

Learning-induced switching costs in a parasitoid  
can maintain diversity of host aphid phenotypes  
although biocontrol is destabilised under abiotic  
stress

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## Summary

1. Aphid populations frequently include phenotypes that are resistant to parasitism by hymenopterous parasitoid wasps, which is often attributed to the presence of ‘protective’ facultative endosymbionts residing in aphid tissues, particularly *Hamiltonella defensa*. In field conditions, under parasitoid pressure, the observed coexistence of aphids with and without protective symbionts cannot be explained by their difference in fitness alone.
2. Using the cereal aphid *Rhopalosiphum padi* as a model, we propose an alternative mechanism whereby parasitoids are more efficient at finding common phenotypes of aphid and experience a fitness cost when switching to the less common phenotype.
3. We construct a model based on delay differential equations and parameterise and validate the model with values within the ranges obtained from experimental studies. We then use it to explore possible effects on system dynamics under conditions of environmental stress, using our existing data on the effects of drought stress in crops as an example.
4. We show the ‘switching penalty’ incurred by parasitoids leads to stable coexistence of aphids with and without *H. defensa* and provides a potential mechanism for maintaining phenotypic diversity amongst host organisms. We show that drought-induced reduction in aphid development time has little impact. However, greater reduction in fecundity on droughted plants of symbiont-protected aphids can cause insect population cycles when the system would be stable in the absence of drought stress.

5. The stabilising effect of the increased efficiency in dealing with more commonly encountered host phenotypes is applicable to a broad range of consumer-resource systems and could explain stable coexistence in competitive environments. The loss of stable coexistence when drought has different effects on the competing aphid phenotypes highlights the importance of scenario testing when considering biocontrol for pest management.

## Keywords

climate change, drought, *H. defensa*, mathematical model, parasitoid, symbiont

## Introduction

1 Understanding the biotic and abiotic factors regulating insect pest dynamics is crit-  
2 ical for reducing agriculture’s reliance on pesticides and developing non-chemical  
3 alternatives. Progress in this area is often constrained, however, by limited knowl-  
4 edge and supporting data about factors regulating pest populations. Aphids are  
5 successful herbivores and crop pests (Dixon, 1985), feeding on the phloem sap of  
6 plants and inflicting damage by removing plant resources and transmitting eco-  
7 nomically damaging plant viruses (Stevens and Lancomme, 2017). Like many  
8 plant-feeding insects, they can be infected by facultative bacterial endosymbionts  
9 that alter insect fitness traits (Zytynska et al., 2019, preprint), but evidence is  
10 scarce regarding the overall contribution of these symbionts to aphid population  
11 regulation. As empirical data are scarce, mathematical modelling provides a tool  
12 for examining the effects of symbiont infection on aphid population dynamics un-

13 der different environmental scenarios.

#### 14 **Aphid-natural enemy dynamics**

15 The summer asexual morph is the most damaging part of the aphid life cycle:  
16 it exhibits rapid development to adulthood, reproduces parthenogenetically, and  
17 gives birth to live nymphs, which means that aphid numbers can build up quickly  
18 on summer vegetation (Dixon, 1985). Summer aphid population dynamics are  
19 influenced by host plant availability and quality, and by natural enemy abun-  
20 dance and activity (e.g. Karley et al., 2004). Modelling and experimental studies  
21 have shown that the combined effects of these natural enemies have the potential  
22 to regulate aphid populations (Kindlmann and Dixon, 2010; Karley et al., 2003,  
23 2004), but aphid suppression is not always achieved. Variable aphid suppression  
24 by natural enemies might be explained by symbiont-encoded fitness traits that  
25 lead to coexistence of natural enemy-resistant and -susceptible aphids (Oliver and  
26 Higashi, 2019). Aphids are attacked by several hymenopterous endoparasitoid  
27 species (Boivin et al., 2012). Female parasitoid wasps insert an egg into the aphid  
28 abdomen; the egg hatches and the emerging larva consumes and eventually kills  
29 the aphid, which becomes a dried husk or ‘mummy’ case for the pupating wasp. In  
30 many aphid species, a proportion of individuals fail to succumb to parasitism after  
31 wasp oviposition, which has been attributed to aphid-encoded resistance factors  
32 (Martinez et al., 2014; Clarke et al., 2017) and to the presence of ‘protective’ facul-  
33 tative endosymbionts residing in aphid tissues, particularly *Hamiltonella defensa*  
34 (previously known as T type or PABS endosymbiont: Oliver et al. (2003); Moran  
35 et al. (2005); see Guo et al. (2017); Vorburger (2018) for recent reviews). As par-  
36 asitoids are frequently used as biocontrol agents for aphids infesting agricultural

37 and horticultural crops, understanding the effects of parasitism resistance on pest  
38 population dynamics is crucial for improving parasitoid efficacy.

### 39 **The cost of parasitism-resistance: aphids**

40 The coexistence of parasitism-resistant and -susceptible aphids within aphid pop-  
41 ulations suggests that natural enemy resistance entails a fitness cost. Resistance  
42 trade-offs clearly exist: in closed systems, pea aphid, *Acyrtosiphon pisum*, phe-  
43 notypes that harbour *H. defensa* reach high frequencies in the presence of para-  
44 sitoids, but uninfected phenotypes dominate in the absence of parasitism (Oliver  
45 et al., 2008); a similar reduction in abundance of *H. defensa*-infected aphids when  
46 parasitism pressure is absent has been demonstrated in the cowpea aphid, *Aphis*  
47 *craccivora* (Dykstra et al., 2014). However, such changes in the frequency of in-  
48 fected aphids occurred over an extended period (weeks-months), probably because  
49 the fitness costs of resistance tend to be small or moderate for aphid life history  
50 parameters such as aphid lifespan and fecundity (Gwynn et al., 2005; Vorburger  
51 and Gouskov, 2011; Vorburger et al., 2013; Martinez et al., 2018) or only occur  
52 on certain plant species (Leybourne et al., 2020; Karley et al., 2017; Clarke et al.,  
53 2017). Given that the fitness costs of parasitism resistance are relatively small  
54 and/or context-dependent, it is unclear why resistant aphids do not dominate  
55 natural populations.

56 Where there is a cost to host resistance, we might expect oscillatory cycles in  
57 parasitoid and aphid abundance that are typical of eco-epidemiological systems  
58 (see Boots et al. (2008) for a review), namely that parasitoid numbers decline due  
59 to the presence of resistant hosts, allowing susceptible hosts to increase in fre-  
60 quency, which subsequently promotes parasitoid abundance. In field populations,

61 changes in the frequency of resistant (symbiont-infected) aphids can occur over the  
62 course of 2-3 weeks (e.g. in *A. pisum* populations on alfalfa: Smith et al. (2015)).  
63 This is more rapid than in closed systems, (described above), which suggests that  
64 the fitness costs to aphids of being resistant are not sufficiently large to cause  
65 oscillation dynamics. Indeed, the detailed model developed by Kwiatkowski and  
66 Vorburger (2012) showed that an implausibly high constitutive fitness cost to host-  
67 ing the symbiont, or a high cost of induced resistance, was required for coexistence  
68 of aphids with and without protective symbiont (*H. defensa*) infection. Together,  
69 these lines of evidence suggest that other mechanisms need to be invoked to explain  
70 short term changes in symbiont infection frequency in aphid populations.

