

1 **Title:** Mosquito species and age influence thermal performance of traits relevant to
2 malaria transmission

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23 **Abstract**

24 Models predicting disease transmission are a vital tool in the control of mosquito populations and
25 malaria reduction as they can target intervention efforts. We compared the performance of
26 temperature-dependent transmission models when mosquito life history traits were allowed to
27 change across the lifespan of *Anopheles stephensi*, the urban malaria mosquito, to models
28 parameterized with commonly derived estimates of lifetime trait values. We conducted an
29 experiment on adult female *An. stephensi* to generate daily per capita values for lifespan, egg
30 production, and biting rate at six constant temperatures. Both temperature and age significantly
31 affected trait values. Further, we found quantitative and qualitative differences between
32 temperature-trait relationships estimated based on daily rates versus directly observed lifetime
33 values. Incorporating these temperature-trait relationships into an expression governing
34 transmission suitability, relative $R_o(T)$, model resulted in minor differences in the breadth of
35 suitable temperatures for *Plasmodium falciparum* transmission between the two models
36 constructed from only *An. stephensi* trait data, but a substantial increase in breadth compared to a
37 previously published model consisting of trait data from multiple mosquito species. Overall this
38 work highlights the importance of considering how mosquito trait values vary with mosquito age
39 and mosquito species when generating temperature-based environmental suitability predictions
40 of transmission.

41 **Key Words:** Anopheles, Temperature, Malaria, Transmission, Life History, Senescence

42

43 **Introduction**

44 Despite the progress of global malaria elimination programs in reducing the incidence of
45 human malaria, particularly *Plasmodium falciparum*, malaria remains a leading cause of
46 morbidity and mortality among infectious diseases (1). The occurrence of multi-class drug and
47 insecticide resistance, in addition to alterations in mosquito behavior, challenge our ability to
48 eradicate malaria and poses the possibility of resurgence (1-6). While numerous environmental
49 factors affect the distribution and prevalence of mosquito-borne diseases, temperature is one of
50 the most pervasive abiotic factors affecting both mosquito and parasite vital rates (7-23).
51 However, even though the importance of these factors is increasingly recognized, gaps remain in
52 the current mechanistic understanding of the relationship between malaria risk and key
53 environmental variables. Improving our understanding of the link between temperature and
54 malaria transmission will be crucial for predicting how transmission varies geographically,
55 seasonally, and with climate and land use change (10, 24-30).

56 Recent research has begun to explicitly define the relationship between temperature and
57 vector and pathogen traits relevant to transmission across a diversity of vector-borne disease
58 systems (24, 26, 31-37). The net effect of these traits in determining temperature-dependent
59 transmission potential can be described by the pathogen basic reproduction number (R_0),
60 defined as the number of secondary cases arising from a primary case given a fully susceptible
61 population. Transmission models that define R_0 can be used to generate predictions of disease
62 risk, inform intervention strategies, and evaluate efficacy of various disease interventions (38-
63 43). Although it is widely accepted that the life history traits of ectotherms exhibit unimodal
64 responses to temperature, models often assume that the temperature-trait relationships for key
65 mosquito and parasite life history traits are linear (37, 44-48). Further, recent research that

66 included nonlinear, unimodal temperature-trait relationships into an R_0 model for malaria
67 transmission predicted a lower temperature optimum, minimum, and maximum than previous
68 estimates based on linear relationships, which better matched field observations of entomological
69 inoculation rate (31, 32). Key biological insights from previous models are that: 1) malaria
70 transmission is constrained in hot summer months in equatorial and tropical regions, 2) regions
71 of the world that are currently permissive for transmission may become less environmentally
72 suitable with future climate warming, and 3) vector control may become more difficult as
73 temperatures in northern latitudes become more permissive and suitable seasons extend (24, 32,
74 49).

75 Despite these advances, insights from previous mechanistic R_0 models remain
76 constrained by a lack of entomological and parasite data (31). Temperature-trait relationships for
77 key parameters are often indirectly estimated from a limited number of studies, leading to high
78 uncertainty around the predicted thermal limits in current malaria R_0 models (31, 32).
79 Additionally, the parameterization of R_0 models with temperature-trait relationships aggregated
80 from different mosquito and parasite species likely introduces error and uncertainty in R_0
81 estimates given the degree of inter- and intra-species variation in life history (7, 31, 32).

