Differential use of multiple genetic sex determination systems in divergent ecomorphs of an African crater lake cichlid

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Abstract

African cichlid fishes not only exhibit remarkably high rates of speciation but also have some of the fastest evolving sex determination systems in vertebrates. However, little is known empirically in cichlids about the genetic mechanisms generating new sex-determining variants, what forces dictate their fate, the demographic scales at which they evolve, and whether they are related to speciation. To address these questions, we looked for sex-associated loci in full genome data from 647 individuals of *Astatotilapia calliptera* from Lake Masoko, a small isolated crater lake in Tanzania, which contains two distinct ecomorphs of the species. We identified three separate XY systems on recombining chromosomes. Two Y alleles derive from mutations that increase expression of the gonadal soma-derived factor gene (*gsdf*) on chromosome 7; the first is a tandem duplication of the entire gene observed throughout much of the Lake Malawi haplochromine cichlid radiation to which *A. calliptera* belongs, and the second is a 5 kb insertion directly upstream of *gsdf*. Both the latter variant and another 700 bp insertion on chromosome 19 responsible for the third Y allele arose from transposable element insertions. Males belonging to the Masoko deep-water benthic ecomorph are determined exclusively by the *gsdf*

30 duplication, whereas all three Y alleles are used in the Masoko littoral ecomorph, in which they
31 appear to act antagonistically among males with different amounts of benthic admixture. This
32 antagonism in the face of ongoing admixture may be important for sustaining multifactorial sex
33 determination in Lake Masoko. In addition to identifying the molecular basis of three coexisting
34 sex determining alleles, these results demonstrate that genetic interactions between Y alleles
35 and genetic background can potentially affect fitness and adaptive evolution.

36 Introduction

37 Sex, as a means of generating beneficial combinations of alleles, is one of the most effective
38 evolutionary innovations used among eukaryotes to surmount fitness challenges. Many different
39 means of establishing separate sexes have arisen across the tree of life, operating through a
40 combination of genetic and environmental mechanisms (Bachtrog *et al.*, 2014; Pennell *et al.*,
41 2018). The continued evolution of new sex determination systems can provide a means to
42 improve fitness via altering sex ratios (Kocher, 2004), resolving sexually antagonistic mutations
43 (van Doorn & Kirkpatrick, 2007; 2010), and avoiding the negative consequences of sex
44 chromosome degeneration (Blaser *et al.*, 2013). Given this adaptive role of sex determination,
45 this begs the question of whether it is any coincidence that the fastest reported rates of sex
46 chromosome and heterogamety transitions among vertebrates (El Taher *et al.*, 2020) have
47 occurred in East African cichlid fishes, renowned also for their extremely high speciation rates
48 (Brawand *et al.*, 2014; Ronco *et al.*, 2020). In support of such an association, population genetic
49 models have demonstrated how heterogamety switches arising from a new sex-determining
50 locus coupled with sexual and sex-ratio selection can help generate reproductive isolation in
51 sympatry (Lande *et al.*, 2001).

52 Sex-determination across African cichlid species is largely governed genetically in either a
53 single-locus or polygenic fashion (Ser *et al.*, 2010). The loci controlling sex are known to exist
54 both on homomorphic sex chromosomes, for which there is little if any evidence for long range
55 suppression of recombination around the sex-determining alleles (Parnell & Streelman, 2013),
56 and on supernumerary B chromosomes (Clark *et al.*, 2017; Clark & Kocher, 2019). Within the
57 Lake Malawi haplochromine cichlid radiation, the characterized sex determining loci are the
58 orange blotch associated ZW locus and an XY locus on chr5 (Roberts *et al.*, 2009; Ser *et al.*,
59 2010), two XY loci on chr7 (Albertson, 2002; Parnell & Streelman, 2013; Roberts *et al.*, 2009),
60 an XY locus on chr3, and a ZW locus on chr20 (Parnell & Streelman, 2013), using the

61 chromosome numbering established for the *Metriaclicma zebra* genome (Conte & Kocher, 2015).
 62 In most of these cases, multiple sex determination systems have been observed to act within a
 63 single species. Most studies to date have identified sex-associated loci through
 64 captive-breeding experiments (e.g. Parnell & Streelman, 2013; Ser *et al.*, 2010), which provide
 65 only broad genomic resolution, or through GWAS on relatively small sample sizes in wild
 66 populations with limited power to detect intraspecific associations (El Taher *et al.*, 2020). While
 67 these studies point to cichlid sex determination as being highly fluid on the timescale of
 68 hundreds of thousands to millions of years, studies on the dynamics within populations would
 69 provide the context for examining how recombination, selection, and drift interact with molecular
 70 mechanisms to shape the evolution of nascent sex chromosomes (Furman *et al.*, 2020). To this
 71 end, we sought to understand how sex determination acts in a single population of the eastern
 72 happy cichlid *Astatotilapia calliptera*.

73 *Astatotilapia calliptera* is found both in the shallow margins of Lake Malawi as well as in the
 74 surrounding rivers and smaller lakes. Peterson *et al.* (2017) found that the major chr7 XY locus
 75 previously identified in Malawi Mbuna cichlids determined sex in a population of *A. calliptera*
 76 from Lake Malawi. Despite only mapping the effect to megabase-scale resolution, they
 77 postulated that a variant in the gonadal soma-derived factor (*gsdf*) gene on chromosome 7 was
 78 responsible for dictating sex given its repeated role in sex determination in other fish species
 79 (Einfeldt *et al.*, 2021; Jiang *et al.*, 2016; Kaneko *et al.*, 2015; Myosho *et al.*, 2012).

80 In particular, we studied *A. calliptera* in crater Lake Masoko to the north of Lake Malawi, which is
 81 estimated to have formed ~50,000 years ago (Williamson *et al.*, 1999). Lake Masoko is only 700
 82 metres in diameter with a shallow littoral margin and walls steeply descending to around 36 m at
 83 its deepest point (Turner *et al.*, 2019). It is currently a closed system, without surface
 84 connections to any other water bodies (Turner *et al.*, 2019). With the only other fish being two
 85 cichlid species distantly related to *A. calliptera* and one clariid catfish species, the lake provides
 86 a relatively simple context for studying the evolutionary genetics of sex determination,
 87 speciation and their potential interaction. Genomic evidence suggests that *A. calliptera*
 88 colonised the shallow littoral habitat from nearby river systems ~10,000 years ago, and
 89 subsequently extended its range into the deeper benthic habitat ~1,000 years ago (Malinsky *et al.*
 90 *et al.*, 2015). These shallow littoral and deep benthic populations are phenotypically distinct
 91 ecomorphs, with the differences in habitat use coinciding with differences in body shape and jaw
 92 morphology. Moreover, the ecomorphs can be distinguished by differences in male breeding

93 colouration, with reproductively active littoral males being typically yellow, and benthic males
94 dark blue. Both ecomorphs are sexually dimorphic, with males generally larger and more
95 brightly coloured than the females, which tend to have a duller, silvery brown colouration.

96 Results

97 We collected whole genome shotgun sequencing data for 548 *Astatotilapia calliptera* from Lake
98 Masoko at a median coverage of 14.5x (range 4.5x - 22x, mean of 12.2x), and combined this
99 with data from 99 previously published samples (Malinsky *et al.*, 2015), resulting in whole
100 genome sequence data for 596 male and 51 female fish (Supplementary Table 1). European
101 Nucleotide Archive accessions for the raw Lake Masoko *A. calliptera* sequence data are
102 provided in Supplementary Table 1. Reads were mapped to the high-quality fAstCal1.2 *A.*
103 *calliptera* reference genome and variants called at 3,328,052 quality-screened single nucleotide
104 polymorphism (SNP) sites (see Methods for details). All commands, code, and links to
105 downloadable source data used to generate the following results and figures can be found at
106 https://github.com/tplinderoth/cichlids/tree/master/Masoko_sex_study.

107 *Multiple Y alleles determine sex in Lake Masoko*

108 We carried out a genome wide association study (GWAS) for sex using a linear mixed model
109 framework (Figure 1a). The most strongly associated SNP is very highly significant ($\log_{10}$
110 p -value = 2.02e-22), and located at position 18,098,212 on chromosome 7 approximately 8 kb
111 downstream of the gene *gsdf*. By considering read depth summed over all fish heterozygous for
112 this SNP, we established that it, and the entire *gsdf* gene, are contained in a 20 kb-long region
113 that exhibits 50% inflated relative coverage in the heterozygotes, suggesting that the associated
114 variant chromosome contains a duplication of this region (Figure 1b). We examined paired end
115 Illumina reads from Masoko *A. calliptera* samples homozygous for the apparent duplication
116 (Supplementary Figure 1a), and long Pacific Biosciences reads from a male fish from a related
117 species (*Tropheops* sp. 'mauve') which also shows the inflated coverage pattern
118 (Supplementary Figure 1b), and in both cases confirmed the presence of a tandem duplication
119 spanning coordinates 18,079,155 to 18,100,834 of chr7. We also confirmed the presence of this
120 duplication junction by PCR (Supplementary Figure 1c). Copy number of the duplication is a
121 stronger predictor of sex than the best associated SNP from the GWAS scan (Table 1),
122 suggesting that the duplication itself operates as a Y allele in an XY sex determination system.