#### 71 **The cost of parasitism-resistance: parasitoids**

72 It is possible that an alternative mechanism could operate to regulate resistant  
73 and susceptible aphid frequencies, whereby the fitness cost is experienced by the  
74 parasitoid due to an effect on host discovery or handling. Ecological theory sug-  
75 gests that if parasitoids learn to handle frequently encountered (i.e. competitive)  
76 hosts more rapidly, less competitive (and therefore less common) hosts might be  
77 able to persist (Chase et al., 2002; Chesson and Kuang, 2008, 2010). Ishii and  
78 Shimada (2012) provided an example of this mechanism: they conditioned the  
79 generalist pteromalid wasp *Anisopteromalus calandrae* on a single bruchid beetle  
80 host species, either *Callosbruchus chinensis* or *C. maculatus*, and found a clear  
81 response to the conditioning in choice tests when both species were present. Tak-  
82 ing account of this type of learning explained why the presence of this common  
83 parasitoid extended the period of coexistence of *C. chinensis* and *C. maculatus*,  
84 despite the weaker competitiveness of the former species in the absence of para-

85 sitism. The more efficient discovery or handling of common hosts can be inter-  
86 preted as a switching penalty in the form of less efficient handling of, or searching  
87 for, less common hosts (see below). The existence of a switching penalty has not  
88 been investigated explicitly for aphid parasitoids but might be anticipated based  
89 on knowledge of parasitoid biology and the behaviour of parasitoids and/or their  
90 aphid hosts during attack. Generalist aphid parasitoids often show innate prefer-  
91 ences for specific host species (Rehman and Powell, 2010). Host preference can be  
92 modified, however, by conditioning to the host types from which they were reared  
93 and by learning from ovipositional experience when parasitoids sample alternative  
94 host types (Chow and Mackauer, 1992; Rehman and Powell, 2010). Several studies  
95 have demonstrated the potential for parasitoids to experience a penalty - in the  
96 form of increased time for host location and handling - when switching between  
97 aphid hosts differing in quality (e.g. Slater et al., 2019) and illustrate that para-  
98 sitoids can distinguish between parasitism-resistant and -susceptible types due to  
99 symbiont-conferred effects on aphid defensive behaviour or pheromone production  
100 susceptibility to parasitism (e.g. Dion et al., 2011; Oliver et al., 2012). These lines  
101 of evidence suggest that changes in oviposition behaviour could incur a cost to the  
102 parasitoid; we were intrigued, therefore, to find out whether this potential switch-  
103 ing cost could help to explain coexistence of parasitism-resistant and -susceptible  
104 hosts in aphid populations.

## 105 **Cereal aphid biocontrol in a changing climate**

106 To test the possibility of this mechanism operating in an aphid-parasitoid system,  
107 we present a model based on the generalist hymenopterous parasitoid *Aphidius*  
108 *colemani* attacking the cereal-feeding aphid *Rhopalosiphum padi*. This model in-

109 corporates switching penalties and offers plausible explanation for coexistence of  
110 aphids with (resistant) and without (susceptible) the protective symbiont *H. de-*  
111 *fensa*. *R. padi* is a pest of global relevance to cereal crop production, transmitting  
112 plant viruses that can cause yield losses of 30% or higher (Perry et al., 2000;  
113 Finlay and Luck, 2011). Although seasonal dynamics of *H. defensa* infection fre-  
114 quencies are not yet available within *R. padi* populations, the symbiont is known  
115 to provide protection against parasitism by *A. colemani* (Leybourne et al., 2020)  
116 and we have a comprehensive description of this aphid-parasitoid system from our  
117 previous experimental work (Leybourne et al., 2019, 2020) that can be used for  
118 model parameterisation. Initial densities of resistant (*H. defensa*-infected) and  
119 susceptible (uninfected) aphids are equal in model simulations. In field conditions,  
120 resistant aphids tend to be more common when parasitoid pressure is high (using  
121 *H. defensa*-infection in *A. pisum* populations as an example: Smith et al., 2015).  
122 Adopting this scenario as a starting point, we therefore impose a cost incurred by  
123 the parasitoid when switching from resistant to susceptible aphids. First, we de-  
124 velop a single stage model, tractable to fixed point analysis, that we use to assess  
125 critical values of the switching penalty and conditions required for co-existence.  
126 We extend it to build a more realistic and more complex stage structured model  
127 incorporating an explicit juvenile stage to determine the effects of including dif-  
128 ferent aphid life stages on coexistence of aphid hosts. The stage-structured model  
129 allows us to explore the effects of environmental stress, which can vary with aphid  
130 development stage. We were particularly interested in testing the effects of drought  
131 on coexistence as our previous research has shown that drought stress affects *R.*  
132 *padi* population structure (Aslam et al., 2013) and aphid fitness (Leybourne et al.,  
133 unpublished), and this is supported by other studies demonstrating the effects of



134 drought on aphid fitness and suitability as prey for natural enemies (Hale et al.,  
135 2003; Tariq et al., 2012; Wade et al., 2017). Climate change-imposed stresses are  
136 predicted to have dramatic effects on host-parasitoid interactions (e.g. Jeffs and  
137 Lewis, 2013); using drought as an example, we illustrate the model's utility for  
138 testing whether the switching penalty effects on aphid coexistence are robust un-  
139 der different environmental stresses. We discuss the implications of our findings for  
140 aphid-parasitoid dynamics and aphid biocontrol and identify modelling outcomes  
141 that might be generally applicable to host-parasitoid or predator-prey dynamics  
142 under fluctuating environmental conditions such as those imposed by a changing  
143 climate.

## 144 **Materials and Methods**

### 145 **Model Construction**

#### 146 **Single Stage Model**

147 We consider a model with one species of parasitoid  $P$  and two phenotypes of  
148 host aphids  $H_s$  and  $H_d$  where the only difference between the two is that  $H_d$   
149 carries the symbiont *H. defensa* which confers resistance to parasitism, whereas  
150  $H_s$  is susceptible. *H. defensa* is known to be maternally-inherited (Sandström  
151 et al., 2001) so we assume perfect vertical transmission and ignore any seasonal  
152 transmission dynamics. We further assume that other natural predators remain at  
153 a level sufficient to maintain a per capita rate of aphid consumption,  $\delta_h$  and that  
154 parasitoids have a natural mortality rate of  $\delta_p$ . Initially we will consider a model  
155 which excludes development time (age structure) and assume host reproduction is

156 logistic with a maximum reproductive rate  $r$  and carrying capacity  $C$ .

157 Assuming that the parasitoids attempt to parasitise hosts of phenotype  $k$  at  
 158 a rate  $\Phi(H_k, H_l)$  (a function of the densities of both host types discussed below)  
 159 and are successful on a proportion  $\epsilon_k$  of attempts (where  $k$  and  $l$  are  $s$  or  $d$ ), the  
 160 system is modelled by the following system of ODEs:

$$\frac{dH_s}{dt} = rH_s \left( 1 - \frac{\delta_h}{r} - \frac{H_s + H_d}{C} \right) - \epsilon_s \Phi(H_s, H_d) P \quad (1)$$

$$\frac{dH_d}{dt} = rH_d \left( 1 - \frac{\delta_h}{r} - \frac{H_s + H_d}{C} \right) - \epsilon_d \Phi(H_d, H_s) P \quad (2)$$

$$\frac{dP}{dt} = [\epsilon_s \Phi(H_s, H_d) + \epsilon_d \Phi(H_d, H_s)] P - \delta_p P \quad (3)$$

161 We use a function for  $\Phi$  proposed by Van Leeuwen et al. (2013) which is based  
 162 on the Holling disc equation, but which allows the searching efficiency for a given  
 163 aphid to differ depending on which phenotype of aphid was last parasitised. The  
 164 Holling disc equation assumes that in a period of time  $T$ , the number of hosts of  
 165 phenotype  $k$  parasitised by each parasitoid,  $N_k$ , depends on the discovery rate (or  
 166 searching efficiency),  $\alpha_k$  ( $k = s, d$ ). It increases with the density of hosts  $H$  and  
 167 the time available for searching (or hunting),  $T_h$ .

$$N_k = \alpha_k T_h H_k \quad (4)$$

168 The time available for searching is the total time available  $T$ , less that used for  
 169 handling hosts. Thus if  $\gamma$  is the handling time for each host we have

$$T_s = T - \gamma(N_s + N_d). \quad (5)$$

170 Combining equations 4 and 5 and rearranging we get

$$N_k = \frac{\alpha_k H_k T}{(1 + \gamma (\alpha_s H_s + \alpha_d H_d))} \quad (6)$$

171 and setting  $T = 1$  yields the parasitism rate,  $\Phi(H_k, H_l) = \Phi_k$ , of hosts of pheno-  
172 type  $k$  per unit time

$$\Phi_k = \frac{\alpha_k H_k}{(1 + \gamma (\alpha_s H_s + \alpha_d H_d))} \quad (7)$$

173 where Van Leeuwen et al. (2013) modify this to incorporate a penalty for switching,  
174  $s_{kl}$ , which is the reduction in searching efficiency due to switching from phenotype  
175  $k$  to phenotype  $l$ .

$$\Phi(H_k, H_l) = \frac{\alpha_k H_k (s_{sk} \alpha_s H_s + s_{dk} \alpha_d H_d)}{(\alpha_s H_s + \alpha_d H_d) (1 + \gamma (s_{sk} \alpha_s H_s + s_{dk} \alpha_d H_d))}$$

