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Fine scale variability of hyporheic hydrochemistry in salmon spawning gravels with contrasting groundwater-surface water interactions.  
**Malcolm Soulsby · Youngson · Tetzlaff**

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38	Abstract	<p>There is increasing realisation of the importance of groundwater–surface water (GW–SW) interactions in understanding freshwater ecology. A study that assessed the influence of local GW–SW interactions on shallow (&lt;250 mm) hyporheic water quality at two contrasting salmon spawning locations in Scotland, UK is reported. At a groundwater-dominated site, continuous logging sensors revealed that hyporheic dissolved oxygen (DO) concentrations changed rapidly in response to changing hydrological conditions. Low volume (25 ml) spot samples revealed fine-scale spatial variability (&lt;0.05 m) consistent with a vertically shifting boundary layer between source waters. At a surface-water-dominated location, hyporheic water was typically characterised by high DO and electrical conductivity values, characteristic of surface water. Small reductions in DO at this site are hypothesised to be associated with short residence hyporheic discharge. A comparison between in-situ (logging DO sensor data) and ex-situ (small volume sampling) methods revealed good agreement, potentially allowing deployment of the two methods in stratified sampling programmes. This study demonstrates that hyporheic water quality varies over fine spatial and temporal scales and that future studies need to design sampling strategies that consider the scales appropriate to both the ecology and the hyporheic processes of interest.</p> <p><b>Résumé:</b> En écologie, l'importance des interactions entre eau de surface et eau souterraine (GW–SW) est de plus en plus reconnue. Une étude sur l'influence des interactions locales eau de surface – eau souterraine sur la qualité de la partie superficielle (&lt;250 mm) de l'eau hyporhéique à deux stations différentes de frayère à saumon localisées en Ecosse, Royaume Uni, est décrite ici. Sur un site dominé par les eaux souterraines, des sondes de mesures en continu montrent que la concentration en oxygène dissous (OD) de la zone hyporhéique change rapidement en réponse à la variation des conditions hydrologiques. Des échantillons ponctuels de faible volumes (25 ml) indiquent une variabilité spatiale à petite échelle (&lt;0.05 m) correspondant à une variation verticale des sources d'eau. Pour le site dominé par les eaux de surface, l'eau hyporhéique est caractérisée par des valeurs élevées en oxygène dissous et conductivité, typique des eaux de surface. On suppose que les faibles diminutions d'oxygène dissous à ce site sont associées à des flux rapides des eaux hyporhéiques. Il existe une bonne adéquation entre les méthodes in-situ (sondes d'OD) et ex-situ (échantillons de faible volume), habilitant potentiellement l'utilisation de ces deux méthodes pour les programmes d'échantillonnage stratifié. Cette étude a montré que la qualité de l'eau hyporhéique varie à une faible échelle spatiale et temporelle et de futures études sont nécessaires afin de définir des stratégies d'échantillonnage prenant en compte l'échelle des études écologiques et des processus hyporhéiques.</p> <p><b>Resumen:</b> Existe una conciencia creciente de la importancia de las interacciones aguas subterráneas-aguas superficiales en el entendimiento de la ecología de las aguas dulces. Se informan los resultados de un estudio que evalúa la influencia de las interacciones entre aguas subterráneas y aguas superficiales locales sobre la calidad de aguas hiporreicas someras (&lt;250 mm) en dos sitios de desove de salmones en Escocia, Reino Unido. En un sitio con predominio de aguas subterráneas, las medidas de sensores continuos revelan que las concentraciones de oxígeno disuelto hiporreico (OD) cambian rápidamente en respuesta al cambio en las condiciones hidrológicas. Las muestras puntuales de bajo volumen (25 ml) indican una variabilidad a escala fina (&lt;0.05 m) que es consistente con una capa límite vertical y cambiante entre las fuentes de agua. En un sector dominado por aguas superficiales, el agua hiporreica típicamente se correspondió con altos valores de OD y conductividad eléctrica, característicos de las aguas superficiales. Se especula que las pequeñas reducciones de OD en este sitio podrían asociarse con descargas hiporreicas de corto tiempo de residencia. Una comparación entre métodos in-situ (datos de sensores de monitoreo de OD) y ex-situ (muestreo de pequeños volúmenes) demuestra una buena concordancia, y potencialmente permite la utilización de los dos métodos en programas de muestreos estratificados. Este estudio demuestra que la calidad del agua hiporreica varía en escalas finas de espacio y tiempo, y que los estudios futuros necesitan diseñar estrategias de muestreo que consideren las escalas adecuadas tanto para los procesos ecológicos de interés como los hiporreicos.</p> <p><b>Resumo:</b> Existe uma percepção crescente da importância das interações</p>	

águas subterrâneas-água superficial para a compreensão da ecologia dos cursos de água doce. Apresenta-se neste artigo um estudo de avaliação da influência daquelas interações na qualidade da água de zonas hiporreicas a reduzida profundidade (<250 mm) em dois locais, com características contrastantes, de desova de salmão na Escócia, Reino Unido. Num primeiro local, em que predomina o fluxo de água subterrânea, a monitorização contínua revelou que a concentração de Oxigénio Dissolvido (OD) na zona hiporreica se alterava rapidamente em resposta a variações das condições hidrológicas. Amostras de água de volume reduzido (25 ml) mostram uma variabilidade espacial a escala reduzida (<0.05 mm) consistente com variações na posição vertical entre fontes de água (superficial e subterrânea). Num segundo local, em que predomina a influência das águas superficiais, a água da zona hiporreica era tipicamente caracterizada por valores elevados de Oxigénio Dissolvido (DO) e de condutividade eléctrica, característicos de águas superficiais. Pequenas reduções no valor de DO neste local são atribuídas a tempos de residência reduzidos das águas subterrâneas nas zonas hiporreicas. Uma comparação entre métodos in-situ (sensores de DO) e ex-situ (amostras de reduzido volume) demonstram uma boa concordância entre aquelas metodologias, potenciando a utilização de ambos os métodos em programas de amostragem em zonas estratificadas. Este estudo demonstra que a qualidade da água de zonas hiporreicas varia em escalas temporais e espaciais reduzidas e que estudos futuros devem considerar estratégias de amostragem adaptadas às escalas apropriadas para os processos ecológicos e para os processos da zona hiporreica a estudar.

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39	Keywords separated by ' - '	Groundwater-surface-water relations - Hydrochemistry - Oxygen - Hyporheic - UK
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# Fine scale variability of hyporheic hydrochemistry in salmon spawning gravels with contrasting groundwater-surface water interactions

I. A. Malcolm · C. Soulsby · A. F. Youngson ·  
D. Tetzlaff

**Abstract** There is increasing realisation of the importance of groundwater-surface water (GW-SW) interactions in understanding freshwater ecology. A study that assessed the influence of local GW-SW interactions on shallow (<250mm) hyporheic water quality at two contrasting salmon spawning locations in Scotland, UK is reported. At a groundwater-dominated site, continuous logging sensors revealed that hyporheic dissolved oxygen (DO) concentrations changed rapidly in response to changing hydrological conditions. Low volume (25ml) spot samples revealed fine-scale spatial variability (<0.05m) consistent with a vertically shifting boundary layer between source waters. At a surface-water-dominated location, hyporheic water was typically characterised by high DO and electrical conductivity values, characteristic of surface water. Small reductions in DO at this site are hypothesised to be associated with short residence hyporheic discharge. A comparison between in-situ (logging DO sensor data) and ex-situ (small volume sampling) methods revealed good agreement, potentially allowing deployment of the two methods in stratified sampling programmes. This study demonstrates that hyporheic water quality varies over fine spatial and temporal scales and that future studies need to design sampling strategies that consider the scales appropriate to both the ecology and the hyporheic processes of interest.