Figure 1: Genome-wide association study for sex. (a) P-values for the likelihood ratio test of an association between sex of *Astatotliapia calliptera* from Lake Masoko and their posterior mean genotypes at SNPs across the genome. The panels in order from top to bottom show results from the serial GWAS in which we looked for sex associations using all females and a subset of males not possessing the alternate allele of the single most highly-ranked SNP (or *gsdf*-dup specifically for iterations two and three) from any of the previous GWAS. The grey, horizontal line in each of the Manhattan plots indicates the 0.05 Bonferroni-adjusted significance threshold, correcting for the number of tested SNPs. Significant SNPs tagging sex-determining loci are shown in maroon. (b) A zoomed-in view of the region harboring the SNPs most strongly associated with sex on chromosome 7. SNPs are coloured based on their degree of linkage disequilibrium with the most strongly sex-associated SNP tagging the *gsdf* duplication. The top panel shows the average sequencing depth in 100 bp bins of males heterozygous for the *gsdf* duplication compared to females. The sequencing depth of each individual was normalized with respect to their average depth in the non-duplicated flanking regions such that an increase of 0.5x in males compared to females indicates the presence of an extra copy of this locus. The duplication spans the region containing the entire *gsdf* gene and SNPs just downstream of *gsdf* were highly associated with sex in the GWAS run on all males and females. A 5 kb insertion upstream of *gsdf* indicated by the grey arrow characterizes the chr7-ins Y allele, which was in high linkage with the strongly sex-associated chromosome 7 SNPs in the bottom panel of (a).

Table 1: Frequency of sex-determining genotypes in Lake Masoko *Astatotilapia calliptera*

Multilocus genotypes for the sex determining loci are based on the number *gsdf* gene copies an individual carries and their combination of reference (0) and insertion (1) alleles at the loci characterized by the chr19-ins and chr7-ins alleles. Among the 51 females in our sample, 46 were classified as low PC1 and five were middle PC1, none of which carried the *gsdf* duplication nor any of the insertion alleles.

<i>gsdf</i> copies	chr19-ins genotype	chr7-ins genotype	All males	Low PC1 males	Middle PC1 males	High PC1 males	Females
2	0/0	0/0	5	5	0	0	51
3	0/0	0/0	481	177	127	177	0
4	0/0	0/0	20	4	6	10	0
2	0/1	0/0	59	38	21	0	0
2	1/1	0/0	2	2	0	0	0
2	0/0	0/1	23	14	9	0	0
3	0/1	0/0	3	1	2	0	0
2	0/1	0/1	1	1	0	0	0
3	missing	0/0	2	1	0	1	0

The duplicated *gsdf* Y allele, which we call *gsdf*-dup, does not determine sex in all males: 90 of the 596 males (15%) are homozygous unduplicated, while 20 (3%) are apparently homozygous duplicated (2x relative sequence depth). To establish whether another locus might control sex in the males lacking *gsdf*-dup, we carried out a second sex GWAS with the 51 females and 90 males without the duplication. This revealed a region on chromosome 19 with multiple SNPs that were highly significant, the highest of which (position 21,581,905, $\log_{10}$ p-value = 6.327883e-15) is located 77 bp upstream of the *e2f2* gene (Figure 1a). The inferred ancestral allele at this SNP was found exclusively among males across 59 heterozygotes and 3

156 homozygotes, suggesting a second XY system (Supplemental Table 2). We inspected the
157 genomic region harboring variants in high linkage disequilibrium (LD) with the SNP to determine
158 whether it was tagging any other variants having an even stronger sex association not detected
159 by the GWAS, which was limited to biallelic SNPs. We discovered one such variant, a 700 bp
160 insertion at position 21,572,413, which is located 1.7 kb upstream of the *id3* gene
161 (Supplementary Figure 2). This male-exclusive insertion, hereafter called chr19-ins, is found in
162 62 of the 90 males without *gsdf*-dup, of which 60 are heterozygotes and two are homozygotes.
163 There are also three males with *gsdf*-dup that are heterozygous for chr19-ins. The additional
164 sequence inserted in chr19-ins occurs in 37 places across 17 chromosomes and two unplaced
165 scaffolds of the reference genome (blastn evalue = 0, > 96% identity, 100% coverage), and
166 matches an LTR/Unknown family transposable element (blastn evalue = 0, 97% identity, 99%
167 coverage) identified by repeatModeler2. At a more relaxed level of identity this transposable
168 element is found in 126 places spread across all chromosomes and eight scaffolds of the
169 reference genome (blastn evalue = 0, > 92% identity, 100% coverage).

170 Since there remain 28 males carrying neither *gsdf*-dup nor chr19-ins, we repeated the GWAS
171 procedure a third time, yielding another highly significant region of association on chromosome
172 7 around *gsdf* (Figure 1a). The most significant individual SNP in this case is approximately 371
173 kb upstream of *gsdf* (position 17,718,711, $\log_{10}$ p-value = 1.386670e-11), with a derived allele
174 exclusively in males; 19 of the 28 males are heterozygous and one is homozygous
175 (Supplemental Table 2). This pattern is consistent with a third Y allele that affects the *gsdf* gene
176 independently of the *gsdf* duplication. Further investigation in the window of elevated LD with
177 this top GWAS SNP revealed a 5 kb insertion at position 18,086,980, hereafter called chr7-ins,
178 located just 2.5 kb upstream of *gsdf*. This insertion is again exclusive to males including all with
179 the chr7:17718711 derived allele as well as three additional males without any previously
180 identified Y allele. Two subregions of the chr7-ins sequence, one 638 bp and the other 510 bp,
181 are respectively found at 19 and 18 places throughout 15 chromosomes and three unplaced
182 scaffolds of the *A. calliptera* reference genome (blastn evalue = 0, >90% identity, 100%
183 coverage). RepeatModeler2 assigns them both to the ends of an unknown repeat family,
184 indicating that the chr7-ins insertion was also introduced by a transposable element. There
185 remain 5 males (0.8% of 596) not carrying any of the three putative Y alleles (*gsdf*-dup,
186 chr19-ins, chr7-ins). These results showing all genotypes are summarized in Table 1.

187 It has been reported that B chromosomes can act dominantly to determine female sex in some
188 rock-dwelling Mbuna Lake Malawi cichlids (Clark *et al.*, 2017; 2018; 2019). We therefore
189 examined whether any of our Lake Masoko samples contained excess sequence indicative of B
190 chromosomes, as defined in Clark *et al.* (2018). None of our samples showed any such excess,
191 indicating that B chromosomes do not contribute to sex determination in this system.

192 *Gsdf* is expressed at higher levels in individuals carrying *gsdf*-affected Y alleles

193 Comparison of gene expression in the gonads of two adult male and two adult female *A.*
194 *calliptera* shows seven-fold higher *gsdf* expression in males than in females (Figure 2a),
195 consistent with observations in other fish species of higher levels of *gsdf* in testis than ovary
196 (Zhu *et al.*, 2018). Furthermore, male carriers of *gsdf*-dup and chr7-ins, the latter which could
197 plausibly be in a promoter region of *gsdf* given its upstream proximity, express *gsdf* in
198 non-gonadal tissues (liver, eye, gill and anal fin) at substantially higher levels than males lacking
199 these alleles (Figure 2b & Supplementary Figure 3). Thus, we infer that higher *gsdf* expression
200 resulting from more copies of the actual gene itself or changes to a regulatory element triggers
201 masculinization in Masoko *A. calliptera*. In contrast, the inserted chr19-ins sequence upstream
202 of *id3*, the nearest gene to this insertion, did not show any associated changes in expression. It
203 remains unclear how this variant results in masculinization.

Figure 2: Expression of *gsdf*. (a) Expression levels of *gsdf* in the gonads of two male and two female *A. calliptera* reveals approximately seven times higher *gsdf* expression in males. (b) Comparison of *gsdf* expression levels in the livers of Masoko male *A. calliptera* heterozygous (three copies) and homozygous (four copies) for the *gsdf* duplication and males lacking the duplication (two copies) but who carry Y alleles generated through insertions on chromosomes 7 and 19. The chromosome 7 insertion (chr7-ins) is directly upstream of *gsdf*, potentially in a regulatory element of this gene. Thus, all males carrying Y alleles resulting from mutations thought to affect *gsdf* express this gene more than other males on average. Gene expression was quantified as counts per million reads (CPM).

Differential use of Y alleles in Lake Masoko

A principal component analysis (PCA) of the SNP data for the Lake Masoko samples reveals a primary axis of genetic variation distinguishing the benthic from littoral ecomorph (Figure 3a), and this axis is strongly correlated with catch depth (Supplementary Figure 4). There is a tight cluster of samples at high principal component 1 (PC1) corresponding to the benthic ecomorph. For the purposes of this paper we denote fish with PC1 > 0.4 as genetically benthic, and those with PC1 < 0.4 as genetically littoral. The genetically littoral fish are more broadly distributed in the PCA plot, consistent with varying degrees of benthic admixture (Supplementary Figure 5),

221 and for some analyses below we partition them into a “low PC1” subgroup with $PC1 < -0.02$,
 222 and a “middle PC1” group with $-0.02 < PC1 < 0.4$.

