

1 Title: **Pollen specialisation is associated with later phenology in *Osmia* bees (Hymenoptera:**
2 **Megachilidae)**

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9 Abstract

- 10 1. Species exhibit a range of specialisation in diet and other niche axes, with specialists
11 typically thought to be more efficient in resource use but more vulnerable to extinction
12 than generalists. Among herbivorous insects, dietary specialists seem more likely to lack
13 acceptable host plants during the insect's feeding stage, owing to fluctuations in host-
14 plant abundance or phenology. Like other herbivores, bee species vary in host breadth
15 from pollen specialisation (oligolecty) to generalisation (polylecty).
- 16 2. Several studies have shown greater interannual variation in flowering phenology for
17 earlier-flowering plants than later-flowering plants, suggesting that early-season bees
18 may experience substantial year-to-year variation in the floral taxa available to them.
- 19 3. We therefore reasoned that, among bees, early phenology could be a more viable strategy
20 for generalists, which can use resources from multiple floral taxa, than for specialists.
21 Consequently, we expected median dates of collection of adult specimens to be earlier for
22 generalist species than for specialists. To test this, we obtained phenology data and pollen
23 diet information on 67 North American species of the bee genus *Osmia*.
- 24 4. Controlling for latitude and phylogeny, we find that dietary generalisation is associated
25 with significantly earlier phenology, with generalists active, on average, 11–14 days
26 earlier than specialists.
- 27 5. This result is consistent with the generalist strategy being more viable than the specialist
28 strategy for species active in early spring, suggesting that dietary specialisation may
29 constrain the evolution of bee phenology—or vice versa.

30 **Keywords:** phenology, *Osmia*, specialisation, oligolecty, polylecty, solitary bees

31 Introduction

32 Ecological communities of all kinds include species that are relatively generalised—along
33 niche axes such as habitat requirements, climatic tolerances, or diet breadth—as well as species
34 that are more specialised (Wilson & Yoshimura, 1994; McPeck, 1996; Hanski *et al.*, 2001;
35 Bascompte & Jordano, 2007). Present-day coexistence of specialists and generalists, as well as
36 past evolutionary shifts in dietary niche breadth within lineages (Forister *et al.* 2012), suggest
37 that both the generalist and specialist strategies have costs and benefits (Wilson & Yoshimura,
38 1994). Probably the most obvious cost of specialisation is the risk of death or reproductive
39 failure if the specific host organism, food source, or mutualist is unavailable at the time and place
40 when the specialist is active (Quiring, 1992; Minckley *et al.*, 1994; Posledovich *et al.*, 2018).
41 Conversely, the costs of generalisation are thought to involve the need to maintain cognitive,
42 morphological, or physiological traits that allow an organism to interact with different kinds of
43 resources or mutualists (Futuyma & Moreno, 1988; Waser *et al.*, 1996; Bernays, 2001; Praz *et*
44 *al.*, 2008a, 2008b).

45 Bees (with few exceptions) obtain all of their food from flowers and exhibit a wide diversity
46 of floral host breadth, presumably because flowers vary greatly in their morphological, chemical,
47 and nutritional characteristics (Wcislo & Cane, 1996). Pollen, in particular, is an essential protein
48 source that many bee species collect from a limited number of host-plants (Wcislo & Cane,
49 1996). What limits host choice by bees is poorly understood but may include suitability of
50 different pollens for larval development (Praz *et al.*, 2008a) and neurological constraints
51 affecting foraging behaviour (Praz *et al.*, 2008b). Though definitions and thresholds vary across
52 the literature, pollen-specialist (oligolectic) bee species are usually defined as depending on the
53 pollen from a single plant genus, tribe, subfamily, or family (Robertson, 1925; Cane & Sipes,

54 2006). Pollen-generalist (polylectic) species are usually defined as collecting pollen from
55 multiple plant families.