82 Further, evidence from a diversity of invertebrate systems demonstrates that organisms
83 experience age-related changes in life history traits (50-53). These changes reflect either
84 senescence, a decline in general physiological function with age, or a shift in energy allocation to
85 different life history tasks as an organism ages to maximize fitness. Limited studies suggest that
86 age modifies mosquito life history, with some evidence that mosquitoes experience reproductive
87 senescence (54), bite more frequently as they age (55), and exhibit age-dependent survivorship
88 (52). Yet, incorporating the combined effect of temperature and age on mosquito life history

89 traits has not been explicitly addressed in temperature-dependent R_0 models for malaria. Studies
90 often use data collected over a relatively limited portion of the mosquito lifespan to estimate
91 lifetime traits such as biting rates, total egg production, and lifespan in models of mosquito
92 population dynamics and disease transmission (23, 24, 26, 31, 32, 35, 36). For example, a recent
93 study characterized the extrinsic incubation period of *P. falciparum* in a cohort of *An. stephensi*
94 mosquitoes, but used the duration of the gonotrophic cycle to approximate the daily biting rate
95 and thus force of infection (23). If key mosquito life history traits vary with age, and temperature
96 influences age-related changes in these traits, then precisely when these traits are measured
97 during the lifespan of the mosquito could impact the predicted relationships between these traits
98 and temperature as well as the predicted environmental suitability for malaria transmission.

99 In this study, we conducted a cohort life table experiment on the urban Indian malaria
100 vector (*An. stephensi*) at six different constant temperatures to address the following questions:
101 1) does the effect of temperature on transmission change when thermal responses of traits from a
102 single mosquito and parasite species are used, rather than aggregated from multiple mosquito and
103 parasite species? 2) how do *An. stephensi* life history traits vary across the full spectrum of
104 biologically relevant temperatures? 3) do life history traits that drive human malaria transmission
105 vary with mosquito age? and if so, 4) do age-dependent changes in life history affect
106 temperature-trait responses and the overall temperature suitability for transmission?

107 **Materials & Methods**

108 *Life history experimental design*

109 *An. stephensi* mosquitoes were reared as described in **SI_Methods**. The life history
110 experiment was initiated three days after adult emergence to permit mating. After they were

111 presented with an initial blood meal for 15 minutes via a water-jacketed membrane feeder we
112 randomly distributed 30 host-seeking females into individual cages (16 oz. paper cup with mesh
113 top) to one of six constant temperature treatments (16°C, 20°C, 24°C, 28°C, 32°C, 36°C ± 0.5°C,
114 80% ± 5 RH, and 12L:12D photoperiod). Each individual adult cage contained an oviposition
115 site: a small petri dish that secured to the bottom of the housing, containing cotton balls to retain
116 liquid, overlaid with a filter paper for easy egg removal and counting. Individual mosquitoes
117 were offered a blood meal for 15 min each day. An individual was scored as having taken a
118 blood meal through visual verification of the abdomen immediately after the feeding period.
119 Oviposition sites were rehydrated and checked for the presence of eggs daily. We followed
120 populations of individual females in each temperature treatment until all mosquitoes had died or
121 when less than 7% of the starting population remained. At least two biological replicates were
122 performed at each temperature (n= 30 per temperature; total n= 390 individuals). Given the
123 extended duration of these experiments (~60 days), multiple blood donors were used throughout
124 each experimental replicate.

125 *Statistical analysis*

126 All statistical analyses were performed using the program R (version 3.4.1). We used
127 generalized linear mixed models (GLMM) R package `<lme4::glmer()>` to estimate the effects of
128 temperature, mosquito age, and their interaction on the proportion of females that imbibed blood
129 on a given day (i.e., the number of females that took a blood meal on a given day out of the total
130 number of females alive on that day for each temperature treatment) and the mean daily egg
131 production (i.e., the number of eggs laid on a given day divided by the total number of females
132 alive on that day in a given temperature treatment) (56). Temperature, age, and their interaction
133 were included as fixed effects. Both temperature and age were included as continuous variables

134 that were scaled and centered. Random factors initially included block, blood donor, and
135 mosquito individual as categorical variables. We used minimum AIC values to compare and
136 select our final models (**SI_Table 1, SI_Table 2**). Second, we used a Log-rank test with R
137 package `<survival::survdifff(>` on Kaplan-Meier estimates to determine if survivorship differed
138 with temperature (57). Lastly, to determine if the daily survival rate changed across the lifespan
139 of the mosquito, we fit a variety of survival distributions, which allow either for a constant
140 (exponential) or variable daily mortality rate (log-normal, gamma, Gompertz, and Weibull) with
141 R package `<flexsurv>` to the Kaplan-Meier estimates (58). AIC values were used to determine
142 survival distribution fits. In addition, the best fitting distributions (minimum AIC) were
143 determined at each temperature treatment separately to confirm the best-fitting survival
144 distribution did not vary with temperature treatment (**SI_Table 3**).

