

1 **Incipient speciation driven by hypertrophied lips in**
2 **Midas cichlids fish?**

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18

19 **Abstract**

20 **Sympatric speciation has been debated in evolutionary biology for decades.**
21 **Although it has gained in acceptance recently, still only a handful of empirical**
22 **examples are seen as valid (e.g. crater lake cichlids). In this study, we**
23 **disentangle the role of hypertrophied lips in the repeated adaptive radiations of**
24 **Nicaraguan crater lake cichlid fish. We assessed the role of disruptive**
25 **selection and assortative mating during the early stages of divergence and**

26 found a functional trade-off in feeding behavior between thick- and thin-lipped
27 ecotypes suggesting that this trait is a target of disruptive selection. Thick-
28 lipped fish perform better on non-evasive prey at the cost of a poorer
29 performance on evasive prey. Using enclosures in the wild, we found that
30 thick-lipped fish perform significantly better in rocky than in sandy habitats.
31 We found almost no mixed pairs during two breeding seasons and hence
32 significant assortative mating. Genetic differentiation between ecotypes seems
33 to be related to the time since colonization, being subtle in L. Masaya (1600
34 generations ago) and absent in the younger L. Apoyeque (<600 generations
35 ago). Genome-wide differentiation between ecotypes was higher in the old
36 source lakes than in the young crater lakes. Our results suggest that
37 hypertrophied lips might be promoting incipient sympatric speciation through
38 divergent selection (ecological divergence in feeding performance) and non-
39 random mating (assortative mating) in the young Nicaraguan crater lakes.
40 Nonetheless, further manipulative experiments are needed in order to confirm
41 the role of hypertrophied lips as the main cue for assortative mating.

42

43 *Keywords:* Sympatric speciation, crater lakes, functional trade-off, intraspecific
44 ecological divergence

45

46 **Introduction**

47 The likelihood of speciation in the presence of gene flow has been debated for
48 decades (Mayr 1942; Coyne & Orr 2004; Gavrillets 2004; Bolnick & Fitzpatrick 2007;
49 Fitzpatrick *et al.* 2008; Nosil 2012; Feder *et al.* 2013; Meyer & Kautt 2014). For
50 sympatric speciation by natural selection to happen, typically three main conditions

51 have to be fulfilled: (1) strong disruptive selection on ecotypes, (2) strong assortative
52 mating by ecotypes and (3) the build-up of linkage disequilibrium between the loci
53 responsible for the ecological traits and mate choice (Bolnick & Fitzpatrick 2007).
54 Although still no agreement has been reached about how often speciation with gene
55 flow occurs, it is generally accepted that divergence in sympatry is facilitated when
56 the same trait that is under divergent natural selection is also involved in assortative
57 mating (Gavrilets 2004; Papadopulos *et al.* 2011; Servedio *et al.* 2011; Martin 2013).
58 To better understand what roles divergent selection and assortative mating play at
59 the earliest stages of speciation one needs to identify and investigate case studies
60 where both of these processes might be at work. Crater lake cichlid fish are widely
61 regarded as one of the most convincing examples of sympatric speciation (Schliewen
62 *et al.* 1994; Coyne & Orr 2004; Barluenga *et al.* 2006; Malinsky *et al.* 2015; Kautt *et*
63 *al.* 2016a) but see (Martin *et al.* 2015) and are an ideal system to assess the potential
64 role of adaptive traits during the early stages of divergence in sympatry.

65 Midas cichlids (*Amphilophus* sp. species complex) inhabiting a number of
66 small, completely isolated volcanic crater lakes located in Western Nicaragua were
67 colonized recently (less than 24 000 years ago) from the great lakes Managua and
68 Nicaragua (Fig. 1A). This group of Neotropical cichlids is particularly variable in eco-
69 morphological traits such as body shape (limnetic/benthic), pharyngeal jaws
70 (papiliform/molariform), and remarkably hypertrophied lips (thick-/thin-lipped)
71 (Barluenga *et al.* 2006; Elmer *et al.* 2010a; Manousaki *et al.* 2013; Machado-
72 Schiaffino *et al.* 2014).

73 Interestingly, hypertrophied lips have evolved independently and repeatedly in
74 African and Neotropical cichlids (Henning & Meyer 2014). The fact that thick-lipped
75 ecotypes evolved in parallel strongly supports the hypothesis that this trait is an
76 adaptation (*sensu* Losos 2011) for a particularly specialized type of foraging

77 behavior. It has been suggested that the feeding apparatus (hypertrophied lips in
78 combination with narrow and pointed heads) of thick-lipped species enhances the
79 ability to forage in rocky substrates by facilitating the access to crustaceans and fish
80 larvae that hide between rocks (Barlow & Munsey 1976; Kohda & Tanida 1996;
81 Konings 1998; Arnegard & Snoeks 2001; Oliver & Arnegard 2010; Baumgarten *et al.*
82 2015). Although this had not been properly tested in Neotropical cichlids yet, it
83 appears to be the case for African cichlids (Baumgarten *et al.* 2015).

84 Within the Midas cichlid species complex, thick- and thin-lipped ecotypes are
85 present in both great lakes (formally described as *A. labiatus* and *A. citrinellus*,
86 respectively) (Barlow 1976), and in the crater lakes Masaya and Apoyeque (Fig. 1A).
87 Frequency of thick-lipped ecotype is much lower (e.g. 5 to 20%) than thin-lipped one
88 in all these lakes, being the highest (around 20%) in crater lake Apoyeque (Elmer *et al.*
89 *et al.* 2010b). Interestingly, L. Masaya is one of the oldest (6000 years old) and L.
90 Apoyeque one of youngest (1800 years old) crater lakes in Nicaragua (Kutterolf *et al.*
91 2007). Morphological differences between thick- and thin-lipped ecotypes are
92 principally found in the mouth region, (Elmer *et al.* 2010b; Manousaki *et al.* 2013) and
93 are associated with diet differences both in African (Colombo *et al.* 2013) and
94 Neotropical (Manousaki *et al.* 2013) cichlids. Based on stomach contents, both
95 studies found that thin-lipped ecotypes predate mostly on fish whereas thick-lipped
96 ecotypes predate preferentially on invertebrates; suggesting a potential trade-off.
97 Moreover, it has been suggested that these niche differences might drive incipient
98 ecological sympatric speciation at least in crater lake Apoyeque (Elmer *et al.* 2010b).

99 The young age of the Midas cichlid complex and the repeated colonization of
100 the crater lakes at different points in time presents a unique opportunity to assess the
101 role of ecologically relevant traits, such as hypertrophied lips, during different stages
102 of the speciation process. By comparing the potential functional trade-off, the degree

103 of assortative mating, the pattern of genome-wide genetic differentiation and the
104 demographic history between thick- and thin-lipped ecotypes we aimed to
105 disentangle how disruptive selection and assortative mating might promote or
106 constrain sympatric speciation in the young Nicaraguan Midas cichlid species
107 complex.

108

109 **Materials and methods**

110

111 *Hypertrophied lip size distribution in wild fish*

112 Standardized lateral photographs of wild caught individuals from each lake were
113 taken in order to quantify lip size. 137, 168, 234 and 89 individuals were collected
114 during field trips in L. Managua, L. Nicaragua, L. Apoyeque and L. Masaya,
115 respectively. Protruded lip area (as measured in Machado-Schiaffino *et al.* (2014))
116 and body area were measured using ImageJ software (Schneider *et al.* 2012) (see
117 Fig. S1F). Hereafter, we refer to normalized lip area as the protruded lip area
118 corrected by body area and all values are expressed in ratios. Hartigans' Dip tests for
119 unimodality and Kernel density plots were carried out in R (R Development Core
120 Team 2014).