176 Without loss of generality, we assume that  $s_{ss} = s_{dd} = 1$ . Further, we assume  
177 that the two aphid phenotypes are identical except that one is more resistant to  
178 parasitoid attachment than the other. Thus  $\alpha_s = \alpha_d$  and

$$\Phi(H_k, H_l) = \frac{\alpha H_k (s_{sk} H_s + s_{dk} H_d)}{(H_s + H_d) (1 + \alpha \gamma (s_{sk} H_s + s_{dk} H_d))} \quad (8)$$

179 Assuming that reproduction is greater than background mortality ( $r > \delta_h$ ) and  
180 non-dimensionalising with respect to  $r$  and  $\delta_h$  we obtain the system:

$$\frac{d\hat{H}_s}{d\hat{t}} = \hat{H}_s \left( 1 - \hat{H}_s - \hat{H}_d \right) - \epsilon_s \Phi \left( \hat{H}_s, \hat{H}_d \right) \hat{P} \quad (9)$$

$$\frac{d\hat{H}_d}{d\hat{t}} = \hat{H}_d \left( 1 - \hat{H}_s - \hat{H}_d \right) - \epsilon_s \Phi \left( \hat{H}_d, \hat{H}_s \right) \hat{P} \quad (10)$$

$$\frac{d\hat{P}}{d\hat{t}} = \left( \epsilon_s \Phi \left( \hat{H}_s \right) + \epsilon_d \Phi \left( \hat{H}_d \right) \right) \hat{P} - \delta_p \hat{P} \quad (11)$$

181 where  $\hat{t} = (r - \delta_h)t$ ,  $\hat{H}_k = \frac{H_k}{C\left(1 - \frac{\delta_h}{r}\right)}$ ,  $\hat{P} = \frac{P}{C\left(1 - \frac{\delta_h}{r}\right)}$ ,  $\hat{\delta}_p = \frac{\delta_p}{r - \delta_h}$ ,  $\hat{\alpha}_k = \frac{\alpha_k C}{r}$ ,  
 182  $\hat{\gamma} = \gamma(r - \delta_h)$ . This highlights that the dynamics of the system will be determined  
 183 by the ratio of parasitoid mortality, attach rates and handling times to the intrinsic  
 184 rate of increase of the aphid population. For ease of reading we will drop the hats  
 185 from this point, and this non-dimensionalised system is assumed unless stated  
 186 otherwise.

## 187 Stage-Structured Model

188 The stage structured model introduces an explicit juvenile stage where aphid  
 189 nymphs of phenotype  $k$  are denoted by  $J_k$  and adults by  $H_k$ . Juvenile and adult  
 190 aphids utilise the same resources so density dependent reproduction is a function  
 191 of both nymphs and adults. However, parasitised nymphs, denoted  $I$ , move less  
 192 and form mummies shortly after parasitism so they are excluded from density de-  
 193 pendence and are not separated by phenotype. It is further assumed that adult  
 194 parasitoids only parasitise juvenile aphid nymphs (Ives et al., 1999). Hence, the  
 195 full stage-structured model is given by:

$$\frac{dJ_k}{dt} = rH_k \left( 1 - \frac{\delta_j}{r} - \frac{H+J}{C} \right) - \epsilon_k \Phi(J_k, J_l) P \quad (12)$$

$$\frac{dH_k}{dt} = \int_{s=t-\tau_h}^t \dot{J}_k(t-\tau_h) ds - \delta_h H_k \quad (13)$$

$$\frac{dI}{dt} = \epsilon_s \Phi(J_s) P + \epsilon_d \Phi(J_d) P - \delta_i I \quad (14)$$

$$\frac{dP}{dt} = \int_{s=t-\tau_p}^t \dot{I}(t-\tau_p) ds - \delta_p P \quad (15)$$

$$k, l = s, d \quad (16)$$

196 where  $H = H_s + H_d$  and  $J = J_s + J_d$ . The non-dimensionalised model is presented  
 197 in supporting information.

## 198 **Effects of Drought Stress**

199 We consider the possible effects on aphids carrying *H. defensa* (and hence those  
 200 more resistant to parasitism) of developing on drought stressed plants in the stage-  
 201 structured model. The first is to reduce the fecundity in the *H. defensa* carrying  
 202 phenotype (a reduction in  $r_d$ ). The non-dimensionalise equation for  $J_d$  is shown  
 203 in the supplementary information.

204 The second possibility is a decrease in aphid development times which would  
 205 involve decreasing  $\tau_h$  either for one or for both phenotypes (See Results).

## 206 **Model Parameterisation**

207 The advantage of the model as formulated is that there are relatively few param-  
 208 eters and many of the raw parameters are obtainable from available empirical in-

209 vestigations. The key parameters for the raw (as opposed to non-dimensionalised)  
210 model are summarised in table 1 and their derivation is discussed below. We first  
211 consider the stage-structured model which most closely describes the lifecycles  
212 of aphids and parasitoids and then the adjustments necessary to parameterise a  
213 comparable single stage model

214 Laboratory experiments described in Leybourne et al. (2020) have indicated  
215 that the bird cherry-oat aphid, *Rhopalosiphum padi* has juvenile aphid development  
216 time  $\tau_h=9$  days.

217 There is no field data for *R. padi* and very limited data for other species of  
218 aphid. However, Leybourne et al. (2020) found almost no nymph mortality after 7  
219 days in glasshouse conditions. In the field there is only data for caged aphids where  
220 Watt (1979) and Howard and Dixon (1992) found values of 87 – 95% survival of  
221 cereal aphids on immature plants and 25 – 40% on mature plants. Based on these  
222 data we assume that, in the field approximately 85% of juveniles *R. padi* survive to  
223 reproductive maturity after 9 days which implies a background natural mortality  
224 rate  $\delta_j = 0.018$  per nymph per day.

225 There is no direct field data for adult survival. However, Leybourne et al.  
226 (2020) found average adult survivorship after 21 days of 10 – 20% in glasshouse  
227 conditions and it is reasonable to assume that the same background field mortality  
228 that impacts juveniles will also apply to adults. The adult death rate of aphids  
229 ( $\delta_h$ ) is calculated from 2 components; a base rate of 0.087 per day so that 14.7%  
230 of individuals are alive after 21 days alongside a background field mortality rate  
231 of 0.018, calculated from juvenile survival. Therefore  $\delta_h = 0.087 + 0.018 = 0.105$   
232 so that after 21 days 9.7% of individuals are alive.

233 Leybourne et al. (2020) found that *R.padi* reproduces at a rate of approximately

234 5 nymphs per day for the first 9 days of reproductive maturity and approximately  
235 1 per day thereafter which over an 18 day adult lifespan would equate to an  
236 average rate of 3 nymphs per day which is consistent with other studies such as  
237 Dean (1974). Therefore assume a base reproductive rate, of  $r=3$  nymphs per  
238 adult per day. When investigating the possible effects of drought we assume aphid  
239 reproduction to be decreased under drought stress as previously reported (Hale  
240 et al., 2003; Johnson et al., 2011) with differential impacts on the two phenotypes  
241 of aphids.

242 The average development time of the parasitoid *A. colemani*, from egg to eclo-  
243 sion from an aphid host, is approximately 12 – 13 days under laboratory conditions  
244 (Kalule and Wright, 2005; Leybourne et al., 2020), but this was measured on a  
245 daily basis so those present at 12 days eclosed (i.e. emerged from the mummy  
246 case) at some point between 11 and 12 days old, similarly those present at 13  
247 days eclosed between 12 and 13 days. Therefore we assume  $\tau_p = 12$  days. Stee-  
248 nis (1993) found that juvenile mortality of *A. colemani* attacking *Aphis gossypii*  
249 was similar to that of the juvenile aphids so while the parasitised aphid nymph  
250 is alive its mortality rate will remain at  $\delta_j = 0.087$  per day. *R. padi* forms mum-  
251 mies after approximately 6 days and approximately 90% of mummies will eclose  
252 to adult parasitoids 6 days later (*Leybourne pers. comm.*). We are not modelling  
253 the mummified stage separately so to translate the mortality rate into an average  
254 mortality rate,  $\delta_i$  over 12 days we have the probability of a parasitoid egg eclosing  
255 to an adult

$$(1 - \delta_i)^{12} = 0.9(1 - \delta_j)^6$$

256 Therefore

$$\delta_i = 1 - 0.9^{1/12} (1 - \delta_j)^{1/2} = 0.0177.$$

257 Adult parasitoid longevity is approximately 20 days (Sampaio et al., 2008), similar  
258 to the aphids so we set  $\delta_p = \delta_h = 0.105$  meaning that 90% of parasitoids have died  
259 after 20 days.