145 ***Temperature-dependent transmission potential (R_0)***

146 We used a temperature-dependent R_0 framework parameterized from the *An. stephensi*-*P.*
147 *falciparum* system to 1) compare predicted environmental suitability for malaria transmission to
148 a previous $R_0(T)$ model that aimed to describe the *An. gambiae* – *P. falciparum* system but
149 consisted of data aggregated from several different mosquito and parasite species (31); and 2) to
150 evaluate the effect of age-related changes in *An. stephensi* life history on the predicted
151 environmental suitability of *P. falciparum*. To do this, we used a common expression for R_0
152 derived from the Ross-MacDonald model (41, 59), which was initially expanded on in Parham &
153 Michael (2010) to incorporate the effect of temperature on mosquito life history and thereby
154 mosquito population size, and later modified in Mordecai et al. (2013) to approximate individual
155 lifetime reproductive values using daily fecundity output and adult daily mortality rates.
156 (**Equation 1, SI_Table 4**) (24, 26, 31-37, 59):

$$157 \quad R_0(T)_{estimated} = \sqrt{\frac{a^{*2} bc(T) e^{-\frac{\mu^*(T)}{PDR(T)}} EFD^*(T) pEA(T) MDR(T)}{Nr\mu^*(T)^3}} \quad (\text{Eq. 1})$$

158 R_0 is the expected number of new cases generated by a single infectious person or
159 mosquito introduced into a fully susceptible population throughout the period within which the
160 person or mosquito is infectious. R_0 components include: egg-to-adult survival probability (pEA),
161 mosquito development rate (MDR), fecundity (EFD ; eggs laid per female per day), biting rate
162 (a), adult mosquito mortality rate (μ), parasite development rate (PDR), vector competence (bc ;
163 the proportion of parasite-exposed mosquitoes that become infectious), the density of humans
164 (N), and the human recovery rate (r), with (T) indicating parameters that are dependent on
165 environmental temperature (degrees Celsius). The host recovery rate (r) and host density (N) are
166 assumed to be temperature independent. We label the $R_0(T)$ formulation in **Eq. 1** as ‘estimated’
167 as lifetime traits are commonly parameterized with indirect estimates based on daily rates (24,
168 26, 31-36).

169 To construct the Multi-species estimated model ($R_0(T)$ Multi-species estimated) we used
170 the thermal relationships defined in (31) and using the formulation in **Eq. 1**. To compare the
171 Multi-species estimated model to the $R_0(T)$ model parameterized with our *An. stephensi* data
172 ($R_0(T)$ *An. stephensi* estimated) and using the formulation in **Eq. 1**, we generated trait estimates
173 (denoted by *) according to methods described in (13, 22, 31, 32) for biting rate (a^*), lifespan
174 (lf^* as $1/\mu^*$), and lifetime egg production (B^* as EFD^*/μ^*). Briefly, the inverse of the duration
175 of the first gonotrophic cycle for each individual was used to estimate biting rate (a^*).
176 Exponential curves were fit to the tail of mosquito survivorship distributions characterized at
177 different constant temperatures to estimate the daily mortality rate (μ^*) of mosquitoes at each
178 temperature treatment. Eggs laid per female per day (EFD^*) at each temperature was estimated

179 by dividing the number of eggs laid for each female in her first gonotrophic cycle by the number
180 of days in that gonotrophic cycle. Additionally, to estimate *An. stephensi* mosquito development
181 rate (*MDR*) and probability of egg to adult survival (*pEA*), as well as *P. falciparum* development
182 rate (*PDR*) and vector competence (*bc*), we used data from (11) and (23). Finally, to incorporate
183 the temperature-dependence (*T*) of each of the traits outlined above and below, we fit symmetric
184 and asymmetric non-linear responses using Bayesian inference as described in Johnson et al.
185 2015 and **SI_Methods** (31).

186 To determine if $R_0(T)$ varies when directly observed lifetime trait values for biting rate
187 (*a*), lifespan (*lf*), and lifetime egg production (*B*) are incorporated instead of indirect estimates of
188 the lifetime values for these traits for *An. stephensi*, we generated the following $R_0(T)$
189 formulation (**Equation 2, SI_Table 4**).

$$190 \quad R_0(T)_{lifetime} = \sqrt{\frac{a(T)^2 bc(T) Y(T) B(T) pEA(T) MDR(T) lf(T)^2}{Nr}} \quad (\text{Eq. 2})$$

191 Mosquito lifespan (*lf*) was defined as the total number of days a mosquito survives after
192 being placed within her respective temperature treatment. Individual lifetime biting rate (*a*) was
193 defined as the total number of blood meals a female takes during her lifespan (*lf*) divided by her
194 lifespan (*lf*). Lifetime egg production (*B*) is defined as the total number of eggs laid by a female
195 during her lifespan (*lf*). The directly observed biting rate (*a*), lifespan (*lf*), and lifetime egg
196 production (*B*) were substituted for the indirectly estimated biting rate (a^*), lifespan ($lf^* = 1/\mu^*$),
197 and lifetime egg production ($B^* = EFD^*/\mu^*$) in **Eq. 1**. The proportion of mosquitoes surviving
198 the latency period, denoted as \square in **Eq. 2**, is substituted for $\exp[-\mu/PDR]$ in **Eq. 1**. To estimate
199 \square , we first fit a Gompertz distribution to survivorship data from each temperature treatment and
200 experimental replicate. We then took the proportion of mosquitoes alive upon completion of the
201 predicted extrinsic incubation period ($PDR_{50}(T)^{-1}$) of *P. falciparum* at each temperature. The

