Impacts of native and invasive plants on mosquito ecology and management

Allison (Allie) Gardner
School of Biology and Ecology, University of Maine
allison.gardner@maine.edu

The ecological impact of invasive plants

Increased rates of stream erosion

Lower air quality and reduced filtration

Loss of benefits of wildlife diversity

Common buckthorn

Amur honeysuckle

*Multiflora rose*

Autumn olive

Vector-borne disease

Increased risk of tick-borne ehrlichiosis due to an increase in tick-host encounter frequency associated with invasive plants
(Allan et al. 2010, *PNAS*)

Increased risk of tick-borne disease via effects on leaf litter depth, soil moisture, and host abundance
(Elias et al. 2006, *J Med Ent*)

Vegetation and vector mosquito ecology

1) **_Attract_** females for oviposition (habitat discovery)
2) Provide **_food source_** for developing larvae, fueling adult emergence rates (habitat quality)

| Egg | → | Larva | → | Pupa | → | Adult | - - → | Host |
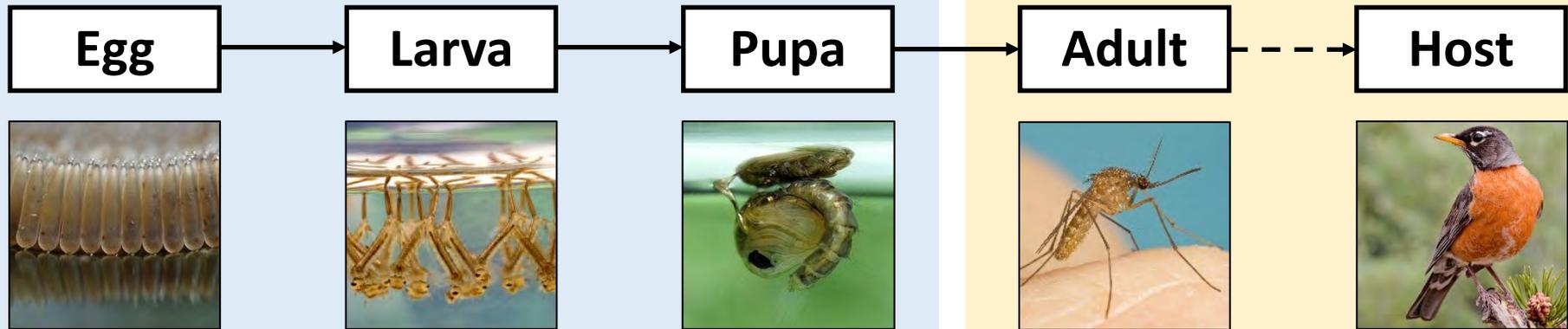
Bacterial flora

Leaf detritus

3) Provide **_resting sites_** (local vector abundance)
4) Regulate local **_microclimate conditions_** (vector longevity)
4) Provide **_sugar sources_** for male mosquitoes and females between blood meals (vector longevity)
5) Provide habitat for **_blood-meal hosts_** (vector-host encounter frequency)

Mosquito oviposition and emergence
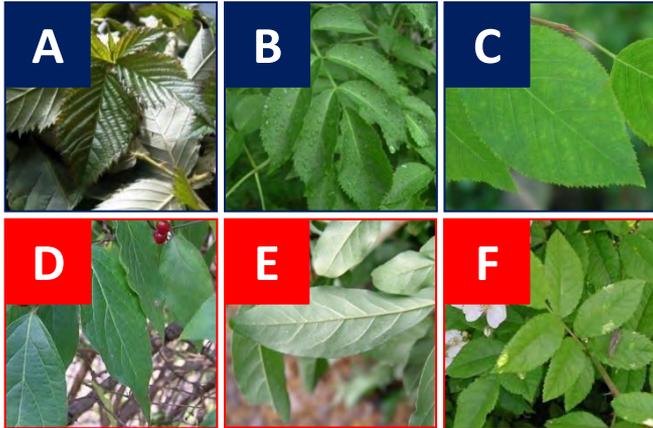
A) Blackberry, *Rubus allegheniensis* (native)
B) Elderberry, *Sambucus canadensis* (native)
C) Serviceberry, *Amelanchier laevis* (native)
D) Amur honeysuckle, *Lonicera maackii* (exotic invasive)
E) Autumn olive, *Elaeagnus umbellata* (exotic invasive)
F) Multiflora rose, *Rosa multiflora* (exotic invasive)