223 **Figure 3: Genetic characterization of Masoko *A. calliptera*.** (a) The first two components
 224 from a principal component analysis of the genome-wide variation among *A. calliptera* from
 225 Lake Masoko shows different Y allele usage between fish belonging to distinct genetic clusters.
 226 The points represent individuals and their colours denote which of the sex determining alleles
 227 identified from the GWAS individuals carry. PC1 separates fish adhering to the benthic
 228 ecomorph from littoral morph fish. The dashed grey lines show the demarcations that were used
 229 to classify fish as low, middle, and high PC1, which corresponds to their level of benthic
 230 ancestry across the genome. (b) Comparisons between the standard lengths of littoral males
 231 heterozygous for *gsdf-dup* versus males heterozygous for *chr19-ins* or *chr7-ins* shows an
 232 interaction between Y allele type and benthic admixture levels on body size. Males carrying
 233 more than one type of Y allele were excluded. Two-tailed t-tests were used to test for significant
 234 differences between the lengths of males characterized by different genetic PC1 background
 235 and Y allele combinations (p-values shown).

236 The genetically benthic fish were almost exclusively found in deep waters (> 20 metres), with
 237 just three of 188 individuals at intermediate depth (5-20 metres). The genetically littoral fish
 238 were found predominantly at shallow (< 5 metres) and intermediate depths, though there were

239 some littoral fish caught in deep water, with a strong bias for these to be amongst fish with
240 higher PC1 values: in particular, amongst the 289 low PC1 subgroup individuals 138 were
241 caught shallow, 114 at intermediate depth, and 6 deep, while out of the 170 middle PC1
242 subgroup individuals 25 were caught shallow, 63 at intermediate depth, and 46 deep.

243 Interestingly, all 188 genetically benthic males carried the *gsdf* duplication compared to 318/408
244 (78%) of the remaining males (Figure 3a); this deviates significantly from a null hypothesis in
245 which the frequency of males using *gsdf*-dup is independent of PC1 ($\chi^2_1 = 7.35$, $p = 0.007$).
246 Correspondingly, the chr19-ins and chr7-ins alleles are only present in the genetically littoral
247 males, at respective frequencies of 8.2% and 2.9%.

248 *Antagonism between Y alleles and admixture*

249 Fish grow throughout life, and there is evidence that physical size is a correlate of resource
250 holding potential and reproductive success in males of African mouthbrooding cichlids
251 (Hermann et al., 2015; Nelson, 1995; Sefc, 2011) where even a 1 mm size difference can
252 severely impact an individual's chances of winning bouts of male-male aggression (Turner &
253 Huntingford, 1986). In Lake Malawi haplochromine cichlids specifically, body size is a key
254 predictor of the ability to successfully hold essential breeding territory from which to court
255 females (Markert & Arnegard 2007). Even in the absence of male-male competition, at least in
256 the case of South American convict cichlids, females prefer to mate with larger males
257 (Dechaume-Moncharmont *et al.*, 2011), thus there is substantial evidence to suggest that male
258 cichlids may commonly benefit from being larger.

259 In Lake Masoko, the genetically littoral male fish tend to be smaller as their amount of benthic
260 ancestry increases (Supplementary Figure 6, Supplementary Table 3). This decrease in size
261 with greater benthic admixture is significantly influenced by the type of Y allele that a male
262 carries (ANOVA $F = 3.66$, $p = 0.027$, comparing a linear model with interaction between genetic
263 PC1 and Y allele to a model with no interaction term). Chr19-ins males and chr7-ins males are
264 the same size in both low and middle PC1 subgroups (low PC1 two-tailed $t = -0.40$, $p = 0.70$,
265 middle PC1 two-tailed $t = -0.24$, $p = 0.81$), and together their size remains stable regardless of
266 the level of benthic ancestry (two-tailed $t = 0.38$, $p = 0.7$, Figure 3b). In contrast, *gsdf*-dup males
267 with middle PC1 genetic ancestry are significantly smaller than those with low PC1 ancestry
268 (two-tailed $t = 5.21$, $p = 4.57 \times 10^{-7}$). This size difference for *gsdf*-dup males is so pronounced that

269 while they are significantly larger than males using the other two Y alleles on the low PC1
270 background (two-tailed $t = 2.24$, $p = 0.03$) they tend to be smaller in an intermediate PC1
271 background. In contrast, the *gsdf*-dup genetically benthic (high PC1) males do not suffer from
272 the size deficit seen in *gsdf*-dup middle PC1 males (Supplementary Figure 7a). Males
273 homozygous for *gsdf*-dup are on average 81 mm long, which is no different than heterozygotes
274 (two-tailed $t = -0.48$, $p = 0.64$), and so by this proxy are equally fit.

275 Because PC1, which reflects benthic genetic content, is correlated with fish capture depth, we
276 examined whether there could be an interaction between environment and genotype
277 contributing to these size differences. Interestingly, while the *gsdf*-dup males with middle PC1
278 ancestry are smaller at all catch depths, chr19-ins and chr7-ins males with middle PC1
279 backgrounds are noticeably larger at depths greater than five metres (Supplementary Figure
280 7a). This larger size of the deeper-caught chr19-ins and chr7-ins middle PC1 males is
281 counteracted by their shallow-caught counterparts tending to be the overall smallest,
282 contributing to these males appearing similar in size across genetic backgrounds when not
283 accounting for depth. Despite numbers of some categories being low, this three-way interaction
284 between the depth at which fish are caught, Y allele type, and level of benthic ancestry, is
285 borderline significant in its ability to predict fish length (ANOVA $F = 3.02$, $p = 0.05$), suggesting
286 that depth is relevant in contextualizing how different genetic combinations relate to body size,
287 and therefore fitness.

288 If the low PC1 and middle PC1 fish were sufficiently separated from each other genetically,
289 these differences in size would be expected to lead to differences in the fraction of littoral males
290 carrying the rarer insertion alleles at greater depth or PC1 values. However, a three-way
291 interaction between PC1 (restricted to low and middle PC1), catch-depth, and Y allele type is
292 not significant in modeling the frequency of males ($\chi^2_2 = 0.08$, $p = 0.96$), nor are interactions
293 between Y allele type and depth or PC1 (Wald test $z = -0.85$ to 1.16 , all p -values > 0.25 in the
294 homogeneous association model of male frequency, which includes all pairwise interactions
295 between depth, Y allele and PC1) (Supplementary Figure 7b). Indeed, pooled across depths,
296 *gsdf*-dup males are 3.5x more common than males carrying either of the other two Y alleles
297 among fish with low PC1 genetic backgrounds and 3.9x more common among middle PC1
298 males (difference not significant, Fisher's exact test $p = 0.45$).

299 Although the results of the last paragraph fail to provide direct evidence of a selective benefit for
 300 the Y insertion alleles at deeper depths or highly admixed genetic backgrounds in terms of allele
 301 frequency differences, it is noteworthy that elevated linkage disequilibrium (LD) extends for
 302 hundreds to thousands of kilobases from the strongest sex-associated GWAS SNPs tagging
 303 chr19-ins and chr7-ins (Supplementary Figure 2). To quantify this extent of LD we measured the
 304 mean squared physical distance between the chr19-ins and chr7-ins tagging SNPs and other
 305 SNPs that were within a megabase and in strong LD ($r^2 > 0.5$) with these focal SNPs; these
 306 values are in the 81st and 87th percentiles respectively compared to other randomly-sampled
 307 focal SNPs across the genome with the same allele frequencies. This is consistent with
 308 long-range LD generated by recent positive selection, suggesting that either the
 309 sex-determining variants or another locus that they are physically linked to could be the target of
 310 selection.

311 *Distribution of sex-determining alleles across the Lake Malawi cichlid radiation*

312 We next investigated the presence of these Y alleles in other species from the Malawi radiation
 313 for which we have sequenced samples. The *gsdf* duplication is seen in 95 additional species,
 314 suggesting that it is old and may correspond to the major male-determining allele in the chr7 XY
 315 system observed to act previously in multiple Lake Malawi cichlid species (Parnell & Streelman,
 316 2013; Ser *et al.*, 2010) (Supplementary Table 5). However, its use in sex determination appears
 317 to be quite dynamic; for example, it was not seen in the entire sample of 32 *A. calliptera* males
 318 from crater lake Itamba near to Lake Masoko (Figure 4a), and it has been lost or gained multiple
 319 times within the *Maylandia* genus (Figure 4b).

Figure 4: Geographic and taxonomic distribution of Y alleles. (a) The frequency of the *gsdf*-dup, *chr7*-ins, and *chr19*-ins alleles among *A. calliptera* males, females, and individuals of unknown sex sampled from lakes and rivers throughout Tanzania and Malawi suggests varied usage of these alleles as sex determiners. The sample sizes for each sex and locality are indicated under pie charts of allele frequencies. (b) The frequency of male (blue) and female (maroon) individuals from four *Maylandia* species that are either heterozygous (three copy), homozygous (four copy), or lacking (two copy) the duplicated *gsdf* allele exemplifies the dynamic role of *gsdf*-dup in sex determination across the Malawi cichlid radiation. The presence of the *gsdf* duplication in relation to the neighbor-joining species tree, rooted using the distantly-related outgroup *Rhamphochromis longiceps*, suggests that the *gsdf* duplication has been lost or gained at least twice during the diversification of the *Maylandia* lineage. Additionally, the *gsdf* duplication is found in both sexes of *M. zebra*, although at significantly different frequencies (Fisher's exact test $p = 0.035$), consistent with it playing a role in sex determination in this population.