260 Aslam et al. (2013) found that in glasshouse conditions when individuals of  
261 another generalist parasitoid *Aphidius ervi* were restricted to searching for *R.padi*  
262 on a single plant the number of attacks was very variable. However, on average  
263 17 aphid nymphs were parasitised in a 30 minute period which would equate to 34  
264 in an hour, but all attacks occurred within the first 10 minutes suggesting that a  
265 parasitoid could theoretically parasitise over 100 nymphs an hour, but it is likely  
266 to be fewer. The handling time,  $\gamma$ , is assumed to be 0.001 days (equivalent to 86.4  
267 seconds) allowing a parasitism rate of 41.7 nymphs per hour if there has been no  
268 switching.

269 *A. colemani* can successfully parasitise approximately 20% of aphids infected  
270 with *H. defensa* and 30 – 70% of aphids uninfected with the symbiont (Leybourne  
271 et al., 2020) thus we assume that parasitism efficiency  $\epsilon_d$  on the symbiont carrying  
272 host  $H_d$  is 0.2 and consider the two extreme values of  $\epsilon_s$ , 0.3 and 0.7, on the  
273 uninfected (and so more susceptible) host  $H_s$ .

274 The efficiency of parasitoids in searching for aphids (sometimes known as the  
275 attack rate),  $\alpha$ , is the discovery rate per unit time per unit density of the aphid  
276 population. It varies between parasitoid-host combinations, and is affected by  
277 aphid host plant, the presence of competitor parasitoids and environmental condi-  
278 tions (Ives et al., 1999; Chua et al., 1990). There is limited information available



279 on the searching efficiency of parasitoids under field conditions and we use the  
280 model to explore the influence of  $\alpha$  on model dynamics considering a range of 0.5  
281 to 10 per day per unit density. The implication of  $\alpha > 1$  is that a parasitoid will  
282 have the capacity to revisit aphids more than once in a day if it has previously  
283 failed to parasitise them or rejected them. It does not mean that an aphid can be  
284 host to more than one juvenile parasitoid.

285 Finally we consider the switching parameters. The higher the value of  $s_{kl}$ , the  
286 smaller the penalty for switching. Values are constrained to lie between 0, indi-  
287 cating an absolute refusal to switch, and 1 where there is no penalty for switching.  
288 Recall that without loss of generality we have set  $s_{ss} = s_{dd} = 1$  because when no  
289 switching has occurred there can be no penalty. Switching penalties for moving  
290 from one host type to the other would depend on the life history of a parasitoid  
291 and, if based on learning, are likely to be higher for switching from the more com-  
292 mon host phenotype to the rarer phenotype. To model learning explicitly would  
293 require a  $s_{sd}$  and  $s_{ds}$  to change depending on the life-history. However, if a phe-  
294 notype with a competitive advantage (in this case  $H_d$ ) is initially less common  
295 than the “weaker” phenotype ( $H_s$ ) and therefore  $s_{sd} < s_{ds}$  then  $H_d$  will rapidly  
296 become more dominant. If  $s_{ds}$  and  $s_{sd}$  were dynamic the relationship would then  
297 reverse and we would have  $s_{ds} < s_{sd}$ . It is reasonable therefore to assume that  
298  $s_{ds} < s_{sd}$  and, for simplicity we make the assumptions that  $s_{ds}$  is fixed and  $s_{sd} = 1$   
299 so that there is no penalty for switching from the (assumed rarer) susceptible aphid  
300 phenotype  $H_s$  to the *H. defensa* carrying phenotype  $H_d$ . These assumptions are  
301 conservative with respect to the stability of the system and we can therefore use  
302 the simpler model to make inference about systems which explicitly model learn-  
303 ing. We then calculate the critical values of  $s_{ds}$  for coexistence of  $H_s$  and  $H_d$  in

304 the single stage model and use a value close to this to explore the dynamics of the  
305 stage structured model.

306 For the single stage model we adjust the reproductive rates of aphids to account  
307 for juvenile mortality and obtain an effective reproductive rate of  $r_{singlestage} =$   
308  $(1 - \delta_j)^{T_h} * r = 0.85 * 3 = 2.55$  new adult aphids per aphid per day. Note that there  
309 is not a direct translation from  $\alpha$  in the single stage model to the stage structured  
310 model because in the latter model the adult host population is unavailable to adult  
311 parasitoids. Also in the single stage model, all successfully parasitised aphids are  
312 assumed to emerge as adult parasitoids.

### 313 **Numerical simulations**

314 Numerical simulations were run in R 3.4.3 (R Core Team, 2017) using the stagePop  
315 package (Kettle, 2015) described in Kettle and Nutter (2015). The single stage  
316 model was run for 200 days which more than covers the length of a summer season  
317 and the stage-structured model was run for 1000 days to allow any effect of initial  
318 conditions to be eliminated from the model and for trends to become apparent.  
319 Simulations were run to investigate the effect of altering the searching efficiency  $\alpha$   
320 and then to investigate the effects of drought described above (see Results section  
321 for details).

## 322 Results

### 323 Single Stage Model

#### 324 Persistence of susceptible phenotype $H_s$

325 In the absence of the parasitoid, the two host aphid phenotypes have identical  
 326 properties so the system will have an unstable equilibrium point where both aphid  
 327 phenotypes are extinct and a neutrally stable equilibrium at  $(H_s^*, H_d^*)$  where  $H_s^* +$   
 328  $H_d^* = K$  and the proportion  $H_s^*/H_d^*$  is equal to the starting proportions  $H_s^0/H_d^0$ .  
 329 However, the presence of a parasitoid changes the dynamics of the system removing  
 330 the neutral stability and introducing 3 further equilibria -  $(0, H_d^*, P^*)$ ,  $(H_s^*, 0, P^*)$   
 331 and a unique interior equilibrium  $(H_s^*, H_d^*, P^*)$  of coexistence. For the remainder  
 332 of this paper we consider the existence and stability of the interior equilibrium. At  
 333 this point we have

$$\hat{H}_s^* = \frac{(\epsilon_d - \hat{\gamma}\hat{\delta}_p - s_{sd}(\epsilon_s - \hat{\gamma}\hat{\delta}_p))\hat{\delta}_p}{\hat{\alpha}(\epsilon_s - \hat{\gamma}\hat{\delta}_p)(\epsilon_d - \hat{\gamma}\hat{\delta}_p)(1 - s_{ds}s_{sd})} \quad (17)$$

$$\hat{H}_d^* = \frac{(\epsilon_s - \hat{\gamma}\hat{\delta}_p - s_{ds}(\epsilon_d - \hat{\gamma}\hat{\delta}_p))\hat{\delta}_p}{\hat{\alpha}(\epsilon_s - \hat{\gamma}\hat{\delta}_p)(\epsilon_d - \hat{\gamma}\hat{\delta}_p)(1 - s_{ds}s_{sd})} \quad (18)$$

$$\hat{P}^* = \frac{(\hat{H}_s^* + \hat{H}_d^*)(1 - \hat{H}_s^* - \hat{H}_d^*)\hat{H}_s^*(1 + \hat{\alpha}\hat{\gamma}(\hat{H}_s^* + s_{ds}\hat{H}_d^*))}{\hat{\alpha}\epsilon_s(\hat{H}_s^* + s_{ds}\hat{H}_d^*)} \quad (19)$$

334 For the parasitoid to persist, it is sufficient to satisfy the conditions for persistence  
 335 when the susceptible phenotype ( $H_s$ ) is extinct:

$$\frac{\epsilon_d \hat{\alpha}}{1 + \hat{\alpha} \hat{\gamma}} > \hat{\delta} \quad (20)$$

336 Given that  $\epsilon_d < \epsilon_s$ , the interior equilibrium will exist with  $H_s^*, H_d^*$  and  $P^* > 0$  if  
 337 and only if the reduction in parasitoid searching efficiency  $s_{ds}$  due to parasitoid  
 338 switching from infected to uninfected phenotypes is bounded above by

$$s_{ds} < \frac{\epsilon_d - \hat{\gamma} \hat{\delta}_p}{\epsilon_s - \hat{\gamma} \hat{\delta}_p} = \frac{\epsilon_d - \gamma \delta_p}{\epsilon_s - \gamma \delta_p} \quad (21)$$