56 Several potential benefits have been suggested to explain the existence of pollen
57 specialisation. Specialisation may allow species to escape competition (Robertson 1925;
58 Minckley *et al.* 1994; but see Weislo & Cane 1996), increase efficiency of pollen harvesting
59 (Strickler, 1979) and digestion (Müller & Kuhlmann, 2008; Praz *et al.*, 2008a), or grant
60 protection against parasites (Spear *et al.*, 2016). Conversely, generalisation may grant access to a
61 fuller spectrum of essential nutrients, thanks to complementarity among different pollens
62 (Requier *et al.*, 2015; Donkersley *et al.*, 2017). Another major advantage of generalisation over
63 specialisation is non-dependance on a single floral host: dietary specialisation must be highly
64 costly when the food source is unavailable, particularly if bees are unwilling or unable to obtain
65 pollen from non-host flowers (e.g. Williams 2003; Praz *et al.* 2008a). Indeed, the availability of
66 floral resources often limits bee reproduction (Roulston & Goodell, 2011) and is an important
67 determinant of bee nesting phenology (Neff *et al.*, 1982; Neff & Simpson, 1990; Cane & Payne,
68 1993). A pollen specialist's reproductive output can be severely limited if it emerges during a
69 period when its floral host is unavailable (Minckley *et al.*, 1994; Müller *et al.*, 2006).
70 Specialisation can therefore be a risky strategy, with success depending on host flowers being
71 reliably present during the period when the bee is active.

72 Across temperate regions, angiosperm flowering phenologies vary widely year to year in
73 response to climatic variables (e.g., CaraDonna *et al.* 2014). Furthermore, plants with earlier
74 average first flowering dates often show more interannual variability in their first flowering
75 dates, and/or larger changes in flowering phenology over time, than those that flower later. This
76 pattern has been observed in temperate European (Fitter *et al.*, 1995; Menzel *et al.*, 2006) and

77 North American (Iler *et al.*, 2013; Bertin, 2015) floras, as well as among cherry trees (*Cerasus*
78 and *Prunus* spp.) in Japan (Miller-Rushing *et al.*, 2007). A likely explanation for this pattern is
79 that the flowering phenology of early-blooming plants tends to be more sensitive to temperature
80 than that of late-blooming plants (Miller-Rushing *et al.*, 2007; Miller-Rushing & Inouye, 2009;
81 Mazer *et al.*, 2013; Wolkovich *et al.*, 2013; Lessard-Therrien *et al.*, 2014), and early spring in at
82 least some north-temperate regions tends to exhibit more interannual temperature variation than
83 summer (Chen & Hellström, 1999; Menzel *et al.*, 2006). If this trend for greater phenological
84 variability among early-flowering plants is generally true in temperate regions, we should expect
85 the availability of specific floral hosts during the period of adult bee activity to be more variable,
86 and less dependable, earlier in the season than later. This means that, unless bees are capable of
87 closely matching their emergence phenology to the flowering phenology of their host-plants, an
88 early-emerging specialist risks, in certain years, not having any flowering hosts from which to
89 forage. Generalists, on the other hand, can feed from a broader range of hosts, offsetting the
90 effects of unreliable bloom (Vicens *et al.*, 1994; Kraemer & Favi, 2005; Yourstone *et al.*, 2021).
91 Consequently, we propose that dietary generalisation should be a better strategy than
92 specialisation for bees that are active early in the growing season—in other words, we suggest
93 that early-flying specialists are less likely to persist than late-flying specialists or early-flying
94 generalists. We therefore expect the adult activity period of generalist (polylectic) species to be
95 earlier than that of specialist (oligolectic) species.

96 Methods

97 We tested the predicted association between host-breadth and phenology using the primarily
98 Holarctic genus *Osmia* Panzer (Hymenoptera: Megachilidae). This genus of solitary bees
99 contains over 350 species worldwide, around 165 of them in the New World, with varying diet

100 breadth (Rightmyer *et al.*, 2013). Members of this typically univoltine genus overwinter within
101 cocoons and emerge as adults from early spring to mid-summer, depending on the species
102 (Bosch *et al.*, 2001; Forrest & Thomson, 2011). Most *Osmia* species lack an ability to
103 facultatively undergo a prolonged diapause that could buffer populations against occasional poor
104 years (cf. Danforth 1999), so a single year in which emergence is poorly timed relative to floral
105 host availability could be devastating for bees that are entirely dependent on those specific hosts.
106 Species-specific phenologies were inferred from specimen records on GBIF.org (Global
107 Biodiversity Information Facility), and data on host breadths of different species were taken from
108 published literature, as described below.