**Keywords** Groundwater-surface-water relations · Hydrochemistry · Oxygen · Hyporheic · UK

## Introduction

With increasing research focus on groundwater-surface water (GW-SW) interactions, there is a growing realisation of the complex spatio-temporal dynamics exhibited by physical, chemical and biological characteristics in the hyporheic zone (Dahm et al. 2006; Malcolm et al. 2008). In particular, the chemical characteristics of the hyporheic zone, as the important interface between groundwater and surface water, are known to vary spatially at scales ranging from centimetres to kilometres (Wondzell and Swanson 1996; Brunke and Gonsler 1997; Boulton et al. 1998; Soulsby et al. 2001; Malcolm et al. 2004; Malcolm et al. 2005; Poole et al. 2006) and temporally at scales ranging from storm event (sub-hourly) to inter-annual (Wondzell and Swanson 1996; Fraser and Williams 1998; Malcolm et al. 2004; Malcolm et al. 2006; Arntzen et al. 2006).

It is widely accepted that there is a need for improved characterisation of the hyporheic environment in order to enhance understanding of hyporheic ecology (Palmer 1993; Fowler and Death 2001; Brunke et al. 2003; Boulton and Hancock 2006; Poole et al. 2006). Furthermore, it has long been recognised that sampling of the hyporheic zone poses particular problems in terms of protocols and methodology (Palmer 1993). However, it is also becoming increasingly clear that one of the central challenges for hyporheic zone research is to sample at temporal and spatial resolutions that are appropriate to both the hyporheic processes of interest and the related ecology (Palmer 1993; Youngson et al. 2005; Grimm et al. 2006; Malcolm et al. 2006). Previous studies of the hyporheic zone have often employed sampling methods that operate at coarse temporal and spatial scales. Moreover, these often involve abstraction of large water samples that integrate over an indeterminate volume of streambed, with unknown recharge or equilibration times. This potentially risks failing to characterise important fine scale spatio-temporal variability and may result in a mis-match between the (large) spatial scales characterised by hyporheic water quality sampling and the (smaller) scales often required to adequately characterise and understand the environment experienced by the hyporheos (Palmer 1993; Malcolm et al. 2008). While the importance of hyporheic sampling methodology has been highlighted for invertebrates (Fraser and Williams 1997; Hunt and Stanley 2000; Scarsbrook

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85 and Halliday 2002), the issue of water quality sampling has  
 86 not been addressed in a similar way. In fact, the issue has  
 87 been overlooked to the extent that in many cases the  
 88 important details of sampling and sample volumes are not  
 89 reported (e.g. Bernier-Bourgault and Magnan 2002; Bowen  
 90 and Nelson 2003; Greig et al. 2005) making interpretation  
 91 of data and comparison between studies difficult.

92 Traditional hyporheic sampling methods typically in-  
 93 volve water sampling under negative pressure from stand-  
 94 pipes (Ringler and Hall 1975), piezometers (Curry and  
 95 Noakes 1995; Baxter and Hauer 2003; Olsen and Town-  
 96 send 2003), incubators (Soulsby et al. 2001; Malcolm et al.  
 97 2003a, b) and temporary (Mermillod-Blondin et al. 2000)  
 98 or fixed (Youngson et al. 2005) sampling tubes, inserted to  
 99 specified depths in the streambed (ex-situ). These methods  
 100 have a number of potential problems, including direct  
 101 connection between the streambed and surface water or  
 102 atmosphere, and the creation of preferential flow paths  
 103 such that surface water is drawn down into the streambed  
 104 during sampling. However, these methods benefit from  
 105 potentially high spatial coverage and relatively low cost.  
 106 In-situ measurements (e.g. Malcolm et al. 2006), using  
 107 water quality probes, have the benefit of providing high-  
 108 resolution temporal data with minimal sampling distur-  
 109 bance, but financial constraints often dictate that replicated  
 110 sampling at fine spatial resolution is impractical. These  
 111 applications are relatively scarce (few chemical determi-  
 112 nants can be accurately measured this way) and individual  
 113 probes are parameter specific. Furthermore, there is the  
 114 potential that in-situ monitoring can reflect highly localised  
 115 conditions that are not more generally representative of the  
 116 hyporheic zone at a given location and scale and that  
 117 results are not comparable with traditional ex-situ methods.

118 In the context of salmon embryo survival, previous work  
 119 by the authors has demonstrated that traditional sampling  
 120 methods have often failed to adequately characterise both  
 121 the temporal dynamics (Malcolm et al. 2006) and spatial  
 122 variability (Malcolm et al. 2005; Youngson et al. 2005)  
 123 of the hyporheic zone in a way that is biologically mean-  
 124 ingful. Salmon ova are deposited in open gravel structures  
 125 called redds, constructed from streambed gravels during a  
 126 process known as spawning. Egg burial depths are  
 127 typically between 0.05 and 0.3 m beneath the streambed  
 128 (DeVries 1997). Survival is dependant on complex  
 129 interactions of physical, chemical and biological processes  
 130 which are reviewed in detail elsewhere (Malcolm et al.  
 131 2008). Critically, however, survival depends on the  
 132 delivery of adequate oxygen to meet the needs of  
 133 developing embryos, and thus, is often influenced by the  
 134 local nature of GW-SW interactions where groundwater is  
 135 characterised by reducing conditions.

136 This paper examines the hydroecological importance of  
 137 sampling at appropriate spatio-temporal scales and com-  
 138 pares the results of in-situ sampling with low volume,  
 139 finely stratified, ex-situ sampling methods, using a case  
 140 study of salmon embryo survival at two heavily utilised  
 141 spawning locations with contrasting GW-SW interactions.  
 142 Inter-site differences are discussed in the context of local  
 143 hydrological controls. The importance of sampling meth-

