

An underwater photograph of a coral reef. The top half of the image shows a clear blue water column with many small fish swimming. The bottom half shows a coral reef with various types of coral, including large, flat, white and yellowish corals, and smaller, more colorful ones. The overall scene is vibrant and detailed.

# Ocean Acidification and Marine Wildlife

Physiological and Behavioral Impacts

Guangxu Liu





# OCEAN ACIDIFICATION AND MARINE WILDLIFE

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OCEAN ACIDIFICATION AND  
MARINE WILDLIFE  
Physiological and Behavioral  
Impacts

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# Contents

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ix

<b>1. Physiological impacts of ocean acidification on marine invertebrates</b>	<b>1</b>
Guangxu Liu and Wei Shi	
Introduction	1
Impacts of ocean acidification on gametes and fertilization success of invertebrates	2
Impacts of ocean acidification on embryonic development of invertebrates	12
Impacts of ocean acidification on biomineralization of invertebrates	21
Impacts of ocean acidification on metabolism and growth of invertebrates	29
Impacts of ocean acidification on immune responses of invertebrates	33
References	40
<b>2. Physiological impacts of ocean acidification on marine vertebrates</b>	<b>53</b>
Shiguo Li	
Introduction	53
Impacts of ocean acidification on acid–base and ion regulation of marine vertebrates	56
Impacts of ocean acidification on fertilization and embryonic development of marine vertebrates	73
Impacts of ocean acidification on metabolism and growth of marine vertebrates	78
Other physiological impacts of ocean acidification on marine vertebrates	82
Effects of ocean acidification on predation and escape behavior	82
Effect of ocean acidification on behavioral lateralization	83
Effects of ocean acidification on habitat recognition and selection	84
Influence of ocean acidification on other behaviors	88
Case studies	89
Case study 1—Ion and acid–base regulation	89
Case study 2—Metabolism	91
Case study 3—Escape behavior	95
Summary	97
References	99

<b>3. Behavioral impacts of ocean acidification on marine animals</b>	<b>109</b>
Youji Wang and Ting Wang	
Introduction	109
Impacts of ocean acidification on foraging	111
Impacts of ocean acidification on antipredation	115
Impacts of ocean acidification on habitat selection	120
Impacts of ocean acidification on the social hierarchy	123
Case studies	126
Case study 1—foraging	126
Case study 2—antipredation	130
Case study 3—habitat selection	134
Case study 4—social hierarchy	138
References	142
<b>4. Potential mechanisms underpinning the impacts of ocean acidification on marine animals</b>	<b>155</b>
Wei Shi and Guangxu Liu	
Introduction	155
Acid—base homeostasis and energy reallocation	156
Neurotransmitter disturbance and signaling transduction	162
Potential molecular mechanisms revealed by omics technologies	166
Examples of case studies	171
Case study 1—Fertilization success	171
Case study 2—Feeding behavior	174
Case study 3—Defense capacity	176
Case study 4—Chemical communication	179
Case study 5—Immune responses	181
References	184
<b>5. Interactive effects of ocean acidification and other environmental factors on marine organisms</b>	<b>193</b>
Tianyu Zhang, Qianqian Zhang, Yi Qu, Xin Wang and Jianmin Zhao	
Introduction	193
Interaction of ocean acidification with global warming	195
Interaction of ocean acidification with hypoxia	205
Interaction of ocean acidification with salinity fluctuation	213
Interaction of ocean acidification with heavy metal pollution	218
References	226

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<b>6. A brief summary of what we know and what we do not know about the impacts of ocean acidification on marine animals</b>	<b>247</b>
Guangxu Liu and Wei Shi	
Introduction	247
A general summary of what we know about the impacts of ocean acidification on marine animals	248
A summary of limitations and knowledge gaps that currently exist	251
Directions for future studies	256
References	258
<i>Index</i>	265



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# Physiological impacts of ocean acidification on marine invertebrates