109 Phenology

110 The GBIF network includes over 100 000 records of *Osmia* specimens throughout the world,
111 including dates of capture, coordinates, species names, and more. We downloaded the raw data
112 for all North American *Osmia* bees that occur between the latitudes of 45°N and 35°N and
113 between the longitudes of 125°W and 60°W (70 126 total occurrences) (GBIF, 2021). This
114 geographic range, corresponding to the mid-latitudes of the conterminous United States and
115 small areas of southern Canada (Figures S1 and S2), was chosen to encompass as many species
116 and occurrences as possible while minimizing the latitudinal range (and hence the variation in
117 phenology due to latitude rather than species identity). This latitudinal band largely excludes the
118 hot deserts of North America, a region of exceptional bee diversity (Michener, 1979; Moldenke,
119 1979). Extreme interannual variability in the occurrence of flowering in these deserts, (Frank &
120 Inouye, 1994) and the greater importance of precipitation cues (rather than temperature) for
121 phenology (Beatley, 1974; Kimball *et al.*, 2010; Crimmins *et al.*, 2011), could lead to different
122 hypotheses about the relationship between specialisation and phenology (e.g. Minckley *et al.*

123 2000). Additionally, desert-adapted specialist bees may use bet-hedging strategies to cope with
124 variability in availability of their host flowers (Danforth, 1999), which may restrict the
125 applicability of our hypothesis. Of the 70 126 *Osmia* records in our selected geographical area,
126 only 620 were from citizen-science observations, and fewer than 10 other records were from
127 sources that lack preserved specimens, so identification error is unlikely to play a large role in
128 our dataset. In any case, errors in identification, or in the phenology or locality data, would only
129 add noise, and not bias, to the dataset.

130 We eliminated from the dataset all occurrences without dates or species names and all
131 occurrences preceding the year 1800, and we combined all subspecies into species. All species
132 represented by fewer than 20 occurrences were excluded because this sample size was judged
133 insufficient for characterising phenology. All 20 occurrences of *O. rostrata* Sandhouse were
134 deleted because a suspiciously high proportion of them were from midwinter (6 in January, 4 in
135 December). Following the taxonomic revisions of Rightmyer *et al.* (2013), *O. sladeni* Sandhouse
136 was considered a synonym of *O. nifoata* Cockerell, and *O. physariae* Cockerell a synonym of *O.*
137 *giliarum* Cockerell. Only three species in our dataset (*O. caerulescens* (L.), *O. cornifrons*
138 (Radoszkowski), and *O. taurus* Smith) are exotic to North America; they were kept in the dataset
139 because, if our hypothesis is correct, introduced early specialists should face the same challenges
140 in establishing and maintaining populations as native early specialists.

141 Host breadth

142 We classified species simply as specialist or generalist because this binary classification
143 predominates in the bee literature (e.g., Haider *et al.* 2014; Sheffield *et al.* 2014; Normandin *et*
144 *al.* 2017; Schenk *et al.* 2017) and gives a simple signal of a species' level of pollen
145 specialisation.

146 Host-breadth was determined from an exhaustive search of the literature combined with
147 solicitation of expert opinion, all carried out blind to phenology data. Classifications we deemed
148 to be based on biased evidence (i.e., surveys of visitors to single plant taxa) were excluded.
149 Monolectic and oligolectic species were classified as specialists; eclectic oligoleges, mesoleges,
150 and polyleges were classified as generalists since most literature classified any species collecting
151 pollen from more than one botanical family as polylectic. Diet information was first sought in
152 Krombein (1979), then using Google Scholar, typically searching the species name, with and
153 without the word “oligolectic” or “polylectic”. Every article from the first page of results was
154 investigated for species host-breadths, and references cited within these articles were also
155 investigated if they were the source of the host-breadth classification. These searches, along with
156 Fowler (2020b, a) and Fowler & Droege's (2020) online databases of North American specialist
157 bees, literature from our personal database of *Osmia*-related literature assembled over 14 years,
158 and personal communications with V. J. Tepedino, gave the host-breadth classifications of 67
159 species (see Table S1 for full results).

160 We found contradictory information on host breadth for 20 species in the dataset. We
161 evaluated all sources for bias and compared them to determine which host-breadth category was
162 best supported for each species. We gave precedence to studies that showed the methodology
163 that led them to certain classifications, or at least gave clear definitions of host-breadth
164 classification, over articles that gave no explanation for their classifications. Three species were
165 unanimously classified as oligoleges in the literature (see references for *O. californica*, *O.*
166 *coloradensis*, and *O. montana* in Table S1) except for being classified as mesoleges by Cane
167 (2017), who used more nuanced classifications; we kept the specialist classifications that were
168 used in the majority of the literature. Torchio (1990) considered *Osmia ribifloris* an Ericaceae

169 oligolege based on observations of floral visits and cell provisioning of one population, but Rust
170 (1986) classified it as oligolectic on Berberidaceae based on nest pollen data from another
171 location. Based on that disagreement and on Haider's (2013) scopal pollen analysis of 50
172 individuals from 42 different localities revealing pollen from 8 families, we classified *O.*
173 *ribifloris* as a generalist. Similarly, *O. inermis* was listed as an Ericaceae specialist by multiple
174 sources (Giles & Ascher, 2006; Wolf & Ascher, 2008), but Müller's (2018) and Hicks's (2009)
175 scopal pollen data showed it to be a probable polylege (or eclectic oligolege with a preference for
176 Ericaceae and Fabaceae), so we listed it as a generalist.

