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# 3 The effects of warming on the ecophysiology of two

# 4 co-existing kelp species with contrasting distributions

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- Student-led highlighted paper: Through a combination of field surveys and a manipulative experiment with multiple ecophysiological response variables, we show that current and predicted future thermal maxima induce sublethal effects in a cold-water habitat-forming kelp species, which will likely lead to a continued range contraction. We show that loss of marginal populations will be primarily driven by ecophysiological responses to high

temperatures, and although compensatory mechanisms may reduce top-down pressure on
marginal populations, this is unlikely to be important within the biogeographical context
examined. The work is novel and topical because it disentangles the relative importance of
physiological and ecological processes which underpin range shifts in a marine foundation
species.

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- Author contributions: All authors conceived and designed the experiments. MH performed
   the experiments. MH and AF analyzed the data. AP provided and analysed field-based
- 27 survey data. MH and DS wrote the manuscript; AF and AP provided editorial advice.

28

#### 30 Abstract

31 The northeast Atlantic has warmed significantly since the early 1980s, leading to shifts in 32 species distributions and changes in the structure and functioning of communities and 33 ecosystems. This study investigated the effects of increased temperature on two co-existing 34 habitat-forming kelps; Laminaria digitata, a northern boreal species and Laminaria 35 ochroleuca, a southern Lusitanian species, to shed light on mechanisms underpinning 36 responses of trailing and leading edge populations to warming. Kelp sporophytes collected 37 from southwest United Kingdom were maintained under 3 treatments; ambient temperature 38 (12°C), +3°C (15°C) and +6°C (18°C) for 16 days. At higher temperatures, L. digitata showed a 39 decline in growth rates and Fv/Fm, an increase in chemical defence production and a decrease 40 in palatability. In contrast, *L. ochroleuca* demonstrated superior growth and photosynthesis 41 at temperatures higher than current ambient levels, and was more heavily grazed. While the 42 observed decreased palatability of L. digitata held at higher temperatures could reduce top-43 down pressure on marginal populations, field observations of grazer densities suggest that 44 this may be unimportant within the study system. Overall, our study suggests that shifts in 45 trailing edge populations will be primarily driven by ecophysiological responses to high 46 temperatures experienced during current and predicted thermal maxima, and although 47 compensatory mechanisms may reduce top-down pressure on marginal populations, this is 48 unlikely to be important within the current biogeographical context. Better understanding of 49 the mechanisms underpinning climate-driven range shifts is important for habitat-forming 50 species like kelps, which provide organic matter, create biogenic structure and alter 51 environmental conditions for associated communities.

52 **Keywords:** Ocean warming, macroalgae, chemical defence, thermal tolerance, range shifts

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## 54 Introduction

55 Anthropogenic climate change is a major threat to the integrity and persistence of marine 56 biodiversity and ecosystems (Hoegh-Guldberg and Bruno 2010). Recent increases in sea 57 temperature have driven shifts in species' distributions and consequent changes in the 58 structure and functioning of communities and ecosystems (Pinsky et al. 2013; Poloczanska 59 et al. 2013; Wernberg et al. 2016). Globally, sea surface temperatures have increased at a 60 rate of >0.1°C per decade since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century (IPCC 2013). In the northeast Atlantic, 61 temperatures have increased from around 0.3-0.6°C per decade since the 1980s, with 2000-62 2010 being the warmest decade recorded in this region (Belkin 2009; Hughes et al. 2010; 63 Smyth et al. 2010). In addition to decadal-scale gradual warming trends, the importance of 64 short-term extreme warming events (e.g. 'marine heatwaves') in structuring marine ecosystems is rapidly gaining recognition (Hobday et al. 2016) and the number of extremely 65 66 hot days (in terms of sea temperatures) has increased along most of the global coastline in 67 recent decades (Lima and Wethey 2012). Both gradual warming and discrete warming 68 events can invoke physiological stress when thermal thresholds are exceeded, which in turn 69 may impact individuals, populations and communities (Smale and Wernberg 2013; 70 Wernberg et al. 2016).

Kelps (members of the order Laminariales) are large conspicuous brown macroalgae with complex tissues and generally high biomass (De Wreede and Klinger 1988). Kelp forests, formed by aggregations of canopy-forming kelp sporophytes, represent one of the most productive ecosystems globally and generally support highly diverse and abundant communities in temperate shallow seas (Steneck et al. 2002). Kelps also provide a suite of ecosystem services including biogenic storm protection, nutrient recycling, natural

77 resources, and nursery grounds and habitat for commercially important fish and crustacean 78 species (Beaumont et al. 2008; Bertocci et al. 2015; Smale et al. 2013). As kelps are generally 79 cold-water adapted species, their geographical distributions, specifically the equatorial 80 range edge, are strongly controlled by temperature (Lüning 1984), although other factors 81 such as light and nutrient levels are important in determining species distributions and kelp 82 forest structure (Desmond et al. 2015; Gorman et al. 2013; Smale et al. 2016). As such, 83 oceanic warming has been linked to loss of marginal populations, range contractions and 84 significant reductions in kelp forest extent (Tuya et al. 2012; Wernberg et al. 2013). Conversely, rising seawater temperatures have also been linked to range expansions at the 85 86 poleward edge for some warmer water species, such as Laminaria ochroleuca (Smale et al. 87 2015). It is evident that recent changes in ocean climate have influenced the structure and 88 extent of kelp forests in some temperate regions, and further changes are predicted to 89 occur (Brodie et al. 2014; Müller et al. 2009; Wernberg et al. 2016). 90 Along the southwestern coasts of the United Kingdom (UK) a number of different kelp 91 species co-exist (Smale et al. 2013), including more northerly-distributed species (e.g. L. 92 digitata, Alaria esculenta), more southerly-distributed species (e.g. L. ochroleuca, Saccorhiza 93 polyschides) and non-native species (Undaria pinnatifida). As a result, the structure of kelp 94 canopies is complex, with high spatiotemporal variability, and the relative abundance of 95 different species is strongly influenced by biotic and abiotic processes (Smale et al. 2013). 96 On moderately wave-exposed shores, the 'cold water' species L. digitata may co-exist with 97 'warm' water kelp L. ochroleuca in the lower intertidal and immediate subtidal zones. Whilst 98 L. digitata is a more northerly-distributed species, with a range that extends from the Arctic 99 to southern Brittany, L. ochroleuca is a more southerly-distributed species of Lusitanian

100 origin, which extends from the southwest of the UK into the warm waters off Morocco and 101 into the Mediterranean (Fig. 1, Smale et al. 2013). Emerging evidence suggests that the 102 southernmost populations of *L. digitata*, located in Northern France, have diminished in 103 recent decades leading to a poleward contraction of the trailing range edge (Raybaud et al. 104 2013). On the other hand, marginal populations of *L. ochroleuca* have proliferated at the 105 leading range edge, in line with recent warming trends (Smale et al. 2015). The co-existence 106 of both a climate change 'winner' and 'loser' presents an interesting model system for 107 examining processes acting at both the trailing and leading range edges, in order to improve 108 understanding of mechanisms underpinning species' distributions (Bates et al. 2014). Here, 109 we examined the effects of thermal stress on the ecophysiological performance of these 110 contrasting kelp species in the southwest UK by assessing a number of factors, direct and 111 indirect, that may be affected by increasing temperature.

