Transcriptomic responses to multigenerational environmental warming in a cold-adapted salmonid using *de novo* RNA sequencing

Running title: Lake trout transcriptomic responses to warming

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Authors' contributions: CMP, GB and CCW conceived the ideas and designed methodology; CMP collected and analysed the data, and led the writing of the manuscript. All authors contributed critically to manuscript drafts and gave final approval for publication.

Conflict of interest: The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

Abstract

Cold-adapted species are particularly threatened by climate change as rates of environmental warming outpace the ability of many populations adapt. Recent evidence suggest that transgenerational thermal plasticity may play a role in the response of cold-adapted organisms to long-term changes in temperature. Using RNA sequencing, we explored differential gene expression of lake trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*), a cold-adapted species, to examine the molecular processes that respond to elevated temperatures under conditions of within-generation (offspring) and transgenerational (parental) warm-acclimation. We hypothesized that genes associated with metabolism, growth and thermal stress/tolerance would be differentially expressed in juvenile lake trout offspring depending on their own acclimation temperature and that of their parents. We found enriched pathways for thermal stress, signaling processes, immune function, and transcription regulation, although the specific genes and direction of differential expression (up- or downregulation) depended on the combination of offspring and parental thermal rearing conditions. While parental warm-acclimation did have a transgenerational effect on gene expression in their offspring, within-generation warm-acclimation had a larger effect on differential expression, enriching more pathways. We provide evidence of the transgenerational response to warming at the transcriptional level in lake trout, which should be useful for future studies of transcriptomics and plasticity in these and other cold-adapted species.

Keywords: acclimation, climate change, RNA sequencing, *Salvelinus namaycush*, transgenerational plasticity, transcriptomics.

Introduction

Temperate and Arctic regions are warming rapidly; surface temperatures in Canada have increased by ~1.7°C in under a century with even greater warming happening in the Arctic (~2.3°C; Zhang et al. 2019). As a result, high-latitude, cold-adapted organisms are experiencing, and will continue to experience, rapid temperature increases that may threaten their survival (Beitinger and Bennett 2000; Burkhead 2012; IPCC 2021). Range expansion to track suitable conditions is particularly challenging for species and populations with limited dispersal options, such as many freshwater fishes (Guzzo and Blanchfield 2017; Smith et al. 2020). Warming rates may outpace adaptive responses (Visser 2008; Crozier and Hutchings 2014; Comte and Olden 2017), particularly for those with low standing genetic variation (Willi et al. 2006; Wilson 2017). In the absence of standing genetic variation for coordinated adaptive responses throughout core metabolic pathways, population responses would be limited to plastic thermal acclimation, but the low physiological plasticity typical of many cold-adapted species means they likely will be particularly vulnerable to rapidly changing environments (Somero 2010; Kelly et al. 2014). Individuals that can withstand warming may have to rely heavily on energetic resources that would normally support growth or reproduction, thus having potentially negative downstream effects on the population (Somero 2010; Rosenfeld et al. 2020). A lack of adaptive genetic variation, low capacity for temperature acclimation, and rapid environmental change are predicted to result in widespread species extirpations (Bennett et al. 2019; Morash et al. 2021).

Some species may be able to buffer the negative impact of environmental warming through transgenerational acclimation, also known as transgenerational plasticity (TGP). As the name suggests, TGP refers to the phenotypic changes that occur over the course of multiple generations (Jablonka et al. 1992; Bell and Hellmann 2019; Bonduriansky 2021). This involves non-genetic inheritance of environmentally-driven changes, including parental effects, where the experiences of one generation are reflected in the morphology, physiology or behaviour of a subsequent generation, often F1 or F2 (Hellman et al. 2020; Lee et al. 2020; Bonduriansky 2021).

TGP occurs through modulation of gene expression through non-genetic inheritance, which includes parental effects and the transfer of epigenetic factors such as patterns of DNA methylation and histone modification, and microRNA activity (Dai et al. 2020; Spadafora 2020; Venney et al. 2020). TGP can potentially be beneficial when a parent's environment coincides

with what their offspring are expected to experience (Bernatchez 2016; Ashe et al. 2021). For example, TGP could be beneficial in a population that experiences environmental warming over multiple generations whereby the offspring are phenotypically "primed" for a warmer environment (Donelan et al. 2020; McCaw et al. 2020; Venney et al. 2022). In the context of climate change, this phenotypic priming could buffer the effects of rapid warming, allowing additional time for evolutionary processes to occur (Bernatchez 2016; Ashe et al. 2021), though the extent to which TGP can be considered adaptive is arguable (Uller et al. 2013; Sánchez-Tójar et al. 2020). Nevertheless, TGP with temperature has been identified in a number of species (Greenspoon and Spencer 2018; Yin et al. 2019). For example, the coral reef fish *Acanthochromis polyacanthus* exhibits TGP for increased temperatures by improving its aerobic scope in a warm environment by increasing maximum metabolic rate or decreasing resting metabolic rate (Donelson et al. 2012; Bernal et al. 2018). Many of the studies on thermal TGP in aquatic organisms have used eurythermal, temperate or tropical model species; by contrast, cold-adapted aquatic vertebrates are relatively understudied but could stand to benefit from TGP given their vulnerability to environmental warming due to climate change.

Acute and chronic temperature acclimation has obvious impacts on the metabolism of ectotherms, at both the whole organism and molecular level (Pérez-Ruzafa et al. 2018; Petitjean et al. 2019; Morash et al. 2021). Relatively few studies to date report the effect of transgenerational warming on phenotypic variation in tandem with gene expression, or with follow-up experiments testing the differential gene expression underlying transgenerational effects (Shama et al. 2016; Bernal et al. 2018; Veilleux et al. 2018). Examining differential gene expression associated with changes in metabolism with thermal experiences can be informative. Shama et al. (2016), for example, found that genes involved in metabolism, mitochondrial protein synthesis, hemostasis and apoptosis were differentially expressed in offspring depending on the multigenerational thermal experiences down the maternal line. These findings underscore the relationship between the molecular mechanisms underlying physiological plasticity and parental thermal experiences.

We sought to explore differential gene expression in lake trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*) to examine the molecular processes potentially underlying transgenerational responses to elevated temperatures. The lake trout is a long-lived, cold-adapted salmonid that is largely limited to cold, oligotrophic lakes in formerly glaciated regions of North America (Riley et al. 2021; Wilson and

Mandrak 2021) and is under significant threat from climate change (Casselman 2008; Guzzo and Blanchfield 2017). Being stenothermal, lake trout behaviourally thermoregulate by migrating to deeper, cooler water when lakes thermally stratify during the summer (Martin and Olver 1980; Guzzo and Blanchfield 2017). Low genetic variation for some lake trout populations (Perrier et al. 2017), and little within- and among-population variation for thermal acclimation capacity (McDermid et al. 2013; Kelly et al. 2014) may limit the adaptive potential of lake trout populations for warming temperate and arctic habitats. A previous study investigated the capacity for transgenerational thermal plasticity in lake trout as a means of coping with warming associated with climate change and found that they exhibit only limited transgenerational plasticity (Penney et al. 2021). Unexpectedly, cold-acclimated offspring of parents from elevated temperatures exhibited higher resting metabolic rate than those with one or both cold acclimated parents (Penney et al. 2021).

For this study, we assessed gene expression in previously studied offspring from factorial mating crosses between cold- and warm-acclimated lake trout adults (Penney et al. 2021) to assess transcriptional responses to within- and transgenerational thermal acclimation. Acclimation of the parents (transgenerational) to one of two environmental temperatures (10 or 17°C) was combined with subsequent acclimation of the offspring (within-generation) to cool (11°C) or warm (15°C) temperatures (Fig. 1). Evidence exists to support both maternal and paternal contributions to transgenerational effects (Marshall 2015; Shama et al. 2016; Penney et al. 2021). Our experimental design allowed us to examine the transgenerational effect of temperature acclimation of each parent, and both parents together, in combination with the offspring's (within-generation) temperature acclimation on gene expression in juvenile lake trout.