177 Analysis

178 All analyses were conducted with R version 4.0.2 (R Core Team, 2020). The species that
179 occurred in the GBIF database but for which we lacked host-breadth information were excluded
180 from the analysis. Visual inspection of distributions of day of year of specimen collection (DOY)
181 revealed a normal distribution for almost every species, with few outliers. Median DOY and
182 median latitude were calculated for each species. The following linear model was tested: median
183 DOY ~ host breadth + median latitude. Latitude was included in the model because bee
184 emergence timing is highly positively correlated to latitude (Bartomeus *et al.*, 2011; Skandalis *et*
185 *al.*, 2011), even over the limited (10°) latitudinal range we considered. Altitude could not be
186 included as a factor because altitudes were only available for 11% of records in the raw GBIF
187 data.

188 To control for the lack of independence among related species, we also conducted a
189 phylogenetic generalised least-squares regression (PGLS) (Symonds & Blomberg, 2014) using
190 the most recent phylogeny of *Osmia*. Phylogenetic information was only available for a subset of
191 the species for which we had data, so the PGLS was used to test the assumption of independence

192 among those species. If the assumption of independence among related species is not violated,
193 we can use the non-phylogenetic linear model to test the central prediction with the full dataset,
194 which has the advantage of a larger sample size. Using the R package *ape* (Paradis *et al.*, 2004),
195 we manually wrote Rightmyer *et al.*'s (2013) *Osmia* phylogeny, which they inferred from three
196 nuclear genes and the mitochondrial COI gene, into Newick format. Branch length data could not
197 be obtained directly, so we used WebPlotDigitizer (Rohatgi, 2020) to extract branch lengths
198 from Figure 2 of Rightmyer *et al.* (2013). Due to the limits of the measurement tool, several very
199 short branches were measured as having a length of 0. For these, we used an arbitrarily small
200 value of 0.0001. The tree used for the PGLS regression was pruned to only include the species in
201 the Rightmyer *et al.* (2013) phylogeny for which we had phenology data and host-breadth
202 classifications, and the phylogenetic analysis was restricted to that subset of our data.

203 Pagel's λ is a value ranging from 0 to 1 indicating the magnitude of phylogenetic signal in a
204 variable, with 0 indicating no phylogenetic signal and 1 indicating maximum phylogenetic signal
205 (corresponding to a model of trait evolution by Brownian motion). With the R package *nlme*
206 (Pinheiro *et al.*, 2013), we ran a PGLS regression with Pagel correlation structure to determine
207 the best-fit Pagel's λ with the following model: median DOY ~ host breadth + median latitude.
208 We also ran the same model twice more, with λ fixed at 0 and 1, and compared AIC values and
209 log-likelihoods of all three models to determine which correlation structure (λ value) was best
210 supported. R^2_{pred} (Ives, 2019) was determined using the R package *rr2* (Ives & Helmus, 2011) for
211 the three phylogenetic models.

212 Results

213 The final non-phylogenetic dataset included 67 *Osmia* species with known host-breadths,
214 collectively represented by 34 098 occurrences from the GBIF dataset (Table S1). Number of
215 occurrences per species ranged from 20 (*O. nanula*) to 5091 (*O. pumila*) and median dates of
216 occurrence ranged from 12 April (*O. liogastra*) to 22 July (*O. chalybea*). Twenty-eight species
217 were classified as specialists and 39 as generalists (see Figures S1 and S2 for geographic
218 distribution of data). Among specialists, twelve species were specialists on Fabaceae, nine on
219 Asteraceae, five on Plantaginaceae, one on Ericaceae, and one on Boraginaceae.

220 The subset of the data used for the phylogenetic analysis included 43 *Osmia* species (19 986
221 occurrences from the GBIF dataset), of which 18 were specialists and 25 were generalists
222 (Figure 1). Number of occurrences per species ranged from 26 (*O. cyaneonitens* and *O.*
223 *nigriventris*) to 4285 (*O. lignaria*) and median dates of occurrence ranged from 12 April (*O.*
224 *liogastra*) to 13 July (*O. juxta*). Among specialist species, seven were specialists on Fabaceae,
225 five on Asteraceae, five on Plantaginaceae, and one on Boraginaceae.