339 If inequality (21) holds (i.e. the switching penalty is sufficiently severe) then both  
 340 hosts will persist otherwise the presence of the parasitoid will cause  $H_s$  to go ex-  
 341 tinct. The handling time  $\gamma$  is small for parasitoid systems so the right hand side  
 342 of equation (21) is dominated by the ratio of the efficiency of parasitoids on the  
 343 infected phenotypes to the uninfected phenotypes. The greater the reduction in  
 344 efficiency on infected aphids, the more severe must be the switching penalty (and  
 345 hence the smaller  $s_{ds}$ ) for the equilibrium to hold. This inequality therefore estab-  
 346 lishes our first key result, namely that in this two host system given a sufficiently  
 347 high penalty for switching from  $H_d$  to  $H_s$ , the presence of the parasitoid can explain  
 348 the coexistence of these phenotypes even in the absence of any costs associated  
 349 with the *H. defensa* carrying, resistant, phenotype  $H_d$ . In the case where there is  
 350 a single aphid phenotype present, the equilibrium is globally attracting and stable  
 351 if

$$\epsilon\alpha \left(1 - \frac{1}{\alpha\gamma}\right) - \delta \left(1 + \frac{1}{\alpha\gamma}\right) < 0 \quad (22)$$

352 Heuristically, the left hand side is a measure of the rate at which the parasitoid  
 353 population can increase. In the case where  $\alpha\gamma < 1$  the inequality will always  
 354 hold and for systems such as parasitoids where the handling time is low, if the  
 355 interior equilibrium exists it will remain stable unless the searching efficiency,  $\alpha$ ,  
 356 is unrealistically high. The introduction of a switching penalty acts to decrease  
 357  $\alpha$  when a parasitoid switches from one phenotype to another. Thus if inequality  
 358 (22) holds for the susceptible aphid the interior equilibrium will be stable. For  
 359 the parameter values of Table 1, the critical value of  $s_{ds}$  ranges from 0.667 (with  
 360  $\epsilon_s = 0.3$ ) to 0.286 (with  $\epsilon_s = 0.7$ ). Thus, as shown in Figure 1, taking  $s_{ds} = 0.65$   
 361 yields stable coexistence of both host phenotypes at an approximate ratio of 20:80  
 362 symbiont-free:infected hosts consistent with up to 80–90% aphids being symbiont-  
 363 infected when parasitoid-induced mortality is high (Smith et al., 2015). However,  
 364 parasitoids are at a higher density than would be expected being present at over  
 365 twice the maximum host capacity (Figure 1) although this issue is addressed by  
 366 the introduction of the stage-structured model (see below).

### 367 **Sensitivity of results with respect to parasitoid attack rate $\alpha$**

368 Given the lack of knowledge about  $\alpha$ , its impact on the system dynamics was  
 369 assessed for  $\alpha$  from 0.7 to 10 in increments of 0.01. With  $\alpha \leq 0.80$  the parasitoid  
 370 population does not persist. For  $0.76 \leq \alpha \leq 1.59$  there is a stable equilibrium  
 371 similar to that in Figure 1 with the density of parasitoids increasing with  $\alpha$ , the  
 372 density of hosts decreasing and the proportion of the host population present as

373 the susceptible phenotype  $H_s$  decreasing. For  $\alpha \geq 1.60$  there was still a stable  
374 fixed point, but the density of the parasitoid population decreased because of the  
375 low density of the host population. These results hold for both the case where  
376  $\epsilon_s = 0.3$ ,  $s_{ds} = 0.65$  and where  $\epsilon_s = 0.7$ ,  $s_{ds} = 0.26$ .

## 377 Stage Structured Model

378 When the juvenile stage is introduced parasitoid densities are at more sensible lev-  
379 els than in the single stage model and more complex dynamics are seen. Complete  
380 closed-form stability analysis of the stage-structured system is complex. However,  
381 within reasonable development times no further equilibria are introduced, and the  
382 range of dynamics for plausible parameter values is extended. For the parame-  
383 terisation given in Table 1 we find that for  $\alpha \leq 1.144$  the parasitoids go extinct.  
384 For  $1.145 \leq \alpha \leq 1.67$  the system exhibits damped oscillations and converges to a  
385 stable steady state of coexistence (shown for  $\alpha = 1.4$  in Figure 2). For  $\alpha \geq 1.68$   
386 coexistence is maintained, but the system exhibits limit cycles (shown for  $\alpha = 1.75$   
387 in Figure 3) which increase in amplitude with  $\alpha$ . The aphid cycles are in phase,  
388 with the parasitoid lagging behind.

## 389 Drought Stress

390 We consider drought stress in the stage-structured system with a stable equilibrium  
391 (for the parameterisation of Table 1 when  $\alpha = 1.4$ ). The two drought stress  
392 mechanisms described earlier are investigated namely reductions in the fecundity  
393 of resistant aphids (i.e. carrying *H. defensa*) and reduced development times for  
394 either one or both aphid phenotypes.

395 Firstly, as the resistant host reproduction rate  $r_d$  is reduced relative to that of  
396 the susceptible aphids,  $r_s$ , the latter aphid phenotype increases both in absolute  
397 density and as a proportion of the population. This means that the parasitoid  
398 spends more time on hosts which it is effective at parasitising and the stable equi-  
399 librium is tipped over into a limit cycle with a lower mean density of parasitoids  
400 (see Figure 4). If  $r_d$  drops sufficiently (relative to  $r_s$ ) then the resistant (symbiont-  
401 infected) aphid phenotype ( $H_d$ ) becomes extinct and the limit cycles remain. For  
402 higher values of  $\alpha$ , the extinction of the resistant (*H. defensa*-infected) host phe-  
403 notype occurs for higher values of  $r_d$ .

404 Secondly, altering the development time,  $\tau_h$ , either for both phenotypes or  
405 for the resistant (symbiont-infected) phenotype had no effect on the dynamics  
406 of the system except to increase or decrease the period of the limit cycle as the  
407 development time increased or decreased.

## 408 Discussion

409 We have constructed a simple host-parasitoid model in which most parameters are  
410 empirically determined, and which includes parasitoid learning in the form of a  
411 ‘switching penalty’. The inclusion of a switching penalty makes a parasitoid less  
412 efficient at finding a less common host phenotype and allows coexistence of two  
413 host phenotypes that differ only in their susceptibility to parasitism. Simulations  
414 showed that a switching penalty could provide a mechanism to explain coexistence  
415 of susceptible and resistant hosts in aphid populations at proportions observed in  
416 field populations (Smith et al., 2015) given a sufficiently high cost associated with  
417 parasitoid switching from resistant to susceptible aphids, even in the absence of

418 any costs to the aphid of being resistant. Stable coexistence was maintained when  
419 stage-structuring was included. When aphid fecundity and development time were  
420 altered in response to drought stress, this led to reduced parasitoid abundance and,  
421 in some cases, tipped the system from stable coexistence into stable limit cycles,  
422 indicating that the switching penalty could destabilise biocontrol under conditions  
423 of abiotic stress.

424 The study provides novel insights into a previously overlooked mechanism capa-  
425 ble of maintaining diversity within host populations, and represents an important  
426 advance in understanding the influence of symbiont-encoded fitness traits on pop-  
427 ulation processes that regulate host-parasitoid dynamics. In aphids, including the  
428 cereal-feeding species *Rhopalosiphum padi* modelled in this study, effort has fo-  
429 cussed on quantifying fitness costs to the aphid of parasitism resistance and not  
430 those experienced by the parasitoid. Fitness trade-offs for aphids are often small or  
431 context-dependent (Clarke et al., 2017, 2018; Leybourne et al., 2020) and not large  
432 enough to explain short-term (days-weeks) changes in aphid phenotype frequency  
433 (Smith et al., 2015; Kwiatkowski and Vorburger, 2012); mechanisms other than  
434 aphid fitness costs, therefore, need to be invoked, such as those experienced by  
435 parasitoids. Fitness costs imposed by parasitoid oviposition behaviour might also  
436 explain why susceptible aphid types persist at moderate to high frequencies across  
437 aphid populations (Henry et al., 2015; Zytynska and Weisser, 2016) and resistant  
438 aphids do not reach fixation despite appearing to be at a competitive advantage.  
439 Our study emphasises the importance of understanding different types of fitness  
440 costs to both organisms in the aphid-parasitoid interaction.