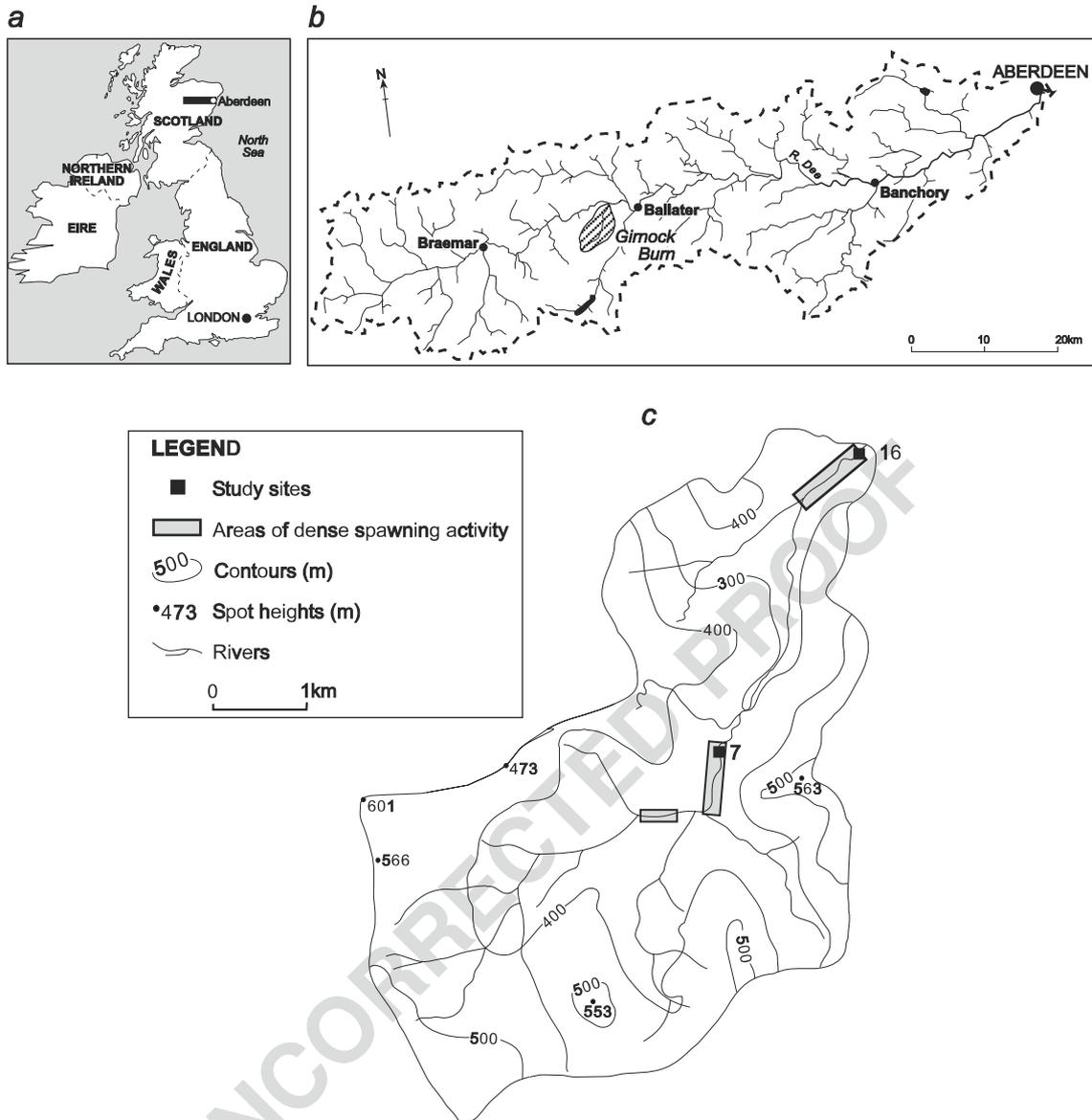
od and resolution are discussed with reference to previous 144  
 work investigating salmon embryo survival in field 145  
 settings. Specifically this study aims to: (1) characterise 146  
 hyporheic hydrochemistry at fine temporal and spatial 147  
 resolution during the period of time between salmon 148  
 spawning and embryo hatch; (2) use natural tracer 149  
 methods to infer the influence of local GW-SW inter- 150  
 actions on streambed DO; (3) assess the implications for 151  
 embryo survival and (4) compare in-situ and ex-situ 152  
 sampling methods and assess the implications for sam- 153  
 pling strategy in future studies of the hyporheic zone 154

## 155 Materials and methods

156 The work was carried out at the Girnock Burn catchment,  
 157 a 31-km<sup>2</sup> sub-catchment of the River Dee in northeast  
 158 Scotland, UK (Fig. 1). Detailed characteristics about the  
 159 catchment are given elsewhere: Tetzlaff et al. (2007a)  
 160 describe the general hydrology and dominant runoff  
 161 processes; Moir et al. (2002, 2004) describe the distribu-  
 162 tion of salmon spawning sites and their hydraulic and  
 163 sedimentary characteristics; Soulsby et al. (2007) outline  
 164 the catchment scale GW-SW interactions, whilst Malcolm  
 165 et al. (2005) consider their implications for hyporheic  
 166 water quality and salmon embryo survival. Briefly, the  
 167 catchment drains a montane area underlain by granitic and  
 168 metamorphic rocks. Groundwater drains through fractures  
 169 in these rocks and various glacial and paraglacial drifts,  
 170 which cover much of the catchment, contributing 25–30%  
 171 of annual runoff. The catchment is largely dominated by  
 172 heather (*Calluna*) moorland (ca. 95%), though the lower  
 173 catchment has mixed forest cover of pine (*Pinus*) and  
 174 birch (*Betula*). Rainfall is around 1,100 mm per annum,  
 175 with a mean annual runoff of around 700 mm.

176 Two sites with contrasting GW-SW interactions and a  
 177 long and documented history of salmon spawning were  
 178 selected for detailed monitoring of hyporheic chemistry and  
 179 assessment of the mortality of salmon ova (Fig. 1). Both  
 180 sites were previously included in catchment scale studies  
 181 of hyporheic hydrochemistry (Malcolm et al. 2005) and  
 182 embryo survival and performance (Youngson et al. 2005)  
 183 using traditional broad scale ex-situ sampling procedures.  
 184 Each site comprised a riffle ca. 10 m long. In the upper  
 185 catchment, the reach containing site 7 (S7) was examined  
 186 in detail by Malcolm et al. (2004). The site is characterised  
 187 by strong groundwater upwelling which often results in  
 188 marked groundwater influence on the hyporheic chemistry.  
 189 The reach containing site 16 (S16) was investigated by  
 190 Malcolm et al. (2002, 2003b) using hydrometric, tracer and  
 191 thermal data which indicated that the hyporheic zone was  
 192 dominated by surface water at this site.

193 At each site, novel methods for measuring hyporheic  
 194 water quality and embryo survival were employed. High  
 195 resolution DO and temperature data were obtained between  
 196 04 November 2005 and 11 April 2006, from the stream and  
 197 an artificially constructed redd at depths of 150 and 250 mm  
 198 in the hyporheic zone using Aandera 4175 shallow water  
 199 (rated to 300 m) DO optodes with analogue converters



**Fig. 1** Location maps showing **a** the position of the River Dee catchment within the UK, **b** the position of the Girnock Burn within the River Dee catchment and **c** the location of study site 7 (7) and site 16 (16) within the Girnock Burn catchment

200 (Fig. 2). These were connected to Campbell dataloggers  
 201 programmed to sample DO (per cent saturation) and  
 202 temperature at 30 second intervals and log average values  
 203 over 15 min. Prior to installation, DO optodes were cross-  
 204 calibrated in the laboratory at a range of O<sub>2</sub> concentrations  
 205 and temperatures showing agreement to within 1% O<sub>2</sub>  
 206 saturation and 0.1°C. Previous work in the same catchment  
 207 (Malcolm et al. 2006) had shown that in-situ installation for  
 208 the period between spawning and egg hatch (ca. 5 months)  
 209 without re-calibration provided excellent data quality. Data  
 210 integrity was generally good, with the exception of two  
 211 short periods early in the monitoring period at S16.