121

122 *Testing feeding performance*

123 Two independent behavior experiments were conducted in order to compare the
124 feeding performance of wild caught thick- and thin-lipped Midas cichlids from Lake
125 Apoyeque when fish are exposed to sessile or evasive prey. For both experiments
126 fish were starved for one day prior to the experiment to keep them at a similar level of
127 satiation. Fish were transferred into a 200L experimental tank one day before the

128 beginning of each experiment for acclimation. Standardized photographs were taken
129 before the experiments in order to measure both lip area, head angle, lip length,
130 standard length and body area for each individual. All measurements were size-
131 corrected by standard length or body area.

132 As a first experiment, 15 wild caught thick- and 16 thin-lipped juvenile fish
133 (mean standard length = 86.6 mm, SD = 7.1) from Lake Apoyeque were individually
134 exposed to mosquito larvae equidistantly placed (every 3 mm) along an acrylic
135 structure (see Fig. 2A) consisting of a continuously decreasing angle (angle range =
136 60° to 15°; total height = 16 cm) following Henning et al. (2017). Each acrylic device
137 was kept in the tank for at least six hours. After that time, the distance from the base
138 (angle = 60°) of the acrylic device to the furthestmost removed mosquito larvae was
139 recorded as a proxy for the minimum foraging angle for each fish.

140 For the second experiment, the same 15 wild caught thick- and 15 thin-lipped
141 juvenile fish from Lake Apoyeque were individually exposed to five free-swimming
142 fish fry. Each experimental fish was recorded from above with a video camera for at
143 least 45 minutes. Only trials in which fish were able to catch at least three fry were
144 considered to obtain a better estimates of the average number of attempts. But note
145 that results were qualitatively similar if the minimum number was set to two. After the
146 experiments the number of failures and successful attacks were quantified from the
147 video recordings.

148

149 *Testing feeding performance in situ: Enclosures*

150 Reciprocal transplant enclosure experiments in the wild have been successfully
151 applied in fish to test fitness of morphologically divergent species in different
152 ecological niches (Hatfield & Schluter 1999; Hendry *et al.* 2002). However, to our
153 knowledge, enclosure experiments have not been extensively used in cichlid fish to

154 test fitness trade-off associated with ecologically relevant traits. In the present study,
155 wild-caught thick- and thin-lipped Midas cichlids from Lake Apoyeque were allocated
156 to enclosures in two well differentiated habitats (rocky and sandy) within the lake in
157 order to test whether the performance between ecotypes (measured as difference in
158 growth) varies depending on the habitat. A total of 40 enclosures were built using
159 chicken-wire mesh. Each enclosure had 1.125 m³ of volume (0.9 x 2.5 x 0.5 meters).
160 All enclosures were attached to the ground (approximately at two meters depth) and
161 equally distributed in the rocky and sandy area. The material employed to build the
162 enclosures was flexible and allowed to fix them in close contact with the ground even
163 in the rocky habitat characterized by crevices among rocks. Single fish were
164 introduced into each enclosure in order to avoid the effect of competition. A total of
165 ten enclosures per morph (thick- and thin-lipped) and habitat (rocky and sandy) were
166 included in this experiment. Juvenile individuals were chosen in order to ensure that
167 substantial growth was still possible. Size matching (by weight) was performed to
168 ensure that starting weight of the fish in the enclosures was similar for each ecotype
169 and habitat (ANOVA *F-statistic* = 0.1528, *df* = 3, *p* = 0.698; starting weights: overall
170 mean = 25 g, SD = 7.64).

171 All fish were weighted before the beginning of the experiment and after seven
172 weeks. Standardized pictures were taken for all individuals. Lip area, body area, and
173 standard length were measured. Differences in weight between morph and habitat
174 were tested with non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis tests due to a lack of normality and
175 homoscedasticity of the data even after transformation. Multiple comparisons were
176 performed with Dunn's test implemented in R (R Development Core Team 2014) and
177 *p* values were adjusted using Bonferroni corrections.

178

179 *Assortative mating*

180 Pair-composition censuses were performed in Lake Apoyeque during two breeding
181 seasons, in December 2013 and 2014. Two divers performed the census
182 independently, starting from the same point of the lake and following opposite
183 directions in order to avoid counting the same nest twice. In total, around 1.5 km (one
184 quarter of the total perimeter of the lake) were covered. All nests with offspring and
185 both parents were included in the analyses. After the identification of a nest, a close
186 examination was carried out in order to identify the phenotypes of both parents.
187 Despite the fact that it was not possible to quantify lip area for the parents, their
188 ecotypes were easily determined without ambiguity.

189 Additionally, the degree of assortative mating was determined for fish from
190 Lake Nicaragua. Due to the size of the lake and its turbidity, pair-composition
191 censuses in the wild were not possible for this lake. Thus, mate-choice experiments
192 were performed under laboratory conditions. All fish included in this experiment were
193 F1s from multiple crosses of wild-caught individuals. A total of 25 thick- (*A. labiatus*)
194 and 25 thin-lipped (*A. citrinellus*) adult individuals were kept under similar conditions
195 (temperature, light and substrate) in a very large tank (7000 L). In order to reduce the
196 number of potential variables associated with pair formation, only dark morphs from
197 both species were used. After seven days of acclimation fish were allowed to interact,
198 the tank was periodically inspected, and the composition of every formed pair that
199 stayed together for at least three days was recorded. Note that spawning took place
200 within the first three days after pair-formation in most cases. After that period, the pair
201 was removed and replaced with individuals of the same ecotype, size, and sex. Thus,
202 the frequency of ecotypes in the tanks was kept constant during the whole
203 experiment. Standardized photographs from the lateral and dorsal side were taken
204 for all individuals that successfully formed a pair in order to measure the association
205 between male and female lip size.

206

207 *Genome-wide differentiation*

208 To quantify how genetic variation is partitioned across genomes between ecotypes
209 and lakes, we performed restriction-site associated DNA-sequencing (RAD-seq)
210 based population genomic analyses. Between 19 and 72 wild caught individuals per
211 ecotype (thick- and thin-lipped) and lake (Managua, Nicaragua, Masaya and
212 Apoyeque) were included in the genomic libraries (Table S1, Supporting information).
213 Most of these fish were collected between 2010 and 2013 and are stored in AM's
214 collection at the University of Konstanz. A small piece of pectoral fin from each
215 sample was used to extract genomic DNA with a Zymo kit.

216 Double digest RADseq libraries were prepared following Peterson *et al.* (2012)
217 and Kautt *et al.* (2016a). Briefly, 600 ng of genomic DNA per sample was double-
218 digested using the restriction enzymes PstI and MspI for 3 hours at 37 °C. After that,
219 P1 and P2 adapters (Recknagel *et al.* 2013) were ligated to the digested DNA using
220 T4 ligase for 30 minutes at room temperature. A total of 307 individually barcoded
221 samples were pooled in six libraries. Size selection for each library was performed
222 using Pippin Prep technology (Sage Science, Beverly, MA) setting the size-range
223 from 320 to 500bp. Finally, genomic libraries were single-end sequenced (100 bp
224 length) in four lanes on an Illumina HiSeq 2000.

225 Raw sequence reads were demultiplexed using STACKS v.1.2.9 (Catchen *et al.*
226 *et al.* 2011; Catchen *et al.* 2013). Only high sequencing quality reads, with correct
227 barcodes and unambiguous RAD site were retained. Demultiplexed reads were
228 mapped to an "in house" anchored *A. citrinellus* reference genome (Elmer *et al.*
229 2014) using BWA (Li & Durbin 2009). SNPs and genotype calling were performed
230 with STACKS. Loci deviating from HWE or showing more than three polymorphic
231 sites (SNPs) in one population were excluded. Further, loci exhibiting a SNP in the

232 last two positions of a read were excluded, because of an excess number of SNPs at
233 these two positions. A locus was included in the analyses only if it was genotyped in
234 at least 10 individuals (20 alleles) per population. On average $74\,197 \pm 18\,049$ (sd)
235 loci were obtained per individual with a mean coverage of 13.94 ± 4.21 (sd) reads per
236 locus and individual (Table S1, Supporting information).