## 441 **Potential causes of a switching penalty in aphid parasitoids**

442 The behavioural and physiological causes of a switching penalty – a key assump-  
443 tion of our model - have not been investigated explicitly in parasitoids attacking  
444 aphids and remain speculative. Host selection by parasitoids involves behavioural  
445 decisions in response to chemical and physical cues that facilitate habitat and host  
446 location, host recognition, host acceptance and oviposition (Rehman and Pow-  
447 ell, 2010). Innate host preferences can be altered by parasitoid conditioning and  
448 associative learning. Parasitoid exposure to certain host types can influence subse-  
449 quent host choice or willingness to oviposit (Chow and Mackauer, 1992; van Emden  
450 et al., 2008; Rehman and Powell, 2010), demonstrating the potential for parasitoid  
451 oviposition choices to be influenced by learning. Our starting point was to assume  
452 that parasitoids are more efficient (e.g. due to faster host location and handling  
453 time) when attacking a familiar aphid (resistant) phenotype that is more com-  
454 mon in the host population. We recognise that in situations where the susceptible  
455 aphid is initially more common, the penalty might operate in the other direction,  
456 although Ishii and Shimada (2012) demonstrated parasitoid conditioning on a time  
457 scale of several hours, which would be sufficiently rapid to prevent the extinction  
458 of susceptible aphids.

459 A small number of studies provide indirect evidence that parasitoids might ex-  
460 perience a fitness cost when attacking resistant (symbiont-infected) or susceptible  
461 (uninfected) aphids due to symbiont-associated differences in parasitoid or aphid  
462 behaviour. For example, pea aphids infected with *H. defensa* show reduced ag-  
463 gressiveness and attenuated escape responses towards parasitoids compared with  
464 uninfected aphids (Dion et al., 2011) indicating that symbiont-infected aphids

465 might present an easier target for attack with faster parasitoid handling time.  
466 Conversely, other studies suggest that resistant parasitoids will be more costly to  
467 attack. For example, *A. ervi* modified its oviposition behaviour in pea aphids in  
468 response to aphid *H. defensa* infection by selectively super-parasitising symbiont-  
469 infected aphids (Oliver et al., 2012), which would be predicted to increase the  
470 handling time compared with uninfected aphids. This behaviour was thought to  
471 be linked to higher levels of alarm pheromone emission by symbiont-infected aphids  
472 suggesting that parasitoids can modify host selection rapidly in response to volatile  
473 cues indicating host quality. Plant volatile emissions in response to aphid infesta-  
474 tion could also contribute to parasitoid learning by altering the attractiveness of  
475 the plant, which is known to vary in response to infestation by symbiont-infected  
476 aphids (Frago et al., 2017). These studies provide initial evidence that a switching  
477 cost could cause aphid parasitoids to make rapid changes in oviposition behaviour  
478 through learning in response to the abundance of resistant/susceptible aphids.  
479 However, focussed experimentation is needed to confirm a switching penalty for  
480 aphid parasitoids and which aphid phenotype is likely to impose the greatest cost.

481     Although the exact value of a host switching penalty would be hard to quan-  
482 tify empirically, it should be possible to establish plausible ranges using targeted  
483 experiments, and the critical value for coexistence is straightforward to calculate.  
484 It depends primarily on the relative efficiencies of parasitising the different host  
485 phenotypes ( $\epsilon$ ), and additionally on the parasitoid death rate ( $\delta_p$ ) and the handling  
486 time of each aphid parasitized ( $\gamma$ ). The effects of the latter two parameters on the  
487 critical value of the penalty are small relative to the larger effect of the ratio of the  
488 parasitism efficiencies for susceptible and resistant hosts (see equation 21). Once  
489 the switching penalty is determined, it reduces the attack rate,  $\alpha$ , on an aphid

490 of a different phenotype to the one last attacked (see equation 8). In a simple  
491 non-spatial model, the switching penalties are fairly high, although although they  
492 are reduced when parasitoid efficiency on the susceptible host is at the lower end  
493 of the plausible range ( $s_{ds} = 0.667$  which equates to a reduction in attack rate of  
494 about one-third). Parasitoid learning may not be enough to fully stabilise coexis-  
495 tence in a system alone, and indeed in the laboratory system investigated by Ishii  
496 and Shimada (2012) the period of coexistence of two beetle species was prolonged,  
497 but not stabilised, by the presence of a parasitoid. However, spatial heterogene-  
498 ity is known to have a stabilising effect at the population level (Hastings, 1977;  
499 Murdoch, 1977; Holt, 1984; Briggs and Hoopes, 2004) and, in a heterogeneous  
500 field situation, parasitoid learning may well have significant explanatory power for  
501 the coexistence of multiple phenotypes of aphids operating in the same ecological  
502 niche.

503 The introduction of an explicit juvenile stage allowed the preference of para-  
504 sitoids for juvenile aphids to be included in the model and led to emergence of  
505 more complex population dynamics with limit cycles likely to occur unless para-  
506 sitoid attack rates were low. As attack rates increased, the system maintained  
507 limit cycles of approximately the same period, but with higher mean parasitoid  
508 population density. However, above an optimum attack rate the host population  
509 was suppressed, leading to a decline in the mean parasitoid population density.  
510 Further, the non-dimensionalized equations show that system stability is related  
511 to the ratio between reproductive rate of hosts and attack rate of parasitoids. As  
512 the aphid reproductive rate decreases, the rate of parasitoid attack at which the  
513 system starts to cycle and the optimum rate of attack also decrease. Host switch-  
514 ing might also influence the sex of the emerging offspring. Parasitoid wasps used

515 for biological control of insect herbivores often exhibit the typical hymenopteran  
516 haplo-diploid mode of sex determination, where fertilized eggs become diploid fe-  
517 males, but unfertilized eggs become haploid males (Heimpel and de Boer, 2008).  
518 In our study, we assumed that all emerging parasitoids were mated females, which  
519 led to high parasitoid abundance. While this assumption is reasonable for asexual  
520 (thelytokous) parasitoid populations, the model could be modified to incorporate  
521 male and female offspring production (e.g. by preventing a proportion of the off-  
522 spring from being able to oviposit to account for males). This would allow study of  
523 the effects of changing sex ratio and mother wasp decisions on sex-specific alloca-  
524 tion of offspring to different quality aphid hosts (reviewed in Rehman and Powell  
525 (2010)).

#### 526 **Model application in aphid-parasitoid systems**

527 If switching penalties are a significant determinant of the outcome of pest-natural  
528 enemy interactions, the model could be used to devise optimum parasitoid abun-  
529 dances for augmenting local populations to control pests and to predict when  
530 changes in parasitoid behaviour due to conditioning and/or learning might alter  
531 the stability of the system. Integrated pest management systems incorporating  
532 biocontrol are receiving greater attention as more pesticides are withdrawn due  
533 to concerns about toxicity beyond the intended target (e.g. Birch et al., 2011).  
534 However, as climate change increases the risk of drought stress in crop production  
535 areas, consideration should be given to how future climate conditions might change  
536 the outcome of biocontrol measures. Under drought, the rates of aphid develop-  
537 ment and aphid growth could increase (Aslam et al., 2013; Wade et al., 2017) and  
538 the fitness costs of carrying the protective symbiont *H. defensa* may become more

539 apparent, for example by a reduction in the fecundity of aphids carrying the sym-  
540 biont (e.g. Leybourne et al. (2020)). The former scenario was tested and found to  
541 have little impact on system dynamics. However, the latter effects could well tip  
542 the system from stability into cycling on a timescale similar to the development  
543 time of hosts and parasitoids. Alternatively, symbiont protection might be atten-  
544 uated by environmental stress, as seen in the breakdown of *H. defensa*-encoded  
545 pea aphid resistance to parasitism under heat stress (e.g. Bensadia et al., 2006;  
546 Guay et al., 2009). If this effect was combined with a reduction in fecundity it may  
547 result in the extinction of the phenotype. The potential impact of changing host  
548 fecundity on population dynamics, and the evidence for a greater impact of poor  
549 quality plants on endosymbiont-infected aphids (Karley et al., 2017; Leybourne  
550 et al., 2020), highlights the importance of elucidating the modulating effects of  
551 drought and other environmental stresses on host-parasitoid dynamics if biocon-  
552 trol is to be used for pest management under a changing climate (e.g. Thomson  
553 et al., 2010). Further work is currently underway to investigate this effect in the  
554 cereal aphid-parasitoid model system used here.