202 amount of days to reach 50% of maximum infectiousness in a mosquito population is represented
203 by $PDR_{50}(T)^{-1}$ (23). This formulation allows us to account for age-dependent mortality in the
204 proportion of mosquitoes surviving the latency period (\square). We then compared the relationship
205 lifespan, biting rate, and lifetime egg production have with temperature for *An. stephensi* when
206 these traits are directly observed (lf, a, B) vs. estimated (lf^*, a^*, B^*) from the data generated in
207 this study, as well as if any observed differences translate to differences in the predicted
208 environmental suitability for malaria transmission (R_0).

209 As done previously (24, 26, 31-36)), we use relative values of R_0 , as opposed to absolute
210 values, to estimate relative temperature suitability for malaria transmission, because absolute
211 values of R_0 depend on a number of factors that vary by location and time, including humidity,
212 breeding habitat availability, vector control, and vector – human contact rates. By rescaling $R_0(T)$
213 in all models to a range between 0 and 1, we can easily compare the thermal optimum and limits
214 for relative R_0 across models. However, when adopting this relative approach, the stable
215 transmission threshold of $R_0 > 1$ is no longer meaningful. Therefore, a conservative suitability
216 threshold of relative $R_0(T) > 0$ is implemented where temperatures outside of this range are
217 deemed unsuitable for transmission to occur because one or more of the component traits in
218 $R_0(T)$ is equal to zero. Finally, sensitivity and uncertainty analyses were performed for our *An.*
219 *stephensi* estimated and lifetime models as described in (31) and **SI_Methods**.

220 ***Mapping seasonal transmission range***

221 We generated maps depicting the number of months an area is predicted to be
222 environmentally suitable for transmission of human malaria (*P. falciparum*) to illustrate the
223 potential impact differences in the thermal breadth among our relative $R_0(T)$ models have across
224 a relevant landscape. We were primarily interested in comparing the amount of area predicted to

225 be endemically (year-round) suitable for *P. falciparum* transmission between our two *An.*
226 *stephensi* relative $R_0(T)$ models incorporating either estimated or observed lifetime trait values
227 across the current distribution of *An. stephensi*. However, we also draw comparisons between our
228 *An. stephensi* models (*An. stephensi* estimated and lifetime) and a previously derived relative
229 $R_0(T)$ model (Multi-species estimated), which aggregates trait data from multiple mosquito and
230 parasite species intended to describe *P. falciparum* transmission in the *An. gambiae* system. This
231 latter comparison serves to illustrate the differences in temperature suitability among systems.
232 Using the median model output for each of these models, we calculated $R_0(T)$ values at 0.2°C
233 increments, at a 0.01 level accuracy of model output, rescaled the $R_0(T)$ values from 0-1, and
234 plotted transmission suitability where $R_0(T) > 0$ as in Tesla et al. 2018 (35). Using the GADM
235 global administrative boundaries data we estimated the land area with endemic (year-round)
236 suitability within countries that span the current range for *An. stephensi*: India, Pakistan, Sri
237 Lanka, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, and Oman (60).

238 **Results**

239 ***Temperature and age shape mosquito life history traits***

240 A cohort life table study was used to evaluate the effect of temperature on *An. stephensi*
241 life history traits as individuals age. Both temperature and mosquito age significantly affected the
242 proportion of females that imbibed blood on a given day, mean daily egg production, and
243 survivorship (**Figure 1, SI_Table 2**). However, the interaction between temperature and age did
244 not significantly affect the proportion of females that imbibed blood on a given day or mean
245 daily egg production (**SI_Table 2**). The proportion of females that imbibed blood on a given day
246 was generally higher at warmer temperatures and declined as mosquitoes approached the end of

247 their lifespan in all temperature treatments, with this age-associated decline being most
248 pronounced at 36°C (**Figure 1a**). Across all temperature treatments, mean daily egg production
249 increased over time to a peak value before declining (**Figure 1a**). Peak mean daily egg
250 production varied with temperature: peak values were higher, occurred sooner, and persisted for
251 shorter periods of time at warmer temperatures (28°C - 36°C) compared to cooler temperatures
252 (16°C - 24°C) (**Figure 1b**). Temperature also significantly affected survivorship (**SI_Table 2**).
253 Survival responded unimodally to temperature, with a peak at 20°C and a decline at higher
254 temperatures (**Figure 1b**). Finally, at all temperatures, mosquito daily probability of survival was
255 not constant with age: a Gompertz distribution, which allows for a variable daily mortality rate,
256 best fit the survival data at each temperature (**Figure 1c, SI_Table 2**).