Among our specimens, the *chr19*-ins allele is exclusive to *A. calliptera*, and is geographically widespread, occurring in populations from another Tanzanian crater lake, Kingiri (Figure 4a), as well three other lakes, and five rivers (Supplementary Table 5) that span an area extending south and north of Lake Malawi. Among the 20 non-Masoko *chr19*-ins carriers for which we have sex information, 18 were *chr19*-ins heterozygote males from the Bua River and lakes

Kingiri, Malombe, Chilwa, and Malawi, and two were heterozygote females from the Salima population of Lake Malawi and the Ruvuma River.

The chr7-ins allele occurs in other lake and riverine populations of *A. calliptera* mostly from the regions surrounding northern Lake Malawi except for one southern Lake Malawi population (Southwest Arm). Among 20 Lake Kingiri males 55% are heterozygous for chr7-ins and 15% are homozygous, while in 32 Lake Itamba males 31% are heterozygous and 69% are homozygous (Figure 4a and Supplementary Table 5). The high frequency of chr7-ins homozygotes, particularly in Itamba, suggests that this variant is either not sex determining or is being epistatically masked by a feminizing allele in these populations. We also detected the chr7-ins variant in seven species from the genus *Tropheops* and two *Pseudotropheus* species (Supplementary Table 6). Both genera are endemic to Lake Malawi and belong to the Mbuna clade that is phylogenetically close to *A. calliptera* (Malinsky *et al.*, 2018). Small sample sizes of both males and females for these species and the coincidence of both the *gsdf* duplication and chr7-ins make it difficult to confidently discern whether chr7-ins could be involved in sex determination, although there is an indication in some cases. For instance, there is one *Tropheops gracilior* male without *gsdf*-dup that is heterozygous for chr7-ins while the single female from this species does not carry either of these putative Y alleles. Similarly, in *Tropheops* sp. 'chilumba' and *Tropheops* sp. 'mauve' there are males heterozygous for chr7-ins without a duplicated *gsdf*, however there are no females for comparison. Such a male is also found from *Tropheops* sp. 'rust' but in this species, and *Tropheops* sp. 'white dorsal', females occur that carry both *gsdf*-dup and chr7-ins. While sexing errors could be responsible, a potentially more plausible explanation is the presence in *Tropheops* of a dominant female-determining variant at another locus, given that females with one of or both chr7-ins and *gsdf*-dup are observed multiple times. Of the two *Pseudotropheus* species positive for chr7-ins, only one, *Pseudotropheus fuscus*, had sexed individuals; 2/2 males are heterozygous for chr7-ins and have an unduplicated *gsdf*, while the only female lacks both *gsdf*-dup and chr7-ins, which is consistent with chr7-ins being male-determining.

Discussion

Our genome-wide survey for genetic associations with sex revealed that there are three putative XY determination systems segregating within a single natural population of *Astatotilapia calliptera* from the crater lake Masoko. Among these, two are associated with *gsdf* on

370 chromosome 7: the duplication present in 85% of males, which is the primary mechanism, and
371 an upstream insertion present in 4% of males. The third Y allele is characterized by an insertion
372 on chromosome 19 in 11% of males. These systems are used differentially between the
373 divergent ecomorphs in the lake, with the deep-water benthic morph only using the duplication,
374 while littoral fish use all three systems.

375 Although use of multiple sex determination systems might seem likely to create sex-ratio biases,
376 multiple Y alleles can coexist without problem in a population, with each male just carrying one
377 of them, and females carrying none of them; Mendelian segregation in the offspring then gives
378 50% males with the paternal Y and 50% females. Indeed, we saw no females with any of the Y
379 alleles. However in our larger set of males we did detect some that carried two Y alleles,
380 including males homozygous for the *gsdf* duplication and others with two different Y alleles,
381 suggesting that there are some females carrying Y alleles present in the broader population. A
382 possible explanation for this is that a dominant ZW system may also be present at low
383 frequency, in which a dominant feminizing W allele acts epistatically to any of the Y alleles, as
384 seen in some other Lake Malawi cichlid species (Parnell & Streelman, 2013; Ser *et al.*, 2010).
385 We did not detect such a W allele in our association scans, possibly because the number of
386 females in our data set did not give sufficient power to detect it at the frequency which would
387 explain our observations. Alternatively, there could be incomplete penetrance of the duplication
388 allele, or genetically male fish could rarely undergo environmentally-induced sex reversal, which
389 has been documented in more taxonomically distant cichlids (Baroiller *et al.*, 1995).

390 Complete genomic sequencing of many wild individuals enabled us to identify the likely causal
391 genetic mechanisms creating new Y alleles and corroborate the suspicion by Peterson *et al.*
392 (2017) that *gsdf* is a sex determination locus in *A. calliptera*. Our findings indicate that the
393 tandem duplication of *gsdf* and the proximal upstream insertion both boost *gsdf* expression,
394 consistent with leading to masculinization as shown in *Oryzias* (Myosho *et al.*, 2012).
395 Upregulated *gsdf* expression appears to be generally important for testicular development in fish
396 (Matsuda & Sakaizumi, 2016) and *gsdf* has been reported as a sex determiner in multiple fish
397 species (Einfeldt *et al.*, 2021; Jiang *et al.*, 2016; Kaneko *et al.*, 2015; Myosho *et al.*, 2012).
398 Recycling of this gene for sex determination through repeated distinct mutations is evidence for
399 evolutionary conservation of the genetic pathways controlling sex even as the specific sex
400 determining alleles turn over (see Bachtrog *et al.* 2014 and Vicoso 2019 for discussion on this
401 topic). The second gene we identified, *id3*, has not previously been directly associated with sex

determination, and while we believe we have identified the responsible mutation we cannot be certain of the affected gene.

The genetic mechanisms generating the Masoko Y alleles parallel those involved in the origin of the *dmy/dmrt1bY* male determining gene in *Oryzias latipes*, which arose from a duplication of *dmrt1*. Two transposable elements (TEs) introduced transcription factor binding sites upstream of the *dmrt1b* paralog, which altered its expression leading to it becoming the master sex-determining gene (Herpin *et al.*, 2010; Scharlt *et al.*, 2018). Similarly, both the chr19-ins and chr7-ins Y alleles were created by TE insertions directly upstream of the *id3* and *gsdf* genes respectively, offering support for the notion that TEs may play a potent role in rewiring the expression of genes to function as sex determiners (Dechaud *et al.*, 2019).

Usage partitioning among three different Y alleles within a single, isolated population provides a striking example of how dynamic sex determination is in African cichlids. This complements recent work showing that across the Lake Tanganyika cichlid radiation sex systems turn over at a higher rate than previously established for vertebrates (El Taher *et al.*, 2020). Previous studies showed that multiple sex determination systems can segregate within captive families involving crosses between Lake Malawi species (Parnell & Streelman, 2013; Ser *et al.*, 2010), but did not characterize their distributions within natural populations. Our results from Lake Masoko allow us to explore how multiple co-occurring sex systems segregate in the wild, and their relationship to subpopulation structure.

All of the variants that we identified for controlling sex also exist outside of Lake Masoko. The presence of *gsdf*-dup across all major clades of the Lake Malawi radiation, except for *Diplotaxodon* and *Rhamphochromis*, suggests that it either predated the radiation or arose early in it. Despite this, the *gsdf* duplication has not fixed, instead showing evidence of gains and loss at fine taxonomic scales within genera and even species. In contrast, chr19-ins and chr7-ins are both far more taxonomically constrained, with chr19-ins exclusive to *A. calliptera*, despite being widespread geographically. This suggests that these variants, although at low frequency, are also old and in the case of chr7-ins could have been introduced into *Tropheops* and *Pseudotropheus* through introgression. Another possibility is that chr7-ins, seen in 9/67 (~13%) of the uniquely-classified Mbuna species (2/13 genera) in our dataset, could have arisen in a common ancestor of *A. calliptera* and Mbuna and remained as a minor sex-determining player in comparison to *gsdf*-dup, which we detected in ~75% of the Mbuna species (11/14 genera).

433 This scenario would suggest that *gsdf*-dup may be selectively advantageous over chr7-ins in
 434 most circumstances, while there are some conditions that favour chr7-ins. A common feature of
 435 all of the Y alleles we identified is that outside of Masoko they do not always appear to
 436 determine sex, suggesting that multifactorial sex determination is common and highly variable
 437 with respect to which alleles serve as the major sex determiners, even in closely related
 438 species. Having identified some of the precise variants influencing sex differentially across the
 439 radiation enables future studies into the evolutionary factors supporting their turnover at a
 440 variety of evolutionary scales.