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## Introduction

Due to anthropogenic activities such as deforestation, fossil fuel utilization, cement production, and biomass burning since the Industrial Revolution in the mid-eighteenth century, the concentration of atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) has increased approximately from 280 to 387 parts per million (ppm), which is higher now than it has been for more than 800,000 years (Booth et al., 2012; Caldeira & Wickett, 2003; Feely et al., 2004; Orr et al., 2005). Being the earth's largest carbon sink, the ocean plays an extremely important role in the global carbon cycle (Doney et al., 2009; Le Quéré et al., 2009). Approximately 30%–50% of the CO<sub>2</sub> released into the atmosphere has been absorbed by the earth's ocean, which thus resulted in reductions in seawater pH, a process termed “ocean acidification” (OA) (Caldeira & Wickett, 2003; Sabine et al., 2004). Over the past two centuries, the global average surface seawater pH has already decreased by more than 0.1 units, from approximately pH 8.21 to pH 8.10, which is equivalent to a 30% increase in the hydrogen ion (H<sup>+</sup>) concentration in the seawater (Ellis et al., 2017; Sabine et al., 2004). According to the prediction made by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, if fossil fuel emissions and carbon-sequestration efforts continue at the present rate, the surface seawater pH will drop another 0.3–0.4 units by the end of the 21st century and by 0.7 units around the year 2300 (Pachauri et al., 2014). Besides, oceanic uptake of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> also lowers the carbonate concentration and reduces the saturation state of calcium carbonate in seawater, especially aragonite and

calcite, which are critical for many marine invertebrates in creating their skeletal structures or shells (Caldeira & Wickett, 2003; Fitzer et al., 2016; Thomsen et al., 2013; Zhao et al., 2017). Therefore theoretically, OA will affect a diversity of marine invertebrate species by altering seawater chemistry (Andersson & Gledhill, 2013; Gibson et al., 2011; Mollica et al., 2018).

Invertebrates, which make up about 95% of all animal species, are the largest group of animals on earth. In the ocean, marine invertebrates are not only functionally important in the marine ecosystem but also have significant commercial value worldwide (Marinelli & Williams, 2003). Since living in an acidified environment would constitute stress to marine inhabitants, OA could have profound ramifications on the physiological performance of marine invertebrates (Gallo et al., 2019; Gazeau et al., 2010; Kurihara, 2008; Shi, Han, et al., 2017; Shi et al., 2019). To date, OA is projected to impact marine invertebrates such as mollusks, crustaceans, and echinoderms present in various areas, from the open sea to estuaries and coastal areas (Bechmann et al., 2011; Holcomb et al., 2014). The present chapter focuses on the physiological impacts of OA on marine invertebrates, including gametic traits, fertilization success, embryonic development, biomineralization, metabolism, growth, and immune responses.



## Impacts of ocean acidification on gametes and fertilization success of invertebrates

Fertilization, in its simplest form, is the fusion of two specialized gametes to form a single viable cell, which is known as the zygote. The release of gametes into the natural seawater column for external fertilization is an ancestral mating strategy commonly employed by various marine invertebrates (Lotterhos & Levitan, 2010). Once discharged, these gametes are in direct contact with the surrounding seawater. In this regard, the gametes and the subsequent fertilization of these marine broadcast spawners may be particularly vulnerable to OA (Table 1.1).

Sperm velocity is theoretically related to the probability of collision of gametes, and studies have shown that sperm with high velocity would be more effective in fertilizing the egg (Kupriyanova & Havenhand, 2005; Levitan, 2000). For example, as compared to faster sperm of the sea urchin *Lytechinus variegatus*, sperm with 0.01 mm/s decrease in velocity