212 These high temporal resolution measurements were  
 213 supplemented with high-spatial-resolution spot samples of  
 214 DO, electrical conductivity and temperature from within  
 215 vertically stratified incubation chambers (Fig. 2). The  
 216 incubation chambers were adapted from those described

217 by Youngson et al. (2005). Briefly, they comprised 217  
 218 stacking 25-mm-high plastic containers, 42 mm in diam- 218  
 219 eter, regularly perforated with 6 mm holes. When screwed 219  
 220 together, the containers formed a cylindrical column 220  
 221 250 mm long. The top chamber was filled with stream 221  
 222 gravel to exclude daylight. Each subsequent container was 222  
 223 lined with a 1-mm plastic mesh and contained 20 water- 223  
 224 hardened salmon eggs taken from a single male and female 224  
 225 mating to exclude parental effects. Fish were obtained 225  
 226 from the Fisheries Research Services (FRS) Girnock trap 226  
 227 facility. A control group of eggs was held in surface water 227  
 228 at the Girnock incubator facility. The control accounted for 228  
 229 hyporheic effects on survival and performance by main- 229  
 230 taining oxygen concentrations near saturation for the entire 230  
 231 incubation period between spawning and hatch. 231

232 In November 2005 (spawning time in the Girnock 232  
 233 Burn), the cylindrical arrays were placed into pre-prepared 233

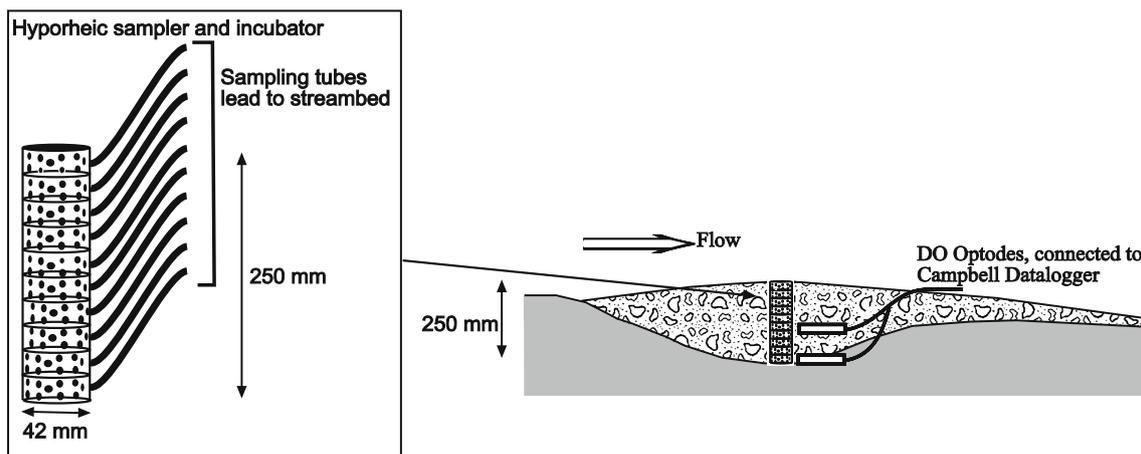


Fig. 2 Sampler design and installation within an artificially constructed redd

234 inserts within artificial redds, constructed at locations used  
 235 by spawners in previous years. The insert was then  
 236 withdrawn from around the cylinder and any resulting gaps  
 237 were filled with surrounding gravel material (>4 mm). This  
 238 resulted in egg chambers at depths of 25, 50, 75, 100, 125,  
 239 150, 175, 200, 225 and 250 mm beneath the streambed. A  
 240 narrow diameter (4 mm i.d.) Nalgene tube led from each  
 241 chamber to the streambed. During sampling, a volume  
 242 equivalent to that held in the sampling tube was discarded  
 243 and a sample (25 ml) approximately equivalent to that held  
 244 in the containers (container volume-ova volume) collected  
 245 to characterise water quality in the immediate vicinity of the  
 246 ova. When not used for sampling a small plastic plug  
 247 prevented direct connection between sampler and surface  
 248 water. DO and temperature were measured using a 2-mm-  
 249 diameter DO micro-sensor and thermistor connected to a  
 250 Pre-Sens Fibox3 oxygen meter. The manufacturer stated  
 251 reporting resolution for DO varies from 0.05% Sat. at 1%  
 252 Sat. to 0.5% Sat. at 100% Sat. Accuracy is stated as  $\pm 1\%$   
 253 Sat. at 100% Sat. to  $\pm 0.15\%$  at 1% Sat. The reporting  
 254 resolution for temperature is  $0.2^\circ\text{C}$  with an accuracy of  $\pm 1^\circ$   
 255 C. Electrical conductivity was measured using a Hannah HI  
 256 9033 portable conductivity meter, reporting resolution  
 257  $0.1 \mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ , accuracy  $\pm 2 \mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$  (0–200  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$  range). Spot  
 258 samples were collected at approximately fortnightly inter-  
 259 vals where discharge and icing conditions permitted ( $n=7$ ).  
 260 Spot samples were compared with continuously logged  
 261 data from the same depth to assess the comparability of  
 262 methods. The chambers were excavated from the stream  
 263 bed on the day of the last sample collection on 11th April  
 264 2006. Live and dead eggs were counted to provide  
 265 percentage survival rates.

## 266 Results

### 267 Temporal variability in hyporheic conditions

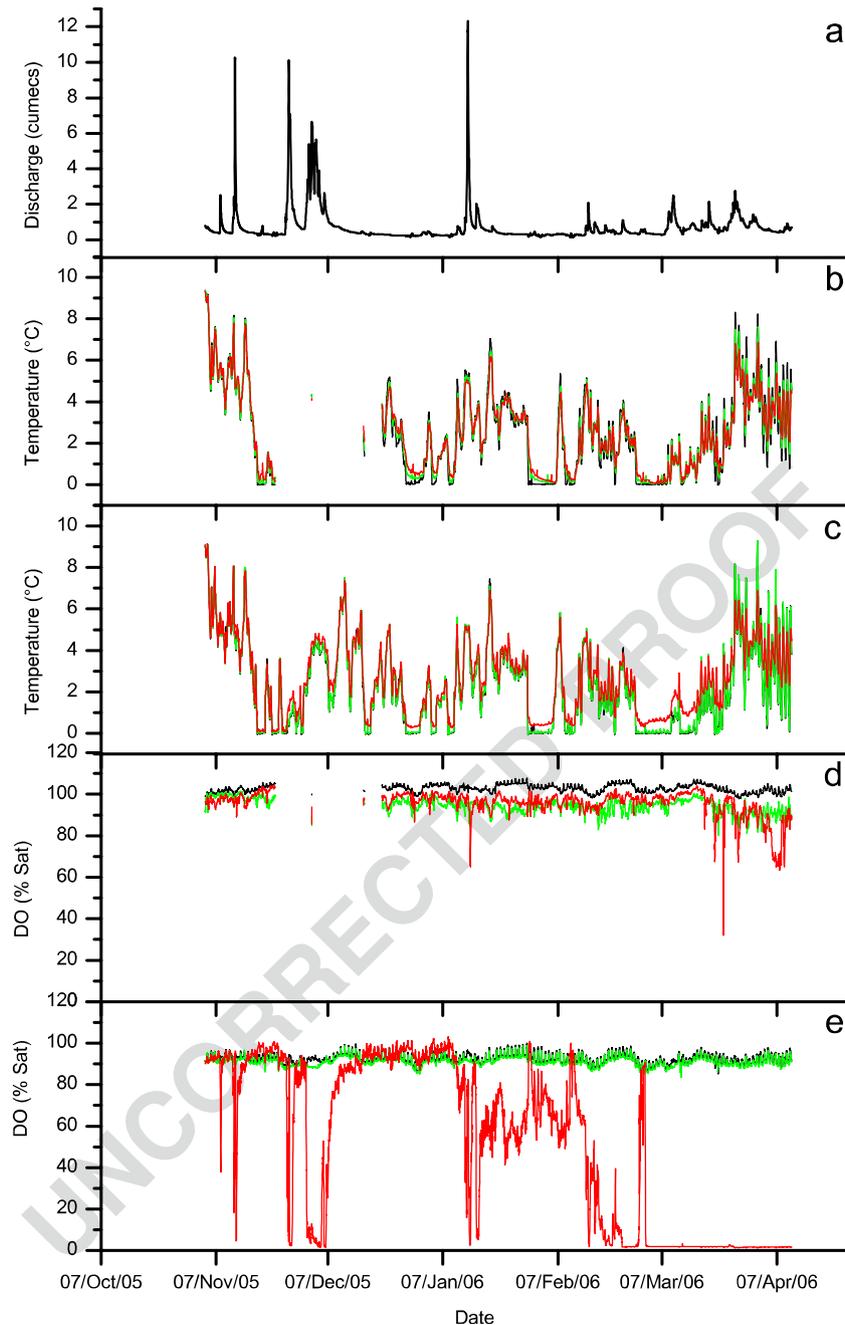
#### 268 Spawning-hatch (in-situ sampling)