226 In the non-phylogenetic model that included all 67 species, generalist species exhibited a
227 13.9-day earlier median date (95% CI: 3.3, 24.5 days) than specialist species, with every
228 additional degree of median latitude being associated with a 7.7-day later median date (95% CI:
229 5.0, 10.4 days) (Figure 2, Table 1).

230 The PGLS model with best-fit λ also showed host breadth to be significantly associated with
231 phenology (Table 1). Specifically, generalisation was associated with an 11-day earlier median
232 (95% CI: 0.5, 21.6 days) occurrence date with a model-estimated λ of 0.183, indicating moderate
233 phylogenetic signal (Table 1). Both fixed- λ models showed host breadth to be only marginally

234 associated with phenology (Table 1). The model with fitted λ had the highest log-likelihood but
235 fit the data little better than the model with $\lambda = 0$, which was the best-supported model based on
236 AIC. Latitude was a highly significant predictor of phenology in all models ($t = 5.9\text{--}6.8$, $p <$
237 0.0001), with median occurrences 9.4–9.7 days later per degree northward (95% CI: 6.3–6.9,
238 12.3–12.5 days). Phylogenetic models including both predictors (host breadth and latitude)
239 explained >45% of the variation in *Osmia* species phenology (Table 1).

240 Discussion

241 Association between host breadth and phenology

242 Our results show that generalist (polylectic) *Osmia* species are active on average 14 days
243 earlier than specialist (oligolectic) species, which is consistent with pollen specialisation being
244 less compatible than generalisation with early phenology. The lack of detectable phylogenetic
245 signal in the PGLS regression suggests that species' relatedness is not responsible for the
246 relationship between host breadth and phenology; we are therefore reasonably confident in the
247 significant association we detected using the non-phylogenetic regression. Though the
248 phylogenetic regression shows only a marginally significant relationship between host breadth
249 and phenology, its smaller sample size compared to the non-phylogenetic regression makes it
250 less reliable. These results are consistent with our expectation that greater unpredictability of
251 early-season flowering makes a specialist diet less tenable for early-season bees.

252 The pattern of generalists having a long-term fitness advantage over specialists in temporally
253 variable environments has been well established (Futuyma & Moreno, 1988; Waser *et al.*, 1996;
254 Kassen, 2002; Overington *et al.*, 2008); our finding suggests that this advantage can lead to
255 seasonal trends in the prevalence of generalisation. Higher late-season competition for pollen

256 resources (e.g. Mizunaga & Kudo, 2017) may lead to a pattern of seasonal increase in the
257 proportion of specialists, which are generally held to be stronger competitors than generalists
258 (Futuyma & Moreno, 1988), but, to our knowledge, that has yet to be demonstrated.

259 An alternative explanation for our results could be that angiosperm traits that are conducive to
260 bee specialisation, such as highly specialised floral structures or well defended pollen, are also
261 associated with later floral phenology, leading their bee associates to have later phenology. For
262 example, the characteristically late-flowering Asteraceae family (Kochmer & Handel, 1986),
263 which may have defended pollen (Müller & Kuhlmann, 2008; McAulay *et al.*, 2021) and
264 supports numerous specialist bees in multiple genera (Müller, 1996; Larkin *et al.*, 2008; Müller
265 & Kuhlmann, 2008), was host to nine specialist *Osmia* species in our dataset. However, 19 of our
266 28 specialist species are associated with early- to mid-season flowering families (Ericaceae,
267 Boraginaceae, Fabaceae, Plantaginaceae) (Kochmer & Handel, 1986), and another specialist-
268 hosting plant family with apparently defended pollen (Ranunculaceae; Sedivy *et al.* 2008,
269 Eckhardt *et al.* 2013) also typically flowers early (Kochmer and Handel 1986). Consequently, the
270 later phenology we observed among specialists is unlikely to be explained by an association with
271 late-flowering families, though host-plant phenology certainly impacts bee phenology (Neff *et*
272 *al.*, 1982; Neff & Simpson, 1990; Cane & Payne, 1993; Minckley *et al.*, 1994).