We hypothesized that genes associated with metabolism, growth and thermal stress/tolerance would be differentially expressed in juvenile lake trout depending on both the acclimation temperature of the offspring and the acclimation temperature of their parents. Based on studies of within-generation and transgenerational warming on differential gene expression in fish (Quinn et al. 2011; Veilleux et al. 2015; Akbarzadeh and Leder 2016; Shama et al. 2016), we predicted that 1) genes involved in growth, heat shock and hypoxia responses, and metabolic pathways would be upregulated in warm-acclimated offspring, and 2) differential expression of these genes would vary depending on whether one or both parents were warm-acclimated, although the size and direction of the effect is difficult to predict given that parental influence on

offspring gene expression has been shown to be sex-specific; depending on the sex of the offspring and that of the parent (Best et al. 2018; Baustista et al. 2020).

Methods

Hatchery-raised adult lake trout from the Ontario provincial Seneca Lake broodstock were used as parents for the experiment. This hatchery strain originated from Seneca Lake, one of the Finger Lakes in central New York State (42°41' N, 76°54' W). The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) hatchery system has maintained this lake trout strain for over five generations, using rotational line crossing (Kincaid 1977) to minimize inbreeding and maintain the founding genetic diversity of the strain (OMNRF Fish Culture Stocks Catalogue 2005).

The tissue samples used for these experiments were collected from juvenile (young of year) lake trout that were previously used in a separate study on metabolic rate with transgenerational warming described in Penney et al. (2021). In this previous study, adult and juvenile offspring lake trout were acclimated to two different temperatures and the offspring were subjected to an acute thermal challenge of $+2°C \cdot h^{-1}$ to determine the effect of within- and transgenerational temperature acclimation on upper thermal tolerance and metabolic rate. Details of the prior experiment (Penney et al. 2021) that are relevant to the current study are summarized below.

All experiments adhered to the Canadian Council on Animal Care guidelines and were approved by the Trent University Animal Care Committee (Protocol # 24794) and the OMNRF Aquatic Animal Care Committee (Protocol # FACC_136).

Experimental design and rearing conditions

Two groups (n = 8 and 9) of mature lake trout (age 8; 2.3 - 4.2 kg) were each held in 6,000 L tanks (1 x 1 x 6 m), with males and females kept together, at the OMNRF White Lake Fish Culture Station (Sharbot Lake, Ontario, Canada) with water being supplied from a nearby lake. As the source waterbody (White Lake) began to stratify in early June, 2015, we began to increase tank water temperature by 1°C per day starting from approximately 9°C until one tank reached 10 ± 0.5°C and the other 17 ± 0.5°C. These temperatures were chosen because 10°C represents the thermal requirements for lake trout spawning while 17°C is meant to push the fish

to their physiological limits without compromising reproduction (Casselman 2008; Penney et al. 2021) at the higher temperature. Temperatures were controlled and maintained by drawing in and mixing water from above and below the lake's thermocline as it flowed into the holding tanks. Fish were acclimated to these temperatures for approximately 3 months, mirroring thermal stratification in the source waterbody. Starting in mid-September, the temperature in the warm-water treatment was allowed to gradually cool by holding the proportional inflows from above and below the thermocline constant as the lake's surface water cooled. Temperatures in the two tanks converged at 10°C after fall turnover (late September) in the lake, and gradually cooled to 7.8°C by the end of the breeding interval (mid-November).

Adult lake trout were reproductive by the end of October with the warm-acclimated fish first spawning on October 30th. The cold-acclimated adults were first ready to spawn on November 5th and all mating crosses were completed by November 19th. Experimental offspring families were produced by a full factorial mating cross using two males and two females from each of the two temperature treatments (4 x 4, 8 adults in total) resulting in a total of 16 offspring families; four families from each of four parental treatment groups (W♀xW♂, W♀xC♂, C♀xW♂ and C♀xC♂, where W = warm-acclimated, and C = cold-acclimated; Figure 1). Fertilized eggs were transported to the OMNRF Codrington Fish Research Facility (Codrington, Ontario, Canada) where they were transferred into 200 L tanks receiving freshwater at ambient temperature (5-6 °C) and natural photoperiod under dim light with each family separately contained in steel mesh boxes (9 x 9 x 7.5 cm, one family per box).

In March (2016), when hatched offspring were ready to begin exogenous feeding, we randomly selected 14 individuals from each of the 16 families to transfer to 200 L tanks for temperature acclimation. Seven fry from each family were acclimated to a cold temperature (11°C) and the other 7 from each family were acclimated to a warm temperature (15°C). The offspring's lower acclimation temperature differs from that of their parents because of reported differences in optimum temperature for both life stages (11 vs 10°C; Edsall 2000, Casselman 2008). The upper acclimation temperature for the offspring represents the anticipated increase in temperature associated with climate change by year 2100 (Hayhoe et al. 2010; IPCC 2021), however, for the parents the upper acclimation temperature was two degrees higher to ensure that temperature was high enough to elicit a physiological thermal response without compromising reproduction. To begin acclimating the offspring, water temperature was increased at a rate of

1°C per day until target temperatures were reached (11 and 15°C). Due to space constraints, tanks were subdivided by adding steel inserts with perforated bottoms. Each insert was divided into 4 sections (24 x 25 x 28 cm per section) with two paternal half-sibling families (n = 7 each; shared male parent) housed per section. Offspring from pooled families were later individually identified to family using microsatellite genotyping (Penney et al. 2021).

After the 3-4 week acclimation period, offspring were subjected to an acute temperature increase of +2°C·h^{-1} from their acclimation temperature until loss of equilibrium was observed, and then quickly transferred to a bath of 0.3 g l−1 of buffered tricaine methanesulfonate (MS-222; Aqua Life, Syndel Laboratories Ltd, BC, Canada). Following euthanasia, the whole liver was rapidly dissected from each fish, blotted on a lab wipe and preserved in RNAlater (Invitrogen, Thermo Fisher Scientific) as per manufacturer's instructions. After 24-48 hours in a 4°C refrigerator, the RNAlater was pipetted from the tissues and the samples were stored at -80°C until RNA extraction. We chose to study gene expression in the liver because it is a metabolically active tissue involved in a number of physiological processes that respond to warming (Quinn et al. 2011; Akbarzadeh and Leder, 2016; Dammark et al. 2018). Additionally, transcriptional responses to multigenerational warming have been observed in the livers of zebrafish: Luu et al. (2021). Therefore, the liver ought to provide insight into the metabolic pathways that are affected by transgenerational temperature acclimation in lake trout. Liver tissue was collected between June 28 and August 9 in 2016.

RNA isolation and sequencing

RNA was extracted from the preserved liver tissues using a phenol-chloroform extraction method (Chomczynski and Sacchi 2006) after the tissues had been individually homogenized via a FastPrep-24 BeadBeater (MP Biomedicals) with 2 mL Lysing Matrix D tubes (MP Biomedicals) and 1 mL of Trizol reagent (Invitrogen, Thermo Fisher Scientific). RNA was precipitated with RNA precipitation solution (Sambrook and Russel 2001) and isopropanol, and washed with 75% ethanol. RNA samples were resuspended in nuclease-free water (Thermo Fisher Scientific). The purity and concentration of the RNA was quantified using a NanoDrop-8000 spectrophotometer, and RNA quality was assessed by gel electrophoresis of glyoxylated RNA on a 1.5% agarose gel (Sambrook and Russel 2001).

Two lots of RNA samples were sent for high-throughput sequencing over a two-year span. In 2018, liver RNA samples from 24 individuals were sent to The Centre for Applied Genomics (Sick Kids Hospital, Toronto, Ontario, Canada), and in 2020 another 30 liver samples (individuals) were sent to Genome Quebec (Montreal, Quebec, Canada). Altogether, the 54 samples included tissue from six individuals from each of the seven experimental treatment groups, however, the control group (11°C-acclimated offspring from cold-acclimated (CxC) parents) had a total of 12 individuals sequenced: 6 individuals in 2018 and an additional 6 in 2020, so that each treatment group was compared against the control group sequenced in the same year to eliminate batch effects in the analysis of differential expression (Table 1). Each group included at least one representative from each family. Both facilities assessed the RNA quality via a Bioanalyzer (Agilent Technologies) and all samples passed quality control (RNA integrity number: ≥ 7.5). cDNA libraries were constructed by enriching the poly(A) tails of mRNA with oligo dT-beads using NEBNext Ultra II Directional polyA mRNA Library Prep. In 2018, barcoded libraries were distributed among two and a half lanes and were sequenced on the Illumina HiSeq2500 instrument producing an average of 28 million reads per sample (n = 24, paired-end, 2x126 bp). In 2020, libraries were sequenced on the Illumina HiSeq4000 with barcoded libraries distributed among three lanes producing 36 million reads per sample (n = 30, paired-end, 2x126 bp).