### 555 **Model insights for predator-prey systems under fluctuating environ-** 556 **mental conditions**

557 The model, with re-parameterisation, is applicable to a wide variety of consumer-  
558 resource interactions (including host-parasitoid and predator-prey systems). Our  
559 findings showed that the model dynamics are robust to variation in absolute and  
560 relative development times of the host and parasitoid, provided the background  
561 mortality rates are not so high that the population goes extinct, and they are also  
562 robust to handling time (which is small relative to the attack rate). The switching

563 parameter is applicable to other consumer-resource systems where resource phe-  
564 notype or quality can vary. It could, therefore, be used to investigate the impact  
565 of switching on the stability of other systems provided the consumer is subject to  
566 conditioning (through learning or acclimatisation) and that conditioning occurs  
567 rapidly relative to the life cycle of the resource, otherwise the initial conditions  
568 will have a large effect on model outcomes and the more common consumer could  
569 become extinct. Sensitivity analyses indicated that low values of the attack rate,  
570  $\alpha$ , could be critical for population dynamics, suggesting that accurate estimates  
571 of this parameter would be needed when modelling other systems. Further, the  
572 findings of this study indicate that the model is suitable for investigating the effect  
573 of any stress or change in the external conditions on consumer-resource dynamics.  
574 The analysis presented here focussed on the effects of a specific stress (drought)  
575 on reproductive rate of the resistant aphid phenotype but would be applicable  
576 to any abiotic or biotic stress which affects the ratio of consumer attack rate to  
577 resource reproductive rate. This might include stress conditions that affect re-  
578 source vulnerability to attack by the consumer, for example through a change in  
579 morphology (e.g. stress-induced changes in aphid body colour that alter their lo-  
580 cation by predators: Losey et al., 1997; Wang et al., 2019) or effects on emission  
581 of volatile signals such as herbivore-induced plant volatiles used for host location  
582 (see Stenberg et al., 2015).

## 583 **Conclusions**

584 Our study shows the powerful stabilising effect of a switching penalty on host-  
585 parasitoid population dynamics, demonstrating the relevance of ecological theory  
586 to practical situations such as pest biocontrol and highlighting that this type of fit-

587 ness effect should be considered more widely when constructing complex predator-  
588 prey models. In most aphid species, little is known about within-season dynam-  
589 ics of defensive symbiont infection, aphid resistance/susceptibility and the conse-  
590 quences for natural enemies. The simple aphid-parasitoid model incorporating a  
591 switching penalty introduced here could be used to identify and mitigate against  
592 scenarios that lead to dominance by resistant aphid phenotypes and has significant  
593 potential for application in other pest-natural enemy systems.

## 594 **Author Contributions and Data Availability State-** 595 **ment**

596 K.F. Preedy contributed to the development of and executed the mathematical  
597 aspects of the modelling and analysis, D.J. Leybourne contributed to the biolog-  
598 ical development and parameterisation of the models; M.A.J. Chaplain and G.  
599 Marion contributed to mathematical aspects of model development and analysis;  
600 A.J. Karley contributed to the biological development and parameterisation of the  
601 models. All authors contributed to writing the manuscript. Models have been  
602 parameterised from published studies cited in the paper. The Modelling has been  
603 performed in a standard package, stagePop, cited in the paper, a copy of the R  
604 code can be supplied on request.

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## 833 **Table captions**

834 **Table 1.** Summary of parameters and their values. The derivation is primarily  
835 based on data for *Rhopalosiphum padi* from Aslam et al. (2013) and Leybourne  
836 et al. (2020) and is discussed in Materials and Methods. Recall that without loss  
837 of generality we assigned  $s_{ss} = s_{dd} = 1$

838

Table 1:

Parameter	Description	Units	Single Stage	Stage Structure	Drought Effect	
$\alpha$	attack rate	( $day^{-1}$ )	0.5 – 10	0.5 – 10	$H_d$ reduced	
$r$	host reproduction	( $day^{-1}$ )	2.55	3		
$\gamma$	handling time	( $day$ )	0.001	0.001		
$\delta_j$	$J_k$ background mortality	( $day^{-1}$ )		0.018		
$\delta_h$	$H_k$ background mortality	( $day^{-1}$ )	0.15	0.15		
$\delta_i$	$I$ background mortality	( $day^{-1}$ )		0.0177		
$\delta_p$	$P$ background mortality	( $day^{-1}$ )	0.15	0.15		
$\tau_h$	$J$ development time	( $day$ )		9		$H_s, H_d$ reduced
$\tau_p$	$I$ development time	( $day$ )		12		
$\epsilon_s$	parasitism success on $H_s$	-	0.3, 0.7	0.3		
$\epsilon_d$	parasitism success on $H_d$	-	0.2	0.2		
$s_{ds}$	switching penalty $J_d$ to $J_s$	-	0.65, 0.26	0.65		

## 839 Figure captions

840 **Figure 1. Co-existence in the Single stage model.** A. Shows the density  
841 of the two adult aphid (Host) phenotypes, the red dotted line represents the sus-  
842 ceptible phenotype without *H. defensa* and the dash-dot black line represents the  
843 phenotype which carries *H. defensa* and is resistant to parasitism. B. shows the  
844 total host density (dashed red line) and parasitoid density (solid black line). Pa-  
845 rameters are as in Table 1 with  $\epsilon_s = 0.3$ ,  $\epsilon_d = 0.2$ ,  $\alpha = 1$  and  $s_{ds} = 0.65$  which is  
846 above the persistence threshold in equation 21.

847

848 **Figure 2. Co-existence in the stage structured model: stable equilib-**  
849 **rium.** A. and B. show the density of the juvenile and adult aphid (Host) pheno-

850 types respectively. The black dash-dot line represents the phenotype which carries  
851 *H. defensa* and is resistant to parasitism and the red dotted line the susceptible  
852 phenotype. C. shows the total densities of the aphids (Hosts) with the solid black  
853 line representing adults and the dashed red line juveniles. D. shows densities of  
854 juvenile (dashed red line) and adult (solid black line) parasitoids. The choice of  
855 attack rate  $\alpha = 1.4$  (with other Parameters as in Table 1) ensures the system  
856 reaches a stable equilibrium.

857

858 **Figure 3. Co-existence in the stage structured model: limit cycles.** A.  
859 and B. show the density of the juvenile and adult aphid (Host) phenotypes respec-  
860 tively. The black dash-dot line represents the phenotype which carries *H. defensa*  
861 and is resistant to parasitism and the red dotted line the susceptible phenotype.  
862 C. shows the total densities of the aphids (Hosts) with the solid black line rep-  
863 resenting adults and the dashed red line juveniles. D. shows densities of juvenile  
864 (dashed red line) and adult (solid black line) parasitoids. The choice of attack rate  
865  $\alpha = 1.75$  (with other Parameters as in Table 1) ensures the system enters a limit  
866 cycle.

867

868 **Figure 4. Drought induced population cycles in the stage-structured**  
869 **model.** A. and B. show the density of the juvenile and adult aphids (Host) phe-  
870 notypes respectively. The black dash-dot line represents the phenotype which  
871 carries *H. defensa* and is resistant to parasitism and the red dotted line the sus-  
872 ceptible phenotype. C. shows the total densities of the aphids (Hosts) with the  
873 solid black line representing adults and the dashed red line juveniles. D. shows  
874 densities of juvenile (dashed red line) and adult (solid black line) parasitoids. Pa-

875 rameters are as in Figure 2, namely the attack rate  $\alpha = 1.4$  and other parameters  
876 are as in Table 1 except that whilst the reproductive rate of susceptible aphids,  
877  $r_s = r = 3$ , the reproductive rate of the symbiont carrying phenotype is reduced to  
878  $r_d = 1.4$  ensuring the system reaches a limit cycle rather than a stable equilibrium.