273 Phenological matching

274 Some bees, like other herbivorous insects, can adjust their emergence timing in such a way
275 that they remain more or less synchronised with their host-plants, despite spatial or interannual
276 variation in host-plant phenology (Minckley *et al.*, 1994; Danforth, 1999; Van Asch & Visser,
277 2007; Posledovich *et al.*, 2018). This may be common in warm desert-adapted bee species (e.g.
278 Danforth, 1999; Minckley *et al.*, 2013); our sampling range mostly avoided the warm deserts of

279 North America. Precise and reliable phenological tracking would negate the disadvantage of
280 variable host-plant phenology; however, synchronisation of insects and host-plants is often
281 imperfect (e.g. Visser & Holleman 2001; Uelmen Jr. *et al.* 2016; Posledovich *et al.* 2018).
282 Though the phenologies of many specialist species such as *Osmia iridis* (a Fabaceae specialist)
283 are correlated with those of their host-plants, the phenologies of plant and bee may respond to
284 different environmental cues, making it difficult for the bees to adjust precisely to interannual
285 variation in the plant's phenology (Forrest & Thomson, 2011). Therefore, variability in the
286 timing of host-plant bloom could still make early emergence a risky strategy for pollen
287 specialists.

288 Although the specialists in our dataset had later phenologies on average than the generalists,
289 the range of phenologies was similar between specialist and generalist *Osmia* species (Figure 2).
290 This suggests that the later season presents no major disadvantages for generalists, and that an
291 early flight season is not completely incompatible with specialisation. In fact, one specialist
292 species, *Osmia liogastra* (a legume specialist native to the southwestern U.S.A.), had the earliest
293 phenology of any species in our dataset. This species is one of a minority in our dataset to nest in
294 soil (Cane *et al.*, 2007); it may therefore be capable of detecting the environmental cues such as
295 soil temperature and snow cover that trigger the onset of flowering in many temperate-region
296 herbaceous plants (Holway & Ward, 1965; Dahlgren *et al.*, 2007; Jánosi *et al.*, 2020), and thus
297 adjust its phenology annually to match that of its host-plant. This species might therefore be
298 more tolerant of early-season variation in phenology than its above-ground, cavity-nesting
299 congeners. More information on the climatic determinants of the phenologies of bee emergence
300 and host-plant flowering will be needed to evaluate this explanation.

301 Potential impacts of climate change

302 Though phenological shifts vary widely among species, angiosperm first-flowering dates are
303 advancing overall in response to increased temperatures caused by climate change (Calinger *et*
304 *al.*, 2013; Bock *et al.*, 2014; CaraDonna *et al.*, 2014; Szabó *et al.*, 2016), paralleling the general
305 advance of springtime phenology in plants (Jeong *et al.*, 2011). Phenology of many generalist
306 bee species is following the same trend, with early-emerging bees advancing their phenology
307 faster than later-emerging bees (Bartomeus *et al.*, 2011) and demonstrating high sensitivity to
308 varying temperatures (Stemkovski *et al.*, 2022). This extension of spring could entail a greater
309 lengthening of the potential foraging and nesting season for generalist bees than for specialists.
310 Additionally, exotic plants have been shown to shift their flowering phenology in response to
311 climate change more readily than native plants (Wolkovich *et al.*, 2013). Since exotic flora are
312 more likely to be exploited by generalist bees than by specialists (Stout & Morales, 2009), this
313 might provide additional support to generalists in the early season, adding to other evidence
314 suggesting that climate change may disadvantage specialists more than generalists (Packer *et al.*,
315 2005; Davey *et al.*, 2012; Gough *et al.*, 2015). However, our conclusion also implies that
316 specialist bees may not be particularly vulnerable to climate-change-induced phenological
317 mismatch with their host-plants, as a result of their later-season phenology. It is also
318 encouraging—for bees and for other organisms that depend on specific hosts being available at
319 the right time—that climate change does not seem to be increasing interannual phenological
320 variability in a broad sample of taxa (Stemkovski *et al.*, 2022).

321 Recommendations for future work

322 If early-spring phenology is broadly associated with dietary generalisation in bees, we would
323 expect to see this pattern in bee genera other than *Osmia* as well—at least among those taxa that

324 share its predominantly temperate distribution and its relatively early-season phenology (e.g.,
325 *Andrena*). Future work could test whether the association between early phenology and
326 generalisation holds across a greater taxonomic and geographic range. However, a more direct
327 test of our hypothesis would be to investigate whether, across a range of plant taxa, interannual
328 variability in flowering phenology predicts the number (or proportion) of specialist pollinator
329 lineages supported by that taxon. More information on the extent to which bees and their floral
330 host-plants share cues for emergence and flowering would also reveal whether specialists are in
331 fact vulnerable to emerging when no suitable flowers are available.