De novo assembly, annotation and analysis

RNA reads from both years were assembled and annotated by the Canadian Centre for Computational Genomics (C3G, Quebec) in 2020. Adapters and reads with a Phred quality score <30 were trimmed using Trimmomatic (v.0.36), and normalization and *de novo* assembly was performed using Trinity assembly software (v.2.0.4) following Haas et al. (2013) and Grabherr et al. (2011). Pre- and post-trimming read counts and Trinity statistics can be found in the supplementary file (Tables S1 and S2). Functional annotation was performed with the Trinotate tool (v.2.0.2) and using the TransDecoder pipeline (v.2.0.1) to identify candidate coding regions and open reading frames. Candidate peptides were searched against known proteins in the Swiss-Prot (UniProtKB/Swiss-Prot) database via BLASTp (v.2.3.0) and the pfam database. The pfam database was also used with HMMER (v.3.1b2) to identify protein domains. Signal peptides,

transmembrane regions and ribosomal RNA genes were predicted using the programs signalP (v.4.1), tmHMM (v.2.0c) and RNAMMER (v.1.2), respectively.

Seven comparisons were made where offspring treatment groups were each compared to the control group (cold-acclimated offspring with cold-acclimated parents) to observe the effect that within- and transgenerational plasticity (acclimation) had on gene expression in juvenile lake trout (Table 1). Transcript abundance was estimated using 'RNA-Seq by Estimation Maximization' (RSEM; Li and Dewey, 2011) in Trinity with the 'align_and_estimate_abundance.pl' utility. Differential gene expression was analyzed between the groups of lake trout offspring in R using the limma package (v.3.40.6; Ritchie et al., 2015) with nominal p-values corrected for multiple testing using the Benjamini-Hochberg method with the false discovery rate (FDR) of 0.1. The log2fold change (LFC) was also calculated for DEGs, representing the magnitude of up- or downregulation; negative LFC are downregulated genes.

For each comparison, an enrichment analysis was performed on DEGs using the goseq package (v.1.28.0) in R which assigned Gene Ontology (GO) terms to transcripts and categorized them based on function (CC: cellular components, BP: biological processes, MF: molecular function). This initial analysis returned results that ran DEGs against databases for multiple species (e.g., human, mice, etc.). Using a limited list of DEGs (LFC of <-1 to >1), we validated the function of these genes for lake trout with the Database for Annotation, Visualization and Integrated Discovery (DAVID) tool (v.6.8) (Huang et al. 2009A; Huang et al. 2009B). The DAVID tool identified the genes as official gene symbols and required that a model species be specified for our gene list, so we opted to use *Salmo salar* because *S. namaycush* was not an available option and, among orthologous species, *S. salar* had the best coverage for annotated proteins available in the Swiss-Prot database (determined via NCBI Eukaryotic genome annotation pipeline, v.8.5). The output from the DAVID tool mapped genes to functional categories (GO) and metabolic pathways (Kyoto Encyclopedia of Genes and Genomes: KEGG), and we limited the list of gene annotations to backgrounds belonging to fish species (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*, *S. salar*, *Danio rerio*, *Oryzias latipes*). Tables outlining the enriched functions are included in the supplemental material. We opted to keep the DAVID tool default criteria of reporting functions that are enriched by a minimum of 2 genes (count) and $p<0.1$. We discuss significantly ($p\leq0.05$) enriched functions and pathways in the following sections with gene IDs provided in parentheses.

Results

The transcriptome data showed both transgenerational and within-generation environmental influences on gene expression (Fig. 2). Among all groups, there were 1,005 unique DEGs with a LFC of ≤ -1 to ≥ 1 that were recognized by the DAVID tool and used for enrichment analysis. The level of differential expression of these genes are displayed in a heatmap (Fig. 2). The first column represents the effect of offspring (within-generation) warm-acclimation on differential gene expression and sets the order of the DEG list, sorted from highest to lowest LFC. The list of genes along with their LFC values and adjusted *p*-value can be found in the supplementary information (Suppl. Table 17).

Within-generation acclimation: offspring warm-acclimation

As predicted, warm-acclimation of lake trout offspring resulted in differential gene expression compared to cold-acclimated offspring, providing support for our hypothesis that warm acclimation would upregulate genes associated with metabolism, growth and thermal tolerance. There were 193 upregulated DEGs mapped to GO terms or metabolic (KEGG) pathways. These 193 genes are displayed in Fig. 3 which shows the number of genes that had overlapping KEGG and GO functions. For example, there were 13 upregulated genes that had overlapping functions relating to KEGG pathways, biological processes, molecular function and cellular components whereas there were 27 genes that mapped uniquely the molecular function (Fig. 3). Among these genes were 29 upregulated DEGs involved in signalling processes, 14 related to cytoplasm functions and 9 related to immunoglobulin (Suppl. Table 3). There were 4 genes associated with methyltransferase activity, though this function was not significantly enriched (p=0.09; Suppl. Table 3). Upregulated DEGs that mapped to metabolic (KEGG) pathways included those involved in degradation (*HMGCLL1*, *CNOT1*) such as peroxisome activity and RNA and ketone degradation (Suppl. Table 4). Genes involved in the heat shock response were also upregulated, specifically *hsp90aa1.1* (Suppl. Table 4). Others included cell adhesion (*CD99L2, CTNNA2*) and signalling (*JAK1, PYCARD, CHD8*; Suppl. Table 4). Warm-acclimated offspring had 180 downregulated DEGs that mapped to GO terms or KEGG pathways (Fig. 3, right). There were 19 downregulated DEGs related with metal- and heme-binding and 3 DEGs associated with cyclin activity (Suppl. Table 3). Contrary to our predictions,

downregulated DEGs involved in KEGG pathways included glycolysis/gluconeogenesis (*GAPDH*) and metabolism of fructose and mannose (*ALDOB*; Suppl. Table 4). Other DEGs involved in peroxidase activity were also downregulated with offspring warm-acclimation (*MPV17L2*; Suppl. Table 4).

Transgenerational acclimation: parental warm-acclimation

Parental warm-acclimation influenced gene expression in cold-acclimated offspring. The direction of differential expression (up- or down-regulation) in the offspring depended on which parent was warm-acclimated and sometimes expression of a gene due to maternal or paternal warm-acclimation contrasted with the expression level when only the offspring were warm-acclimated (positive vs. negative LFC; Fig. 2). Nevertheless, parental warm-acclimation influenced differential gene expression in the lake trout offspring, lending support to our prediction that differential expression of genes would vary in offspring depending on parental temperature acclimation.

With maternal warm-acclimation, 107 upregulated DEGs mapped to GO terms or KEGG pathways (Fig. 4A). Maternal warm-acclimation had the effect of upregulating processes related to muscle function in their offspring, specifically 2 DEGs involved in calcium-binding and 3 DEGs in troponin synthesis (Suppl. Table 5). There were 13 upregulated DEGs associated with transferases and 3 DEGs related to glycolysis (Suppl. Table 5). Upregulated genes involved in KEGG pathways included DNA damage/repair and fatty acid metabolism (*DDIT4*, *hsd17b12a*; Suppl. Table 6). Maternal warm-acclimation resulted in 61 downregulated offspring DEGs mapped to GO terms or KEGG pathways (Fig. 4A). There were 14 downregulated DEGs involved in cell signalling and 10 involved in hydrolase/protease activity (Suppl. Table 5). The KEGG pathway analysis revealed that maternal warm-acclimation downregulated *GAPDH* involved in glycolysis/gluconeogenesis, and functions related to RNA transport and degradation (*CNOT1* and *EIF3C*; Suppl. Table 6).