Gardner et al. 2015, *Parasites & Vectors*
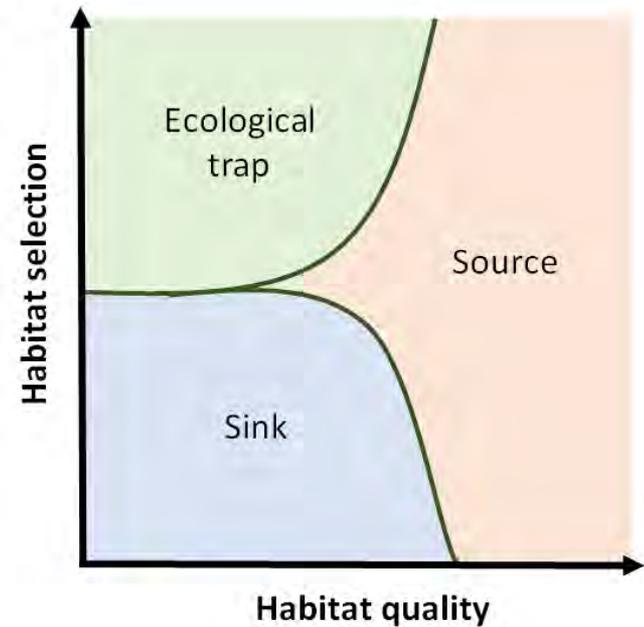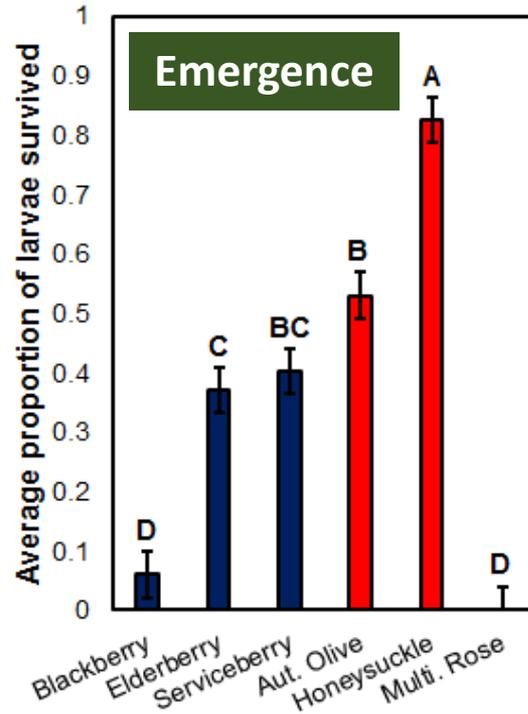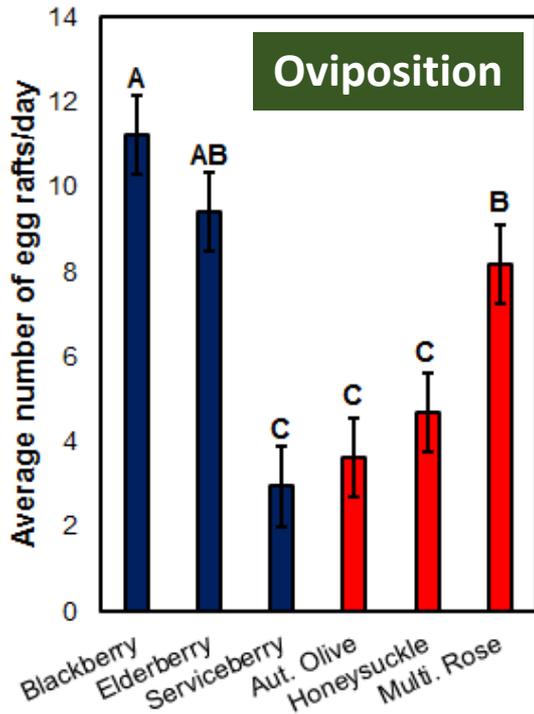
Mechanisms underlying emergence rates