237 Population genomic statistics were obtained using the *populations* program
238 implemented in STACKS. Genome-wide F_{st} values were calculated among all pair-
239 wise combinations of populations using ARLEQUIN software with default settings
240 (Excoffier & Lischer 2010), and the significance was tested using 10 000
241 permutations. Population structure was investigated with the model-based software
242 ADMIXTURE (Alexander *et al.* 2009) and model-free Principal Component Analyses
243 (PCAs) implemented in the EIGENSOFT package (Patterson *et al.* 2006). Support for
244 the number of genetic clusters was determined based on the implemented cross-
245 validation error technique or Tracy-Widom statistics, respectively. The phylogenetic
246 tree was built using PHYLIP (Felsenstein 1993) based on a distance matrix
247 calculated from the frequency data of 1000 randomly selected markers. Statistical
248 support of nodes was estimated with 1000 bootstrap replicates. Note that only one
249 SNP per locus was used for analyses concerning population structure or the
250 phylogenetic tree to account for non-independence of linked sites. Additionally,
251 individual-based phylogenetic networks were built using SPLITSTREE v.4.13.1
252 (Huson & Bryant 2006). Individual genotype calls were transformed from variant call
253 format (VCF) to Nexus format using custom scripts and networks were built using the
254 NeighborNet method based on uncorrected P distances.

255

256 *Demographic inference*

257 Demographic parameters were estimated by simulation and fitting of different
258 demographic models to the information contained in the multidimensional minor site
259 frequency spectrum (SFS) using FASTSIMCOAL2 (Excoffier *et al.* 2013). Briefly,
260 FASTSIMCOAL2 uses coalescent simulations to obtain the expected SFS for a
261 certain specified model and then optimizes each demographic parameter in the
262 model so as to maximize the likelihood. Demographic models can be arbitrarily
263 complex, including a variety of demographic events such as migration, population
264 size changes, population splits and admixture, and there is no restriction in the
265 number of analyzed populations. The relative fit of different demographic models to
266 the data was evaluated by means of the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC).

267 Loci presumably located in coding regions were identified via a BLAST search
268 against a compilation of transcriptomic data from various species and tissues of
269 Midas cichlids (Henning *et al.* 2013; Manousaki *et al.* 2013) and excluded. Only one
270 SNP per locus was used for the demographic analyses. The SFS was created as in
271 Kautt *et al.* (2016a). Briefly, data was parsed from VCF files using a custom python
272 script and transformed into the SFS using *daði* (Gutenkunst *et al.* 2009). To account
273 for missing data the SFS was projected down to 25 individuals per lake. The same
274 minimum number of 25 individuals per lake was specified to create the VCF files.
275 Thus the ratio between monomorphic and polymorphic sites can be correctly inferred
276 and used to convert the parameter estimates into demographic units. Once the
277 presumably best model is chosen the fit to the data can be inferred by using the
278 maximum likelihood point estimates of the model parameters to perform parametric
279 bootstrapping and obtain confidence intervals (Excoffier *et al.* 2013).

280

281 **Results**

282

283 *Bimodal distribution of hypertrophied lips*

284 The normalized size of lips (lip area corrected by body area) is strongly bimodal in all
285 lake populations except for crater lake Masaya where unimodality (Hartigans' Dip
286 test) could not be rejected probably due to low sample size (Fig. 1B-E). Phenotypic
287 differentiation was more pronounced in the older source lakes (Fig. 1B, C) than in the
288 recently colonized crater lakes (Fig. 1D, E). This pattern is concordant with
289 theoretical predictions of eco-morphological traits under disruptive selection during
290 the early stages of divergence (Coyne & Orr 2004; Gavrilets 2004).

291

292 *Disruptive selection acting on lips*

293 Coupled with differences in lips we found pronounced differences in feeding
294 performance – this was tested with wild-caught thick- and thin-lipped ecotypes from
295 Lake Apoyeque (Fig. 2). Thick-lipped fish performed better than thin-lipped fish when
296 food was attached (sessile) and had to be scraped off an acrylic structure with a
297 continuously decreasing angle (Fig. 2A), mimicking crevices in the natural habitat.
298 Although thick- and thin-lipped fish are different both in terms of lips and head shape,
299 feeding performance when food was sessile was significantly associated only with
300 hypertrophied lips (Fig. S1, Supporting information). These findings were validated
301 also in experiments with thick- (*A. labiatus*) and thin-lipped (*A. citrinellus*) fish from
302 great lake Nicaragua (Fig. S2A, Supporting information).

303 However, wild-caught thin-lipped fish performed significantly better than thick-
304 lipped fish when feeding on evasive prey in the water column (Figs 2B and Fig. S2B,
305 Supporting information), indicating a trade-off. Here, feeding success was negatively
306 associated with lip size.

307 This trade-off was also assessed in terms of fitness consequences with
308 experiments in the crater lakes: using single-fish enclosures ($n = 40$) in sandy or
309 rocky habitats in crater lake Apoyeque we monitored the change in weight of the fish
310 as a proxy for fitness. Despite the fact that all fish had a similar weight at the
311 beginning of the experiment (ANOVA F -statistic = 0.1528, $df = 3$, $p = 0.698$; starting
312 weights: overall mean = 25 g, SD = 7.64), the weight change after seven weeks
313 differed significantly (Kruskal-Wallis chi-squared = 10.4717, $df = 3$, p -value = 0.0149)
314 in the predicted direction between ecotypes and habitats (Fig. 2C). Although most
315 fish lost weight in the enclosures - probably due to the restricted foraging space -,
316 thick-lipped fish in rocky habitat lost significantly less weight than thick-lipped fish
317 confined to a sandy habitat (Dunn's statistics = -2.540, Bonferroni adjusted $p =$
318 0.033). Also a trend (Dunn's statistics = -2.199, Bonferroni adjusted $p = 0.083$)
319 towards thick-lipped fish compared with thin-lipped fish was apparent on rocky
320 habitat. Differences between thick- and thin-lipped fish in the enclosures on sandy
321 habitat were not significant (Dunn's statistics = -0.696, Bonferroni adjusted $p =$
322 1.000), which might be best explained by the observation that evasive prey (e.g.
323 small fish) was free to leave the enclosures, thereby depriving thin-lipped fish from
324 their foraging advantage compared to thick-lipped fish. This is in agreement with the
325 fact that thin-lipped fish predate preferentially on fish compared to thick-lipped fish
326 (Colombo *et al.* 2013; Manousaki *et al.* 2013).

327

328 *Assortative mating between ecotypes*

329 Given the bimodality and fitness trade-offs of this trait we conducted both field
330 observations and laboratory experiments to determine if ecotypes mate assortatively.
331 Due to the clarity of its water we chose to survey Lake Apoyeque for breeding pairs
332 during two consecutive breeding seasons (2013-2014); the turbid waters of the great

333 lakes and crater lake Masaya precluded us from collecting data on pairs in these
334 lakes. We note that Midas cichlids are seasonally monogamous and pairs defend
335 their brood jointly for weeks. Among a total of 68 breeding pairs, mating was highly
336 significantly non-random (Yates' chi-square = 25.147, $p = 3.46 \times 10^{-6}$) and based on
337 ecotypes (Fig. 3A), supporting the hypothesis that gene flow is restricted between the
338 ecotypes. Due to the fact that thick-lipped fish occur much less frequently (c.a. 5-
339 20%) than thin-lipped fish in all the lakes where both ecotypes coexist, it would be
340 expected under random mating that most of the pairs including thick-lipped fish would
341 be disassortative; thus the probability of pairing up of two thick-lipped fish is expected
342 to be very low (e.g. 4%, assuming a 20% frequency of thick-lipped fish). However, we
343 found significantly more assortative thick-lipped pairs than expected. The total
344 number of thick-lipped fish included in this survey (11 out of 136, around 8%) was
345 similar to the frequency of this ecotype in the wild (around 20% for crater lake
346 Apoyeque (Elmer *et al.* 2010b)). Interestingly, many of the thin-lipped pairs (20 out of
347 a total of 30 pairs where the kind of substrate was recorded) were found in rocky
348 areas, although they supposedly have a feeding advantage in sandy areas. Thus,
349 both ecotypes tend to breed in rocky areas of the lake suggesting that there is no
350 habitat isolation during breeding season.