441 Our results raise the question of which eco-evolutionary contexts promote the invasion and
 442 eventual maintenance or loss of new sex determining variants. Theorized evolutionary
 443 mechanisms contributing to sex system turnover include resolving sexually antagonistic traits
 444 (van Doorn & Kirkpatrick, 2007), escape from deleterious mutational load (Blaser *et al.*, 2013),
 445 selection on sex ratios (Eshel, 1975), genetic drift (Saunders *et al.*, 2018), and transmission
 446 distortion (Clark & Kocher, 2019; Werren & Beukeboom, 1998). In considering how our findings
 447 align with such models it is important to recognize that we are only observing a snapshot of
 448 whatever dynamics may be occurring in Masoko, rather than seeing the evolutionary trajectories
 449 of Y allele usage.

450 Under the classic model of sexually antagonistic selection (van Doorn & Kirkpatrick, 2007),
 451 autosomal alleles with differential fitness effects between sexes gain an advantage if they
 452 become linked to a new sex determination locus, thus coupling the male-benefiting allele with
 453 males and vice versa. The resulting linkage disequilibrium can be reinforced in the long term
 454 through reduced recombination in the region containing the sex-determining and sexually
 455 antagonistic loci. When multiple sex loci co-occur in a population as in our case, the Y allele
 456 conferring the greatest fitness advantage to males will spread.

457 We found evidence of an antagonistic relationship in terms of body size between the different Y
 458 alleles and genetic PC1 in littoral males. In cichlids, larger size confers higher fitness to males
 459 by providing them with an advantage in defending spawning sites and procuring access to
 460 reproductively active females (Hermann *et al.*, 2015). In the shallow waters where spawning
 461 littoral fish have been observed, the frequencies of males characterized by different
 462 combinations of Y alleles and levels of benthic ancestry correlate well with their average size:
 463 *gsdf*-dup males with low benthic ancestry (low PC1) are largest and most common compared to

464 males that either carry the chr19-ins or chr7-ins Y alleles or have more benthic ancestry (middle
465 PC1). This suggests that in shallow water among males with low levels of benthic ancestry,
466 *gsdf*-dup males have a fitness advantage over males that carry the rarer Y alleles. This size
467 advantage disappears however in fish with an increased benthic ancestry component, with
468 middle PC1 *gsdf*-dup males being smaller by nearly 8 mm on average. Furthermore, in waters
469 deeper than five metres, among the fish with middle PC1 ancestry, chr19 and chr7 insertion
470 males actually gain a size advantage over *gsdf*-dup males. These size differences are all
471 greater than the level known to be sufficient for preventing smaller males of another African
472 cichlid species from being able to effectively compete for territories (Turner & Huntingford,
473 1986). In *A. calliptera* specifically, body size has been shown to significantly influence
474 male-male aggression, presumably because it signals the resource holding potential of
475 competing males (Theis *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, we suggest that the insertion Y alleles may be
476 maintained in the population by a relative advantage under these depth and genetic background
477 conditions, while there is sufficient genetic mixing between the low and middle PC1 subgroups
478 of littorals to prevent establishment of significant allele frequency differences.

479 We suggest two possible reasons, not mutually exclusive, for why the chr7-ins and chr19-ins Y
480 alleles are not seen in the high PC1 benthic ecomorph. The first is that the PCA and admixture
481 plots (Figure 3a, Supplementary Figures 4, 5) are consistent with an asymmetry of gene flow
482 between the benthic and littoral ecomorphs, with the benthic ecomorph that is adapted to the
483 cold, hypoxic environment at the bottom of the lake being genetically isolated with little if any
484 gene flow from littorals into it, whereas there is gene flow from the benthics into littorals. This
485 supports the cline of benthic admixture reflected in PC1 variation amongst the littorals. Second,
486 even if there is hybridisation leading to low levels of gene flow into benthics, there are reasons
487 to suggest it is sex-biased involving littoral females and benthic males. We never caught
488 genetically benthic fish in the shallow depths where littorals breed, but we do see occasional
489 genetic littorals in deep water. Benthic males appear to exclusively use the deep water mating
490 territories that have been observed at the base of the crater wall, and we suggest that littoral
491 males may be unable to compete successfully in this forbidding environment to which they are
492 not adapted whereas littoral females may accept mating. In this scenario low frequency Y alleles
493 from the littorals would not invade the benthics at an appreciable rate, and any that were
494 present in the founders or entered through rare hybridization events could have been easily lost
495 by drift.

496 In conclusion, our discovery that at least three different alleles control sex and segregate
 497 differentially within an isolated population of *A. calliptera* provides evidence that genetic sex
 498 determination in nature can be extremely fluid even at very small demographic scales. All of the
 499 alleles we identified involved structural genetic variants, with two of the three generated by
 500 transposable element insertions, highlighting a potentially important role for TEs in the rapidly
 501 evolving sex systems of African cichlids, similar to their role in adaptive variation in opsin
 502 regulation (Carleton *et al.* 2020). Our results also indicate that genetic background differences
 503 likely created by admixture can bring about antagonistic relationships among males carrying
 504 different Y alleles, providing an evolutionary context that may favour multifactorial sex systems.
 505 This has interesting implications for the incipient speciation between littoral and benthic Masoko
 506 ecomorphs in that alternative Y alleles circumvent negative genetic interactions brought about
 507 by admixture, allowing for sustained back-crossing that reduces the level of divergence. It is
 508 possible that this contributes to the low genome-wide F_{ST} (4%) between the ecomorphs, which
 509 also lack fixed genetic differences, although there are tens of islands of high F_{ST} divergence
 510 potentially associated with loci under differential selection (Malinsky *et al.*, 2015). Admixture and
 511 relatively low divergence are hallmarks of the Malawi cichlid radiation, so it seems plausible that
 512 similar processes could exist or have existed elsewhere. The fact that we and other studies
 513 have found polygenic sex determination systems that differ markedly between closely related
 514 species and populations across the radiation supports this possibility.

515 **Methods**

516 *Samples and sequencing*

517 Fish were primarily collected by professional aquarium fish catching teams. Fish at a target
 518 depth range (determined by diver depth gauges) were chased into block nets by SCUBA divers
 519 and transferred to a holding drum, then brought to the surface, where they were euthanized with
 520 clove oil. The right pectoral fin of sampled individuals was then removed and stored in ethanol,
 521 and the remainder of the specimen pinned, photographed, labelled and preserved in ethanol for
 522 later morphological analysis. Standard lengths were measured using calipers. Females were
 523 distinguished from juvenile males among the smaller fish by visual inspection of the gonads
 524 after opening the abdominal cavity. Adult males were identified from secondary sexual traits of
 525 larger size, brighter colour and possession of elongate filaments on the pelvic, dorsal and anal

526 fins (confirmed to be reliable by visual inspection of the gonads in a number of specimens from
527 earlier collections).

528 DNA was extracted from preserved fin clips using Qiasymphony DNA tissue extraction kits or
529 PureLink® Genomic DNA extraction kits and samples were sequenced on the Illumina
530 HiSeq2000 as in Malinsky *et al.* (2015) or on the HiSeqX in three batches: 1) 118 “ILBCDS”
531 samples collected in 2011 sequenced at 3.9-19.2x coverage (median 7.5x), 2) 194 “CMAS”
532 samples collected in 2014-2016 sequenced to 4.3-9.0x coverage (median 5.7x), 3) 336 “cichl”
533 samples collected in 2014-2016 and 2018 sequenced to 12.0-23.2x coverage (median 15.8x).

534 One sample that was initially part of the study was removed following conflicting data being
535 detected during the analysis. Further testing with our PCR assay of both the original tissue
536 sample obtained in the field, and a second sample from the supposed same ethanol-preserved,
537 whole specimen, produced one male and one female genotype respectively, indicating a
538 labeling error (Supplementary Figure 1c).

539 RNA was extracted from the gonads of two male and two female *A. calliptera* collected from the
540 Itupi River in 2016. To ensure accurate quantification of transcripts, we used PolyA selection on
541 one male and one female sample and RNA depletion on the other male and female sample. The
542 gonad libraries were then sequenced using 75 bp paired-end reads on three lanes of the
543 Illumina HiSeq 2500 (SBS kit v4). Adapter sequences and bases with Phred quality below 20
544 were removed from the ends of gonad RNAseq reads using Trim Galore 0.6.2
545 (https://www.bioinformatics.babraham.ac.uk/projects/trim_galore/) and read quality was checked
546 using FastQC 0.11.8 (<https://www.bioinformatics.babraham.ac.uk/projects/fastqc/>). We also
547 extracted RNA from the anal fins, eyes, gills and livers of 151 *A. calliptera* collected from Lake
548 Masoko in 2015, 2016 and 2018 (Supplementary Table 1), which was stored in RNALater, using
549 Direct-zol™ RNA MiniPrep Plus kits (Zymo, R2072) with an additional Chloroform step before
550 loading the sample onto filtration columns. RNA samples were quantified with the Qubit™ RNA
551 HS Assay Kit and quality assessed on the Agilent 4200 TapeStation. Libraries were prepared
552 using Illumina mRNA sequencing kits with polyA enrichment and sequenced using 100 or 150
553 bp paired-end reads on three lanes of the Illumina HiSeq4000 and five S4 lanes of the Illumina
554 NovaSeq. Adapter sequences and bases with Phred quality below 20 were removed from the
555 ends of all resulting RNAseq reads using Trim Galore 0.6.4 and read quality was checked using
556 FastQC 0.11.9.