**Table 1.1** Effects of ocean acidification on the gametic traits and fertilization success of marine invertebrates.

<b>Taxon</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>pH/pCO<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Effects</b>	<b>References</b>
Coelenterata	<i>Acropora digitifera</i>	pH 8.03–6.55 (400–21,100 ppm)	Sperm	↓ Sperm flagellar motility	Morita et al. (2010)
		pH 7.74 (1000 ppm)	Sperm	↓ Sperm motility	Nakamura and Morita (2012)
		pH 7.99–7.60 (438–1111 ppm)	Sperm	Unaffected	Iguchi et al. (2015)
Mollusca	<i>A. palmata</i>	pH 7.7 (998 ppm)	Sperm	↓ Fertilization success	Albright et al. (2010)
	<i>Crassostrea gigas</i>	pH 8.12–7.85	Sperm and egg	Unaffected	Havenhand and Schlegel (2009)
		pH 8.09–7.73 (580–3573 ppm)	Sperm and egg	↓ Sperm motility; ↓ Fertilization rate	Barros et al. (2013)
	<i>Saccostrea glomerata</i>	600, 750, and 1000 ppm	Sperm and egg	↓ Fertilization success	Parker et al. (2009)
	<i>Mytilus galloprovincialis</i>	pH 7.6 (1000 ppm)	Sperm	↓ Sperm swimming speed; ↓ Percentage of motile sperm	Vihtakari et al. (2013)
	<i>Tegillarca granosa</i>	pH 8.1–7.4 (589–3582 ppm)	Sperm and egg	↓ Sperm swimming speed; ↓ Fertilization success; ↓ Gamete fusion probability;	Shi et al. (2017)
pH 8.1–7.4		Sperm and egg	↑ Polyspermy risk	Han et al. (2021)	
Arthropoda	<i>Acartia tonsa</i>	pH 8.23–7.15 (385–6000 ppm)	egg	↓ Fertilization success	Cripps et al. (2014)
Urochordata	<i>Ciona robusta</i>	pH 8.1–7.8	Sperm	↓ Sperm motility; ↓ Sperm viability.	Gallo et al. (2019)

(Continued)

**Table 1.1** (Continued)

<b>Taxon</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>pH/pCO<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Effects</b>	<b>References</b>
Echinodermata	<i>Hemicentrotus pulcherrimus</i>	pH 7.35 and 6.83 (2000 and 10,000 ppm) pH 8.06–7.55	Sperm and egg	↓ Fertilization success	<a href="#">Kurihara and Shirayama (2004)</a>
	<i>Heliocidaris erythrogramma</i>	pH 7.7	Sperm	Unaffected	<a href="#">Zhan et al. (2016)</a>
	<i>Strongylocentrotus franciscanus</i>	pH 7.81 and 7.55 (800 and 1800 ppm)	Sperm and egg	↓ Sperm swimming speed; ↓ Percent sperm motility; ↓ Fertilization success	<a href="#">Havenhand et al. (2008)</a>
	<i>S. purpuratus</i>	pH 8.03–7.61	Sperm and egg	↓ Fertilization success; ↑ Polyspermy risk	<a href="#">Reuter et al. (2011)</a>
	<i>Centrostephanus rogersii</i>	pH 8.1–7.6 (435–1558 ppm)	Sperm	Unaffected	<a href="#">Kapsenberg et al. (2017)</a>
	<i>Acanthaster planci</i>	pH 8.11–7.61 (520–1658 ppm)	Sperm	↓ Sperm mitochondrial membrane potential; ↓ Sperm swimming speed	<a href="#">Schlegel et al. (2015)</a>
	<i>Holothuria</i> spp.	pH 8.03–6.55 (400–21,100 ppm)	Sperm	↓ Sperm swimming speed; ↓ Sperm motility; ↓ Fertilization success	<a href="#">Uthicke et al. (2013)</a>
	<i>Glyptocidaris crenularis</i>	pH 7.98–7.48 (453–1674 ppm)	Sperm and egg	↓ Sperm flagellar motility	<a href="#">Morita et al. (2010)</a>
	<i>Lytechinus variegatus</i>	pH 7.8	Sperm and egg	↓ Fertilization success; ↓ percentage of abnormal fertilized eggs	<a href="#">Zhan et al. (2016)</a>
				Unaffected	<a href="#">Lenz et al. (2019)</a>