351 In order to validate the strong assortative mating between ecotypes found in
352 the wild, we also performed mate choice experiments in the laboratory in very large
353 tanks with *A. citrinellus* (thin-lipped) and *A. labiatus* (thick-lipped) from Lake
354 Nicaragua. All 25 pairs that formed in these experiments were assortative (Fig. 3B).
355 There was no correlation between lip size (corrected by body area) of the paired
356 individuals within *A. labiatus*, suggesting that the presence of lips alone, rather than
357 their size, might matter most for mate choice (Fig. 3C). Moreover, pair composition

358 was independent of size (weight) for *A. labiatus* and *A. citrinellus* pairs ($r = -0.232$ $p =$
359 0.446 and $r = -0.207$ $p = 0.518$, respectively).

360

361 *Recent colonization and weak genome-wide genetic differentiation between ecotypes*
362 *in the crater lakes*

363 Based on more than 16 740 polymorphic genetic markers, clear genome-wide
364 genetic differentiation was found with each lake population forming a distinct genetic
365 cluster (Figs 1A, and S3A, Supporting information). Using a much smaller genetic
366 data set of microsatellite markers, we had previously suggested that crater lake
367 Masaya was colonized from the nearby great lake Nicaragua (Barluenga & Meyer
368 2010). Yet, the analysis of this new substantial set of genome-wide markers shows
369 that both crater lakes share a more recent common ancestor with great lake
370 Managua (Fig. 4A). Moreover, individuals from crater lake Masaya tend to cluster
371 closer to great lake Managua (Fig. S3A, Supporting information). Individual-based
372 phylogenetic split networks also suggest that both crater lakes cluster together with
373 great lake Managua and not with Lake Nicaragua (Fig. S4, Supporting information).
374 Altogether, these findings support the notion that we have the interesting opportunity
375 to study the evolution of two independent radiations that were recently, but at
376 different times, founded from the same source population (Lake Managua).

377 Both crater lakes Apoyeque and Masaya are genetically clearly distinguishable
378 and distinct from Lake Managua (Table S2, Supporting information; Figs 1A, and S4,
379 Supporting information). The genetic differentiation between thick- (*A. labiatus*) and
380 thin-lipped (*A. citrinellus*) species in the source lakes Managua ($F_{ST} = 0.050$,
381 $p < 0.00001$) and Nicaragua ($F_{ST} = 0.019$, $p < 0.00001$) are subtle, but highly significant
382 (see Figs 4B, C, and S3B, C, Supporting information). These findings agree with the
383 strong assortative mating between *A. labiatus* and *A. citrinellus* from Lake Nicaragua

384 that we found in lab experiments (Fig. 3B) and support their status as two biological
385 species. Similarly, we found significant, yet even lower, genome-wide differentiation
386 between ecotypes in the about 6000 years old crater lake Masaya ($F_{ST} = 0.016$,
387 $p < 0.00001$) (Fig. 4E). However, no genetic differentiation was found between
388 ecotypes in the less than 2000 year old crater lake Apoyeque ($F_{ST} = 0.002$, $p = 0.827$)
389 (Fig. 4D). This lack of genome-wide differentiation is not unexpected at this early
390 stage of speciation without geographical isolation.

391 The demographic history of the crater lake populations was inferred (Fig. 4F)
392 through coalescent simulations and comparing their fit against the empirical data
393 summarized in the two-dimensional site frequency spectra (SFS) (Excoffier *et al.*
394 2013). Assuming great lake Managua as the source population, 13 and 17 different
395 models were tested for crater lakes Apoyeque and Masaya, respectively (Table S3,
396 Supporting information).

397 According to the best model for crater lake Apoyeque the source population
398 (great lake Managua) experienced a population bottleneck about 1870 (95%
399 confidence interval: 1480-2520) generations ago and was reduced to only about
400 1490 (1040-2290) individuals and it has since been growing exponentially reaching a
401 population size of about 460,270 (0-898,670) individuals at present. The results for
402 the source lakes are similar to Kautt *et al.* (2016a) in which they were used as
403 outgroups for two other crater lake radiations. The confidence intervals around the
404 current population sizes are wide, probably because small differences in the
405 estimated growth rates will lead to a high variance since growth is exponential. Lake
406 Apoyeque was colonized by a small founder population of only about 110 (50-200)
407 individuals around 580 (430-770) generations ago, growing to a current size of 14
408 720 (1480-32 990) individuals. Continuous migration between the lakes is not
409 supported, but a single admixture event 380 (290-470) generations ago in which the

410 crater lake population received approximately 16% (8.3%-22.4%) of its gene pool
411 from the source population is strongly supported.

412 In the best model for crater lake Masaya the estimates for the population
413 dynamics in the source lake (Managua) are similar to above (Fig. 4F). Lake Masaya
414 was colonized only about 1560 (1400-1800) generations ago. Surprisingly, a
415 population size change in L. Masaya is not supported, and it seems thus to have
416 remained relatively stable at about 8610 (7800-9760) individuals throughout its
417 history. Continuous migration from the source into Masaya is not supported, yet Lake
418 Masaya received about 21.0% (14.5%-29.2%) of its gene pool from the source
419 population in an admixture event about 240 (120-400) generations ago. While we
420 consider the model above to be the best model, a different model in which L. Masaya
421 was colonized before the bottleneck in the source lake received a higher support.
422 Yet, considering the geographic isolation of this lake, this model assumes biologically
423 unrealistically high amounts of gene flow (continuous migration of 1.91×10^{-4} and
424 57.1% admixture event) and a colonization time (6390 generations ago) prior to the
425 formation of the crater lake itself.

426 In summary, L. Apoyeque was colonized much more recently than L. Masaya
427 and is characterized by a much smaller long-term effective population size.
428 Differences were also visually apparent in a plot of the two-dimensional site
429 frequency spectrum (2D-SFS). While the spectrum of the source population together
430 with L. Apoyeque is characterized by a considerable number of diverging sites, in the
431 case of L. Masaya many more sites fall along the diagonal, indicating only weak
432 signs of divergence (Fig. S6, Supporting information).

433

434 **Discussion**

435 We find that a conspicuous morphological trait, hypertrophied lips, is associated with
436 genetic differentiation in several repeated radiations of the Nicaraguan Midas cichlid
437 species complex. In several experiments in the field and the laboratory we document
438 a trade-off with respect to feeding behavior between thick- and thin-lipped ecotypes:
439 thick-lipped fish perform better on non-evasive prey attached to narrow angles
440 (“crevices”), but are significantly less successful in feeding on free swimming prey
441 than thin-lipped fish. These findings from laboratory experiments were supported by
442 enclosure studies in crater lake Apoyeque, in which thick-lipped fish performed better
443 in rocky than sandy habitats. That these two types of fish are ecologically distinct was
444 suggested before based on stomach content and stable isotope analyses (Elmer *et al.*
445 *2010b*; Manousaki *et al.* *2013*), but there was no information on feeding
446 performance. Thus, hypertrophied lips are likely subject to disruptive natural
447 selection. Moreover, our results suggest that this trait might also play a role in
448 assortative mating or is tightly linked to a trait resulting in assortative mating,
449 however, further manipulative experiments are needed to confirm this hypothesis.