557 *Variant discovery*

558 Sequencing reads for all *A. calliptera* samples were mapped to a high-quality *A. calliptera*
 559 reference genome (fAstCal1.2, accession GCA_900246225.3) (Rhie *et al.*, 2021) using
 560 bwa-mem 0.7.17 (Li, 2013). We used GATK 3.8 (McKenna *et al.*, 2010) to identify
 561 individual-level variation with the HaplotypeCaller program followed by joint genotype calling
 562 among all samples using GenotypeGVCFs (Poplin *et al.*, 2017; Van der Auwera & O'Connor,
 563 2020). Sites exhibiting any of the following indications of quality issues in the medium-coverage
 564 (~15x) "cichl" subset of 336 individuals were masked from all analyses: total sequencing depth
 565 across individuals more extreme than the genome-wide median total site depth (DP) +/-25%,
 566 fewer than 90% of individuals covered by at least eight reads, more than 10% of individuals with
 567 missing genotypes, root mean square mapping quality less than 40, an alternate allele assertion
 568 quality score below 30, a variant quality by depth score below three, excess heterozygosity
 569 (exact test p-value < 1e-4), biases between reference and alternate alleles in terms of strand
 570 (exact test p-value < 1e-6), base quality (z-score > 6), mapping quality (z-score > 6), and read
 571 position (z-score > 6). Sites spanning indels or having more than two alleles were also masked
 572 from analyses. Quality control for sites was carried out using the program vcfCleaner
 573 (<https://github.com/tplinderoth/ngsQC/tree/master/vcfCleaner>).

574 *Population genetic characterization*

575 We used principal component analysis (PCA) based on genotype posterior probabilities at the
 576 quality-controlled SNPs to characterize the distribution of *A. calliptera* genetic variation
 577 throughout Lake Masoko. Specifically, we used ANGSD 0.929 (Korneliussen *et al.*, 2014) to
 578 estimate minor allele frequencies from genotype likelihoods (-GL 1 model) calculated using
 579 reads with minimum base and map Phred qualities of at least 20. These minor allele frequency
 580 (MAF) estimates and genotype likelihoods were used to obtain genotype posterior probabilities
 581 for all individuals under a Hardy-Weinberg genotype prior. We used ngsCovar 1.0.2 (Fumagalli
 582 *et al.*, 2014) to estimate the genetic covariance matrix among individuals based on their
 583 genotype posteriors at SNPs with MAF greater than 5%, which we decomposed in R 3.6.3 (R
 584 Core Team, 2020) with the eigen() function. In addition, we used the program ADMIXTURE
 585 1.3.0 (Alexander *et al.*, 2009) to infer the proportions of distinct genetic ancestry for individuals
 586 assuming two ancestral populations (K parameter).

587 *Genome-wide association tests for sex*

588 We relaxed some quality filters to accept additional biallelic SNPs for statistical association
 589 testing by requiring that they have a minimum total depth across individuals of 2000x (lowered
 590 from 3500x), at least 90% of individuals covered by a minimum of four reads, and an exact test
 591 p-value for excess heterozygosity above 1e-20. All other quality criteria were kept the same. We
 592 queried all such SNPs across the genome with MAF of at least 5% for association with sex
 593 under the linear mixed model framework implemented in GEMMA 0.98.1 (Zhou & Stephens,
 594 2012). Sex was treated as a binary response which we regressed against posterior mean
 595 genotypes calculated from the GATK genotype likelihoods using vcf2bimbam
 596 (<https://github.com/tplinderoth/ngsQC/tree/master/vcfCleaner>) under a Hardy-Weinberg
 597 genotype prior. We accounted for confounding effects of ancestry among individuals through
 598 incorporating a centered pairwise kinship matrix calculated using GEMMA as a random effect in
 599 the LMM. We identified significantly associated loci using the likelihood-ratio test p-values from
 600 GEMMA run in the LMM mode at a 5% significance level after a Bonferroni correction for the
 601 number of tested SNPs. In order to identify as many sex-associated loci as possible, we
 602 iteratively tested conditional subsets of individuals who did not carry alleles significantly
 603 associated with sex from previous iterations, that is, subsets of individuals whose sex was not
 604 accounted for by other candidates.

605 *Characterizing sex-determining variants throughout Lake Masoko and the Malawi radiation*

606 We only used SNPs with GEMMA and so following the sex GWAS we checked for the presence
 607 of structural variants (SVs) that might have a stronger association with sex in 10 kb windows
 608 extending from the significantly associated SNPs. We extracted read mapping information
 609 directly from the BAM files to look for mapping signatures that would be consistent with
 610 structural variation, considering both read pair and depth information, using IGV 2.8.0 (Robinson
 611 *et al.*, 2011). We initially screened at least five males and five females for structural variation in
 612 IGV and then used a custom perl script to call SVs if at least 5% of read pairs among all
 613 individuals within 480 bp of any putative SV positions had mates which mapped to a different
 614 chromosome. We assembled the anomalously mapped read pairs across all individuals for each
 615 SV that we called using MEGAHIT 1.2.9 (Li *et al.*, 2016) and performed a blastn (Altschul *et al.*,
 616 1990; Camacho *et al.*, 2009) search of the resulting contigs against fAstCal1.2. This approach

led to the discovery of the putative sex-determining insertions on chromosomes 7 and 19, which blasted with at least 90% identity across their full length to multiple places across the genome. We used repeatModeler2 2.0.2 (Flynn *et al.*, 2020) with default options but including the -LTRStruct option to identify transposable element sequences in the fAstCal1.2 genome. Then we compared the SV contigs to these transposable element sequences to further characterize the insertions. The chr19-ins allele matched a 700 bp transposable element (blastn eval = 0, 97% identity, 99% coverage) identified by repeatModeler2 as belonging to an LTR/Unknown family. The two partial contigs of the chromosome 7 insertion matched with 94% identity (631/673 bp with 35/673 bp (5%) gaps) and 97% (496/509 bp with 11/509 bp (2%) gaps) to either end of a 3,947 bp unknown transposable element.

In order to characterize the presence or absence of the chromosome 7 and 19 insertions, we mapped sequencing reads from all *Masoko A. calliptera* to the assembled insertion sequences including 1 kb of upstream and downstream flanking sequence using BWA. We considered any reads mapping within the flanking regions and which spanned the insertion as reference allele reads (with respect to fAstCal1.2) and any reads which mapped within the insertion by a minimum of three bp as alternate allele reads. An individual's genotype was called heterozygous (0/1) if they possessed reads from both alleles that were each at a minimum frequency of 10%, otherwise, with more than 90% of either the reference or insertion reads, individuals were called as homozygous for the reference allele (0/0) or homozygous for the insertion allele (1/1), respectively. We also genotyped fish based on the copy number of the duplicated *gsdf*-containing locus which spans positions 18,079,155 to 18,100,834 of chromosome 7 in the fAstCal1.2 reference. For each individual, we translated their average sequencing depth across this region relative to their average sequencing depth from 38,320 bp flanking sequence (19,154 bp upstream and 19,166 bp downstream of the duplication breakpoints) into copy number in increments of 0.5x: Relative coverage of 1.25 or lower was recorded as a non-duplicated *gsdf* region, (1.25, 1.75] as three *gsdf* copies, (1.75, 2.25] as four copies, and so on. Individuals with three and four copies of the *gsdf* locus were called heterozygous and homozygous for the duplication respectively. Though it is possible for a four-copy individual to have one chromosome with three *gsdf* copies this would necessitate another duplication and so is less parsimonious than the assumption that they are homozygous for a chromosome with two copies.

648 We also developed a PCR assay for the *gsdf* duplication (Supplementary Table 7), which we
 649 used to confirm its presence in a subset of *A. calliptera* and *Maylandia zebra*. Genomic DNA
 650 was extracted from fin clips using PureLink Genomic DNA Mini Kits (ThermoFisher Scientific,
 651 K182001) following the manufacturer's protocols and eluted in 30-60 μ L elution buffer. We
 652 carried out PCRs in 20 μ L reaction volumes consisting of 1X Platinum™ II PCR Buffer, 0.2 mM
 653 of each dNTP (ThermoFisher Scientific, R0192), 0.2 μ M of each primer (Merck Life Science,
 654 desalted), less than 500 ng template DNA (1 μ L genomic DNA at ~1-5 ng/ μ L), 0.04 U/ μ L
 655 Platinum™ II Taq Hot-Start DNA Polymerase (ThermoFisher Scientific, No 14966001) and
 656 nuclease-free water. We amplified the DNA using the following thermal profile: 94°C for two
 657 minutes followed by 30-35 cycles of 94°C for 15 seconds, 60°C for 15 seconds, 68°C for 15
 658 seconds, and a final 68°C extension for five minutes. The PCR products were separated using
 659 electrophoresis run at 100 volts for 30 minutes on a 2% agarose gel.