Paternal warm-acclimation also had an effect on offspring gene expression, providing further support for our hypothesis regarding a transgenerational of warming on gene expression, although fewer genes were differentially upregulated with paternal warming compared to maternal warming. There were 69 upregulated DEGs mapped to GO terms or KEGG pathways (Fig. 4B) which included 10 DEGs related to transferase activity along with 3 DEGs involved in

glycolytic processes (Suppl. Table 7). Upregulated KEGG pathways included the mTOR signalling pathway (*DDIT4*) and protein processing (*ERO1A*; Suppl. Table 8). Slightly more (n = 75) DEGs were downregulated (Fig. 4B), including 16 DEGs involved in cell-signalling and 7 DEGs associated with protease activity (Suppl. Table 7). The KEGG pathway analysis revealed there were two transcripts (one upregulated and the other downregulated), that were identified as *GAPDH* and mapped to glycolysis (Suppl. Table 8). Comparing the adjusted *p*-value of both transcripts, where a lower *p*-value means it is less likely a false positive (i.e. type I error), suggests that *GAPDH* was actually downregulated ($p = 0.88$). Up- and downregulation was also observed with *CNOT1* (Suppl. Table 8), but because the $p = 1$ in both cases, we cannot conclude whether this DEG was up- or downregulated.

As expected, transgenerational effects were also observed in offspring gene expression when both mothers and fathers were warm-acclimated. A total of 101 upregulated DEGs mapped to GO terms or KEGG pathways (Fig. 4C). Among these were 16 DEGs associated with cell signalling processes, 9 DEGs related to hydrolase/proteases/peptidases function and 2 DEGs associated with peroxisome activity (Suppl. Table 9). Upregulated KEGG pathways included the mTOR pathway (*DDIT4*), RNA degradation (*CNOT1*) and amino acid transferase activity (*BHMT*, *GATM*, *GAMT*; Suppl. Table 10). A similar number of downregulated genes (n = 101) mapped to GO terms or KEGG pathways (Fig. 4C) which included 4 DEGs involved in glycosyltransferase activity, 3 DEGs related to lectin and 2 DEGs associated with tRNA function (Suppl. Table 9). There were 7 downregulated DEGs associated with translation/ribosomal proteins, but this function was not significantly enriched (p=0.09; Suppl. Table 9). Downregulated KEGG pathways included peroxisome activity (*HMGCLL1*) and apoptotic signaling (*pycard*) and Notch signaling pathways (*APH1B*; Suppl. Table 10). Again, *GAPDH* appeared as both up- and downregulated in the KEGG analysis.

Multigenerational acclimation: offspring and parental warm-acclimation

As hypothesized, genes associated with metabolism, growth and thermal stress/tolerance were differentially expressed with the combined effect of offspring and parent warm acclimation. In some cases, a combination of offspring and parent warm-acclimation resulted in more DEGs (e.g. >200) being up- or downregulated relative to when the within-generation warm-acclimation and transgenerational warm-acclimation were considered in isolation.

With offspring and maternal warm-acclimation, 193 upregulated genes mapped to GO terms or KEGG pathways (Fig. 5A). These included 20 DEGs related transferase function, 4 DEGs involved in metalloprotease/endopeptidase activity and 4 associated with the PDZ domain (Suppl. Table 11). There were also 3 DEGs associated with protein folding, 3 DEGs associated with DNA repair, and 3 associated with muscle contraction/ZASP (Suppl. Table 11). Genes that encode heat shock proteins (*HSP70*, *HSPB1*, *HSP7C*, *HSP30*) and proteins involved in the respiratory chain (*COX2*, *COX1*) were also upregulated, though these functions were not significantly enriched (p=0.07; Suppl. Table 11). Similarly, upregulated KEGG pathways included heat shock responses and RNA degradation (Suppl. Table 12). There were 236 downregulated genes which mapped to GO terms or KEGG pathways (Fig. 5A). Among these were 21 DEGs with transferase functions, 20 with function related to the cell nucleus and 19 DEGs involved in ATP binding (Suppl. Table 11). Additionally, there were 12 DEGs associated with kinases, 5 that had cyclin functions and 5 associated with DNA replication (Suppl. Table 11). Downregulated KEGG pathways included glycolysis/gluconeogenesis (*ALDOB*, *GAPDH*; Suppl. Table 12).

Offspring and paternal warm-acclimation combined to influence the differential expression of similar numbers and sorts of pathways as did maternal warm-acclimation, again supporting our hypothesis. There were 187 upregulated DEGs mapped to GO terms or KEGG pathways (Fig. 5B). The combination of offspring and paternal warm-acclimation had the effect of upregulating 4 DEGs that have proteases/peptidases functions and 2 DEGs involved in glycolysis (Suppl. Table 13). There were 2 upregulated DEGs involved in complex IV of the respiratory chain, however, this function was not significantly enriched (p=0.07; Suppl. Table 13). Similar to the combined effect of offspring and maternal warm-acclimation, offspring and paternal warm-acclimation upregulated KEGG pathways involved in cell signaling/inflammation (*mapk14a*), but offspring and paternal warm-acclimation uniquely upregulated KEGG pathways associated with protein folding (*HYOU1*) and insulin regulation (*foxo1a*; Suppl. Table 14). A similar number (n = 180) of DEGs mapped to downregulated GO terms or KEGG pathways (Fig. 5B). Enriched downregulated functions included ATP binding (14 DEGs), hydrolase/protease activity (13 DEGs), DNA replication (4 DEGs) and cyclin function (4 DEGs; Suppl. Table 13). There were also 2 DEGs associated with tRNA ligase activity and 2 DEGs related to peroxisome function (Suppl. Table 13). Downregulated KEGG pathways included glycolysis (*ALDOB*,

GAPDH), amino acid metabolism (*hpda*, *ALDH4A1*, *RRM1*, *RRM2*, *tdo2a*), fatty acid metabolism (*ELOVL6*; Suppl. Table 14).

Of all groups compared so far, the combined multigenerational effect of offspring, maternal and paternal warm-acclimation had the greatest effect on differential gene expression in the offspring with a total of 471 identified DEGs (Fig. 5C). There were 230 upregulated DEGs mapped to GO terms or KEGG pathways (Fig. 5C) with 41 of these upregulated DEGs associated with signalling function (Suppl. Table 15). Immunoglobulin and protease/peptidase activity were also enriched (9 and 5 DEGs, respectively; Suppl. Table 15). There were 2 DEGs involved in the respiratory chain complex IV but complex IV was not significantly enriched (p=0.07; Suppl. Table 15). Some of the affected KEGG pathways included the heat shock response (*hsp90aa1.1*), signalling pathways associated with inflammation (*mapk14a*) and insulin regulation (*foxo1a*; Suppl. Table 16). There were 241 downregulated DEGs mapped to GO terms or KEGG pathways (Fig. 5C). Enriched functions included transferase activity (24 DEGs), DNA replication (6 DEGs) and cyclin functions (4 DEGs; Suppl. Table 15). Binding functions were downregulated, such as those related to magnesium, nucleic acid and iron binding (5 DEGs each; Suppl. Table 15). Downregulated DEGs involved in KEGG pathways included peroxisome activity (*MPV17L2*), glycolysis/gluconeogenesis (*ALDOB*), and response to DNA damage (*DDIT4*; Suppl. Table 16).

Summary of general trends

We have identified five noteworthy trends when considering the experimental results all together: 1) Within-generation (offspring) warm-acclimation had a larger effect on the overall number of mapped DEGs compared to transgenerational contributions from warm-acclimated parents (mother, father or both). Unsurprisingly, the combination of offspring, maternal and paternal warm-acclimation had the greatest effect on the level of differential expression in the offspring with an overall 471 mapped DEGs. 2) Cell signalling processes were upregulated (29 DEGs) with offspring (within-generation) warm-acclimation, but maternal or paternal (transgenerational) warm acclimation had the effect of downregulating cell-signalling functions (14-16 DEGs). When both parents were warm-acclimated, cell signalling was upregulated (16 DEGs). Cell signalling was most enriched (41 DEGs) with multigenerational (offspring, maternal and paternal) warm-acclimation. 3) Transferase functions appeared to be regulated

mainly by transgenerational (parental) warm acclimation rather than with within-generation (offspring) warm-acclimation, however, the degree of enrichment (i.e. gene count) and the direction of the effect (up- or downregulation) appeared to depend upon whether one or both parents were warm-acclimated. 4) Regulation of cyclin functions appeared to be primarily under the control of the offspring because this process was only downregulated when offspring were warm-acclimated, thus not influenced by transgenerational (either parent or both) warm-acclimation. 5) Mothers seemed to have an influence over muscle functions (calcium binding, troponin synthesis, ZASP) in their offspring, upregulating these functions when mothers experienced a warmer environment, whereas there was no evidence of paternal influence on offspring muscle functions.