879

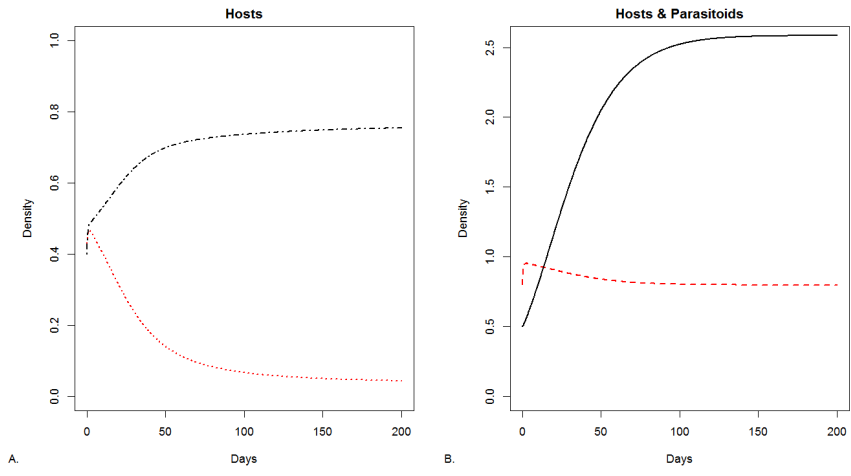


Figure 1:

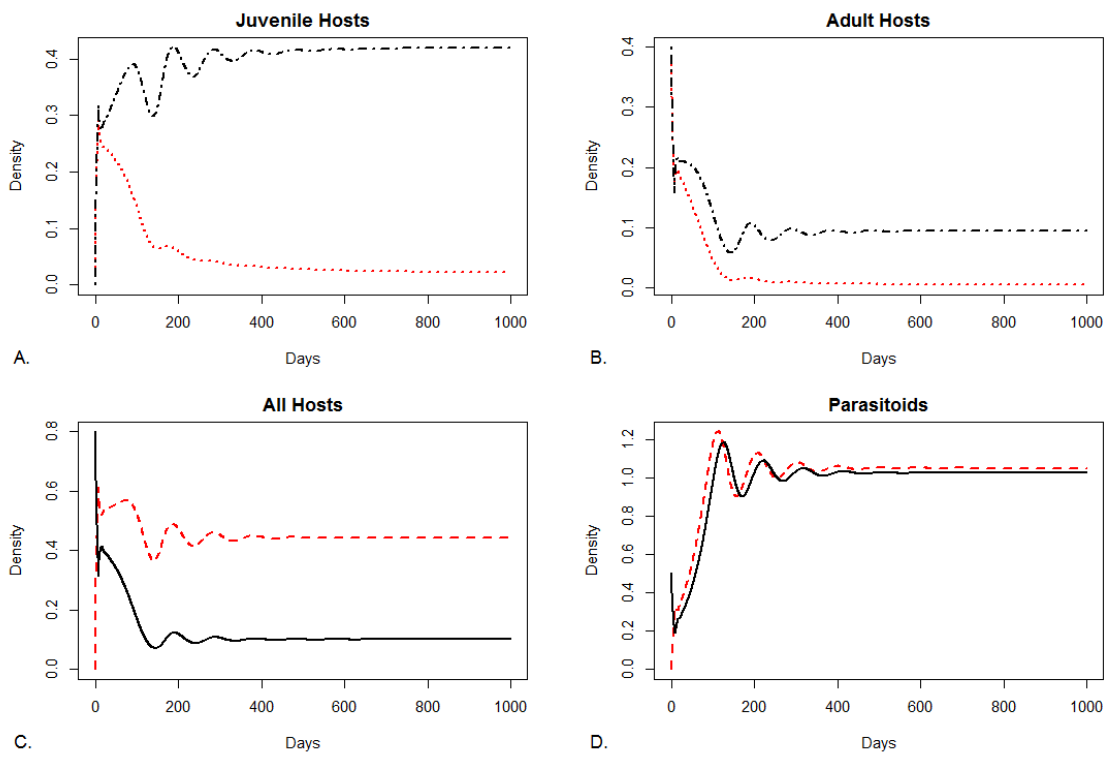


Figure 2:



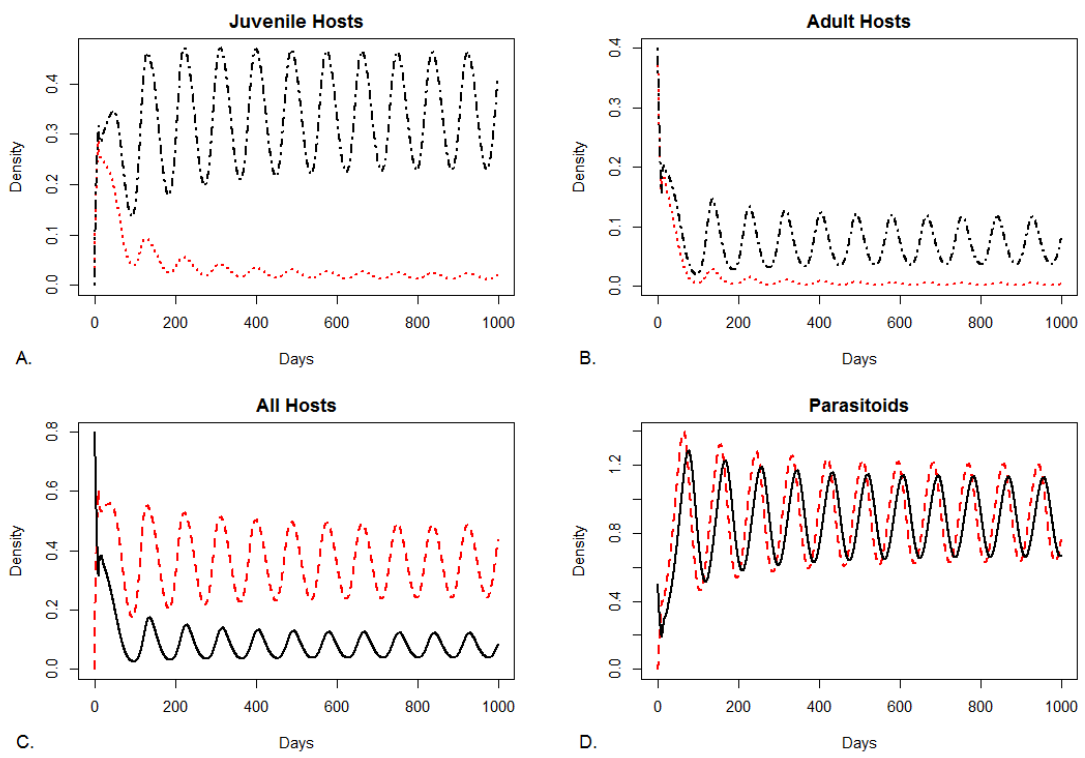


Figure 3:

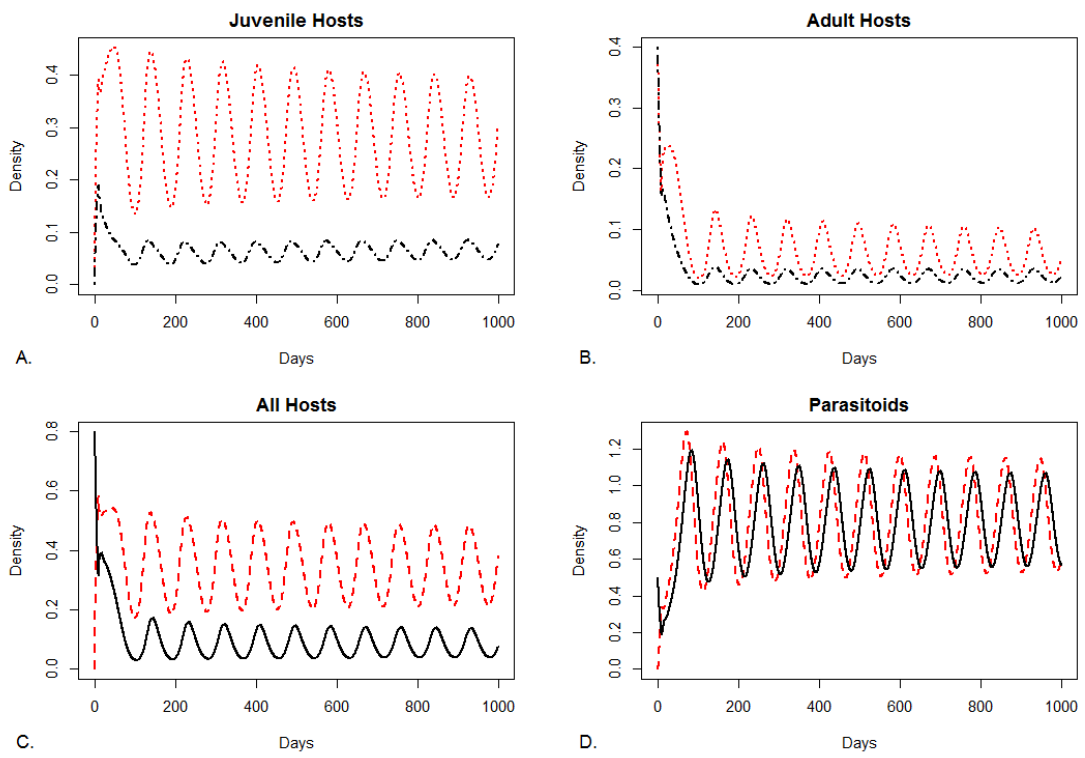


Figure 4: