

Indirect interactions in a microcosm-assembled cladoceran community:

Implications for apparent competition

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Apparent competition occurs when species that otherwise may not directly interact still exhibit negative indirect effects on one another because they share a food-limited predator (enemy). Even though this type of indirect interaction has received significant theoretical and empirical attention, alternative mechanisms producing similar results have not been considered in the literature. In this paper we document the results of a series of microcosm experiments aimed to evaluate the importance of the generalist consumer *Daphnia ambigua* upon the relative abundance of the more specialized *Moina micrura* and *Ceriodaphnia dubia* (Cladocera). We compared the population parameters of *M. micrura* and *C. dubia* when alone, in coexistence, and in the presence and absence of *D. ambigua*. While *M. micrura* and *C. dubia* did not show evidence for interspecific competition, the addition of *D. ambigua* promoted a reduction in the maximal population density of *M. micrura*, causing a pattern of indirect competi