660 We genotyped 1,552 additional individuals from all seven of the Lake Malawi radiation clades
 661 (*A. calliptera*, Mbuna, Benthic, Deep, Utaka, *Diplotaxodon*, and *Rhamphochromis*; see Malinsky
 662 *et al.* 2018) for the *gsdf* duplication as well as the chromosome 7 and 19 insertions in the same
 663 way as for Masoko *A. calliptera* described above. This set of Malawi radiation individuals
 664 represents 255 species (some are not formally established but recognized as distinct taxa) from
 665 47 genera, including *A. calliptera* from locations other than Lake Masoko. In order to
 666 characterize how the *gsdf* duplication is acquired and lost as lineages diversify we mapped its
 667 presence at different copy number in males and females to the species tree for four Mbuna
 668 species from the *Maylandia* genus: *M. zebra*, *M. callainos*, *M. emmiltos*, and *M. fainzilberi*. We
 669 generated the species tree using 12,133,030 genome-wide segregating sites among the four
 670 *Maylandia* species identified using GATK 3.8 in the same manner as for Masoko *A. calliptera*.
 671 These SNPs passed quality controls addressing abnormally low and high sequencing coverage
 672 and low mapping quality for the ingroup samples as well as for samples from the
 673 distantly-related species *Rhamphochromis longiceps*, which served as an outgroup. We used
 674 ngsDist 1.0.8 (Vieira *et al.*, 2016) to calculate a pairwise genetic distance matrix based on
 675 genotype likelihoods for all of the ingroup and outgroup samples, as well as to bootstrap sites in
 676 order to generate 100 additional bootstrap distance matrices. For this *Maylandia* species tree,
 677 we used fastME 2.1.6.1 (Lefort *et al.*, 2015) to infer neighbor-joining trees from the genetic
 678 distance matrices using the BIONJ algorithm with SPR tree topology improvement. RAXML-NG
 679 1.0.1 (Kozlov *et al.*, 2019) was used to determine the bootstrap support for the genome-wide
 680 tree.

681 *B chromosome assay*

682 In addition to autosomal sex loci, B chromosomes, which are supernumerary chromosomes not
 683 required for organismal function and variably present across taxa and individuals, have been
 684 implicated as sex modifiers in Lake Malawi cichlids (Clark *et al.*, 2017). Accordingly, we assayed
 685 for the presence of B chromosomes among Masoko *A. calliptera* to discern whether they may
 686 influence sex. B chromosome material initially derives from autosomes, so their presence can
 687 be detected through inflated read coverage in homologous regions of the reference genome
 688 where B reads mismap. Accordingly, we assayed for B chromosomes based on inflated
 689 coverage at regions containing sequence known to exist on B chromosomes from Lake Malawi
 690 cichlids (Clark *et al.*, 2018). Regions identified as core B block sequence according to Clark *et al.*
 691 (2018) were translated into fAstCal1.2 coordinates and the mean coverage across each of
 692 these segments for each Masoko *A. calliptera* individual was calculated directly from the BAM
 693 files. We used a minimum coverage ratio for the core B region compared to the genome-wide
 694 average of 2x to call B positive individuals. None of the Lake Masoko *A. calliptera* passed this
 695 threshold although this process did identify individuals carrying B chromosomes from other
 696 species.

697 *Expression of sex-associated genes*

698 We mapped the quality-controlled liver, eye, gill, and anal fin RNAseq reads to the fAstCal1.2
 699 genome with STAR 2.7.3a (Dobin & Gingeras, 2015) and counted reads derived from
 700 sex-associated genes with featureCounts 2.0.1 (Liao *et al.*, 2014). These read counts were
 701 normalized to counts per million (CPM) reads using edgeR 3.30.3 (Robinson *et al.*, 2010). We
 702 mapped the quality-controlled gonad reads to the fAstCal1.2 reference using bwa-mem and
 703 counted reads derived from *gsdf* exons using SAMtools 1.9 (Li *et al.*, 2009) and ngsAssociation
 704 0.2.4 (<https://github.com/tplinderoth/ngsAssociation>) summarize, which were also normalized to
 705 CPM.

706 *Relationship between Y alleles and body size*

707 Genetic PC1 was used as a proxy for the degree of admixture since this component clearly
 708 separates fish based on their degree of benthic ancestry. Based on distinct clustering in the

709 genome-wide PCA plot, fish with PC1 > 0.04 were classified as genetically benthic and those
 710 with PC1 < 0.04 as genetically littoral. We further classified fish with the lowest amounts of
 711 benthic ancestry as “low PC1” (PC1 < -0.02), those with more equal amounts of littoral and
 712 benthic ancestry as “middle PC1” (PC1 range -0.02 to 0.04), and the clear benthic cluster as
 713 “high PC1” (PC1 > 0.04). The three Y alleles segregate in the littoral group only, which is
 714 composed of low and middle PC1 fish, yielding six possible Y and PC1 combinations when
 715 excluding the 0.7% of males that carry more than one type of Y. For all analyses related to fish
 716 size we considered only males that were heterozygous for their Y allele (except when we
 717 compared the length of *gsdf*-dup homozygotes to *gsdf*-dup heterozygotes). We tested the
 718 hypothesis that littoral Lake Masoko *A. calliptera* males with different ancestry backgrounds and
 719 Y allele combinations differ in standard length using pairwise two-tailed t-tests in R.

720 We investigated whether the size of littoral males is influenced by interactions between Y allele
 721 and ancestry regime by fitting linear models of standard length as a function of Y allele and PC1
 722 class in R using `glm()`. We tested whether the interaction provides a significantly better fit with
 723 the `anova()` F-test by comparing the residual sums of squares between a model with only main
 724 effects to a model with main effects and an interaction between Y allele type and PC1 class. We
 725 also introduced a depth class variable into our models to investigate whether the depth at which
 726 fish were caught plays a role in explaining their length. Depths less than five metres were
 727 considered “shallow”, depths ranging from 5-20 metres were “intermediate”, and depths more
 728 than 20 metres were “deep”. As before, we compared the fit of a saturated model including the
 729 three-way interaction between Y allele, PC1 class, and depth band to the same model but
 730 without the three-way interaction using analysis of variance to determine if the joint interaction
 731 between all variables provides a significant amount of additional power for predicting fish length.

732 Since the size of male fish is likely to influence fitness, we used log-linear models to look at
 733 whether the same factors affecting length could predict the frequency of males. Specifically, we
 734 fit models using `glm()` in R with `family='poisson'` for the frequency of males based on Y allele,
 735 PC1 class, and depth band. We assessed whether the frequency of males belonging to
 736 categories based on these three variables are independent of one another, and if not, what
 737 interactions were involved by performing an analysis of variance on nested pairs of models. We
 738 tested whether the differences in the residual deviance between the models being compared
 739 were significant using χ^2 tests. This enabled us to find the simplest model that predicts male
 740 frequencies statistically as well as the saturated model that includes all main effects and their

741 possible interactions. The significance of terms within the context of a particular model for which
742 they were fit was determined using a Wald test of the null hypothesis that a term's effect is equal
743 to zero.

744 *Assessment of linkage disequilibrium around sex loci*

745 We calculated LD in terms of r^2 between each of the most highly sex-associated GWAS SNPs
746 and their surrounding SNPs using PLINK 1.9 (Purcell, 2014; Purcell *et al.*, 2007). We observed
747 high LD, $r^2 > 0.5$, between the strongest GWAS SNPs tagging chr19-ins and chr7-ins and
748 far-ranging surrounding SNPs, which we visualized using plot_zoom
749 (https://github.com/hmunby/plot_zoom). In order to determine how unusual these long stretches
750 of high LD were, we compared the variance in the pairwise physical distance between the top
751 GWAS SNPs and all SNPs within one megabase and $r^2 > 0.5$ to an expected distribution. The
752 background distributions were generated by randomly sampling 5,000 focal SNPs from across
753 the genome having the same alternate allele frequencies as each of the top GWAS SNPs. For
754 each sampled SNP, we calculated the variance among pairwise distances with other SNPs in
755 the same way as we had done for the GWAS SNPs.

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766 **Competing interests**

767 The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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1006 **Supplementary Figures & Tables**

1007 **Figure S1: Characterization of the *gsdf* duplication.** (a) Short Illumina reads from four
1008 Masoko male *A. calliptera* called homozygous for the *gsdf* duplication based on relative

sequencing depth that is approximately 2x higher than in ~38 kb of non-duplicated flanking sequence. The mapping orientation of all read pairs to the fAstCal1.2 reference is consistent with a tandem duplication as shown in the schematic at the top. **(b)** PacBio reads from a male *Tropheops 'mauve'* mapped to the fAstCal1.2 reference. The sharp break in the alignment of some of the reads at the edges of the *gsdf* duplication (blue horizontal bar) in conjunction with elevated coverage signals that this individual is heterozygous for the same *gsdf* duplication identified in Masoko *A. calliptera*. **(c)** Agarose gel image of PCR products from primers designed to assay for the presence of the *gsdf* duplication. Based on this assay, individuals positive for the *gsdf* duplication yield three distinct bands, whereas those negative for the duplication produce a single band. The assay was used to confirm the presence of the duplication in two male *Maylandia zebra* samples that were putative heterozygotes for *gsdf*-dup based on sequencing depth. Two separate tissues for Masoko *A. calliptera* sample D29I03 produced different genotypes based on this PCR assay indicating a sampling error and resulted in this individual being omitted from all analyses.