Expt 1: Leaf infusion
(2 g leaves/360 mL water)
Single species: honeysuckle (H), autumn olive (A) blackberry (B), elderberry (E)
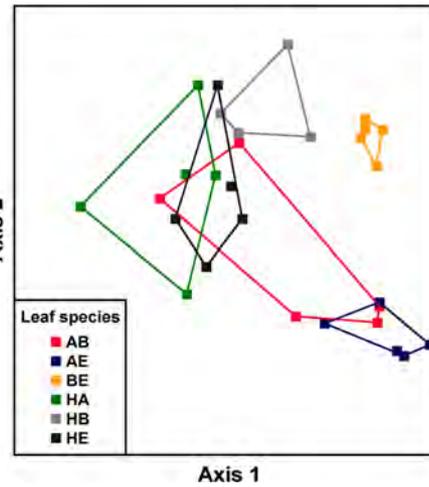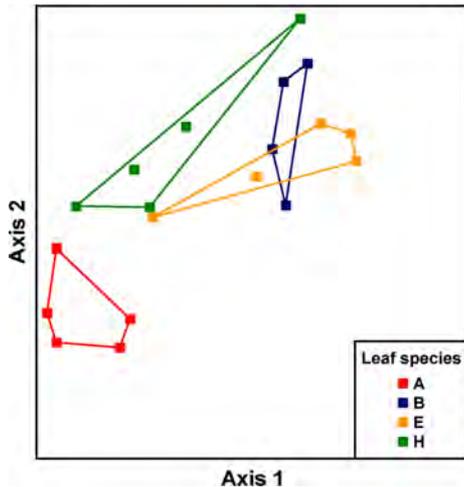**Mixed species:** HA, HB, HE, AB, AE, BE

Expt 2: Filtered infusion
(10 mg Tetramin/2 days)
-- Leaf infusion from same batch as Expt 1 with same mixtures as Expt 1
-- Vacuum-filtered to remove all microbes
-- Provided uniform diet across mixtures (10 mg Tetramin on day 0 + 10 mg every 2 days)

Sequence 16S V4 region to identify bacterial OTUs

Larvae

Bacteria

Leaves

Axis 2 / Axis 1

Leaf species
A
B
E
H

Axis 2 / Axis 1

Leaf species
AB
AE
BE
HA
HB
HE

Significant pairwise differences between bacterial communities reflect pairwise differences in emergence

BH   AB   BE
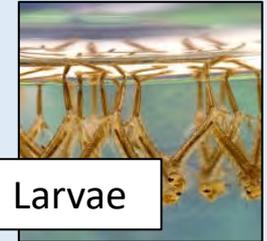
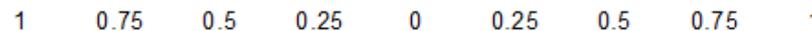# Mechanisms underlying habitat selection

Treatment	Preparation/Importance
Deionized water	Negative control
Whole infusion	Positive control; fermented leaves in water for 7 day period
Microbes only	Pelleted microbes by centrifugation and re-suspended in DI water
Leachate only	Removed microbes by vacuum filtration

Applications for mosquito management

	Oviposition rate		
	Low 0-5 eggs/day	**Medium** 5-15 eggs/day	**High** 15+ eggs/day

Emergence rate:
- **Low** 0-33%: Multiflora Rose (Medium), Blackberry (High)
- **Medium** 33-66%: Serviceberry (Low), Elderberry (Medium)
- **High** 66-100%: Autumn Olive (Medium), Honeysuckle (Medium)

Legend:
- ■ Blackberry
- ■ Elderberry
- ■ Serviceberry
- ■ Honeysuckle
- ■ Autumn Olive
- ■ Multiflora Rose

Can these results be exploited for vector control practices that improve the efficacy of and/or reduce reliance on conventional insecticides?

**Some exotic, invasive shrubs promote mosquito production.** Honeysuckle and autumn olive are associated with high survival and medium oviposition.

**A native plant is an ecological trap for *Culex pipiens*.** Blackberry is associated with low survival and high oviposition; there is a mismatch between selection for and quality of this habitat.

