

Morphological, physiological and dietary covariation in migratory and resident adult brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) - DTU Orbit (09/11/2017)

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The causes and consequences of trait relationships within and among the categories of physiology, morphology, and life-history remain poorly studied. Few studies cross the boundaries of these categories, and recent reviews have pointed out not only the dearth of evidence for among-category correlations but that trait relationships may change depending on the ecological conditions a population faces. We examined changes in mean values and correlations between traits in a partially migrant population of brown trout when migrant sea-run and resident stream forms were breeding sympatrically. Within each sex and life-history strategy group, we used carbon and nitrogen stable isotopes to assess trophic level and habitat use; assessed morphology which reflects swimming and foraging ability; measured circulating cortisol as it is released in response to stressors and is involved in the transition from salt to freshwater; and determined oxidative status by measuring oxidative stress and antioxidants. We found that sea-run trout were larger and had higher values of stable isotopes, cortisol and oxidative stress compared to residents. Most groups showed some correlations between morphology and diet, indicating individual resource specialization was occurring, and we found consistent correlations between morphology and cortisol. Additionally, relationships differed between the sexes (cortisol and oxidative status were related in females but not males) and between life-history strategies (habitat use was related to oxidative status in male sea-run trout but not in either sex of residents). The differing patterns of covariation between the two life-history strategies and between the sexes suggest that the relationships among phenotypic traits are subjected to different selection pressures, illustrating the importance of integrating multiple phenotypic measures across different trait categories and contrasting life-history strategies

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