Discussion

There was evidence to support our hypothesis that genes associated with metabolism, growth and thermal stress/tolerance would be differentially expressed in juvenile lake trout, depending on the acclimation temperatures of the offspring as well as their parents. Genes involved in growth, heat shock and hypoxia responses, and metabolic pathways were differentially expressed with within-generation, transgenerational and multigenerational warm-acclimation. The degree to which each gene was affected depended on whether it was the offspring or parent that had been warm-acclimated, with the offspring thermal experience often having a stronger effect compared to the parental thermal experience. Maternal and paternal warm-acclimation sometimes had opposing effects on the direction of differential expression of certain genes in their offspring with one parent stimulating gene upregulation and the other parent stimulating downregulation.

The general effect of warming on differential gene expression

Across all comparisons there were several DEGs that were indicative of thermal stress. Among these were upregulated DEGs associated with molecular chaperone and co-chaperone functions (*hsp90aa1.1, hsp70, hsp30, hsp7c, hspB1, hspB7*, *HYOU1*, *FKBP5* and *FKBP8*). *HYOU1* in particular was upregulated with within- or multigenerational warm-acclimation, but not with transgenerational warm-acclimation in isolation (Suppl. Table 17). *HYOU1* (also known as *GRP170* and *HSP12A*) is part of the heat shock protein 70 family and its expression is

primarily induced with hypoxia. Although, upregulation of this gene has previously been observed in response to heat stress in fish (Huang et al. 2018; Bilyk et al. 2021), its expression may be linked to a hypoxia response or may potentially reflect the increased demands on aerobic metabolism/oxidative stress (Olsvik et al. 2013; Huang et al. 2018). The temperature-controlled water in the source tank supplying the respirometer setup was supplemented with compressed oxygen at higher temperatures in an effort to maintain saturation levels and minimize exposure to hypoxia. However, we must acknowledge the possibility that some hypoxic responses may still have occurred.

In general, within- and transgenerational warm-acclimation resulted in upregulated mitogen-activated protein kinases (MAPK): *MAPK3*, *MAPK14a* and *MAPK14b* (also known as *ERK1*, *p38a* and *p38b*, respectively). MAPKs are important in the regulation of many processes, including mitosis during growth and development. They are also upregulated in response to various stressors, such as osmotic, hypoxic and thermal stress (Cowan and Storey 2003; Tian et al. 2019). MAPKs are associated with the induction of HSPs, for example, *MAPK3* has been shown to induce expression of *HSP70* in zebrafish under thermal stress (Keller et al. 2008). Both *MAPK3* and *HSP70* were upregulated in warm-acclimated lake trout offspring with warm-acclimated mothers, suggesting that these fish relied on MAPK signaling cascades for resilience to warming. This is perhaps not surprising given that MAPK cascades and the induction of HSPs are evolutionarily conserved across numerous taxa (Krens et al. 2006; Kostenko et al. 2011), and that upregulation of these genes has been observed previously in other taxa following heat stress (Keller et al. 2008; Liu et al. 2021). Other affected pathways indicating upper thermal stress included peroxisome activity (*HMGCLL1*), DNA damage (*DDIT4*) and apoptotic signaling (*pycard*), though whether these DEGs were up- or downregulated depended on whether it was the parental or offspring generation that had experienced warming. Taken together, these DEGs indicate increasing temperatures caused a stress response in lake trout, which we would expect given that each offspring was subjected to an acute temperature increase (+2°C/h) and these DEGs were likely upregulated to respond to cellular/protein damage occurring at their upper critical thermal limit (Penney et al. 2021).

There was a general enrichment of pathways associated with metabolism, including genes such as *COX1*, *COX2*, *GAPDH* and *ALDOB*. In general, *GAPDH* and *ALDOB* were downregulated with within- or transgenerational warm acclimation, however, *COX1* and *COX2*

were upregulated in warm-acclimated offspring with warm-acclimated mothers following an acute temperature challenge. The effect of acute warming on differential expression of cytochrome c oxidase subunits is equivocal in fish: for example, acute exposure to warmer temperatures resulted in downregulation of *COX1* and *COX2* in the liver of yellow croaker (Qian and Xue 2016) but upregulation of *COX1* in the liver of juvenile lake whitefish (Zak and Manzon 2019). In our experiment, the matching of offspring and maternal thermal experience increased COX gene expression to a greater extent compared to other groups, potentially allowing offspring to meet the energetic demands associated with acute warming. We did not see upregulation of any other COX subunits, but it seems that expression of COX subunits does not follow stoichiometric expectations (Bremer and Moyes 2014) which may explain why we observed upregulation of only two of the 14 subunits that make up the COX holoenzyme.

We found some indication that warm-acclimation and upper thermal stress affected the growth of the lake trout offspring. We expected to see upregulation of some growth-related genes given that the warm-acclimated offspring were heavier than the cold-acclimated offspring at the time of sampling (Penney et al. 2021). Common molecular indicators of growth in fish include genes encoding growth hormone (*GH*) and insulin-like growth factor-1 (*IGF-1*), and genes related to thyroid function (Hevrøy et al. 2015; Li et al. 2021). We did not observe differential expression with *GH* or *IGF-1* in our experiment, but the thyroid receptors *TRα* and *TRβ* were downregulated in offspring that experienced warm-acclimation. Thyroid hormones have important roles in growth and development (reviewed by Deal and Volkoff 2020), however, it is curious that *TRα* and *TRβ* were downregulated given we showed previously that warm-acclimated lake trout grew larger than the cold-acclimated group (Penney et al. 2021). Indicators of growth, measured as expression of *GH* and *IGF-1*, increased in *Labeo rohita* at slightly warmer acclimation temperatures but was suppressed at higher acclimation temperatures (Shahjahan et al. 2021). We collected liver samples at each fish's CTMax, so it is possible that fish were responding to the stress of the acute temperature increase and may have suppressed growth at this point in favour of a heat stress response. Lastly, there is evidence suggesting that growth hormone signaling pathways in the muscle are more sensitive to elevated temperature than in the liver of Atlantic salmon and rainbow trout (Hevrøy et al. 2015), thus it is possible that we may have seen a stronger transcriptional response for growth pathways in the muscle compared to the liver. Confirmation of this would require further experimentation.

Transcriptomic responses to warm-acclimation across generations

We found that an offspring's thermal acclimation often had a greater influence on the level (LFC) of gene expression than did the thermal experience of its parents and in some cases multigenerational (offspring and parental) warm acclimation had an additive effect. For example, cold-acclimated offspring downregulated the molecular chaperone *HYOU1* when either parent was warm-acclimated (LFC maternal: -1.21, paternal: -0.94; Suppl. Table 17), however, a combination of offspring and parental warm-acclimation upregulated *HYOU1* (LFC offspring & maternal: 0.72, offspring & paternal 0.80, offspring & both parents 1.14), though to a lesser extent than when offspring were warm-acclimated in isolation (LFC 1.29; Suppl. Table 17). This trend suggests that within- and transgenerational warm acclimation had an additive effect on the expression level of *HYOU1*. The gene *MAPK14a* was upregulated whenever the offspring were warm-acclimated, regardless of parental thermal experience (LFC ranged from 1.19 to 2.06) and seemed to override the isolated effect of transgenerational (parental) warm-acclimation (LFC ranged from -0.67 to 0.52; Suppl. Table 17). The idea of WGP overriding TGP has been presented before (Shama 2017), and our experiment provides evidence of this phenomenon at the transcriptomics level. It has been suggested that transgenerational effects are strongest in early-juvenile life stages (Yin et al. 2019) and it would be interesting to see if this is reflected at the transcriptomics level by looking at gene expression at different life stages following within- and transgenerational warm-acclimation.