269 The 2005–2006 spawning to hatch period (ca. November–  
 270 April in the Girnock catchment) was relatively dry with only

271 four moderate flow events over  $3 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  (cumecs; Fig. 3).  
 272 Stream temperatures at S7 and S16 were broadly similar.  
 273 Early November was characterised by declining stream  
 274 temperatures, with frequent icing events throughout the  
 275 winter, before warming once more during March. The last  
 276 icing period in early March corresponded to a prolonged  
 277 period of late winter snowfall, whose subsequent melt  
 278 resulted in a period of moderately elevated flows.

279 Previous hydrochemical and hydrometric work at the  
 280 study sites indicated contrasting GW–SW interactions, with  
 281 the hyporheic zone of S7 being influenced by variable  
 282 contributions of groundwater (Malcolm et al. 2004), while  
 283 S16 was dominated by surface water (Malcolm et al. 2005).  
 284 These differences in GW–SW interactions were reflected in  
 285 different hyporheic temperature and DO characteristics  
 286 between the sites. At S16, streambed temperatures were  
 287 slightly moderated, showing less variable temperatures than  
 288 surface water, with differences being most apparent at  
 289 greater depths and during freezing periods (Fig. 3). At S7,  
 290 stream and shallow hyporheic water (150 mm) exhibited  
 291 similar temperature characteristics. However, hyporheic  
 292 water at 250 mm initially exhibited similar temperatures,  
 293 with moderation of temperature extremes increasing over  
 294 time. This is consistent with increasing groundwater  
 295 influence, where groundwater is typically characterised by  
 296 more stable temperatures which are higher than surface  
 297 water during winter months (Hannah et al. 2004). Differ-  
 298 ences in stream and hyporheic temperatures for the entire  
 299 period where data were available at both sites are  
 300 summarised in Figs. 4a and b. Only the 250 mm depth  
 301 sampler at S7 (S7–250) exhibited a notably different  
 302 thermal regime, showing some temperature moderation.

303 DO concentrations at S16 remained close to saturation in  
 304 both the stream and hyporheic water for the majority of the  
 305 study period, although small and short-lived gradients were  
 306 observed, particularly in the final months on the study  
 307 (Fig. 3). Between October and the end of February, DO at  
 308 150 mm was often lower than that at 250 mm. Much of this  
 309 variability can be explained by the moderated (generally  
 310 higher) temperatures in the streambed, which affect calcu-  
 311 lated saturation values, i.e. there is no change in oxygen

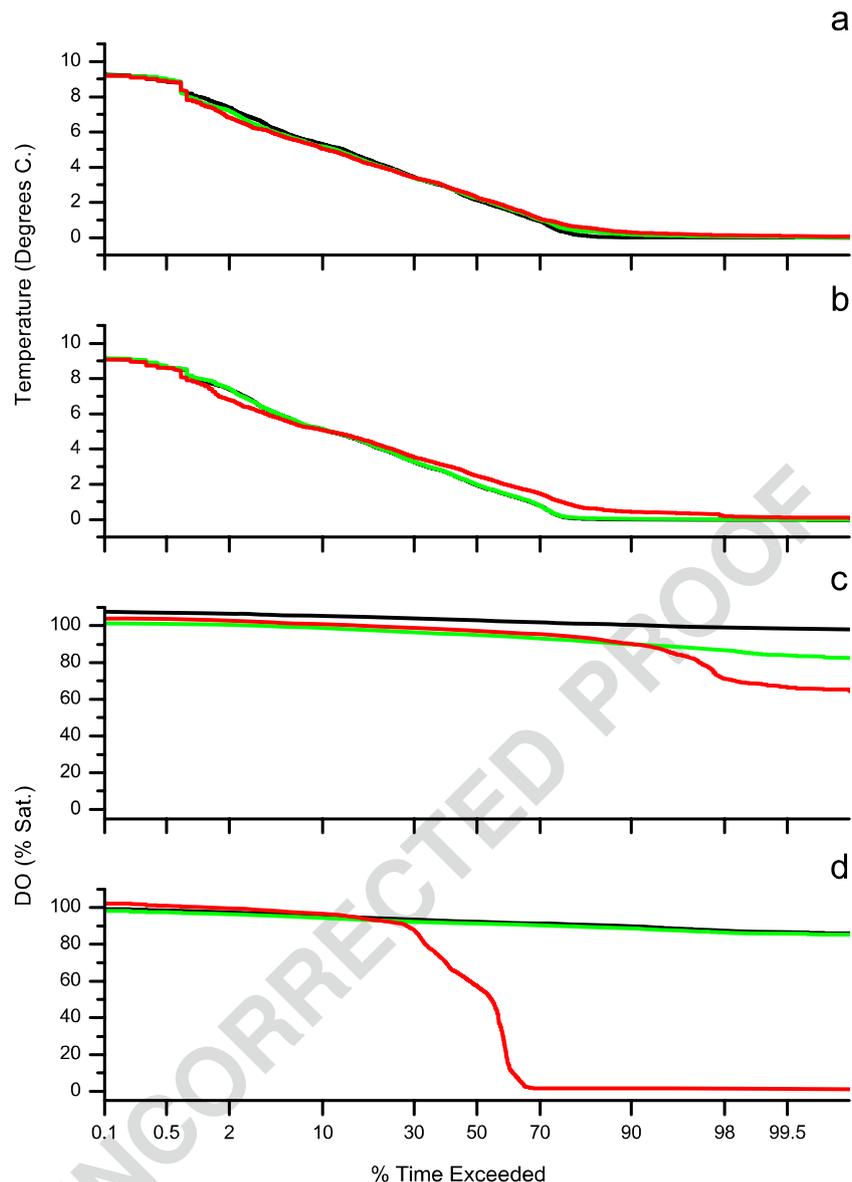


**Fig. 3** a Girnock Burn discharge; temperature at b S16 and c S7; and dissolved oxygen at d S16 and e S7, for the period between salmon spawning and embryo hatch. *Black lines* show surface water, *green lines* show hyporheic water at 150 mm, *red lines* show hyporheic water at 250 mm

312 concentration (mg/L), but small differences in temperature  
 313 change expected saturation values. Over the course of the  
 314 study, five periods of notable DO reductions were observed  
 315 where levels dropped below 70%. Four of these periods  
 316 were observed during the final month of the study.