Application: Vector control in catch basins

Can ecological traps be exploited for "attract-and-kill" mosquito control in urban/suburban storm water environments?
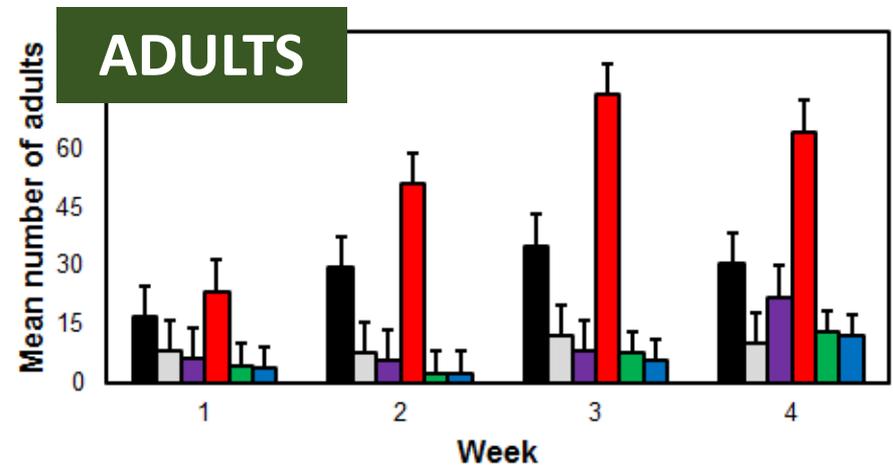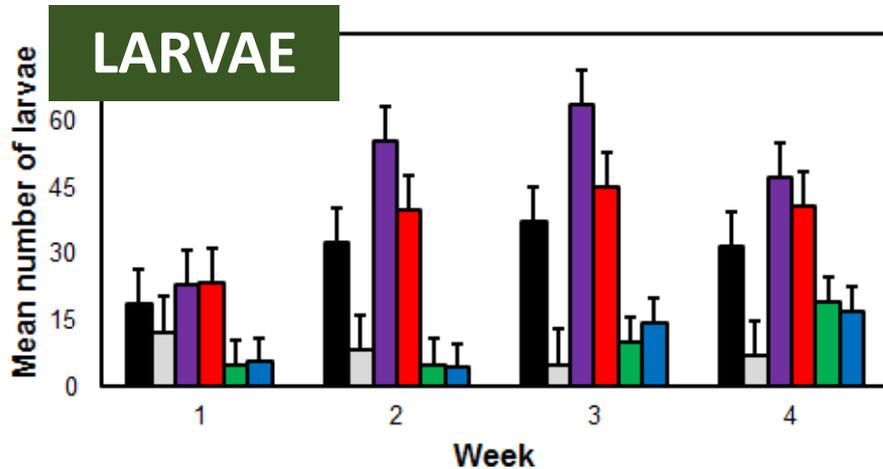

Treatment	Importance
Honeysuckle leaves	Attractants only
Blackberry leaves	Attract-and-kill (natural)
Bti briquette	Insecticide only
Honeysuckle + Bti	Attract-and-kill (artificial)
All leaves removed	Negative control
No modification	Positive control
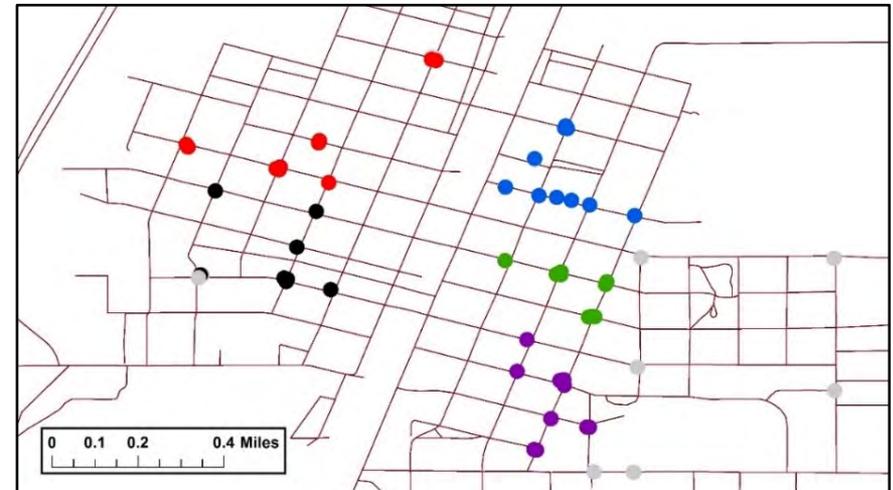
Application: Invasive plant management

Does management of Amur honeysuckle reduce mosquito abundance?

	Year 1 (2014)	Year 2 (2015)
Control Location (0.6 stems/m²)	Honeysuckle intact	Honeysuckle intact
Treatment Location (1.8 stems/m²)	Honeysuckle intact	Honeysuckle cleared