112 Individual response variables, such as growth and fecundity, are controlled by biochemical 113 and physiological processes that are strongly influenced by temperature. As such, thermal 114 stress has a direct effect on these responses, especially when thermal thresholds are 115 exceeded and available resources are allocated to maintenance, for example (Andersen et 116 al. 2013; Bolton and Lüning 1982). An example of an indirect effect of thermal stress on 117 macroalgal performance is the influence of increased temperature on plant-grazer 118 interactions (O'Connor 2009). Macroalgal success at the individual and population levels can 119 be limited by herbivory, which in turn may be mitigated by the capacity of a primary 120 producer to defend itself against grazers (Herms and Mattson 1992). The purpose of 121 chemical defence is to maintain algal fitness by interfering with a herbivore's ability to graze 122 successfully. Effecting chemical defence against herbivory is beneficial, as intense grazing

123 will reduce a plant's fitness (Bigger and Marvier 1998) and can ultimately be fatal (Scheibling 124 et al. 1999). Plant-grazer interactions in marine ecosystems are complex and represent a key 125 biotic factor influencing entire communities (Bigger and Marvier 1998), particularly within 126 kelp forests (Ling 2008; Norderhaug and Christie 2009; O'Brien and Scheibling 2016; Vergés 127 et al. 2014). Phaeophytes produce a range of primarily carbon-rich and therefore 128 metabolically costly defensive compounds including polyphenolics and terpenoids (Maschek 129 and Baker 2008), with the polyphenolic phlorotannins playing a primary role in maintaining 130 the cell structure of brown macroalgae, as well as fulfilling a defensive role (Arnold and 131 Targett 2003). Increased production of polyphenolics in macroalgae has been observed 132 during periods of thermal stress (Steinberg 1995), which may be an inducible defence 133 response as polyphenolics have high anti-oxidant and radical-scavenging properties (Wang 134 et al. 2009). As increased secondary metabolite production may (Johnson and Mann 1986) 135 or may not (Pansch et al. 2008) alter the palatability of kelp tissue and thereby modify 136 grazer-plant interactions, changes in production of such compounds could influence 137 ecophysiological performance of kelps at the organism and population level.

138 This study aimed to investigate the extent to which increased temperature directly and 139 indirectly influences the performance of two co-existing northeast Atlantic kelp species (Fig. 140 1), Laminaria digitata and Laminaria ochroleuca, with respect to growth rates, photosynthetic 141 efficiency, chemical defence production, and palatability to grazers. Given that in the 142 southwest UK study region L. digitata is found towards the trailing range edge whereas 143 marginal populations of *L. ochroleuca* represent the leading range edge (Fig. 1), we predicted 144 that high temperatures would cause a decline in the ecophysiological performance of L. 145 *digitata* but would be favourable for *L. ochroleuca*. We also expected production of secondary

146 metabolites to increase under stressful thermal conditions, which has the potential to alter 147 grazer-plant interactions. More generally, examining the responses of these contrasting 148 species to elevated temperature could shed new light on the underlying mechanisms driving 149 climate-mediated expansion and contraction at the range edge.

150

151 Methods

# 152 Sample collection and field surveys

153 To examine whether these species occupy similar environments in natural communities and 154 whether, therefore, they co-exist at their respective range edges, field surveys were conducted at 2 sites within Plymouth Sound, southwest UK. At both Batten Bay and Firestone 155 156 Bay (Fig. 1), 10 replicate 5 x 1 m belt transects were completed in the low intertidal zone ( $\sim 0.3$ 157 m above chart datum) during spring tide periods (March/April 2014). Transects were laid 158 parallel to the shore on suitable rocky substrata, and the abundances of L. digitata and L. 159 ochroleuca were recorded within each transect (only mature, distinguishable sporophytes 160 were counted; Laminaria recruits were not included). Transects were at least 5m apart from 161 one another. Additionally, at each site, 30 mature sporophytes of each species were randomly 162 sampled and weighed (wet weight) to estimate standing stock of each species. In order to 163 quantify the potential grazing pressure on the kelp species, the abundance of invertebrate 164 grazers associated with lamina of L. digitata and L. ochroleuca was also quantified. On low 165 intertidal platforms at 2 study sites (Batten Bay and Tinside, see Fig. 1), fine cotton mesh bags 166 were carefully placed over the laminae of randomly-selected mature sporophytes of each kelp species to sample their associated macrofauna (which was subsequently identified and 167

168 enumerated at the laboratory). A total of 29 or 30 sporophytes of each species were collected
169 from each study site (throughout March-May 2016).

170 For the experimental work, 12 mature, medium-sized sporophytes of L. digitata and L. 171 ochroleuca (mean total thallus length:  $109 \pm 11$  cm and  $105 \pm 16$  cm, respectively) were 172 collected from the low-intertidal zone (0.2-0.4 m above chart datum) at Firestone Bay (Fig. 1) 173 in June 2015. The site is moderately exposed to waves and tidal currents, and is typical of the 174 inner shores of Plymouth Sound. There is no evidence of local anthropogenic impact, from 175 sewerage discharge or pollutants for example, and the kelp sporophytes were deemed to be 176 representative of the wider population. The site supports mixed substrata, including bedrock, 177 cobbles and boulders and patches of soft sediments. Kelp sporophytes were sampled 178 haphazardly from within a mixed kelp bed comprising *L. ochroleuca* and *L. digitata*, as well as 179 other brown macroalgae (e.g. Saccorhiza polyschides, Saccharina latissima and Undaria 180 pinnatifida, see Arnold et al. 2016 for more details).

In order to place our experimental temperature treatments (see below) into an ecological
context, we deployed temperature loggers ('Hobo' temperature pendant logger, Onset Comp.
Corp., Bourne) within 2 shallow subtidal habitats (at ~1 m below chart datum) in Plymouth
Sound, in close proximity to natural populations of *L. digitata* and *L. ochroleuca*. Temperature
was recorded every 30 minutes for 45 days during summer 2014 (July-September) to quantify
thermal maxima experienced by these populations.