317 At S7 DO concentrations in stream and shallow  
 318 (150 mm) hyporheic water remained at or near saturation  
 319 throughout the study. However, at 250 mm, concentrations  
 320 were characterised by a dynamic response, varying between  
 321 0 and 100% saturation, often varying markedly over short  
 322 periods in response to hydrological events. Typically, DO

323 levels fell on the recession limb of storm hydrographs  
 324 shortly after peak discharge in agreement with observations  
 325 from previous years (Malcolm et al. 2004, 2006). DO  
 326 concentrations tended to recover in the aftermath of events.  
 327 Recovery times varied depending on event magnitude and  
 328 antecedent catchment wetness, which are thought to  
 329 influence water table elevation in the adjacent hillslopes  
 330 at this site (Malcolm et al. 2004, 2006). Between January  
 331 and the end of February, DO recoveries were only partial.  
 332 In the final stage of the study from March onwards, DO  
 333 levels failed to exhibit any response recovery. Inter-site



**Fig. 4** Temperature at **a** S16 and **b** S7, and dissolved oxygen at **c** S16 and **d** S7; duration curves for the period between spawning and embryo hatch. *Black lines* show surface water, *green lines* show hyporheic water at 150 mm, *red lines* show hyporheic water at 250 mm

334 differences in DO are summarised in the duration curves  
 335 shown in Fig. 4c and d. At S16 DO was always above  
 336 saturation in surface water and at, or near saturation at  
 337 150 mm. DO at 250 mm was near to saturation for the  
 338 majority of the study dropping below 80% sat. for less than  
 339 3% of the time. At S7 DO concentrations were close to  
 340 saturation in surface water and at 150 mm for the entire  
 341 study period. However, at 250 mm DO concentrations  
 342 were near to saturation for only ~30% of the time, which is  
 343 comparable to the time spent at 0% saturation.

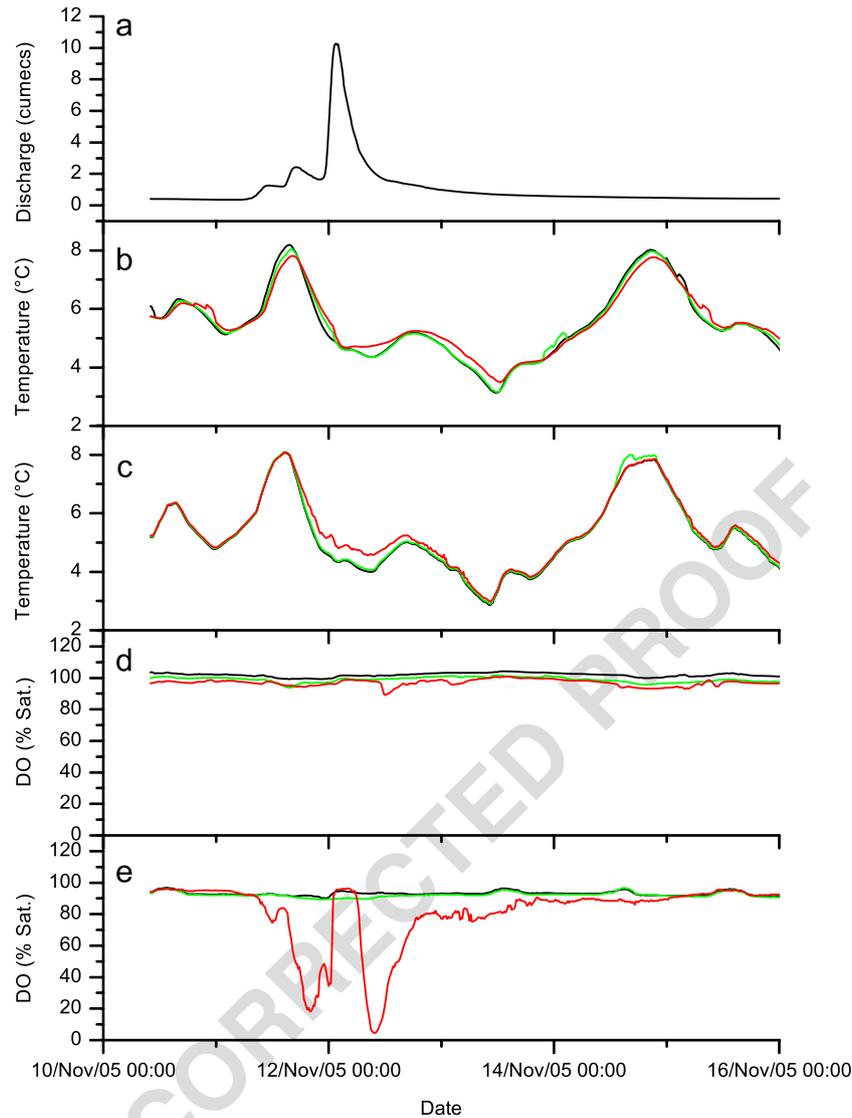
344 *Event responses (in-situ sampling)*

345 Event responses varied between sites, depending on event  
 346 magnitude and antecedent conditions. Three contrasting  
 347 event responses were identified: (1) DO response identi-

fied only at S7, (2) DO response observed at both sites, 348  
 and (3) DO response observed at S16 with S7 charac- 349  
 terised by constant low DO at 250 mm. 350

On the 10 November 2005, a complex double-peaked 351  
 hydrograph was accompanied by mirrored declines in DO 352  
 concentrations at S7–250, punctuated by a short period of 353  
 saturated DO at the main event peak (Fig. 5e). Falling DO 354  
 concentrations on the recession limb were followed by 355  
 fairly rapid recovery. At S16, only a very slight decline 356  
 in DO was observed at 250 mm on the recession limb 357  
 following the main event peak. Temperatures in the stream 358  
 and hyporheic zone were similar at both sites, though small 359  
 differences at S7–250 were associated with the event peak. 360

Figure 6 shows a later event (12 January 2005) where 361  
 hyporheic DO concentrations declined at 250 mm at both 362  
 S7 and S16. On the rising limb of the hydrograph and at 363



**Fig. 5** Event based (November 2005) oxygen and temperature responses showing: **a** discharge; temperature at **b** S16 and **c** S7; and dissolved oxygen at **d** S16 and **e** S7. *Black lines* show surface water, *green lines* show hyporheic water at 150 mm, *red lines* show hyporheic water at 250 mm