Compared to within-generation (offspring) warm-acclimation, transgenerational warm-acclimation (parents only) had only a modest effect on differential gene expression in lake trout offspring, supporting our previous study of whole animal metabolic responses to acute warming (Penney et al. 2021). Transgenerational effects can include parental effects (e.g. egg provisioning and transfer of sperm cell cytoplasmic components) and epigenetics (Dai et al. 2020; Spadafora 2020; Venney et al. 2020). For example, brook trout (*S. fontinalis*) offspring incurred more differentially methylated regions due to transgenerational warm-acclimation than with within-generation warm-acclimation (Venney et al. 2022). In the current study, maternal and paternal warm-acclimation separately elevated DEGs functioning in the DNA damage response (*DDIT4*) and heat shock proteins (maternal only: *HSPB1*, *HSPB7*). These transgenerationally elevated pathways associated with DNA damage and HSPs supports the idea of an adaptive response

whereby parents may improve offspring fitness when they correctly anticipate their offspring's environment (Bateson et al. 2014; Bernatchez 2016; Ashe et al. 2021).

Our prediction that transgenerational warm acclimation would upregulate metabolic processes in the lake trout offspring was partially supported. We observed differential expression of the genes GAPDH, ALDOB and ENOA which relate to the glycolytic enzymes glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase, aldolase and enolase, respectively. These three transcripts tended to be downregulated in all groups except for the two groups that included the combined effect of offspring cold acclimation and paternal warm acclimation which indicates a paternal transgenerational effect of increasing offspring metabolism (Suppl. Table 17). Despite this evidence, we cannot be fully confident that glycolysis was upregulated in these offspring because, while the differential expression of GAPDH, ALDOB and ENOA suggests an effect of warm acclimation on the rate of glycolysis in the offspring, these three transcripts did not significantly enrich the 'glycolysis' pathway in our analysis. Also, these genes may be constitutively expressed and have even been proposed as housekeeping genes for experiments exploring differential gene expression, however, the expression level may vary depending on species, tissue type and treatment (Hori et al. 2012; Purohit et al. 2016; Shekh et al. 2017).

Although transgenerational warming can result in larger offspring (Salinas et al. 2012), we did not find support for a transgenerational effect of warm-acclimation on growth in lake trout at the transcriptomics level, consistent with a lack of response at that whole animal level (Penney et al. 2021). Lastly, despite some genes being transgenerationally expressed in the same direction by either the maternal or paternal warm-acclimation, none of these genes appeared to have an additive effect on expression level when both parents were simultaneously warm-acclimated (Suppl. Table 14).

The combination of offspring, maternal and paternal warm-acclimation had the greatest effect on the overall number genes that were differentially expressed and, for some genes, the greatest effect on up- or downregulation. This adds to a growing literature suggesting that transgenerational plasticity occurs when offspring and parental thermal experiences are coincident (Shama et al. 2014; Donelson et al. 2017; Yin et al. 2019). Among all of the groups compared, the combination of offspring and parent warm-acclimation had the strongest effect on cytochrome c oxidase subunit upregulation. Differential expression of COX-related genes has elsewhere been recorded with transgenerational acclimation (Shama et al. 2016; Bernal et al.

2018). Also, the expression level of *COX1* and *COX2* subunits (among 7 of 14 subunits tested) correlated with cytochrome c oxidase activity in muscle of fish (Bremer and Moyes 2014). Our result could be indicative of a higher metabolic rate in warm-acclimated offspring with warm-acclimated parents, although neither resting or peak metabolic rates differed between warm-acclimated offspring from warm- or cold-acclimated parents (Penney et al. 2021). It is worth noting, however, that gene expression does not necessarily confer a protein to function given that post-transcriptional and post-translational activity could also tag a protein for degradation.

There were a few instances where some genes such as *GAPDH* and *CNOT1* appeared to be simultaneously upregulated and downregulated within treatments, though why this occurred is not immediately clear. One possible explanation is that the direction of the responses were sex-specific (Best et al. 2018; Bell and Hellman 2019; Bautista et al. 2020). For example, in stickleback, mothers can influence the direction (up- or downregulation) of differentially expressed genes depending on whether the offspring is male or female (Metzger and Schulte 2016). We did not test for the sex of the offspring so we cannot confirm this for the lake trout.

Conclusions

We found that transgenerational thermal acclimation in isolation (either or both parents) or in combination with offspring (within-generation) thermal acclimation can influence the strength and direction of differential expression of genes associated with metabolism and thermal stress/tolerance in lake trout experiencing acute thermal stress. In general, transgenerational warm acclimation had a smaller effect on differential gene expression compared to the strength of within-generation warm acclimation and, for some genes, transgenerational acclimation had opposing effects on offspring gene expression (mothers vs. fathers, or parents vs. offspring). The influence of transgenerational acclimation on offspring responses to environmental changes is complex, may not always be apparent in the phenotype or may have weak effects (Uller et al. 2013; Bautista and Burggren 2019; Lee et al. 2020; Sánchez-Tójar et al. 2020). However, the patterns of gene expression we observed here could present itself in the offspring's phenotype and we have previously shown that transgenerational environmental mismatching can have maladaptive effects in lake trout (Penney et al. 2021).

Without sufficient time or standing genetic variation necessary for adaptation (Willi et al. 2006, Comte and Olden 2017, Wilson 2017) populations of many cold-adapted species will need

to rely on plastic thermal acclimation to withstand chronic increases in environmental temperature. This may be particularly important for stenothermal coldwater species like lake trout, and for landlocked or isolated populations with finite adaptive resources. It is therefore critically important that we improve our understanding of the transcriptomic and phenotypic responses of organisms that are vulnerable to climate change by exploring the mechanisms driving phenotypic changes, and how those mechanisms act to mediate stresses associated with chronic warming.

Acknowledgements

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) Fish Culture Section provided adult lake trout, rearing space and logistical support at the White Lake Fish Culture Station. Bill Sloan, Scott Ferguson, Anne McCarthy (OMNRF) and John Dewart provided assistance with breeding adult fish; Bill Sloan and Scott Ferguson also provided invaluable logistical support for all aspects of fish husbandry from care of the juvenile trout to assisting with experiments at the OMNRF Codrington Fisheries Research Facility. Caleigh Smith (OMNRF) genotyped adult and juvenile fish for parentage assignment and family identification of juveniles. Paul Craig and Heather Ikert (University of Waterloo) kindly provided advice and guidance on the enrichment analysis. Madison Wikston provided advice for figure presentation. Paul Craig and Graham Scott provided feedback on early drafts of the manuscript.

Research funding was provided by the Canada-Ontario Great Lakes Agreement (COA) to CCW, by the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) to CMP, and a Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) Discovery Grant to GB.

Data archiving statement: Data for this study are available at: *to be completed after manuscript is accepted for publication.*

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Tables

Table 1: Summary of the seven comparisons made to measure differential gene expression in juvenile lake trout following within- and transgenerational thermal acclimation.

	Control group	**Treatment group**	**Effect measured**
Within-generation warm-acclimation	Cold-acclimated offspring (C♀xC♂)	Warm-acclimated offspring (C♀xC♂)	Offspring warm-acclimation
Transgenerational warm-acclimation	Cold-acclimated offspring (C♀xC♂)	Cold-acclimated offspring (W♀xC♂)	Maternal warm-acclimation
		Cold-acclimated offspring (C♀xW♂)	Paternal warm-acclimation
		Cold-acclimated offspring (W♀xW♂)	Maternal & paternal warm-acclimation
Within- and transgenerational warm-acclimation	Cold-acclimated offspring (C♀xC♂)	Warm-acclimated offspring (W♀xC♂)	Offspring & maternal warm-acclimation
		Warm-acclimated offspring (C♀xW♂)	Offspring & paternal warm-acclimation
		Warm-acclimated offspring (W♀xW♂)	Offspring, maternal & paternal warm-acclimation

Sample sizes were n=12 for the control group and n=6 for each treatment group. Parental crosses are given in parentheses where C = cold and W = warm, with mothers listed first (♀ x ♂).

