

## Long term patterns in the late summer trophic niche of the invasive pumpkinseed sunfish



Quantifying the trophic dynamics of invasive species in novel habitats is important for predicting the success of potential invaders and evaluating their ecological effects. The North American pumpkinseed sunfish *Lepomis gibbosus* is a successful invader in Europe, where it has caused negative ecological effects primarily through trophic interactions. Here, we quantified variations in the late summer trophic niche of pumpkinseed during establishment and integration in the mainstem of the Guadiana river, using stomach content analyses over a period of 40 years. Pumpkinseed showed a shift from trophic specialization during establishment to trophic generalism during integration. These results were concomitant with an increase in diet breadth that was accompanied by higher individual diet specialization particularly in large individuals. Irrespective of their drivers, these changes in trophic niche suggest that the potential ecological effects of pumpkinseed on recipient ecosystems can vary temporally along the invasion process.

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