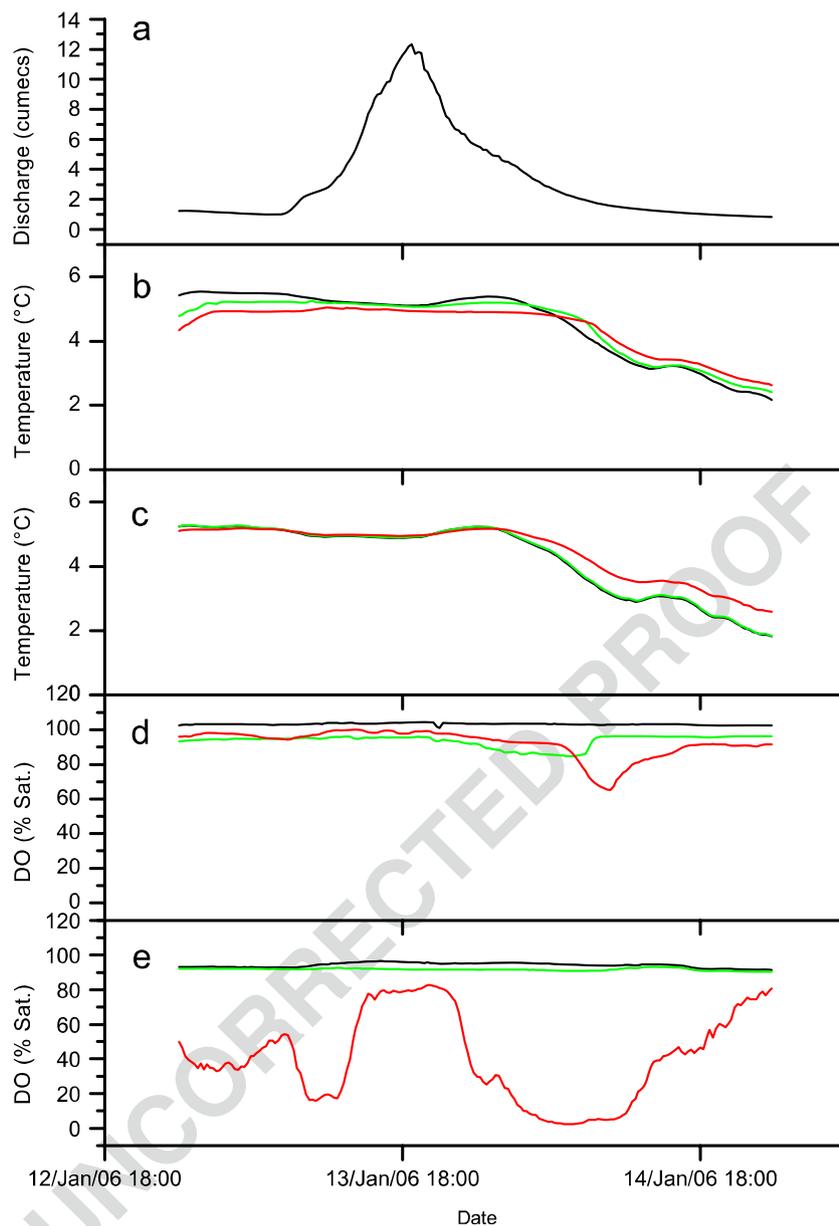
364 the event peak, DO levels in stream water, S16 (150,  
 365 250 mm) and shallow hyporheic water at S7 (150 mm)  
 366 were close to saturation. In contrast, at S7–250, DO levels  
 367 declined on the rising and falling limb of the hydrograph,  
 368 with elevated DO levels during peak flow (Fig. 6e). At  
 369 S16–250, DO concentrations exhibited a small decrease in  
 370 DO on the recession, which was considerably lagged  
 371 relative to that at S7. Following the event, DO concentra-  
 372 tions at both S7–250 and S16–250 recovered to near  
 373 saturation within 3 days. Temperature data from S16  
 374 (Fig. 6b), shows moderation of warmer pre-event and  
 375 cooler post-event water. S7–250 exhibited distinct strati-  
 376 fication from surface and shallow hyporheic water on the  
 377 recession limb, while temperatures at S7–150 were  
 378 identical to those of surface water (Fig. 6c).

379 Towards the end of the monitoring period (22 March  
 380 2006), S7–250 was consistently characterised by near-zero

DO concentrations for almost a month (Fig. 3e). However,  
 381 during this period, S16 exhibited a series of unusual, mode-  
 382 rate and occasionally prolonged reductions in DO that ap-  
 383 peared to be associated with only minor hydrological events  
 384 in the Gironck Burn (Fig. 7d). Temperature data from S16  
 385 showed a moderated temperature gradient with depth that  
 386 also showed a lagged response (Fig. 7b). At S7, tempera-  
 387 tures in the stream and at 150 mm closely tracked, while tem-  
 388 perature at 250 mm exhibited marked thermal moderation.  
 389

**Fine scale spatial variability in hyporheic water quality (ex-situ sampling)**

390  
 391 The continuous water quality monitors provide data of  
 392 excellent temporal resolution, but only provide relatively  
 393 coarse spatial information on hyporheic water quality. The  
 394 integrated embryo survival chambers and samplers facil-  
 395



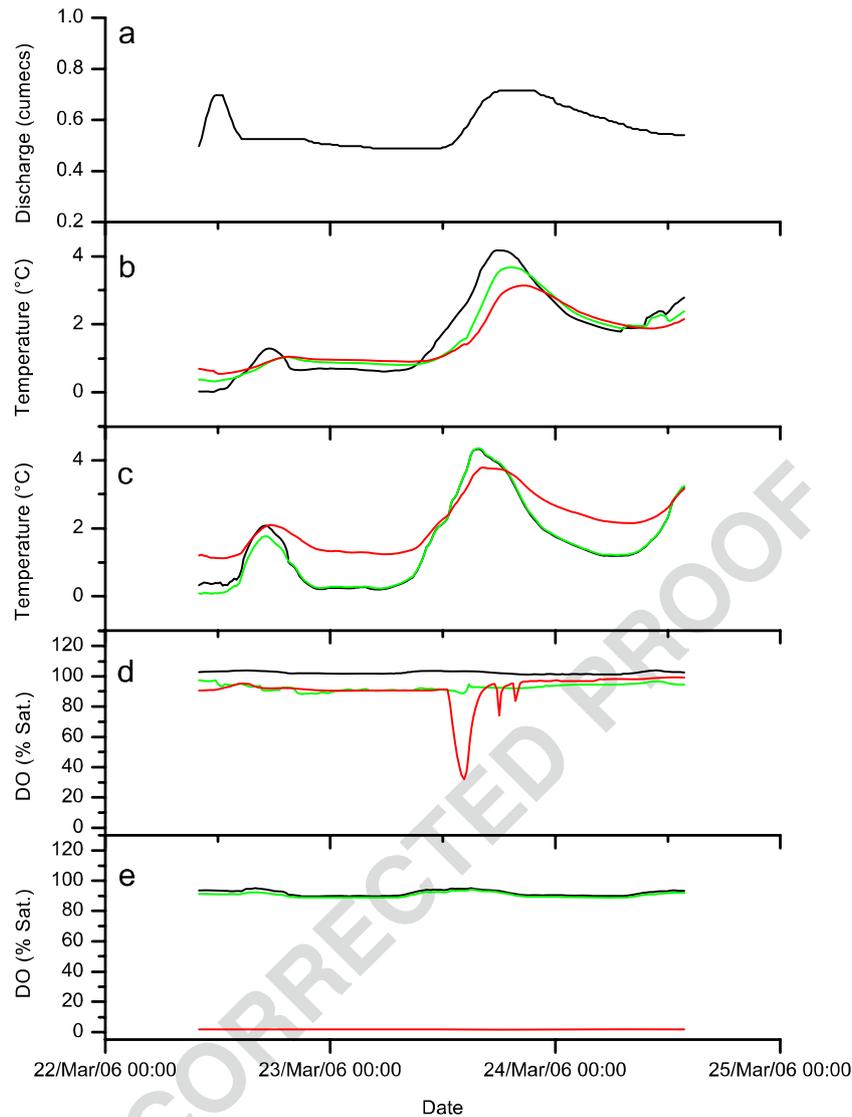
**Fig. 6** Event based (January 2006) oxygen and temperature responses showing: **a** discharge; temperature at **b** S16 and **c** S7; and dissolved oxygen at **d** S16 and **e** S7. *Black lines* show surface water, *green lines* show hyporheic water at 150 mm, *red lines* show hyporheic water at 250 mm