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338 Contribution of authors

339 The project was conceived by JF. Data collection was carried out by DP. Both authors
340 contributed equally to analysis and writing.

341 Conflict of interest

342 There is no conflict of interest.

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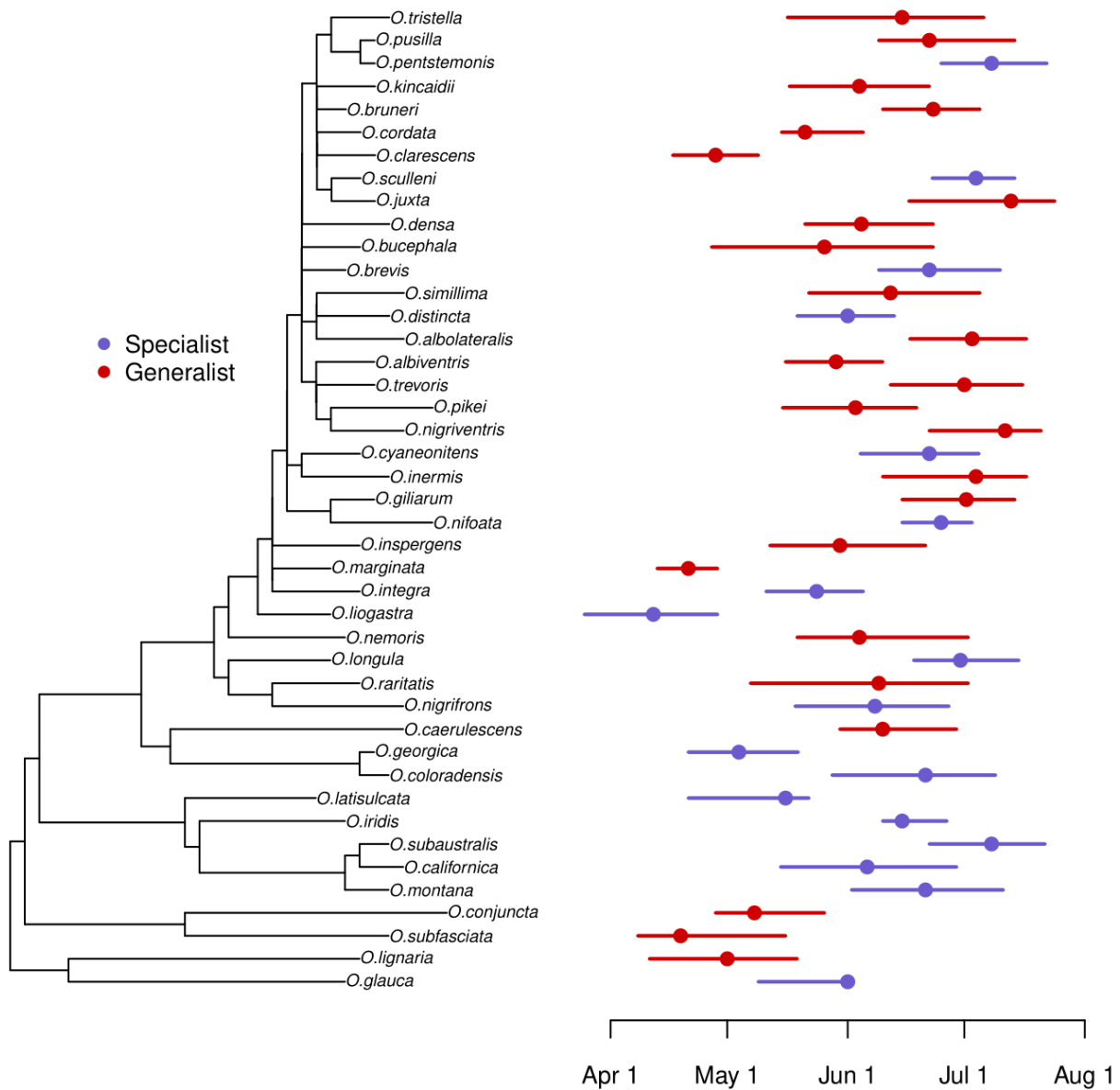
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603

604 **Table 1.** Results of the non-phylogenetic linear model and three PGLS models of the effect of host breadth on median date of
605 occurrence (median latitude included as a covariate). Coefficients indicate the effect of generalisation (polylecty) on median day-of-
606 year. Significant p-values ($\alpha = 0.05$), the highest log-likelihood, and the lowest AIC value are indicated in bold. R^2 for the
607 phylogenetic models represents R^2_{pred} (Ives, 2019).