Figures

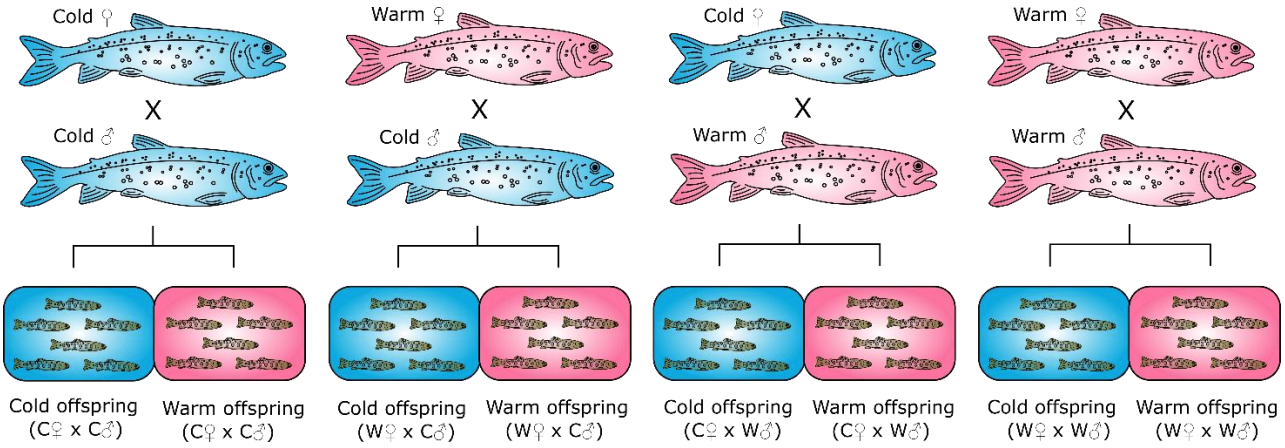

Figure 1: Experimental treatment groups of lake trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*). Two males and two females each from cold- and warm-acclimation tanks were bred in a full factorial cross, resulting in four families per parental treatment group (C♀xC♂, W♀xC♂, C♀xW♂, W♀xW♂; one each depicted here for simplicity). Offspring from each family was divided and acclimated to either a cold (11°C) or warm (15°C) temperature.

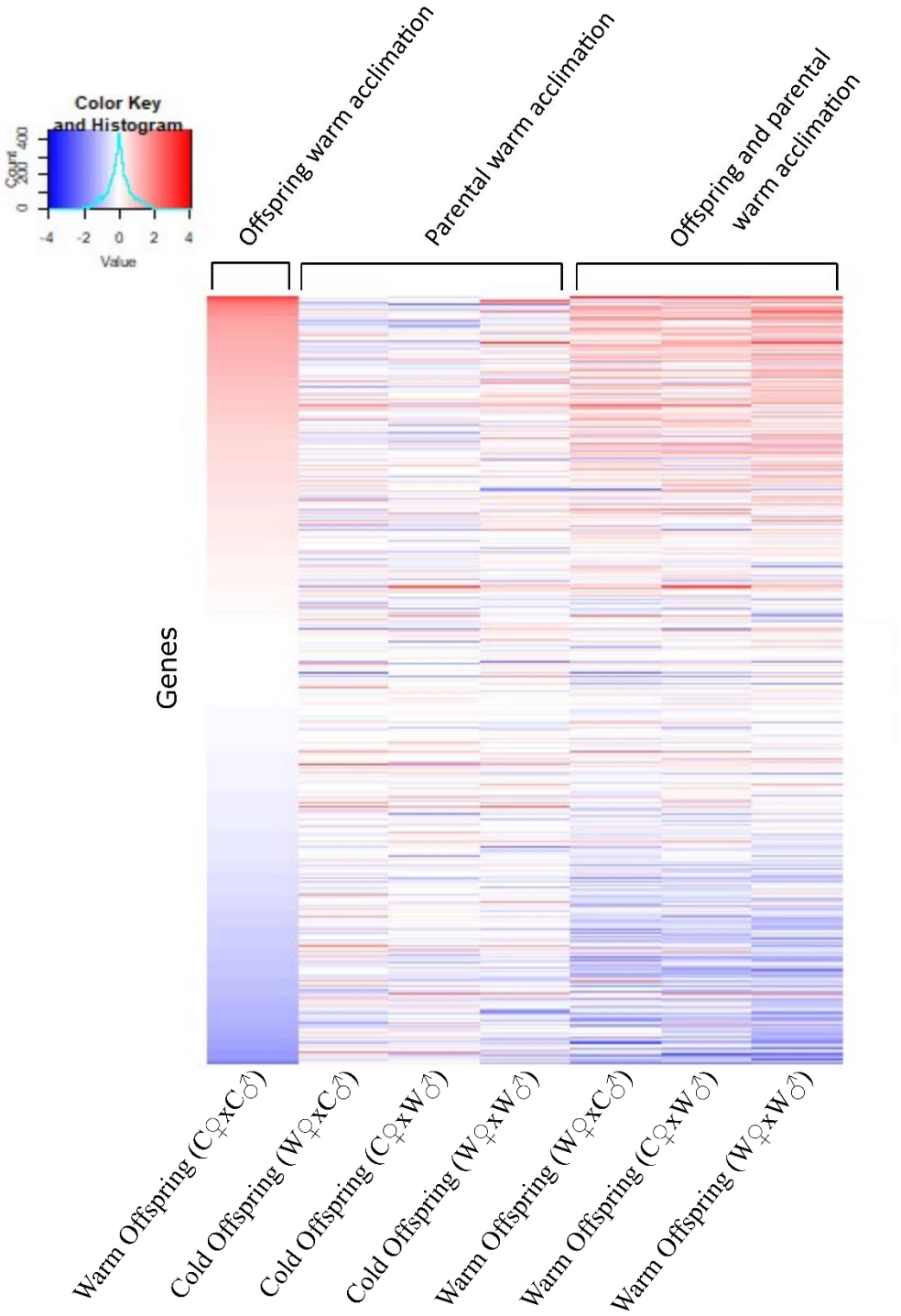

Figure 2: Heatmap comparing the effect of warm-acclimation on offspring (within-generation) and parental (transgenerational) gene expression in juvenile lake trout. Changes in expression are represented as log2-fold change (LFC; blue = downregulate, red = upregulated) in offspring (n = 6) for each treatment compared against the control group (11°C C♀xC♂; n = 12) where both parents and offspring were cold-acclimated. Labels for each column indicate whether the offspring, parents or both were acclimated to higher ("warm") temperature. Parental treatment (acclimation) is given in parentheses where "C" refers to a cold-acclimated parent and "W" refers to a warm-acclimated parent, mothers are listed first. The list of genes along with their

LFC values and FDR (adjusted p-value) can be found in the supplementary information (Suppl. Table 3).

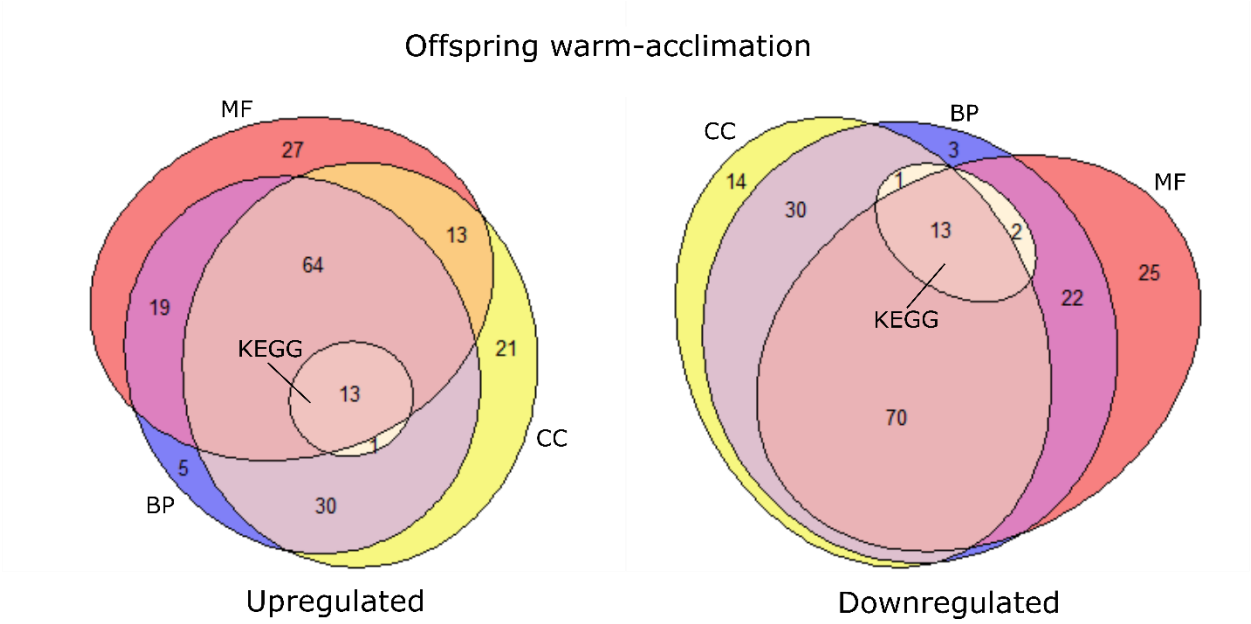

Figure 3: Enrichment of pathways using genes that were differentially expressed in response to warm-acclimation of juvenile lake trout offspring (n = 6) when compared against the control group (11°C C♀xC♂; n = 12) where both parents and offspring were cold-acclimated. Genes were expressed at log2-fold change (LFC) of ≤ -1 or ≥ +1 and were mapped to GO categories (BP: biological processes, CC: cellular components, MF: molecular function) and KEGG pathways. Treatment groups include representatives from each family.

