.99	0.08	0.01	0.33	0.01	ASV20:g_ <i>Roseibacillus</i>
0.03	0.04	0.82	0.02	0.06	0.39	0.86	ASV5:f_ <i>Mycoplasmataceae</i>
0.03	0.04	0.76	0.06	0.01	0.44	0.01	ASV8:g_ <i>Synechococcus</i> CC9902
0.02	0.02	0.88	0.02	0.03	0.47	0.01	ASV24: <i>lekithochrous</i>
<b>July vs March</b>							
0.17	0.08	2.00	0.39	0.07	0.24	0.01	ASV2:g_ <i>Mycoplasma</i>
0.09	0.06	1.61	0.08	0.24	0.37	0.01	ASV1:f_ <i>Spirochaetaceae</i>
0.04	0.04	0.96	0.08	0.00	0.42	0.01	ASV20:g_ <i>Roseibacillus</i>
0.04	0.04	1.00	0.02	0.07	0.47	0.87	ASV5:f_ <i>Mycoplasmataceae</i>
<b>July vs May</b>							
0.16	0.08	1.96	0.39	0.11	0.22	0.01	ASV2:g_ <i>Mycoplasma</i>
0.11	0.11	0.93	0.01	0.21	0.37	0.01	ASV7:g_ <i>Pseudomonas</i>
0.08	0.08	1.00	0.02	0.16	0.48	0.01	ASV5:f_ <i>Mycoplasmataceae</i>
<b>August vs March</b>							
0.12	0.06	1.94	0.30	0.07	0.18	0.03	ASV2:g_ <i>Mycoplasma</i>
0.08	0.05	1.56	0.11	0.24	0.30	0.02	ASV1:f_ <i>Spirochaetaceae</i>
0.04	0.04	1.14	0.06	0.07	0.36	0.80	ASV5:f_ <i>Mycoplasmataceae</i>
0.02	0.04	0.38	0.03	0.00	0.39	0.01	ASV47:g_ <i>Stenotrophomonas</i>
0.01	0.01	1.07	0.01	0.03	0.41	0.65	ASV27:g_ <i>Psychrobacter</i>
0.01	0.02	0.84	0.03	0.00	0.43	0.01	ASV74:g_ <i>Persicirhabdus</i>
0.01	0.02	0.76	0.03	0.00	0.45	0.04	ASV24: <i>lekithochrous</i>
0.01	0.03	0.39	0.02	0.00	0.47	0.02	ASV19:g_ <i>Endozoicomonas</i>
0.01	0.01	0.79	0.02	0.00	0.48	0.01	ASV44:f_ <i>Helicobacteraceae</i>
0.01	0.01	1.10	0.02	0.00	0.49	0.27	ASV66:g_ <i>Vibrio</i>
<b>August vs May</b>							
0.11	0.06	1.72	0.30	0.11	0.16	0.34	ASV2:g_ <i>Mycoplasma</i>
0.11	0.12	0.91	0.00	0.21	0.32	0.01	ASV7:g_ <i>Pseudomonas</i>
0.08	0.07	1.15	0.06	0.16	0.44	0.01	ASV5:f_ <i>Mycoplasmataceae</i>
<b>March vs May</b>							
0.11	0.12	0.92	0.00	0.21	0.17	0.01	ASV7:g_ <i>Pseudomonas</i>
0.08	0.06	1.22	0.07	0.16	0.30	0.01	ASV5:f_ <i>Mycoplasmataceae</i>
0.07	0.05	1.45	0.24	0.19	0.41	0.29	ASV1:f_ <i>Spirochaetaceae</i>
0.05	0.04	1.29	0.07	0.11	0.48	1.00	ASV2:g_ <i>Mycoplasma</i>
<b>Bannow vs Cromane</b>							
0.11	0.08	1.38	0.25	0.18	0.17	0.01	ASV2:g_ <i>Mycoplasma</i>
0.06	0.05	1.37	0.17	0.18	0.27	0.77	ASV1:f_ <i>Spirochaetaceae</i>
0.05	0.05	0.86	0.05	0.07	0.35	0.73	ASV5:f_ <i>Mycoplasmataceae</i>
0.04	0.08	0.45	0.07	0.00	0.41	0.02	ASV7:g_ <i>Pseudomonas</i>
0.02	0.03	0.57	0.04	0.01	0.44	0.01	ASV27:g_ <i>Psychrobacter</i>
0.02	0.02	0.65	0.01	0.04	0.47	0.01	ASV8:g_ <i>Synechococcus</i> CC9902
0.01	0.03	0.49	0.00	0.03	0.49	0.04	ASV20:g_ <i>Roseibacillus</i>