187 Experimental design

An experimental tank system was used to control temperature and examine ecophysiological
responses to warming treatments. On return to the laboratory, the central digit of the lamina

190 of each kelp sporophyte was hole-punched with a 5mm diameter punch at 5, 10 and 15cm 191 above the stipe-meristem junction (for quantification of growth rates, see below). Each kelp 192 individual was then attached to a rock using cable ties and placed in a separate tank (121 x 38 193 x 30 cm). Replicate tanks were established (n = 4 per treatment), with 1 kelp individual in 194 each, at 3 different temperature treatments; 12°C (ambient temperature; SST data for the 195 study region showed that mean seawater temperature was ~11.5°C during the May/June 196 period), 15°C (i.e. 3°C above ambient) and 18°C (i.e. 6°C above ambient). The magnitude of 197 warming treatments was chosen to reflect temperatures observed during short-term marine 198 heatwaves in coastal ecosystems (Hobday et al. 2016). Each tank contained ~130L of seawater 199 which was circulated through header tanks and maintained at the desired temperature with 200 aquarium chillers (DC-750, Deltec, Delmenhorst) or heaters (300W DR-9300, Boyu, 201 Guangdong) as necessary. Salinity was maintained at 35 ppt with the addition of fresh water 202 as necessary; lamps (Reef Daylight T8 36W, Interpret, Dorking) specifically designed for 203 aquatic plants were used to generate a 12:12 hr light-dark regime with PAR irradiance levels of ~120  $\mu$ mol m<sup>-2</sup> s<sup>-1</sup> (recorded with a Licor LI-250A PAR meter). Light intensity (i.e. 204 205 illuminance) in the tanks was monitored with duplicate 'Hobo' pendant light loggers, which 206 recorded light levels (lumens m<sup>-2</sup>) every 20 minutes for 5 days. These data were compared 207 those from an identical light sensor deployed on a sub-surface pellet buoy within a shallow 208 subtidal habitat (at ~1 m below chart datum) in Plymouth Sound, which recorded light 209 intensity above the kelp canopy every 20 minutes for 5 days in May 2014. Seawater was 210 partially exchanged every 3 days to maintain water quality and nutrient levels and aquarium 211 wave-makers created turbulent water flow within the tanks. Kelp sporophytes were 212 maintained under experimental conditions for 16 days, which is representative of the 213 duration of a typical marine heat wave (Hobday et al. 2016).

#### 214 **Response variables**

215 At the end of the experimental period, growth was quantified as the elongation rate of lamina 216 as determined from the new positions of the hole-punch marks (Parke 1948). The extension 217 distance of the lamina was then divided by the experimental duration (i.e. 16 days) to 218 calculate elongation rates (mm/day). In order to convert elongation rates to biomass 219 accumulation, the basal part of the lamina was cut transversely to form strips 50 mm in width, 220 which were individually weighed (g of fresh weight). The strip with the maximum biomass was 221 then used to calculate biomass accumulation (BA; g ind.-1 d-1) as BA = xM/50d, where x is 222 the lamina extension (mm), M is the fresh weight of the heaviest strip (g) and d is the number 223 of days between punching the hole and processing the kelp (i.e. 16 days). This method has 224 been widely used to quantify biomass accumulation in kelps (e.g. Bearham et al. 2013). 225 Measurements of lamina biomass (fresh weight) and length were also obtained. The quantum 226 efficiency of photosystem II, a measure of physiological stress, was determined using 227 standard fluorometry techniques (Murchie and Lawson 2013). Fv/Fm was measured with an 228 Aquapen AP100 fluorometer (PSI, Drasov) at the end of the experimental period. Strips of 229 basal lamina tissue (4 x 1 cm, 3 subsamples per individual) were cut, held in seawater within 230 blacked-out vessels for 15 minutes to dark adapt before being placed in a cuvette for analysis.

For biochemical analyses, tissue from the mid-section of the lamina (i.e. recent growth above the meristematic area) was sampled from each kelp (~10 x 10 cm) and immediately frozen and freeze-dried, before being ground into a fine powder. Phenols were quantified using a modification of the method outlined by Van Alstyne (1988). A 100-mg sample of ground freeze dried material was added to 1 ml Methanol (50 %, diluted with distilled water) in a 1.5 ml Eppendorf tube, vortexed and refrigerated for 24 hr. The sample was then vortexed again

237 and centrifuged, after which 0.5 ml of the supernatant was decanted into another 1.5 ml 238 Eppendorf and diluted with 0.5 ml distilled water. The sample was then vortexed and 160  $\mu$ l 239 was pipetted into a 98 well plate with 20 µl Folin-Ciocalteu (FC) reagent (50 %, diluted with 240 distilled water). After 5 minutes 10 µl 1.5M Na<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> was added. Absorbance was read at 765 241 nm (FLUOstar Omega microplate reader, BMG Labtech, Offenburg), with a solvent blank. Each 242 absorbance was converted to a percentage value of total dry mass using a standard curve 243 using phloroglucinol. Flavonoids were extracted to the same protocol as the phenolics, but 244 samples were not diluted prior to the assay. An 88 µl sample solution was added to 60 µl AlCl<sub>3</sub> 245 (10%), and after 5 minutes 20 µl K Acetate (3%) was added. The plate was read at 415 nm with 246 a solvent blank. The absorbance values were calculated as percentages of dry mass using 247 Quercetin as a standard. For both assays, 6 measurements were obtained for each replicate 248 kelp sample; these were treated as subsamples and averaged for each kelp.

249 To test for any variability in the palatability of algal tissue between experimental treatments, 250 the marine gastropod Gibbula cineraria was used as a model grazer for feeding bioassays 251 based upon techniques described by Hay et al. (1994) and Amsler et al. (2005). 'Biscuits' of 252 algal tissue, suspended in agar, were produced using a mixture of 1 g of finely ground freeze-253 dried kelp lamina sample, 1 g of similarly prepared *Ulva* sp. (to optimise the viscosity, see Hay 254 et al. 1994) and 0.7 g agar powder (20 replicates per temperature per species, 120 in total). 255 The seaweed samples were mixed with 16 ml of deionised water, and the agar medium was 256 made up with a further 20 ml of water. The agar solution was then heated to melting point, 257 mixed with the seaweed samples and poured over glass slides (34 x 42 mm<sup>2</sup>) covered with a 258 1 mm<sup>2</sup> plastic mesh. This molten mixture was then compressed between glass plates spaced 259 to give a 1 mm thick layer of nutritional medium above the mesh surface. Each 'biscuit' was

260 cut from the block of agar medium and the edges trimmed with a scalpel to make grazing 261 detection easier. Large, mature Gibbula cineraria individuals were collected from Firestone 262 Bay and were kept in the lab at 15°C (± 1°C), and deprived of food for 10 days prior to the trials. To quantify total grazing individual grazers were placed in small (1 L), covered, gently 263 264 aerated aquaria with one biscuit (n=10 per species per temperature regime) for 48 hr, after which the area grazed was quantified by counting the number of 1 mm<sup>2</sup> grid squares of 265 266 material consumed. To determine patterns of grazer preference, a similar protocol was 267 employed but each grazer was presented with a choice of one biscuit from each kelp species 268 in a paired choice test (n=10 per temperature treatment). Feeding trials were conducted in 269 constant temperature chambers (held at 15°C) under a 12:12 hr lighting regime.