Model	n	Pagel's λ	logLik	AIC	d.f.	t	b	Std. error	p	R²
Non-phylogenetic	67	N/A	not comparable	not comparable	64	-2.6	-13.9	5.3	0.011	0.34
Best-fit λ	43	0.183	-174.5	359.0	5	-2.1	-11.0	5.4	0.047	0.53
λ fixed as 0	43	0	-174.8	357.5	4	-1.9	-10.1	5.2	0.061	0.54
λ fixed as 1	43	1	-181.8	371.6	4	-1.9	-10.1	5.4	0.066	0.47

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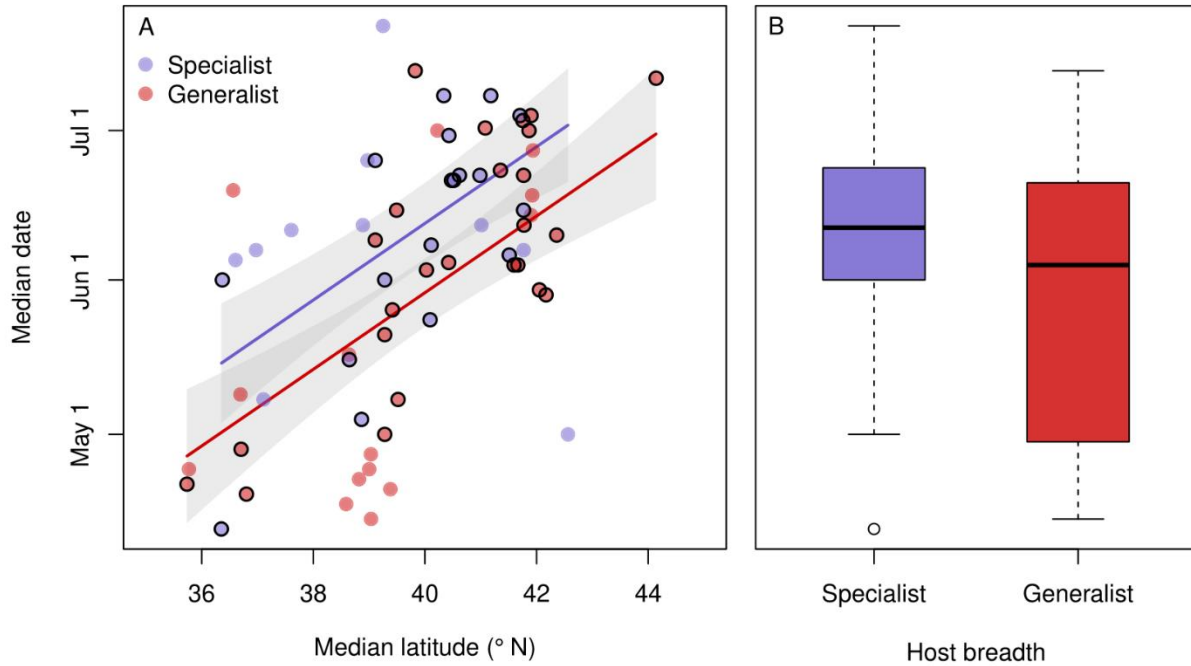


610

611 **Figure 1.** Partial phylogeny of the genus *Osmia* from Rightmyer *et al.* (2013), including only the
 612 43 species used in the PGLS regression. At right are shown the median occurrence dates and
 613 interquartile ranges for each species. The 18 pollen-specialist (oligolectic) species are shown in
 614 blue, the 25 pollen-generalist (polylectic) species in red. Branch lengths were extracted from
 615 Figure 2 of Rightmyer *et al.* (2013) using WebPlotDigitizer (Rohatgi, 2020).

616

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618

619 **Figure 2.** Median dates of occurrence for 28 pollen-specialist (oligolectic) and 39 pollen-
 620 generalist (polylectic) *Osmia* species (A) as a function of median latitude and (B) as a function of
 621 host breadth. Black outlines on datapoints in (A) indicate the subset of species included in the
 622 dataset used for the PGLS regression. Lines represent non-phylogenetic additive model (median
 623 date ~ median latitude + host breadth) predictions with 95% confidence intervals. In (B), the
 624 thick black line represents the median, hinges represent first and third quartiles, and whiskers
 625 extend to earliest and latest dates no more than 1.5× the inter-quartile range.

626