450

451 *Disruptive selection acting on lips*

452 Here, we provide evidence that hypertrophied lips, and not other correlated traits, are
453 subject to divergent natural selection. A bimodal distribution of lip size was found in
454 all populations, except for crater lake Masaya where the sample size was small, with
455 more pronounced differences in the older lakes (great lakes Managua and
456 Nicaragua) than the much younger crater lakes (see Fig. 1B-E). A trade-off in feeding
457 performance was found between thick- and thin-lipped fish: the former are more
458 successful in feeding in small crevices (characteristic of rocky habitat) whereas the
459 latter feed more efficiently on free swimming fish (sandy/open-water habitat) (Fig. 2).
460 Hybrids between thick- and thin-lipped ecotypes exhibiting an intermediate

461 phenotype (Machado-Schiaffino *et al.* 2014) and are expected to perform worse than
462 either of the more extreme phenotypes on their preferred foods/habitats (Rueffler *et*
463 *al.* 2006). Therefore, hybrids would be expected to have a lower fitness (Rundle &
464 Whitlock 2001). Unfortunately, we could not perform these experiments on hybrids
465 with an intermediate phenotype due to logistical reasons. Nonetheless, it seems that
466 in both experiments the performance of thick-lipped fish with relatively small lip sizes
467 was intermediate (Fig. 2A-B).

468 One crucial advantage of hypertrophied lips is that they increase suction
469 power during foraging by sealing cracks and grooves in rocky substrate (Barlow &
470 Munsey 1976; Konings 1998; Oliver & Arnegard 2010; Baumgarten *et al.* 2015). We
471 show that the benefits of hypertrophied lips also engender costs when feeding in the
472 open-water (i.e. are subject to a trade-off; Fig. 2); explaining the pronounced diet
473 differences we previously found where thin-lipped fish tend to prey more on evasive
474 prey (e.g. fish) than thick-lipped individuals (e.g. hard-shelled invertebrates)
475 (Colombo *et al.* 2013; Manousaki *et al.* 2013). The kinetics of the buccal protrusion
476 during prey capture might differ between these ecotypes and would explain the
477 differences in predation success (see also (Holzman *et al.* 2012)). Hypertrophied lips
478 might also be constraining the size and shape of the mouth in thick-lipped fish and
479 create more turbulence in the water, thereby decreasing feeding success
480 (Skorczewski *et al.* 2012) on fish (Fig. 2B). Preliminary analyses furthermore suggest
481 that *A. labiatus* and *A. citrinellus* also differ strongly in mouth shape, due to a
482 difference in gape height, which is in turn caused by differences in the ascending and
483 descending process of the premaxillary bone (Fig. S5, Supporting information). It
484 would be expected that a more planar and circular mouth shape, as is found in *A.*
485 *citrinellus*, increases feeding performance by maximizing the capacity of suction
486 feeders to exert hydrodynamic forces on the prey (Skorczewski *et al.* 2012). Overall,

487 thick-lipped fish might increase suction power by sealing cracks and grooves when
488 their mouth is firmly attached to the rocky substrate, meanwhile, thin-lipped fish might
489 increase suction forces when the mouth is not attached to any substrate as is the
490 case when they feed in open water.

491 Transplant experiments in the field have been shown to be a successful way
492 to test the role of natural selection in divergent environments (Schluter 1995; Soria-
493 Carrasco *et al.* 2014). Using enclosures in the wild (crater lake Apoyeque) we found
494 a trend with thick-lipped fish performing better in the rocky than in the sandy habitat
495 (Fig. 2C). To our knowledge, this is one of the first studies using reciprocal transplant
496 enclosure experiments to test for a fitness trade-off associated with an ecologically
497 relevant trait in cichlid fish. Despite the fact that loss in weight was detected for
498 several enclosures, the weight change after seven weeks differed significantly in the
499 predicted direction between thick-lipped fish confined to the rocky and sandy habitat.
500 It is known that the density of prey is significantly reduced in enclosures (Schluter
501 1995). However, we decided not to provide supplementary diet in order to avoid any
502 potential bias in growth that might affect our results. Moreover, Midas cichlids growth
503 is relatively slow and, thus, the duration of the experiment might not have been long
504 enough to detect significant growth in all experimental individuals.

505

506 *Reproductive isolation: assortative mating*

507 The evolution of non-random mating is crucial in speciation driven by selection for
508 local adaptation in the presence of gene flow (Schluter 2000). Assortative mating
509 based on colour has been reported in South American cichlids (Ready *et al.* 2006).
510 Similarly, non-random mating based on a color polymorphism (gold-dark) that is
511 present in some, but not all, species of Midas cichlids has been known for some time

512 (Elmer *et al.* 2009). This suggests that active mate choice might be one of the
513 mechanisms driving divergence in this young system.

514 We observed that both ecotypes are present at a similar depth in sandy and
515 rocky habitat during the breeding season in Lake Apoyeque and several thin-lipped
516 pairs were found in both habitats. This implies that “like-pairs” are formed
517 independently of the respective preferred feeding habitats. Moreover, laboratory mate
518 choice experiments demonstrated complete assortative mating between *A. citrinellus*
519 and *A. labiatus* (Fig. 3B) suggesting that mate choice is due to direct preference,
520 rather than differences in breeding habitat choice. Not a single disassortative pair
521 was found in the laboratory experiments, suggesting that prezygotic isolating
522 mechanisms predominantly prevent hybridization. A panel of F₂ individuals from a
523 forced cross of thick- and thin-lipped fish suggests, however, that there might be also
524 some postzygotic barriers, since we found that a large number (around 10-20%) of F₂
525 individuals showed some degree of malformation, particularly in their mouths (data
526 not shown). Although thick- and thin-lipped species from great lake Nicaragua mate
527 completely assortatively in the lab, the significant but relatively low level of genetic
528 differentiation suggests a certain level of gene flow between these species. This is in
529 concordance with previously documented low levels of genetic differentiation
530 between *A. citrinellus* and *A. labiatus* based on different molecular markers
531 (Barluenga & Meyer 2010; Kautt *et al.* 2012). Although clear evidence for assortative
532 mating between thick- and thin-lipped ecotypes was found both in the wild and in lab
533 experiments, we cannot completely rule out that other visual, behavioural or chemical
534 cues are involved in pair formation. Thus, further manipulative experiments should be
535 performed to test whether hypertrophied lips act as the main mating cue.

536

537 *Genomic fingerprints of divergence in sympatry*

538 Based on population genomics approaches one can gauge how many genomic
539 regions might contribute to the evolution of reproductive isolation and hence
540 speciation (Ellegren *et al.* 2012; Jones *et al.* 2012; Feder *et al.* 2013). The patterns of
541 genome-wide genetic differentiation that we detected between both ecotypes support
542 a scenario of ecological speciation with gene flow under sympatric conditions (Feder
543 *et al.* 2012; Feder *et al.* 2013); only very few regions of the genome show signs of
544 differentiation between ecotypes in the very recently colonized crater lakes (“L-
545 shaped” frequency distribution of genetic differentiation across loci with most loci
546 having low F_{st} values) compared to the older Lakes Nicaragua and Managua (Fig.
547 S3B, Supporting information). Also the demographic analyses, assuming great lake
548 Managua as the source population, suggested that both crater lakes were colonized
549 very recently (580 and 1600 generations for L. Apoyeque and L. Masaya,
550 respectively). Despite the fact that only a small number of individuals were estimated
551 to have colonized the crater lakes (at least L. Apoyeque) and the much lower
552 frequency of thick-lipped fish in the great lakes (e.g. around 5%), it is likely that thick-
553 lipped fish colonized the crater lakes from the great lakes. Thus, we think that the
554 presence of the thick-lipped ecotype in the crater lakes is due to the retention of
555 ancestral standing genetic variation, rather than due to *de novo* mutations. However,
556 it seems evident that a strong homogenization event has occurred after the
557 colonization, erasing the genetic differentiation already present between the ecotypes
558 in the great lakes. Only by elucidating the genetic basis of this ecologically relevant
559 trait, would it be possible to test whether hypertrophied lips originated *de novo* in the
560 crater lakes or from standing genetic variation present in the great lakes.