### 270 Statistical analysis

For the field survey data, variability patterns in kelp density and biomass and the abundance 271 272 of associated grazers were examined with 2-way ANOVA, with 'site' and 'kelp' as fixed factors. 273 For the controlled experiment, differences between treatments and kelp species were 274 examined using 2-way ANOVA with 'temperature' and 'kelp' as fixed factors for all response 275 variables. Prior to analysis data were tested for homogeneity of variance (Levene's test) and 276 validity of models was confirmed by inspection of analytical residuals. Field-based data were 277 Ln(x+1) transformed prior to analysis, whereas experimental data met the assumptions of 278 ANOVA and were left untransformed for analysis. To compensate for low sample sizes in the 279 experiment all P values were based upon bootstrapped confidence intervals using 1000 280 stratified iterations per factor combination. Where significant main effects or interaction 281 terms were detected (P<0.05), post hoc pairwise comparisons were performed (based upon 282 estimated marginal means with bootstrapped confidence intervals as above). Data from feeding preference trials were analysed using paired t-tests after first confirming normality ofdifferences using Shapiro Wilks tests.

285 **Results** 

286 Field surveys showed that both kelp species were present at the same sites and at similar shore heights within Plymouth Sound (Fig. 2, Fig. S1). Generally, L. digitata formed a distinct 287 288 band at a greater shore height than L. ochroleuca, which extended into the shallow subtidal 289 zone, but at both sites these bands overlapped to form a mixed stand of *L. ochroleuca* and *L.* 290 *digitata* at ~0.0-0.2 m above chart datum. *L. digitata* was numerically dominant at the shore 291 height surveyed at both study sites (Fig. 2) but differences were non-significant (Table S1). 292 Estimates of standing biomass for each species were more comparable (Fig. 2) due to the 293 slightly greater average weight of *L. ochroleuca* sporophytes which tended to have larger 294 holdfasts and stipes, and standing biomass did not differ statistically between either sites or 295 kelp species (Table S1). The only macrofaunal grazers associated with the laminae of the 296 kelp species were 2 gastropods; the blue-rayed limpet *Patella pellucida* and the grey 297 topshell Gibbula cineraria. The abundance of P. pellucida was generally low and highly 298 variable between sporophytes; the greatest mean abundance  $(2.2 \pm 4.0 \text{ inds. kelp}^{-1})$  was 299 observed on *L. digitata* at Batten Bay (Fig. 2). A significant species x site interaction was 300 observed as L. ochroleuca supported statistically greater abundances of P. pellucida than L. 301 digitata at Tinside but not Batten Bay (Table S1). The abundances of G. cineraria were also 302 low and variable, but were statistically greater on *L. ochroleuca* compared with *L. digitata* 303 (Fig. 2, Table S1). Temperature data from the field showed that, during summer, shallow 304 subtidal kelp populations in Plymouth Sound experience sea temperatures in excess of our 305 highest experimental treatment (Fig. 3). Indeed, observed in situ sea temperatures were

18°C or more on at least 12 days during the summer months. Average daytime light levels
experienced by natural populations at a field site within Plymouth Sound were comparable
to light levels in the experimental tanks (Fig. S3).

309 Following the 16-day manipulative experiment, ANOVA detected a significant kelp species x 310 temperature interaction term for both elongation rate and biomass accumulation (Table 1). 311 Pairwise comparisons within each level of kelp species showed that temperature had no significant effect on L. ochroleuca whereas both growth variables were significantly reduced 312 313 at 18°C for L. digitata. Rates of elongation and biomass accumulation for L. digitata were ~3 314 times greater at 12°C compared with 18°C, whereas values for L. ochroleuca varied little 315 across the temperature range examined (Fig. 4a&b). Overall, growth rates varied markedly 316 between the 2 species, with L. ochroleuca exhibiting greater elongation and biomass 317 accumulation rates (Fig. 4a&b, Table 1). Differences in growth rates were not related to 318 inert-specific variability in morphology, as the biomass and length of kelp lamina did not 319 differ between the two species (Fig S3). With regards to Fv/Fm, ANOVA detected a 320 significant interaction term as variability between kelps species was not consistent with 321 temperature (Table 1; Fig. 4c). At 12°C, both kelps exhibited similar Fv/Fm values, whereas 322 at 15°C and 18°C values for *L. ochroleuca* were significantly greater than *L. digitata* (Table 1). 323 The concentrations of the defence compounds showed similar patterns in that both 324 phenolic and flavonoid production was markedly higher in L. digitata compared with L. 325 ochroleuca (Fig. 4d&e). Again, a significant kelp species x temperature interaction was 326 detected; temperature did not significantly affect defence compound production in L. 327 ochroleuca, whereas the concentrations of both phenolics and flavonoids in L. digitata was 328 significantly greater at 18°C than at 12°C (Table 1, Fig. 4d&e). The area of algal tissue grazed

within the 48 hr feeding trials was variable within temperature treatments (Fig. 4f). On
average, consumption rates for *L. digitata* tissue declined monotonically with temperature
with consumption of tissue held at 12°C significantly greater than for tissue held at 18°C
(Table 1; Fig. 4f). Consumption of *L. ochroleuca* by comparison peaked at 15°C, with
noticeably more *L. ochroleuca* tissue than *L. digitata* consumed at higher temperatures.
Results of the feeding preference trials indicated no clear preference for either species at
12°C and a small but significant preference for *L. ochroleuca* at 15°C and 18°C (Fig. 5).

# 336 Discussion

337 Anthropogenic climate change is driving a redistribution of marine species at a global scale 338 (Poloczanska et al. 2013; Sunday et al. 2012), which in turn is creating novel species 339 interactions and a reshuffling of communities and ecosystems (Beaugrand et al. 2013; 340 Vergés et al. 2014). However, responses to climate change have varied markedly between 341 populations, species and biogeographic regions (Poloczanska et al. 2013), as eco-342 evolutionary context, biotic interactions and species traits have important mediating 343 influences on climate responses in both marine (Pereira et al. 2015; Sunday et al. 2015) and 344 terrestrial ecosystems (Valladares et al. 2014; Van der Putten et al. 2010). Moreover, as 345 mechanisms that underpin species range shifts will vary between the leading and trailing 346 edges, direct comparisons between functionally-similar climate change 'winners' and 347 'losers' will improve our understanding of processes driving changing species distributions. 348 Our study has shown that realistic, observable levels of warming negatively impacted the 349 ecophysiology of a cool-water foundation species, but had no effect on its warm-water 350 congener. Moreover, the cool-water species exhibited increased production of known 351 defence compounds, which as well as serving primary functions may also serve as a

352 compensatory mechanism by reducing palatability and grazing pressure on already-stressed353 marginal populations.