257 ***Using directly observed as opposed to estimated lifetime trait values alters temperature-trait***
258 ***relationships***

259 Depending on the life history trait examined (biting rate (a), lifespan (lf), or lifetime egg
260 production (B)), using observed vs. estimated lifetime values to fit temperature-trait relationships
261 resulted in shifts in the predicted thermal minimum (T_{min}), maximum (T_{max}), and optimum (T_{opt})
262 (**Figure 2a-c, SI_Table 5**). Temperature-trait relationships derived from estimated lifetime trait
263 values resulted in an overall decrease in the absolute values for each lifetime trait (**Figure 2a-c**).
264 While peak values of the temperature functions for observed lifetime biting rate (a) were
265 approximately double (0.5 vs. 0.24) that of estimated lifetime biting rate (a^*), the temperature at
266 which these peak values occurred (T_{opt}) was 4.2°C lower for observed lifetime biting rate
267 (**Figure 2a, SI_Table 5**). Further, the temperature-trait relationship for estimated biting rate (a^*)
268 had a substantially warmer predicted thermal minimum (T_{min} ; +7.6°C) and maximum (T_{max} ;
269 +2.4°C) than that for lifetime biting rate (a) resulting in a 5.2°C reduction in the breadth of

270 temperatures ($T_{breadth}$) permissive for biting (**Figure 2a, SI_Table 5**). Similarly, the value for
271 observed lifespan (lf) at the predicted thermal optimum (T_{opt}) was approximately twice that of
272 estimated lifespan (lf^* ; 38.3 days vs. 16 days) (**Figure 2b, SI_Table 5**). However, in contrast to
273 biting rate, the predicted optimum and maximum temperatures were the same for observed
274 lifespan (lf) and estimated lifespan (lf^*) with only a slight 0.2°C difference in the predicted
275 thermal minimum (**Figure 2b, SI_Table 5**). The temperature-trait relationship for observed
276 lifetime egg production (B) was predicted to have a 2.2°C decrease in the T_{opt} as compared to
277 estimated lifetime egg production (B^*), with subtle shifts in the predicted thermal minimum and
278 maximum (**Figure 2c, SI_Table 5**). Predicted peak values were higher for observed lifetime egg
279 production (B ; 317.1 eggs) than estimated lifetime egg production (B^* ; 225 eggs) (**Figure 2c**).

280 Surprisingly, the changes in temperature-trait relationships that occurred when directly
281 observed lifetime data are used instead of indirect estimates did not yield large changes in the
282 predicted relationship between temperature and malaria transmission across the *An. stephensi*
283 relative $R_0(T)$ models (**Figure 2d, SI_Table 6**). There was a slight decrease from 27.6°C (*An.*
284 *stephensi* estimated) to 26.6°C (*An. stephensi* lifetime) in the predicted T_{opt} , but no major
285 differences noted in the predicted T_{min} and T_{max} across models. We did also find notable
286 differences in the T_{min} and T_{max} of the estimated thermal relationship for the proportion of
287 mosquitoes surviving the latency period (\square) between *An. stephensi* models, which also likely
288 contributed to the minor shifts in relative $R_0(T)$ (**SI_Figure 4, SI_Table 7**). Finally, $R_0(T)$ was
289 sensitive to lifespan (lf) and biting rate (a) in both *An. stephensi* models; however, the *An.*
290 *stephensi* lifetime model exhibited less sensitivity to lifespan (lf) than the *An. stephensi* estimated
291 model (**SI_Results, An. stephensi lifetime; SI_Figure 2 & An. stephensi estimated; SI_Figure**
292 **3**).

293 ***The relationship between temperature and relative R_0 is disease system specific***