561 Thick-lipped ecotype could also have been brought into the crater lake by a
562 secondary invasion from the source lakes. In this regard, our best demographic
563 models provide evidence for admixture events in both crater lakes. We note,

564 however, that we used the thin-lipped *A. citrinellus* from L. Managua as a source
565 population in these models. Our rationale for this was that the site frequency spectra
566 of both species (*A. citrinellus* and *A. labiatus*) are almost identical and our data thus
567 was not powerful enough to tease apart whether the colonization and subsequent
568 admixture happened by either one or a mix of both species (see also Kautt *et al.*
569 2016a). In any case, together with recent evidence for admixture events in
570 Nicaraguan crater lakes Apoyo, Xiloá (Kautt *et al.* 2016a), and Asososca Managua
571 (Kautt *et al.* 2016b) and Cameroonian crater lakes (Martin *et al.* 2015), this might
572 suggest that crater lakes are not as isolated as they were believed to be. In this
573 regard, fish must have somehow come into the crater lakes in the first place and
574 evidence for reasonably small admixture events indicating secondary waves of
575 colonization are not unreasonable. However, we note that distinguishing between
576 more ancient divergence events and high amounts of gene flow and very recent
577 divergence with little or no gene flow based on genetic data is challenging (Hey *et al.*
578 2015) and the validity of admixture events will have to be further tested in the future.

579 Even though some differentiation for a few markers was found, our results
580 show that there is almost no genome-wide genetic differentiation between the young
581 sympatric ecotypes in crater lake Apoyeque and only very weak genomic
582 differentiation in the relatively older crater lake Masaya. Thus, the lack of genomic
583 differentiation found in Lake Apoyeque could be explained by different factors. Firstly,
584 although it is expected that genome-wide differentiation increases as phenotypic
585 divergence increases (Roesti *et al.* 2012; Gagnaire *et al.* 2013; Seehausen *et al.*
586 2014), divergence could remain heterogeneous across the genome for a long time
587 due to repeated events of interspecific gene flow even after reproductive isolation
588 has become strong (Neafsey *et al.* 2010; Garrigan *et al.* 2012). In this regard, we
589 have found some disassortative pairs in crater lake Apoyeque (Fig. 3A), suggesting

590 that gene flow and recombination between ecotypes is plausibly generating a
591 homogenizing effect (Felsenstein 1981). Thus, ongoing gene flow between
592 populations might homogenize variation in genomic regions not affected by divergent
593 selection or reproductive isolation (Noor & Bennett 2009; Turner & Hahn 2010). Yet,
594 reduced diversity in genomic islands of speciation should also be considered as an
595 alternative explanation (Cruickshank & Hahn 2014). Secondly, due to the localized
596 genomic effect of disruptive selection, divergence during the early stages of
597 ecological speciation is expected to be greater in genomic regions that harbor key
598 quantitative loci (QTL) than it is in regions that have no effect on the phenotypic
599 divergence of the populations (Via 2009). Therefore, adaptation with gene flow tends
600 to result in concentrated genetic architectures with fewer, larger, and more tightly
601 linked divergent alleles (Yeaman & Whitlock 2011). Although the exact genetic
602 architecture of hypertrophied lips remains unknown, ongoing projects in our
603 laboratory provide evidence that only a few major QTL are involved in this trait in
604 Midas cichlids: we find intermediate phenotypes of F_1 hybrids (Machado-Schiaffino *et*
605 *al.* 2014) and a high proportion of F_2 individuals that almost completely recover both
606 parental phenotypes (Fig. S7, Supporting information). Thus, it is very probable that
607 due to the reduction of genome complexity associated with RAD-sequencing,
608 considering just a fraction of the whole genome, no markers closely linked to the QTL
609 were present in our data set.

610

611 *Progress toward sympatric speciation*

612 It has been estimated by Thibert-Plante & Gavrillets (2013), assuming a scenario of
613 relatively weak divergent selection, that 10 000 generations might be needed in order
614 to observe strong reproductive isolation (complete non-random mating). This seems
615 to be the case in thick- and thin-lipped fish in the young crater lakes, where we found

616 a clear trade-off between ecotypes, morphological bimodality, and assortative mating,
617 while our enclosure experiments suggest that the differences between ecotypes in
618 different habitats might not be very strong.

619 Recently, it has been shown for Ejagham tilapia that even in the presence of
620 strong assortative mating, the process of sympatric speciation might be stalled if
621 disruptive selection is weak (morphological unimodality and minimal ecological
622 divergence; (Martin 2013). Despite the fact that we were not able to quantify the
623 strength of disruptive selection (see (Martin 2012)) in the crater lakes, we found clear
624 morphological bimodality and ecological divergence (also see (Colombo *et al.* 2013;
625 Manousaki *et al.* 2013), suggesting that disruptive selection and assortative mating
626 acting in concert might be strong enough to lead to speciation. This process might be
627 relatively slow and yet incomplete due to the young age of the crater lakes, small
628 effective population sizes, or complexity of the genetic architectures of trophic
629 morphology. The absence of other sister species pairs in the crater lakes precluded
630 us from testing if complete divergence is possible at the same timescale, as was the
631 case in Lake Ejagham (Martin 2013).

632 Our results suggest that hypertrophied lips might be promoting incipient
633 sympatric speciation through divergent selection (ecological divergence in feeding
634 performance) and non-random mating (assortative mating) in the young Nicaraguan
635 crater lakes. All this opens the possibility of hypertrophied lips acting as a “magic
636 trait” driving speciation in these young crater lake cichlids, although further
637 manipulative experiments are necessary to confirm its role as the main cue in
638 assortative mating. Nicaraguan crater lakes are a unique natural laboratory for
639 examining, “in real time”, how ecologically relevant traits under selection affect the
640 evolution of reproductive isolation during the earliest stages of speciation in
641 sympatry.

642

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659

660 **Data Accessibility**

661 All the data used in this study have been deposited in Dryad
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663

664

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854

855 **Author contributions**

- 856 G.M.S and A.M designed the experiments. G.M.S analyzed the morphological data.
- 857 G.M.S and J.T.D performed and analyzed the experiments in the field. G.M.S, A.F.K
 858 and J.T.D performed and analyzed assortative mating experiments in the lab. G.M.S,
 859 L.B and F.H performed and analyzed the feeding performance experiments in the

860 lab. Population genomics data were generated and analyzed by A.F.K and G.M.S.
861 Demographic analyses were performed by A.F.K. G.M.S and F.H designed the
862 crosses and obtained the F2 populations. G.M.S wrote the manuscript with
863 contributions from all the authors.

864

865 **Figure Legends**

866 **Fig. 1** Thin- and thick-lipped populations in the Midas cichlid species complex. (A)
867 Map showing the four lakes where thin- and thick-lipped Midas cichlids coexist.
868 Admixture plot showing clear genetic clustering among the four lakes together with
869 cross-validation errors for admixture runs are shown below the map. The lowest
870 cross-validation error (i.e. highest support) was found for four genetic clusters. (B, C,
871 D, E) Histograms and Kernel density plots of normalized lip area (lip area corrected
872 by body area) in wild-caught individuals from the great lakes Managua (purple) and
873 Nicaragua (green) and the crater lakes Apoyeque (red) and Masaya (blue). Sample
874 sizes (N), Hartigans' Dip tests for unimodality (D) and p-values are shown for each
875 lake.

876

877 **Fig. 2** Functional trade-off between ecotypes. (A) Correlation between normalized lip
878 area and feeding performance (distance from the base of the acrylic device to the
879 furthestmost removed mosquito larvae) for wild caught thick- and thin-lipped fish from
880 crater lake Apoyeque exposed to mosquito larvae attached to an acrylic structure
881 with continuously decreasing angle. (B) Correlation between normalized lip area and
882 feeding success ratio (number of eaten prey items divided by the number of
883 attempts) for wild caught thick- and thin-lipped fish from crater lake Apoyeque
884 exposed to free swimming fry. (C) Differential performance (mean change in weight

885 per day in grams and standard deviation) between thick- and thin-lipped ecotypes in
886 rocky and sandy habitats areas in crater lake Apoyeque.