354 The Lusitanian kelp Laminaria ochrolueca was first recorded in the UK, in Plymouth Sound, in 1946 (Parke 1948) and has seemingly proliferated at the poleward range-edge in recent 355 356 years, most likely in response to increasing sea temperatures (Smale et al. 2015). At our 357 field sites, which are representative of semi-sheltered shores in southwest UK, L. ochroleuca is now a conspicuous and important component of low shore kelp canopies. Conversely, the 358 359 more northerly-distributed *L. digitata* is adversely affected by increasing sea temperatures 360 at its equatorward range edge and, as such, has declined in spatial extent along the coast of 361 France in recent years (Raybaud et al. 2013) and is predicted to further contract poleward in 362 the near future (Brodie et al. 2014; Smale et al. 2013). At our field sites L. digitata was still 363 the dominant kelp species inhabiting intertidal rocky platforms, which is typical of semi-to-364 fully wave exposed shores in the wider Plymouth Sound region (authors' observations). It 365 remains unclear whether the abundance and extent of L. digitata has declined in the 366 southwest UK region, but its growth (tom Dieck 1992) and reproduction (Bartsch et al. 2013) 367 are likely to be negatively impacted by summer temperatures. Although formal tests of 368 species interactions are needed, it seems likely that the cold and warm species are 369 competing for resources (i.e. light and space) at our field sites, given that the combined 370 densities of these kelp species ranged from 5 to 8 inds m<sup>-2</sup>, combined biomass exceeded 371 1200 g WW m<sup>-2</sup> and average lamina lengths were in excess of is >1 m for both species. As 372 such any changes in ecophysiological performance mediated by increased temperature may 373 alter the balance of any biotic interactions between these species.

374 In our manipulative experiment, the ecophysiology of *L. digitata* was adversely affected by 375 the high temperature treatment, the magnitude of which reflected warming anomalies 376 typical of marine heatwaves in coastal ecosystems (Hobday et al. 2016) and was frequently 377 observed within the Plymouth Sound study region. Rates of elongation and biomass 378 accumulation for L. digitata declined with an increase in temperature, with the highest 379 growth occurring at 12°C and the lowest at 18°C. Bolton and Lüning (1982) reported that the 380 optimum temperature for growth in *L. digitata* was 10°C, and that this thermal optimum 381 varied little between geographically isolated populations. A similar optimum temperature 382 range for growth in *L. digitata* of 10-15°C was subsequently reported by tom Dieck (1992). Our 16-day exposure experiments recorded similar optimum and maximum temperatures 383 384 for growth. We also observed a marked decline in growth at higher temperatures, as 385 biomass accumulation and elongation rates were >3 times greater at 12°C and 15°C 386 compared with 18°C. Further work should also examine the influence of temperature on 387 erosion and production of kelp detritus, which was not considered here but may be 388 adversely affected by warming (Krumhansl et al. 2014).

389 With respect to photosynthetic activity, Roleda (2009) reported an optimum temperature 390 range between 7°C and 13°C for photosynthesis in *L. digitata*. Of the three temperature 391 treatments in this study, Fv/Fm was highest at 12°C, with a marked decline at 15°C and a 392 significant reduction at 18°C, where low Fv/Fm values (~0.6) were indicative of physiological 393 stress (Murchie and Lawson 2013). Similar responses have been reported for 3 kelp species 394 in the South Pacific, where increased temperatures decreased the efficiency of 395 photochemical processes (Cruces et al. 2012). The experiment was conducted in May/June, 396 an ecologically-important period for many *Laminaria* species which exhibit fastest annual

growth rates through spring and into early summer (Lüning 1979). As such, the observed
reduction in growth rates and photosynthetic efficiency at higher temperatures for *L. digitata* during this period could have wider implications for benthic primary production and
the availability of kelp-derived material for consumers.

401 We recorded sea temperatures in excess of 18°C on multiple occasions during the summer 402 months, which will be detrimental to L. digitata populations inhabiting shallow subtidal 403 habitats. Previous work has shown that air temperatures during spring low tides may exceed 404 25°C on intertidal rocky reefs in the southwest UK (Moore et al. 2007), prolonged exposure 405 to which would likely result in high rates of reproductive failure and mortality (Bartsch et al. 406 2013; Bolton and Lüning 1982; tom Dieck 1992). Indeed, significant bleaching of L. digitata 407 sporophytes – a symptom of desiccation or temperature stress – has been observed in 408 intertidal populations during periods of high temperatures (Smale, pers obs). Given that 409 observed and predicted maximum temperatures adversely affect L. digitata, it is likely that 410 marginal populations at the equatorward range edge will be negatively impacted by further 411 warming, in terms of both gradual increases in mean temperature and extreme warming 412 events, perhaps leading to a poleward range contraction as has been observed in France 413 (Raybaud et al. 2013).

In stark contrast, none of the response variables measured for *L. ochroleuca* were
significantly affected by the temperature treatments. Rates of elongation and biomass
accumulation and Fv/Fm were greatest at the highest temperature but these differences
were non-significant. An optimum temperature of ~15-17°C for growth in *L. ochroleuca* has
been previously reported (Biskup et al. 2014; Izquierdo et al. 2002; tom Dieck 1992), and our
results suggest that the marginal populations found at the poleward range edge exhibit

420 similar optimum temperatures for sporophyte growth. Given that sea temperatures are sub-421 optimum for growth and reproduction for most of the year, continued ocean warming will 422 increase the ecophysiological performance of L. ochroleuca populations at the poleward 423 range edge in the future. Currently, the rate of poleward spread is restricted by winter 424 thermal minima, as gametophytes cannot reproduce and sporophyte growth is arrested at 425 temperatures below 10 °C (Izquierdo et al. 2002) and intertidal populations cannot tolerate 426 low air temperatures (G. Boalch, pers com). In addition to temperature, relatively high light 427 requirements (Izquierdo et al. 2002), susceptibility to wave action (Smale and Vance 2015) 428 and competitive interactions with other kelps (Pereira et al. 2011) are acting to suppress the 429 proliferation of *L. ochroleuca* at the range edge. Should the ecophysiological performance of 430 the cold-water species *L. digitata* decline under warmer conditions, it is plausible that 431 competitive interactions between these species will be modified, consequently allowing L. 432 ochroleuca to increase its extent and abundance in the region.

433 The phenolic and flavonoid content in *L. digitata* was significantly greater in sporophytes 434 held at the highest temperature treatment. It has been shown that thermal stress can cause 435 increased production of polyphenolics in both terrestrial plants (Rivero et al. 2001) and 436 marine macroalgae (Steinberg 1995). For example, the kelp *Ecklonia radiata* exhibits 437 seasonality in polyphenolic production as higher concentrations are observed in warmer 438 compared with cooler months, which has been linked to higher ambient temperatures 439 (Steinberg 1995). Increased polyphenolic production during periods of temperature-related 440 physiological stress may be an inducible defence response, as polyphenolics have high anti-441 oxidant and radical-scavenging properties (Wang et al. 2009). For example, Cruces et al. 442 (2012) reported an increased level of radical scavenging correlated with increased phenolic

levels when the kelp *Macrocystis pyrifera* was exposed to increased thermal stress and UV
exposure. In contrast, Simonson et al. (2015) reported no alteration in phenol production in *L. digitata* across the 11-21°C temperature range, although the temperature exposures
lasted for 1 week rather than the >2 week exposures described here. This study suggests
further support for the importance of secondary metabolites, in this case polyphenols, as
inducible responses to thermal stress, perhaps because of their role as reactive oxygen
species scavengers and anti-oxidants.