294 Integrating temperature-trait relationships from the *An. stephensi* – *P. falciparum* system
295 resulted in a qualitatively different temperature-relative R_0 relationship to a previously defined
296 multi-species model (31) (**Figure 2d, SI_Table 4, SI_Table 6**). The *An. stephensi* relative $R_0(T)$
297 model parameterized with equivalent methods (*An. stephensi* estimated) displayed an increase in
298 the breadth of suitable temperatures over which $R_0 > 0$ and a decrease in the credible intervals
299 around the thermal minimum (T_{min}), maximum (T_{max}), and optimum (T_{opt}) compared to a
300 previously published model (Multi-species estimated) which was used to describe *P. falciparum*
301 transmission via *An. gambiae* (**Figure 2d, SI_Table 6**). This increase in the range of
302 temperatures that are suitable for malaria transmission results from an increase in T_{max} from
303 32.6°C (Multi-species estimated) to 36°C (*An. stephensi* estimated) and a decrease in T_{min} from
304 19°C (Multi-species estimated) to 15.6°C (*An. stephensi* estimated). The *An. stephensi* estimated
305 model also had a predicted higher T_{opt} than the previous Multi-species estimated model (T_{opt} ;
306 25.4°C) by 2.2°C. (**Figure 2d, SI_Table 6**). Finally, we found differences in the T_{opt} and T_{max} of
307 the estimated thermal relationship for the proportion mosquitoes surviving the latency period
308 ($\exp[-u*(T)/PDR(T)]$) between the Multi-species estimated and *An. stephensi* estimated models
309 (**SI_Figure 4, SI_Table 7**).

310 ***Seasonal transmission based on temperature suitability varies geographically across relative***
311 ***R_0 models***

312 To visualize the differences in model predictions, we created maps illustrating geographic
313 variation in seasonal suitability for *P. falciparum* transmission of the three relative $R_0(T)$ models
314 along with spatial descriptors of the derived maps (**Figure 3a-c, SI_Table 8**). Comparisons are
315 drawn to the Multi-species estimated model to illustrate how environmental suitability

316 predictions may vary across disease systems (**Figure 3d**). The mapped overlay of year-round
317 (12-months) environmental suitability for malaria transmission for all three models highlights the
318 broader geographic extent of temperature suitability in our *An. stephensi*-*P. falciparum* models,
319 most notably extending northward into India and on the Arabian Peninsula as compared to the
320 previous Multi-species estimated $R_0(T)$ model (**Figure 3d, SI_Table 8**). For example, the Multi-
321 species estimated model predicts India to contain 710,046 km² of endemic area, whereas our two
322 *An. stephensi* models are predicted to contain approximately 3.5 times more endemically suitable
323 area (**SI_Table 8**). Further, Qatar was predicted to be unsuitable for year-round malaria
324 transmission in the Multi-species estimated model but contained a modest area of endemic
325 transmission suitability (11,210 km²) with our two *An. stephensi* models. In contrast, the
326 predicted endemically suitable area in Sri Lanka remained largely unaltered among models
327 predictions. In addition, there was a very subtle increase in suitability season in the northern-
328 most regions with the *An. stephensi* lifetime model compared to the *An. stephensi* estimated
329 model (**Figure 3**).

330 **Discussion**

331 This comprehensive study characterized how mosquito life history traits of an urban
332 Indian malaria vector, *An. stephensi*, were jointly modified by temperature and age to affect the
333 temperature suitability for malaria transmission. This study also tailored current temperature-
334 dependent relative R_0 models to *An. stephensi* to evaluate how predictions of environmental
335 suitability for malaria transmission are influenced by: 1) the use of direct observations for
336 mosquito life history traits (e.g. lifespan, lifetime egg production, and biting rate) instead of
337 common proxies currently used in the literature to estimate these traits and 2) the inclusion of
338 *An. stephensi*-specific trait data. We found that in addition to temperature, mosquito age altered

339 the daily proportion of females imbibing a bloodmeal, daily egg production, and daily
340 probability of survival. These results suggest that estimates of these life history traits
341 characterized during a finite portion of a mosquito's lifespan may be imprecise (24, 31, 32).
342 Importantly, we found large quantitative differences in observed lifetime trait values relative to
343 estimates that suggest absolute transmission potential could differ with mosquito age. A failure
344 to include the effects of mosquito age structure, for example, could have important implications
345 for modeling approaches that predict malaria transmission dynamics. Finally, we determined that
346 the inclusion of *An. stephensi* – *P. falciparum* specific data resulted in qualitatively different
347 temperature-transmission relationships compared to a previous relative $R_0(T)$ model that used
348 thermal responses from *An. gambiae* and other *Anopheles* and *Aedes* species, ultimately affecting
349 predictions of regional suitability for malaria transmission (31, 32).

350 Research across a diversity of ectothermic organisms demonstrates that age and
351 temperature both affect development, survival, and reproduction (50-53). In mosquitoes, limited
352 evidence suggests that mosquitoes experience age-related changes in cuticular hydrocarbons,
353 immune function, flight activity, insecticide resistance, biting rates, and survival (61-72). In this
354 study, we observed a decrease in the proportion of females imbibing a blood meal and daily egg
355 production in older *An. stephensi*. For both the proportion of females imbibing blood and
356 survival, the rate of decline occurred faster at increasingly warmer temperatures. Previous work
357 with *An. gambiae* showed an increase in the daily biting rate with age, which is in contrast to our
358 findings (55). It remains unclear whether this is outcome is due to differences in senescence,
359 allocation of resources into different life history tasks across *Anopheles* species, or nutritional
360 conditions. Finally, the daily egg production for *An. stephensi* displayed a unimodal relationship
361 with age, where daily egg production increased to a peak before declining. The time to reach

362 peak values and the subsequent decline occurred earlier in mosquitoes housed at warmer
363 temperatures.