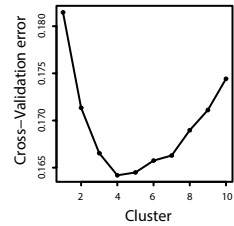
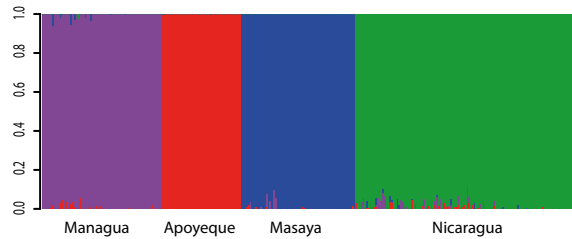
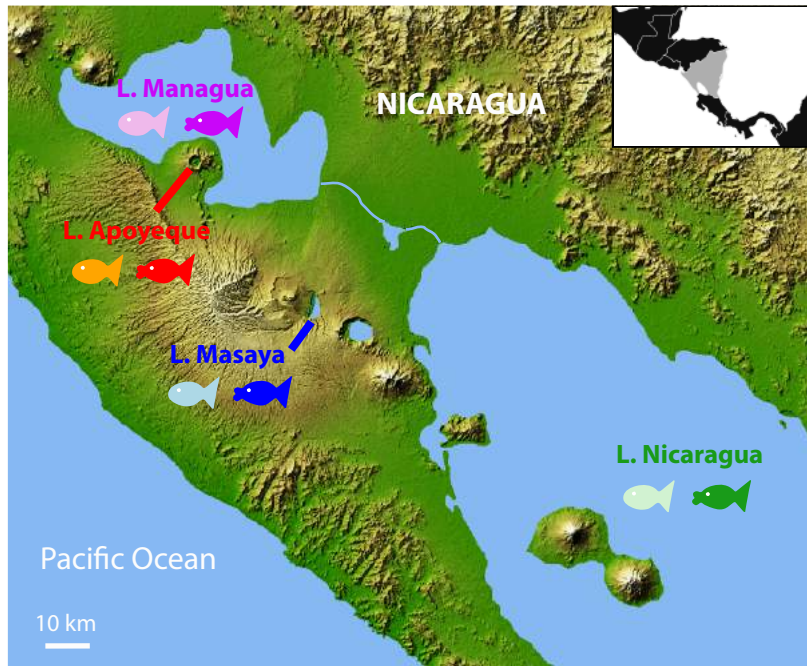
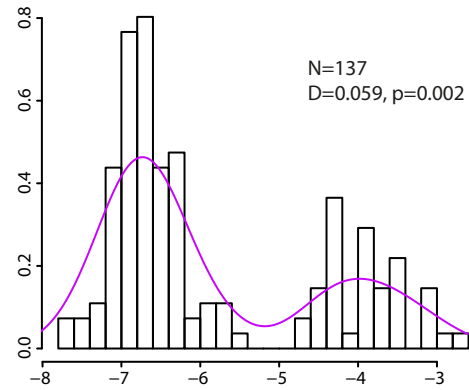
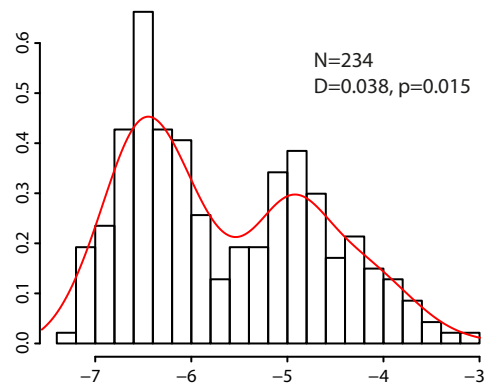
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888 **Fig. 3** Assortative mating by ecotypes. (A) Assortative mating in crater lake
889 Apoyeque. Census of pairs during breeding season 2013-2014. Observed number of
890 pairs (red/orange) and expected under random mating (grey) are shown. (B) Strong
891 Assortative mating under laboratory conditions between *A. citrinellus* (thin-lipped) and
892 *A. labiatus* (thick-lipped) from great lake Nicaragua. Observed number of pairs (green
893 or light green) and expected under random mating (grey) are shown. (C) Correlation
894 between normalized lip area of mating females and males under laboratory
895 conditions.

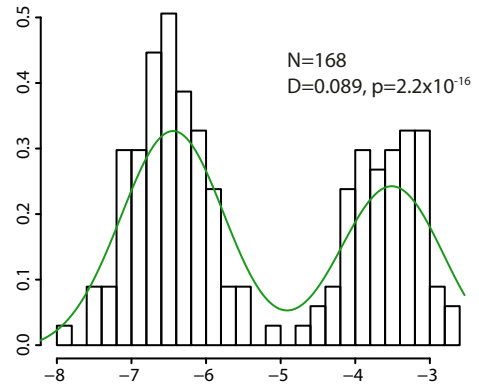
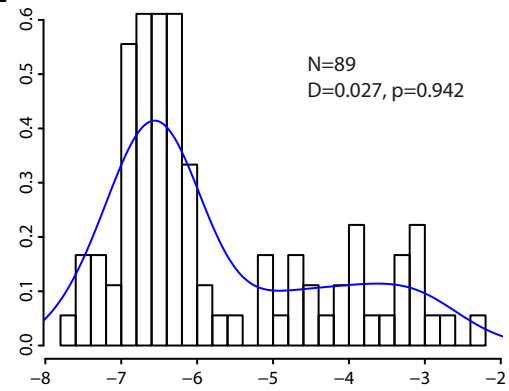
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897 **Fig. 4** Genetic relationship and differentiation between ecotypes. (A) Neighbor-joining
898 tree showing that fish from crater lakes Apoyeque (red/orange) and Masaya
899 (blue/light blue) share a more recent common ancestor with those from great lake
900 Managua than great lake Nicaragua (purple/light purple). Thick- and thin-lipped
901 ecotypes from great lake Nicaragua are shown in green and light green, respectively.
902 (B, C) First three main axes of genetic variation (Principal Component Analysis)
903 between ecotypes in the great lakes Managua (purple/light purple) and Nicaragua
904 (green/light green). The first principal component of the PCA was highly significant
905 (p -value ~ 0) for both great lakes. Analyses based on 16 286 and 21 465 polymorphic
906 loci for great lake Managua and Nicaragua, respectively. (D, E) First three main axes
907 of genetic variation (principal components) between ecotypes in the crater lakes
908 Apoyeque (red/orange) and Masaya (blue/light blue). The first principal component of
909 the PCA was highly significant for crater lake Masaya but only slightly significant for
910 L. Apoyeque ($p = 9.34 \times 10^{-29}$ and $p = 0.011$, respectively). Analyses based on 13 547

911 and 6693 polymorphic loci for crater Masaya and Apoyeque, respectively. (F)
912 Schematic illustrations of the most supported demographic models of crater lakes
913 Apoyeque and Masaya assuming great lake Managua as the source population.
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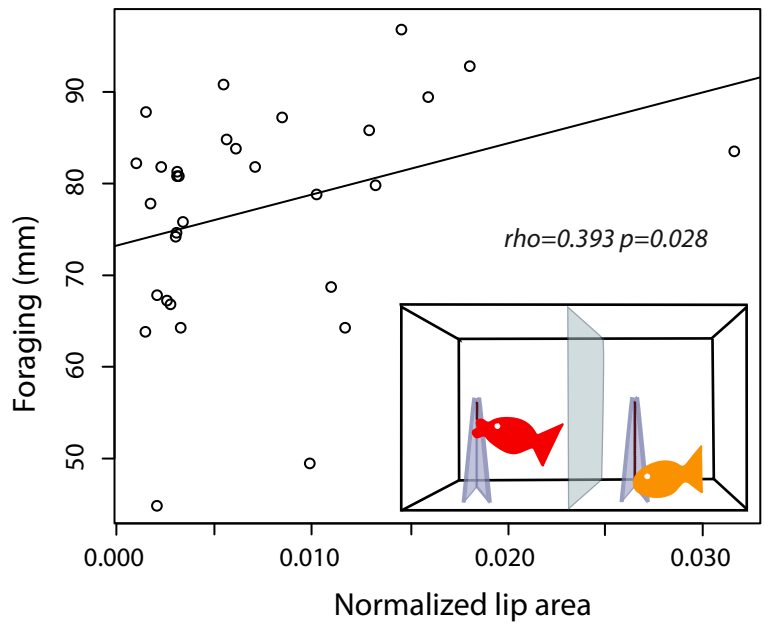
A**Molecular Ecology****B****D**