450 The rate of consumption of L. digitata in feeding trials was lowest for the kelp tissue held at 451 the highest temperature. It is interesting to note that the decline in palatability and the shift 452 in grazing preference towards *L. ochroleuca* corresponded with the increase in phenol levels in L. digitata observed at higher temperatures. Since secondary metabolites often fill a suite 453 454 of roles, such as grazer defence, anti-microbial defence, and radical scavenging, the ability 455 of L. digitata to increase phenolic levels during periods of thermal stress may serve a direct 456 function in primary defence as well as a secondary function in reducing palatability and 457 therefore the detrimental effects of herbivory. However, herbivory is not recognised as 458 being a major driver of kelp population structure in the study region (Smale et al. 2013), as 459 grazer densities (e.g. sea urchins, gastropods) are generally low and there have been very 460 few reports of over-grazed areas (e.g. urchin barrens). Indeed, our (albeit limited) field 461 observations showed that the densities of molluscan grazers associated with each species 462 was low and highly variable between individual kelp sporophytes (although densities of 463 Patella pellucida are likely to increase throughout the year, see Toth and Pavia 2002). Even 464 so, localised high densities of molluscan grazers (e.g. Patella pellucida) can induce kelp 465 defoliation through direct consumption and through increased dislodgement by weakening

466 tissue (Kain and Svendsen 1969; Krumhansl and Scheibling 2011; Toth and Pavia 2002). It is 467 also possible that the relatively higher palatability of L. ochroleuca at elevated temperatures 468 may serve to slow the range-expansion process in a fashion consistent with biotic resistance to invasive species (Kimbro et al. 2013; Parker and Hay 2005). Further work is needed to 469 470 understand the ecological importance of enhanced polyphenolic production under stressful 471 conditions as it may counteract, to some extent, the expected increased rate of grazer 472 consumption relative to macrophyte growth rates at higher temperatures (Gutow et al. 473 2016; O'Connor 2009).

474 There are several limitations and caveats to the current study which should be explicitly 475 examined. First, our experiments did not test for the combined effects of exposure to high 476 air temperatures and desiccation, which intertidal populations may be subjected to during 477 periods of emersion on spring low tides. Even though the low intertidal kelp populations at 478 the study sites are exposed to air for only short periods during summer (sporophytes at 0.4 479 m above chart datum were emersed for ~10 hours throughout June-September 2015), 480 consecutive acute heat stress can have considerable impacts on kelp physiology (Pereira et 481 al. 2015) and, as such, acute exposures to high air temperatures may interact with chronic 482 exposure to higher sea temperatures to impact *L. digitata* populations. Moreover, as the 483 experiment aimed to examine ecophysiological responses affected by elevated 484 temperature, we did not include a recovery period between the warming treatments and 485 the measurement of response variables. Some kelp species and life stages have the capacity 486 to recover from acute thermal stress (Ladah and Zertuche-González 2007), and further work 487 on the cumulative combined effects of chronic and acute thermal stress is needed. Second, 488 the field data presented here were used to place the experimental work into an ecological

context and were not collected as part of a spatially and temporally extensive survey, nor
did we examine the strength and direction of species interactions (i.e. competition,
facilitation) between these co-existing species (as well as other canopy-forming
macroalgae). Biotic interactions need to be considered when predicting the effects of
climate change on species' distribution patterns (Kordas et al. 2011; Van der Putten et al.
2010) and gaining a better understanding of ecological interactions between climate change
'winners' and 'losers' in marine ecosystems should be a priority.

496 In conclusion, our study has shed light on the likely mechanisms underpinning climate-driven 497 shifts in the extent and relative abundances of 2 habitat forming kelp species with contrasting 498 distributions. For the northern kelp L. digitata, sublethal effects of warming, such as 499 decreased growth and photosynthetic activity and the energetic costs associated with 500 secondary metabolite production, will manifest during thermal maxima, which will threaten 501 the persistence of marginal populations. Population responses will be primarily driven by the 502 ecophysiological effects of high temperatures, and although compensatory mechanisms may 503 reduce top-down pressure on marginal populations, this is unlikely to be of great importance 504 within the study region. Given observed and predicted sea temperatures in the northeast 505 Atlantic (Philippart et al. 2011), it is likely that *L. digitata* will continue to retract its trailing 506 range edge polewards in the near future. Conversely, the extent and relative abundance of L. 507 ochroleuca is expected to increase, at least along semi-exposed shorelines, which could 508 ultimately affect timings and rates of primary production and the overall structure of 509 intertidal communities, although further research is needed to examine likely impacts. 510 Crucially, the ecological niches of these 2 habitat-forming species do not entirely overlap 511 (Yesson et al. 2015), as L. digitata can tolerate greater wave exposure and extends higher up

the shore than *L. ochroleuca*, which is susceptible to cold damage during low winter temperatures. As such, full replacement of the cold species by the warm species is unlikely to occur. Better understanding of the mechanisms underpinning climate-driven range shifts of kelp species is particularly important, given that they exert strong influence on the structure and functioning of associated communities in temperate marine ecosystems.

517

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757

760 761 762 763 764 765 766 766 767	biomass accumulation to grazers between ke (accepted at P <0.05; interaction term was	n, (c) F elp spe confid signific e the in	v/Fm, (d) p ecies and to lence inter cant, pairw nteraction	ohenolic ar emperatur vals bootsi vise tests w further (LL	nd (e) flavo e (both fixe rapped) a vithin each D = <i>Lamina</i>	ty in (a) elongation rates, (b) moid content and (f) palatability ed factors). Significant P values re shown in bold. Where the level of the main factor were tria digitata, LO = Laminaria cervals).
				_	_	
769 770	Source of Variation	DF	MS	F	P	
770 774	Kelp	1	1.606	59.41	<0.001	
771 772	Temperature	2 2	0.064 0.156	2.36 5.78	0.123 <b>0.011</b>	
773	Kelp x Temperature Residual	2 18	0.136	0.027	0.011	
774	Residual	10	0.407	0.027		
775	LD 12>18, 12=15, 15>	18: LO	) 12=15, 12	2<18, 15=1	8	
	, ,		,	,		
776	(L) D'anna an L					
777	(b) Biomass accumula	ation				
778 779	Source of Variation	DE	MS	F	Р	
780	Kelp	DF 1	0.0040	г 163.9	۹ <0.001	
781	Temperature	2	0.0040	0.55	0.585	
782	Kelp x Temperature	2	0.0001	8.27	0.003	
783	Residual	18	0.0001	0.27	0.005	
784	nesiduai	10	0.0001			
785	LD 12>18, 12=15, 15>	18: LO	12 =15, 12	2=18, 15=1	.8	
786	(c) Fv/Fm					
787				_	_	
788	Source of Variation	DF	MS	F	P	
789 700	Kelp Tanana sastana	1	0.0147	34.069		
790 701	Temperature	2	0.0001	0.224	0.802	
791 792	Kelp x Temperature Residual	2 18	0.0016 0.0004	3.824	0.041	
792 793	Residual	10	0.0004			
793 794	LD 12>18, 12=15, 15=	18: LO	0 12 =15, 12	2=18, 15=1	.8	
795	(d) Phenolic content					
796 707	Course of Variation	<b>Dr</b>	MC	-	Р	
797 708	Source of Variation	DF	<b>MS</b>	F 45.27	P <0.001	
798 799	Kelp Temperature	1 2	1.539 0.138	45.27 4.04	<0.001 0.039	
799 800	Kelp x Temperature	2	0.138	4.04 5.77	0.039	
800 801	Residual	2 18	0.196	J.//	0.012	
802	nesiuuui	10	0.034			
803	LD 12<18, 12=15, 15<	18:10	12 = 15 1	2=18.15=1	8	
500	-2,,	-00		0, _0-1	-	