364 The temperature-sensitive age-dependent mortality rates for mosquito populations are
365 concordant with previous work in laboratory and limited field studies (51, 73, 74). While there is
366 some evidence that long-lived *An. gambiae* cohorts can occur in the field, it is generally assumed
367 that mosquitoes have shorter lifespans in the field than typically observed in controlled
368 laboratory settings (75, 76), and the same may be true for *An. stephensi*. Thus, whether
369 mosquitoes experience senescence in the field remains an open and critical question, primarily
370 due to the logistical difficulties of accurately aging mosquitoes, conducting mark-recapture
371 studies, and controlling for temperature in variable environments (51).

372 Using direct measurements of an individual's biting rate, lifetime fecundity, and lifespan
373 instead of common approaches to estimate these traits from truncated portions of a mosquito's
374 life (e.g., first gonotrophic cycle only) yielded quantitatively, and in some cases qualitatively,
375 different temperature-trait relationships. Our results suggest that previous approaches used to
376 estimate these life history traits in the literature underestimate values for these traits across most
377 temperatures. This could have important ramifications for predicting mosquito population
378 dynamics as well as the effectiveness of mosquito control interventions in the field where
379 thermal conditions vary. Further, imprecise estimates of lifespan can have a compounding effect
380 on predictions of population dynamics and vector-borne disease transmission as it impacts
381 estimates of total reproductive output and the amount of time a mosquito survives past becoming
382 infectious (51, 52, 77). More effort is needed in measuring both lifespan and age-associated
383 changes in life history traits under field settings for important mosquito disease vectors.

384 By using a temperature-dependent R_0 model framework we were able to explore how
385 model parameterization of trait data (estimated vs. observed) influenced the temperature
386 suitability for *P. falciparum* transmission. While there were substantial quantitative differences
387 between directly measured versus estimated lifetime trait values along with qualitative
388 differences in shape of the temperature-dependent functions for biting rate and lifetime egg
389 production, we observed only very subtle differences in the predicted effects of temperature on
390 the environmental suitability of malaria transmission between the *An. stephensi* estimated and
391 *An. stephensi* lifetime models (**Figure 2d, Figure 3**). With the relative R_0 approach, absolute
392 differences in predicted temperature-trait and temperature-transmission relationships are masked.
393 One potential ramification of ignoring absolute differences across temperature-trait relationships
394 is that we cannot account for variation in the intensity of malaria transmission with temperature
395 among modeling approaches. For example, even though values of mosquito lifespan differed by
396 up to 2-fold, the predicted temperature-relative R_0 relationship was relatively unaffected by
397 whether the temperature-lifespan relationship was parameterized from estimated or directly
398 observed values(**Figure 2**). These results suggest that predictions of seasonal prevalence could
399 be improved in a modelling framework that incorporates the age-structure of mosquito
400 populations.

401 Additionally, while our *An. stephensi* estimated model was sensitive to lifespan, our *An.*
402 *stephensi* lifetime model was less so (**SI_Results, SI_Figure 2,3**). Thus, the small shifts in the
403 predicted thermal minimum and optimum for relative R_0 to cooler temperatures in our *An.*
404 *stephensi* lifetime model relative to the *An. stephensi* estimated model is primarily driven by the
405 qualitative differences in the temperature-trait relationship between directly observed and
406 estimated biting rate and the proportion of mosquitoes surviving the latency period (**SI_Results,**

407 **Figure 2, SI_Figures 2-4**). Differences in the temperature-trait relationship for the proportion of
408 mosquitoes surviving the latency period likely arise between models as the *An. stephensi* lifetime
409 model accounts for mortality rates that vary with age, whereas the *An. stephensi* estimated model
410 assumes a constant mortality rate.