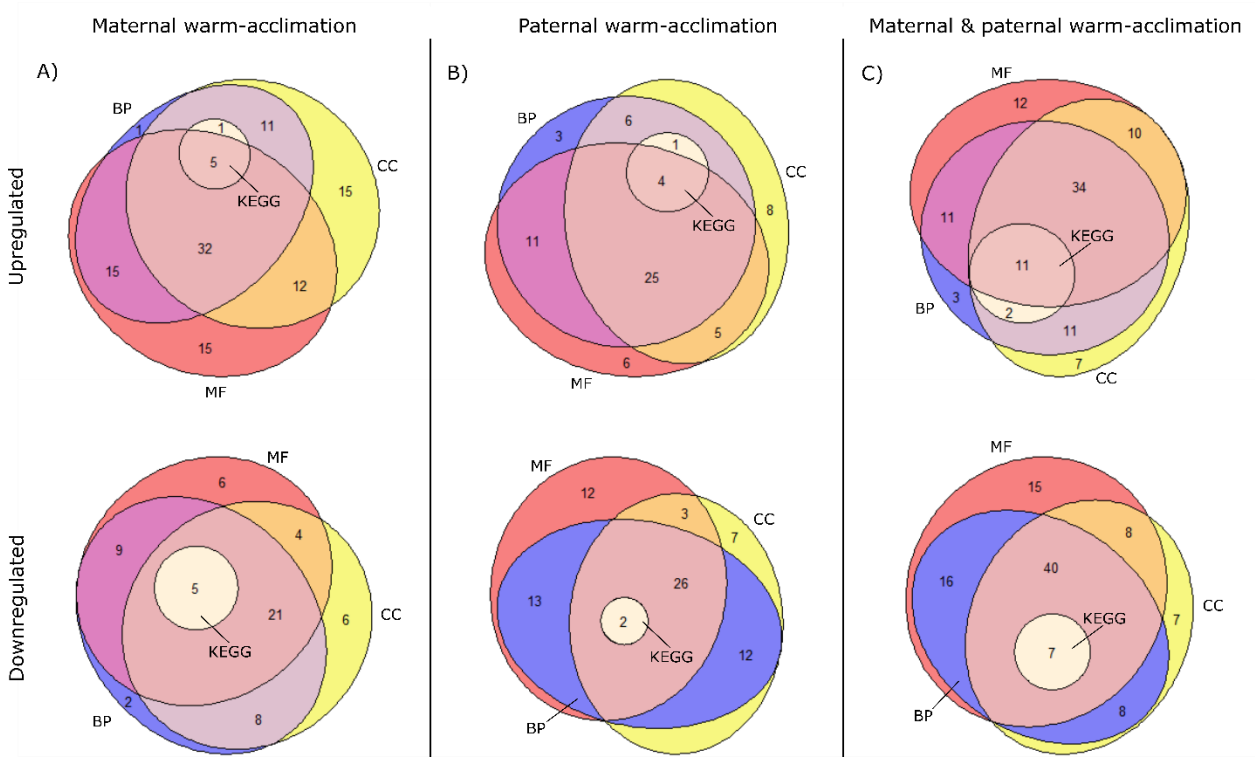

Figure 4: Enrichment of pathways using genes that were differentially expressed in response to transgenerational (parental) warm-acclimation of juvenile lake trout offspring when the mothers (A) or the fathers (B) were warm-acclimated, and when both parents (C) were warm-acclimated. Treatment groups (n = 6 each) were compared against control group (11°C C♀xC♂; n = 12) where both parents and offspring were cold-acclimated. Genes were expressed at log2-fold change (LFC) of ≤ -1 or ≥ +1 and were mapped to GO categories (BP: biological processes, CC: cellular components, MF: molecular function) and KEGG pathways. Treatment groups include representatives from each family.

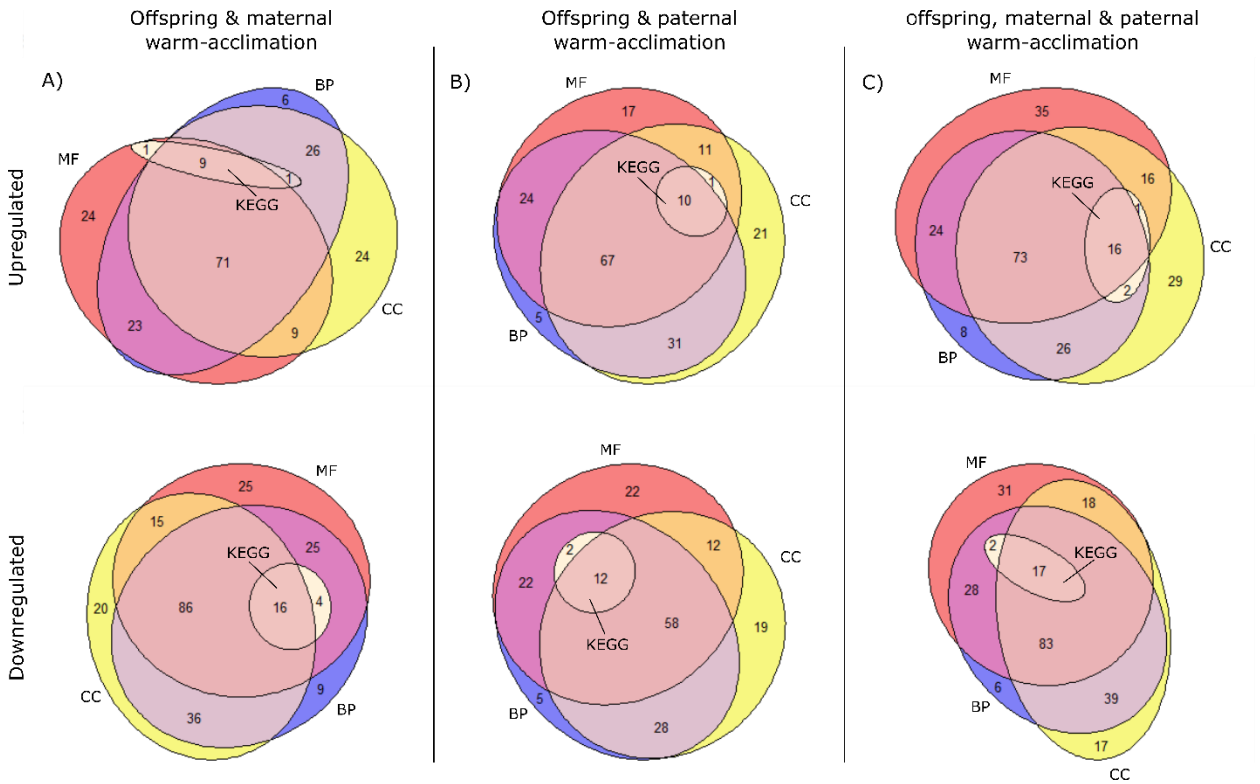

Figure 5: Enrichment of pathways using genes that were differentially expressed in response to the combined effect of within- and transgenerational warm-acclimation in juvenile lake trout offspring. Offspring were warm-acclimated along with warm-acclimated mothers (A), fathers (B) or both parents (C). Treatment groups (n = 6 individuals per group) were compared against a control group (11°C C♀xC♂; n = 12) where both parents and offspring were cold-acclimated. Genes were expressed at log2-fold change (LFC) of ≤ -1 or ≥ +1 and were mapped to GO categories (BP: biological processes, CC: cellular components, MF: molecular function) and KEGG pathways. Treatment groups include representatives from each family.