Before

$F_{1,16} = 123.61, P < 0.01$

After
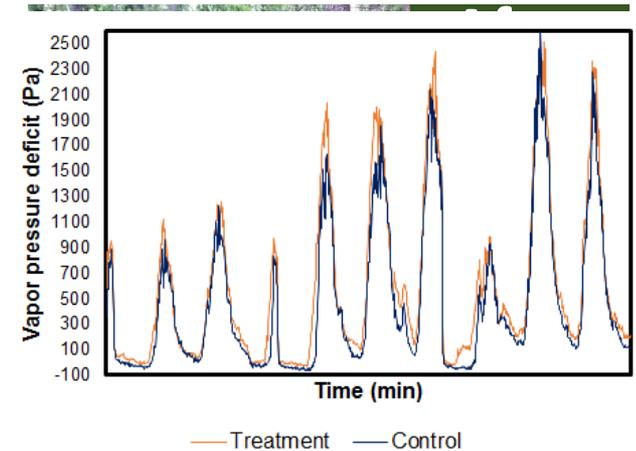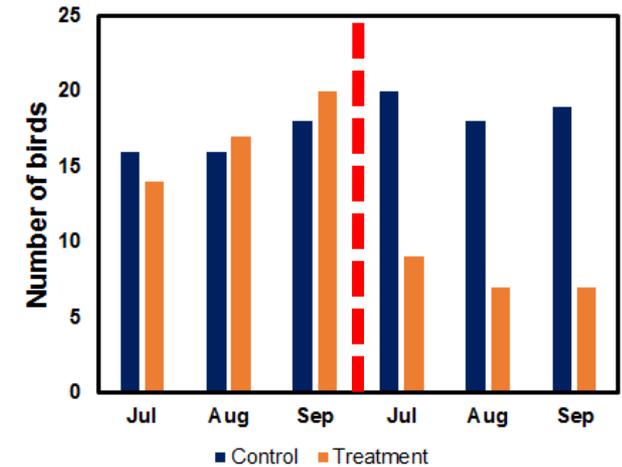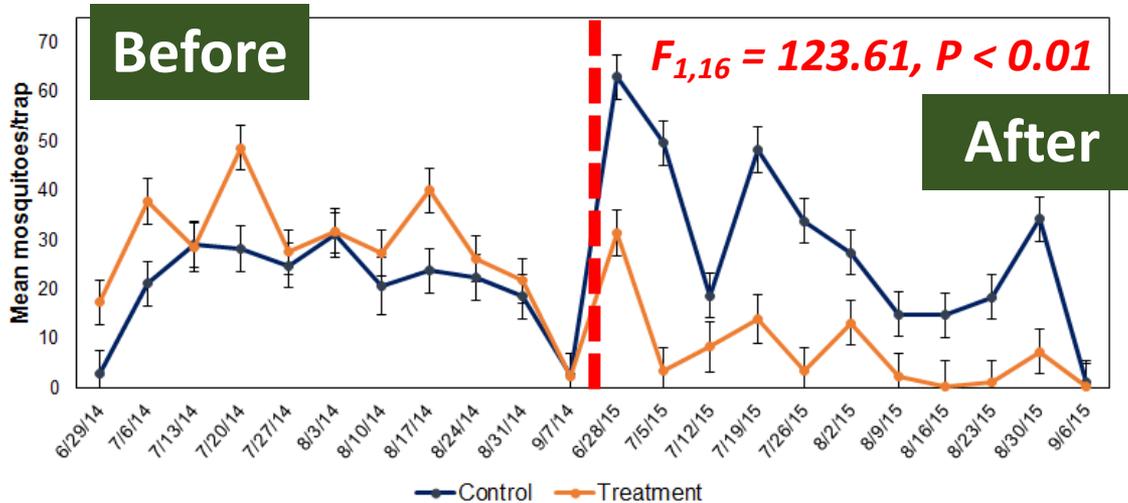
$$y_{ijkl} = \mu + L_i + Y_j + LY_{ij} + \varepsilon_{1(ijk)} + W_{(j)l} + LW_{(j)il} + \varepsilon_{2(ijkl)}$$

Research Summary

Leaf detritus from native and invasive plant species in the aquatic larval habitat alters adult emergence and oviposition rates of *Culex pipiens*

Variation in emergence rates is related to the different bacterial communities associated with leaves of different plants

Variation in oviposition rates most likely is related to phytochemicals leaching from leaves from different plants

Storm water mosquito control application
Ecological traps may be exploited for attract-and-kill control of larvae in storm water catch basins

Invasive plant removal application
Removal of *Lonicera maackii* reduces abundance of mosquitoes and their avian hosts in forest fragments

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Collaborators
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Juma Muturi, USDA ARS
Page Fredericks, University of Illinois
Andrew Mackay, IL Natural History Survey
Raymond Chang, INHS
Millon Blackshear, INHS
Jeff Bara, INHS
Allison Parker, Northern Kentucky U
Tanya Josek, Illinois State University