804					
805	(e) Flavonoid content	t			
806					
807	Source of Variation	DF	MS	F	Р
808	Kelp	1	7.668	82.39	0.002
809	Temperature	2	0.178	1.91	0.176
810	Kelp x Temperature	2	0.437	4.70	0.023
811	Residual	18	0.093		
812					
813	LD 12<18, 12<15, 15=	18: LO	12 =15, 12	=18, 15=1	18
814	(f) Grazing rates				
	., .				
815	Source of Variation	DF	MS	F	Р
815 816	Source of Variation	DF 1	<b>MS</b> 30375	<b>F</b> 4.97	P 0.029
				-	0.029
816	Kelp	1	30375	4.97	0.029
816 817	Kelp Temperature	1 2	30375 43062	4.97 7.05	0.029 0.002
816 817 818	Kelp Temperature Kelp x Temperature	1 2 2	30375 43062 49598	4.97 7.05	0.029 0.002
816 817 818 819	Kelp Temperature Kelp x Temperature	1 2 2 54	30375 43062 49598 6106	4.97 7.05 8.12	0.029 0.002 <0.001
816 817 818 819 820	Kelp Temperature Kelp x Temperature Residual	1 2 2 54	30375 43062 49598 6106	4.97 7.05 8.12	0.029 0.002 <0.001

## 824 Figure Legends

Fig. 1. Distribution records of *Laminaria digitata* (black dots) and *Laminaria ochroleuca* (grey triangles) at the scale of (a) the mid-NE Atlantic and (b) the southwest UK study region. Distribution records were extracted from recognised, quality-assured biogeographic information databases (specifically OBIS, GBIF and NBN). Inset map on panel (b) details the Plymouth Sound study area (marked with a black box on the main map) to show the location of the study sites, Firestone Bay (FSB), Batten Bay (BB) and Tinside (TS)

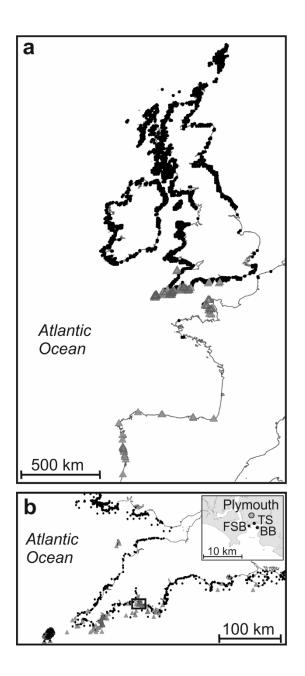
831 Fig. 2. Mean density (a) and biomass (b) of the kelps Laminaria digitata (black bars) and 832 Laminaria ochroleuca (grey bars) on low intertidal rocky reef at 2 study sites within Plymouth 833 Sound, Batten Bay and Firestone Bay. Densities of mature sporophytes were quantified in 10 834 replicate 5 x 1 m belt transects, standing biomass (g wet weight) was estimated by sampling 835 30 mature sporophytes and combining with density data. Lower plots show mean abundances 836 of the gastropod grazers (c) Patella pellucida and (d) Gibbula cineraria found on mature 837 sporophytes of Laminaria digitata (black bars) and Laminaria ochroleuca (grey bars) at 2 study 838 sites within Plymouth Sound, Batten Bay and Tinside. A total of 29 or 30 individuals of each 839 species were collected and examined from each site between March and May 2016. All values 840 are means (± standard error) and an asterisk indicates a significant difference between kelp 841 species (at P<0.05)

Fig. 3. Observed sea temperatures at 2 shallow subtidal rocky reef habitats (~2 m depth below
chart datum) in the Plymouth Sound study region during summer 2014. Temperature was
recorded in situ every 30 minutes. Dashed line indicates the magnitude of the highest
temperature treatment used in the experiment (18°C)

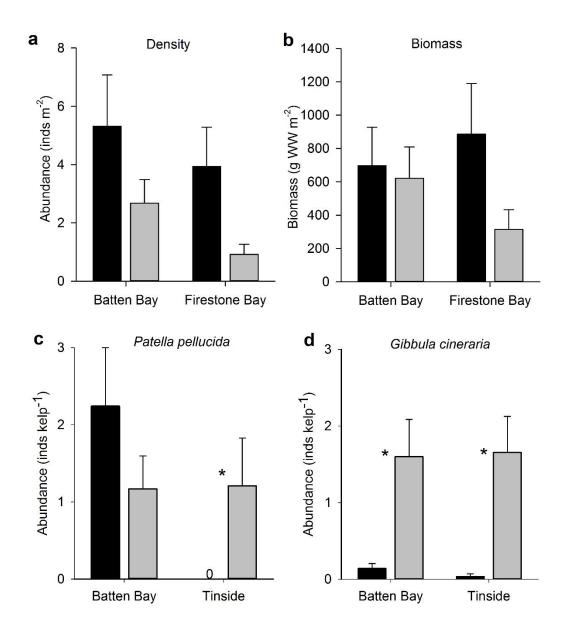
Fig. 4. Ecophysiological responses of the kelps *Laminaria digitata* (black bars) and *Laminaria ochroleuca* (grey bars) to temperature treatments. Bars indicate mean values (a-e: n = 4, f: n
= 10 ± standard deviation) for (a) elongation rates (cm day<sup>-1</sup>) (b) biomass accumulation rate
(g wet weight day<sup>-1</sup>) (c) Fv/Fm (d) phenolic content (% dry weight) (e) flavonoid content (%
dry weight) and (f) the rate of consumption by the gastropod grazer *Gibbula cineraria* (mm<sup>2</sup>
of algal tissue consumed in 48 hr). An asterisk indicates a significant difference between kelp
species (at P<0.05) at each temperature</li>