Log(normalized lip area)

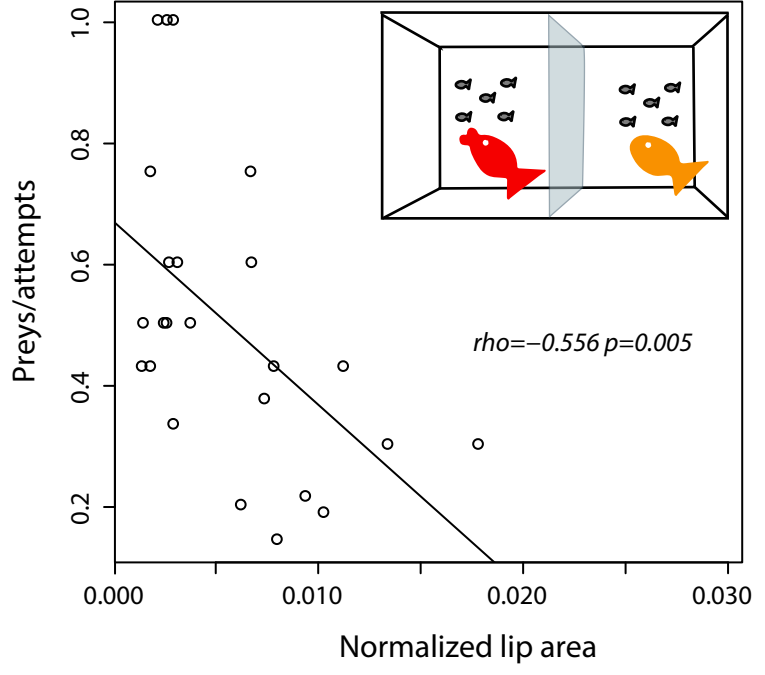
C**E**

Log(normalized lip area)

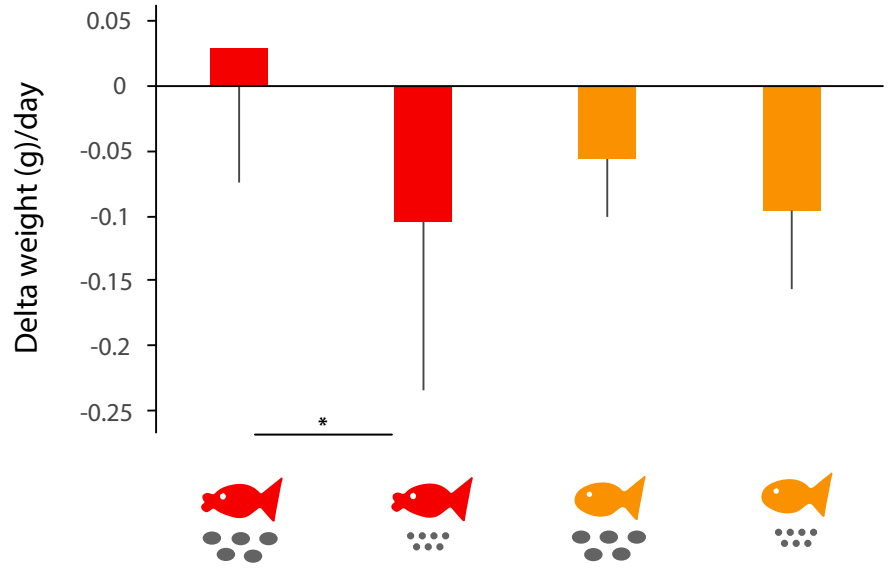
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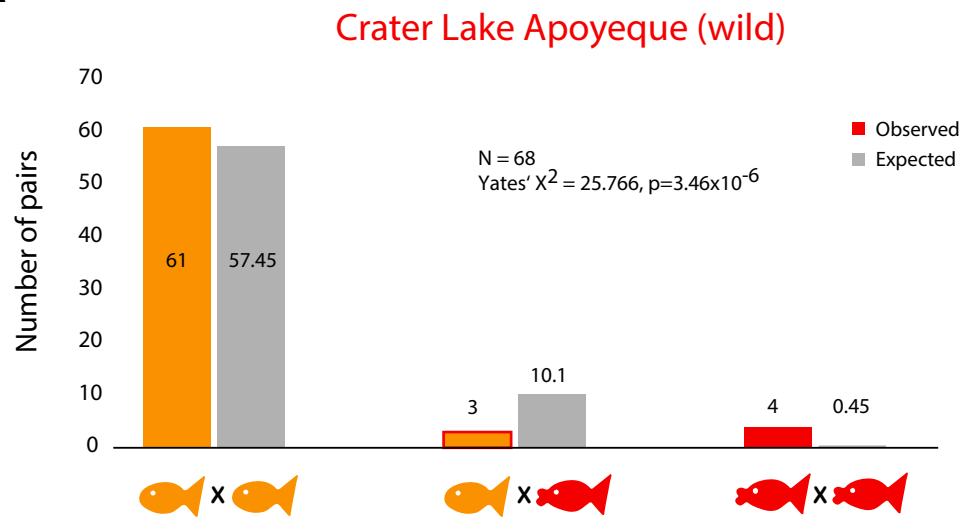
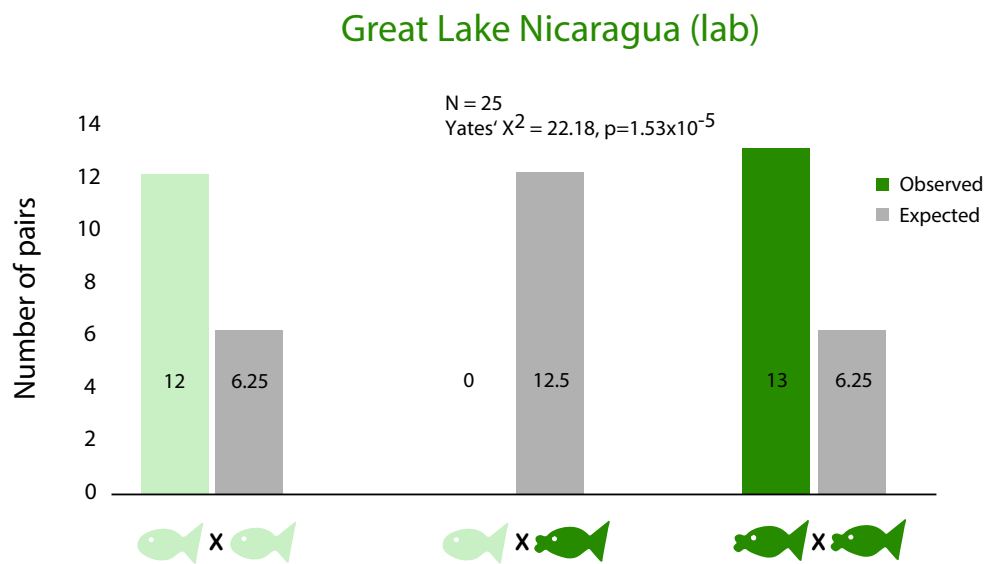


B



C



A**B****C**