411 Using *An. stephensi* data dramatically changed the predicted relationship between the
412 environmental suitability of malaria transmission and temperature relative to the previously
413 published Multi-species estimated model based largely on *An. gambiae* and *P. falciparum* (31),
414 suggesting that the thermal limits and optima of relative $R_0(T)$ models varies across disease
415 systems (26, 78). Specifically, we demonstrate a 3.4°C decrease in the predicted thermal
416 minimum and 3.4°C increase in the thermal maximum for our *An. stephensi* estimated model, as
417 compared to the Multi-species estimated model that used trait responses from multiple *Anopheles*
418 and an *Aedes* species (**Figure 2d, SI_Table 4, SI_Table 6**) (32). The increase in environmental
419 suitability at warmer temperatures could be due to differences in physiological constraints of the
420 mosquito vectors investigated. *An. stephensi* may be selected for higher temperature tolerance, as
421 it is found in urban areas in Asia. Thus, due to its geographical location and the urban ‘heat-
422 island effect,’ this species inhabits warmer areas on average than that of the more rural *An.*
423 *gambiae* (60). Further, differences in *Plasmodium* species and the method of calculating EIP
424 could drive differences between models (79). However, this would not explain the increased
425 suitability at cooler temperatures, which instead suggests a vector or parasite with a higher
426 plasticity in temperature tolerance. Finally, incorporating life history data for *An. stephensi* and
427 *P. falciparum* reduced the credible intervals around the predicted temperature-relative R_0
428 relationship relative to the Multi-species estimated model (**Figure 2d**) (31). In order to further
429 refine temperature suitability predictions for the effective use in vector control and to optimally

430 inform public health strategies there is a strong need for additional research on temperature
431 effects on the basic biology of disease vectors such as mosquitoes.

432 Accurately predicting malaria transmission depends on variation in other abiotic and
433 biotic factors, as well as socioeconomic factors that determine human exposure to infectious
434 mosquitoes that the R_0 approach does not capture. Further, the R_0 framework employed in this
435 work is static and does not incorporate the effect of temporal variation in daily or seasonal
436 temperatures, as well as fluctuations in vector and host densities or disease states (e.g.,
437 susceptible, exposed, infectious, recovered). However, here we demonstrate that the predicted
438 thermal suitability for endemic malaria transmission in Southeast Asia is more substantial than
439 previously predicted. Additional study limitations associated with the experimental design are
440 presented in **SI_Discussion**. Surprisingly, the predicted temperature-relative R_0 relationship and
441 overall land area of endemic environmental suitability were only subtly affected by using
442 common approaches to estimate mosquito lifetime traits (e.g., lifespan, lifetime egg production,
443 and biting rate) versus directly measuring them. However, differences in the overall magnitude
444 of these traits—as opposed to the shapes of their thermal responses—could affect transmission in
445 ways not captured using the relative $R_0(T)$ approach. This work highlights the importance of
446 integrating data specific to a disease system of interest and underscores the need for more basic
447 research in the field to improve the accuracy of mechanistic transmission models.

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459 **Figure 1. Temporal Effects.** *Anopheles stephensi* life history daily trait values across six
460 temperature treatments (16°C, 20°C, 24°C, 28°C, 32°C, and 36°C) for the (a) proportion of
461 females that imbibed blood, (a) daily egg production, and (c) survivorship. In a and b, colored
462 dots represent trait values for each replicate, with smoothed averages (loess; solid line) and the
463 trend across daily mean values (faded solid line) shown. The proportion of females that imbibed
464 blood, is the defined as the total number of females who took a blood meal on a given day over
465 the total number of females alive on that day. Daily egg production is defined as the total number
466 of eggs laid on a given day over the total number of female alive on that day. In c, Kaplan-Meier
467 estimates (solid line, upper and lower 95% CI: shaded area) and the best-fitting survival
468 distribution (Gompertz; dashed line) are shown.

469

470 **Figure 2. Direct Comparison of Lifetime vs. Estimated Traits.** A direct comparison of
471 temperature-trait relationships between observed lifetime trait values (black) and estimated
472 lifetime values (blue) for (a) biting rate (a), (b) lifespan (lf), and (c) lifetime egg production (B).
473 No data points (dots) are displayed for estimated lifetime values in c, as this trait is the product
474 of the temperature-trait relationships for estimated daily egg production and estimated lifespan
475 ($B^*(T) = EFD^*(T) \times lf^*(T)$). Comparison of the three relative $R_0(T)$ models (d). Each model is
476 displayed as relative to the respective max T_{opt} upper 95% credible interval (CI) model value
477 with mean model values (solid line) and 95% CI (faded area) across temperature shown.

478

479 **Figure 3. Mapping of relative $R_0(T)$.** Number of monthly pixels with $R_0(T) > 0$ for (a) Multi-
480 species estimated, (b) *An. stephensi* estimated, and (c) *An. stephensi* lifetime. (d) Mapping

481 overlay of all three models with endemic transmission (12-months suitability, deep red shading
482 in previous panels) with *An. stephensi* lifetime (bottom layer, purple), *An. stephensi* estimated
483 (middle layer, deep red), and Multi-species estimated (top layer, pink). Thus, the pink region
484 corresponds approximately to the areas where all three models predict endemic suitability, the
485 deep red reflects the additional area predicted to have endemic suitability by the *An. stephensi*
486 models, while the purple represents the additional area predicted for endemic suitability by the
487 *An. stephensi* lifetime model only.

488

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