Figure S2: Elevated linkage disequilibrium around the chr19-ins and chr7-ins loci. The top Manhattan plots are a regional view of the p-values for the likelihood ratio test from the GWAS for sex used to identify SNPs tagging chr19-ins (left) and chr7-ins (right). The positions of the insertions are denoted with red arrows. Elevated linkage disequilibrium (LD) between the SNP with the highest sex association in each GWAS and other surrounding SNPs extends far along

the respective chromosomes. This causes the variance in the pairwise physical distance among SNPs in high LD ($r^2 > 0.5$) with the top GWAS SNPs to be higher than typically expected throughout the genome, consistent with recent positive selection. The histograms show where this variance for the top GWAS SNPs fall along the expected distributions for Masoko *A. calliptera*, which were generated by randomly sampling 5,000 SNPs across the genome with the same alternate allele frequencies as the GWAS SNPs. The variance among the pairwise distances between each sampled SNP and their surrounding high-LD SNPs were calculated in the same manner as for the GWAS SNPs.

Figure S3: Expression of *gsdf* in somatic tissues for males with different Y alleles. The *gsdf*-dup and chr7-ins alleles are defined by a tandem duplication of the *gsdf* gene and an insertion directly upstream of *gsdf*, respectively. Levels of *gsdf* expression in eye, anal fin, and gill tissues from Masoko male *A. calliptera* demonstrate that males carrying putative Y alleles generated through mutations involving *gsdf* express this gene more than other males.

Figure S4: Relationship between genetic variation and catch depth. Lake Masoko A. *calliptera* distributed along the first two components of a principal component analysis of genome-wide variation reveals strong philopatry of high PC1 fish for deep depths. This coincides with nearly all high PC1 individuals conforming to the benthic ecomorph. In contrast, fish below PC1 values of 0.04 are almost all of the littoral ecomorph and exhibit far less constrained habitat preference. Among littoral fish (PC1 < 0.04), the most admixed individuals in the middle of PC1 (-0.02 to 0.04) regularly occupy all depth bands, while low PC1 littorals (PC1 < -0.02) remain mostly at depths above 20 metres, though occasionally they are found deep.

Figure S5: Ancestry characterization of Masoko *A. calliptera*. (a) Genome-wide ancestry proportions for individuals inferred using the program ADMIXTURE and ordered by their genetic PC1 rank shows the genetic distinctiveness of the benthic (high PC1) subgroup, a subset of littorals having low amounts of benthic ancestry (low PC1), and a highly admixed group (middle PC1). (b) The genetic PC1 scores of Lake Masoko individuals regressed against their proportion of benthic ancestry shows that PC1 almost perfectly describes the genetic structure of the Lake Masoko population in terms of the continuum between genetically benthic and littoral ancestries. The fitted linear regression line is shown in red and the low, middle, and high PC1 classification cutoffs are depicted with dashed grey lines.

Figure S6: Interaction between genetic background and Y allele in predicting male size.

The standard lengths of male *A. calliptera* from Lake Masoko plotted against their position along PC1 of the principal component analysis of genome-wide variation shows a negative trend in the length among genetically littoral (PC1 < 0.04) males (circles) with increasing PC1 value. Linear regression models of length predicted by PC1 were fitted separately for littoral males heterozygous for either *gsdf*-dup, chr19-ins, or chr7-ins corresponding to the colours blue, red, and yellow, respectively. Littoral males carrying more than one Y allele, homozygous for Y alleles, or which did not have an identified Y, are represented by uncoloured circles and were

1066 excluded from the regressions. Genetically benthic males, defined as fish with $PC1 > 0.04$, are
 1067 plotted for comparative purposes as squares without any indication of their Y genotype. The
 1068 distinctly more negative slope of the regression line fit to *gsdf*-dup males compared to chr19-ins
 1069 and chr7-ins males shows that length is predicted to decrease much more drastically with more
 1070 benthic admixture among *gsdf*-dup males. This difference is so great that males using *gsdf*-dup
 1071 are predicted to switch from being longer than males using other Y alleles to actually being
 1072 shorter above PC1 values of -0.02.

Figure S7: Male sizes and frequencies according to Y allele, genetic PC1, and catch depth. (a) Standard length comparisons across different PC1 genetic backgrounds and catch depths of Lake Masoko *A. calliptera* males heterozygous for only one of the Y alleles shows an interaction between Y allele, catch depth, and PC1 background in predicting size. Among the genetically littoral males (within the dashed grey box) those carrying *gsdf-dup* are smaller on middle PC1 versus low PC1 backgrounds regardless of what depth they are found at. In

contrast, among males using the other Y alleles only middle PC1 males found in shallow waters are smaller than the low PC1 males, while at deeper depths their size remains constant across genetic backgrounds and may even show a subtle tendency to be larger with middle PC1 benthic ancestry. **(b)** A comparison of the proportion of littoral males characterized by different genetic PC1 backgrounds and Y alleles at different catch depths shows that the proportion of males with middle PC1 ancestry increases with depth. However, within PC1 backgrounds, the fraction of males using the different Y alleles remains relatively stable across depths. Overall, *gsdf*-dup males dominate at all depths.

Tables S1 to S7 can be found in the attached Excel file: `supplementary_tables_differential_use_of_multiple_genetic_sex_determination_systems_in_divergent_ecomorphs_of_an_African_crater_lake_cichlid.xls`. For convenience the table legends are given below, and we also copy below the contents of tables S3 and S7, which are short.

Table S1: Lake Masoko *Astatotilapia calliptera* samples Genetic, phenotypic, collection, and data availability information for all Lake Masoko *A. calliptera* samples. RNAseq expression levels for *gsdf* are reported in counts per million reads mapped (CPM). Sample accessions are provided for whole-genome (WGS) and RNAseq sequence data deposited into the European Nucleotide Archive. Missing values are coded as “NA”.

Table S2: GWAS multilocus sex determination genotype frequencies Counts of Masoko *A. calliptera* individuals, stratified by sex and PC1 genetic background, for all observed combinations of *gsdf* copy number and genotypes at the most strongly associated SNPs in the serial GWAS for sex. 0 = reference allele, 1 = insertion allele, ./ = missing genotype.

Table S3: Average sizes of Masoko males The mean standard length of Masoko *A. calliptera* males heterozygous for one type of Y allele stratified by PC1 genetic background and catch depth.

Lake-wide mean length (mm)		
Y allele	Low PC1	Middle PC1
<i>gsdf</i> -dup	81.34	73.55

chr7-ins or chr19-ins	77.68	78.73
Shallow (< 5 m) mean length (mm)		
Y allele	Low PC1	Middle PC1
<i>gsdf</i> -dup	78.55	69.91
chr7-ins or chr19-ins	76.67	67.46
Intermediate (5-20 m) mean length (mm)		
Y allele	Low PC1	Middle PC1
<i>gsdf</i> -dup	84.41	74.87
chr7-ins or chr19-ins	79.50	79.96
Deep (> 20 m) mean length (mm)		
Y allele	Low PC1	Middle PC1
<i>gsdf</i> -dup	100.26	73.33
chr7-ins or chr19-ins	78.22	81.56

1103 **Table S4: Littoral male frequencies according to genetic type and catch depth** Counts of
1104 Lake Masoko *A. calliptera* littoral males heterozygous for one type of Y allele stratified by
1105 genetic PC1 background and depth at which they were caught.

1106 **Table S5: Sex loci genotype calls for Lake Malawi cichlid radiation species** The number of
1107 *gsdf* copies and genotype (GT) calls for chr19-ins and chr7-ins (0 = reference allele, 1 =

1108 insertion allele, ./ = missing genotype) for individuals of different species belonging to the Lake
1109 Malawi haplochromine cichlid radiation. The AC values indicate the number of “<reference
1110 allele>,<insertion allele>” sequencing reads observed for an individual. Missing values are
1111 coded as “NA”.

1112 **Table S6: Frequency of chr7-ins in non-calliptera species from the Lake Malawi**

1113 **haplochromine radiation** Counts of individuals from all species apart from *Astatotilapia*
1114 *calliptera* in which chr7-ins was found, stratified by *gsdf* copy number and chr7-ins genotype.
1115 Multilocus genotype calls are defined as <number of *gsdf* copies>/<number of chr7-ins alleles>:
1116 for example, “3/1” denotes an individual possessing three *gsdf* copies and who is heterozygous
1117 for the insertion allele at the chr7-ins locus. Genotype class cells with non-zero counts are
1118 highlighted for readability.

1119 **Table S7: PCR primers for the detection of *gsdf*-dup** All samples should undergo

1120 amplification for the 402 bp control fragment, whereas only samples positive for the *gsdf*
1121 duplication should show equally strong amplification for the 207 bp fragment (and an additional
1122 614 bp fragment which is not present when each primer pair is run in individual reactions).

primer	sequence	Tm (°C)	%GC	primer partner	amplicon size (bp)
dup_fwd	TGTCGCGTCATAACGAGGAG	59.9	55	dup_rev	207
dup_rev	AGCTGATCTGGTCCCTCACT	60.0	55	dup_fwd	
control_fwd	GCTGCCCCACCTCGTAGTAAT	59.5	55	control_rev	402
control_rev	GCACGAGTGGGAACCAGTAA	60.0	55	control_fwd	

dup_fwd				control_rev	614
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