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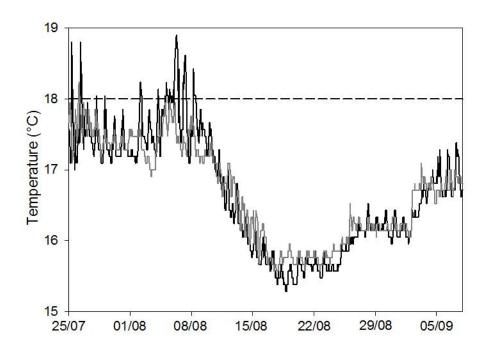
Fig. 5. Feeding preference of *Gibbula cineraria* at the 3 different temperatures. Preference
expressed as amount of *L. digitata* consumed – amount of *L. ochroleuca* consumed, positive
values indicate a preference for *L. digitata*, negative for *L. ochroleuca*. Boxes indicate
interquartile range, horizontal line = medians, whiskers = range, \*\* = significant at p<0.01</li>



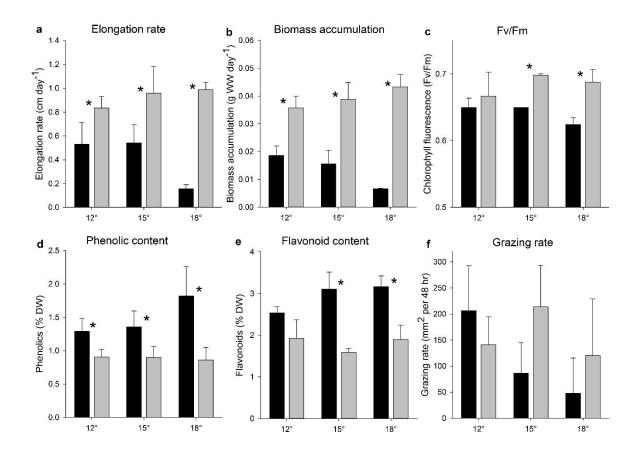














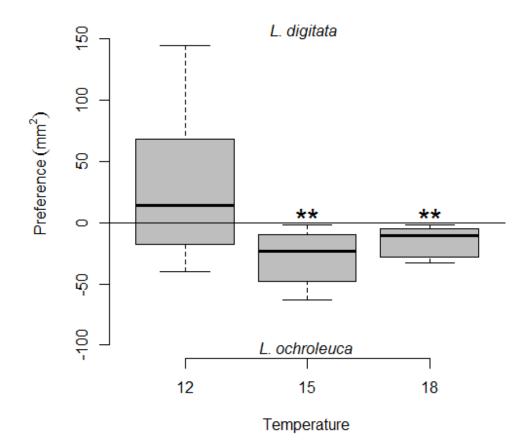


Fig. 5

## 864 Electronic supplementary material

## 865 The effects of warming on the ecophysiology of two

## 866 co-existing kelp species with contrasting distributions

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- 873 \*Corresponding author: Email: <u>dansma@mba.ac.uk</u> Tel: +44 1752 633354

- Table S1: Results of 2-way ANOVA tests to examine variability in (a) kelp density and (b) biomass and the abundances of associated grazers (c) *Patella pellucida* and (d) *Gibbula cineraria* between sites and kelp species. Significant P values (accepted at P <0.05) are shown in bold. Where the interaction term was significant, pairwise tests within each level of the site factor were conducted to examine the interaction further (BB = Batten Bay, TS =
- Tinside, LD = Laminaria digitata, LO = Laminaria ochroleuca). All data were Ln(x+1)
- 881 transformed prior to analysis.
- 882 (a) Kelp density

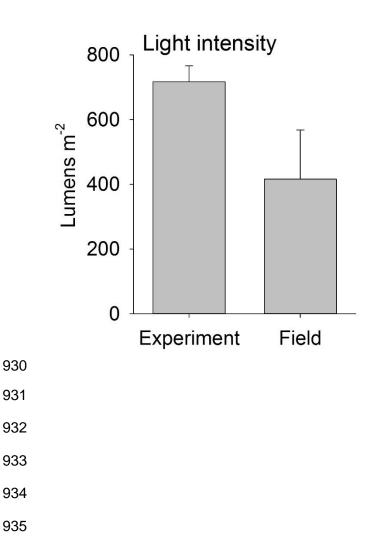
883	Source of Variation	DF	MS	F	Р
884	Kelp	1	5.38	3.15	0.084
885	Site	1	4.61	2.70	0.109
886	Kelp x Site	1	0.26	0.16	0.695
887	Residual	36	1.71		
888					
889	(b) Kelp biomass				
890					
891	Source of Variation	DF	MS	F	Р
892	Kelp	1	1.62	0.26	0.613
893	Site	1	9.95	1.59	0.215
894	Kelp x Site	1	0.01	0.01	0.988
895	Residual	36	6.26		
896					
897					
898	(c) Patella pellucida				
899					
900	Source of Variation	DF	MS	F	Р
901	Kelp	1	0.30	0.60	0.442
902	Site	1	3.44	6.83	0.010
903	Kelp x Site	1	2.16	4.30	0.040
904	Residual	114	0.50		
905					
906	BB: LD=LO; TS: LD <lo< td=""><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></lo<>				
907					
908	(d) Gibbula cineraria				
909					
910	Source of Variation	DF	MS	F	Р
911	Kelp	1	10.6	37.1	<0.001
912	Site	1	0.04	0.14	0.703
913	Kelp x Site	1	0.04	0.13	0.725
914	Residual	114	0.28		
915					

- 916 Fig. S1. Low intertidal and shallow subtidal rocky reef habitats within the Plymouth Sound
- 917 study region support mixed kelp canopies. here showing the co-existence of the study
- 918 species Laminaria ochroleuca (LO) and Laminaria digitata (LD) as well as Laminaria
- 919 hyperborea (LH).
- 920



922

Fig. S2. Mean daytime light intensity (12 hours of daylight between 0600 and 1800) in the
experimental tanks and a representative shallow subtidal (~1 m below chart datum) field site
within the Plymouth Sound study region. Light intensity data were captured every 20 mins
with 'Hobo' pendant loggers. Daily mean values are calculated from 5 consecutive days in
May 2014 (field) and May 2015 (tank) and shown ± SD.



936Fig S3. Mean lamina biomass (wet weight) and total length for each species at the end of the937temperature experiment (LD = Laminaria digitata, LO = Laminaria ochroleuca). One-way938ANOVA indicated that both biomass ( $F_{1,22} = 2.83$ , P = 0.11) and length ( $F_{1,22} = 0.66$ , P =

0.43) did not differ significantly between kelp species. Mean values were generated from 12

940 replicate kelp sporophytes (shown  $\pm$  SD).