396 itated collection of water samples at 25 mm vertical  
 397 resolution (25–250 mm) which revealed the fine-scale  
 398 spatial variability of hyporheic water quality with depth,  
 399 although at the expense of temporal resolution (Fig. 8).  
 400 Additionally, spot samples allowed the collection of  
 401 electrical conductivity data (Fig. 8a, b) as an indicator of  
 402 source water provenance (Youngson et al. 2005). Electrical  
 403 conductivity and DO saturation at S16 were relatively  
 404 uniform with depth over the entire study period indicating  
 405 a common source water. By contrast, depth-related  
 406 stratification of both DO and conductivity was apparent  
 407 at S7 over much of the study and appeared to increase  
 408 over time. Differences in conductivity and DO were  
 409 consistent with an increasing groundwater influence with

depth (Malcolm et al. 2005). Higher conductivity values  
 indicative of longer residence water were generally  
 associated with lower DO. Stratification gradients at S7  
 were steep, with DO varying from nearly 100% saturation  
 to <10% over distances of only 50 mm. Gradients in DO  
 appeared to be more consistent with depth than those  
 exhibited by electrical conductivity and it is possible that  
 this inconsistency reflected mixing between samples  
 collected from adjacent depths despite very low volumes.

**A comparison of in- and ex-situ sampling methods**

A comparison of the spot sample DO data, with  
 continuous data from the optodes located at approximately



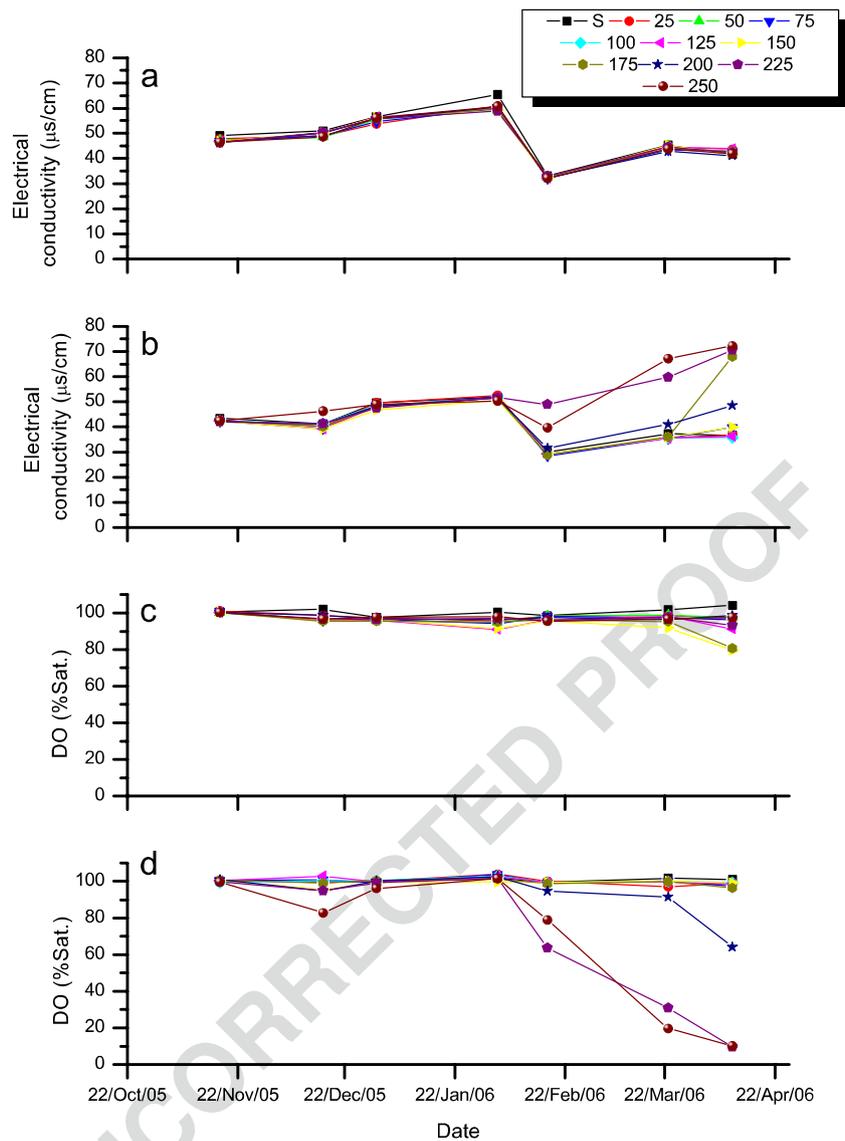
**Fig. 7** Event based (March 2006) oxygen and temperature responses showing: **a** discharge; temperature at **b** S16 and **c** S7; and dissolved oxygen at **d** S16 and **e** S7. *Black lines* show surface water, *green lines* show hyporheic water at 150 mm, *red lines* show hyporheic water at 250 mm

422 the same depth, reveals that the two methods were  
 423 generally comparable for a given sampling occasion  
 424 (Fig. 9). The two methods also produced broadly similar  
 425 patterns of variability, although very few low DO spot  
 426 samples were obtained due to the coarse sampling  
 427 frequency. Given the fine-scale spatial variability of DO  
 428 revealed by the spot sampling, difficulties locating  
 429 equipment with a high degree of spatial precision beneath  
 430 the streambed and complexities associated with cross-  
 431 calibration of seven independent measuring units, it is not  
 432 surprising that the two methods did not provide exactly  
 433 the same DO values. However, a paired *t*-test ( $n=26$ )  
 434 revealed that there was no significant difference between  
 435 the data obtained using the two methods ( $P=0.27$ ). When  
 436 comparing the methods, it is clear that each has merit. The  
 437 loss of temporal resolution is evident in the spot samples,  
 438 while the continuous data lacks potentially important fine  
 439 scale spatial resolution.

**Embryo survival**

In 2003–2004 and 2004–2005 embryo survival at controls  
 held at the Girnock Burn was 100%. During the 2005–  
 2006 spawning season, unusually high mortality of  
 fertilised ova occurred. The reasons for this mortality are  
 unclear, but appeared to affect many groups of ova  
 reflecting reduced viability in general or unknown  
 procedural problems during adult stripping or fertilisation.  
 Survival in the control group was 70%, although across  
 the incubator as a whole it was on average closer to 50%.  
 Given this background, interpretation of ova survival at S7  
 and S16 is difficult and it is possible that variability  
 between sites and depths reflected random sampling from  
 a variably impacted group of fertilised ova at the project  
 outset. Embryo survival in the streambed incubators  
 varied from 0–60% (Table 1) and for the most part did  
 not show clear patterns that could be associated with  
 environmental variation. Nevertheless, at S7, complete

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**Fig. 8** Temporal and spatial variability of electrical conductivity at **a** S16 and **b** S7 and dissolved oxygen at **c** S16 and **d** S7 in surface (S) and hyporheic water at depths ranging from 25–250 mm (see legend), separated at 25-mm intervals. Approximately fortnightly sampling occasions are shown as points

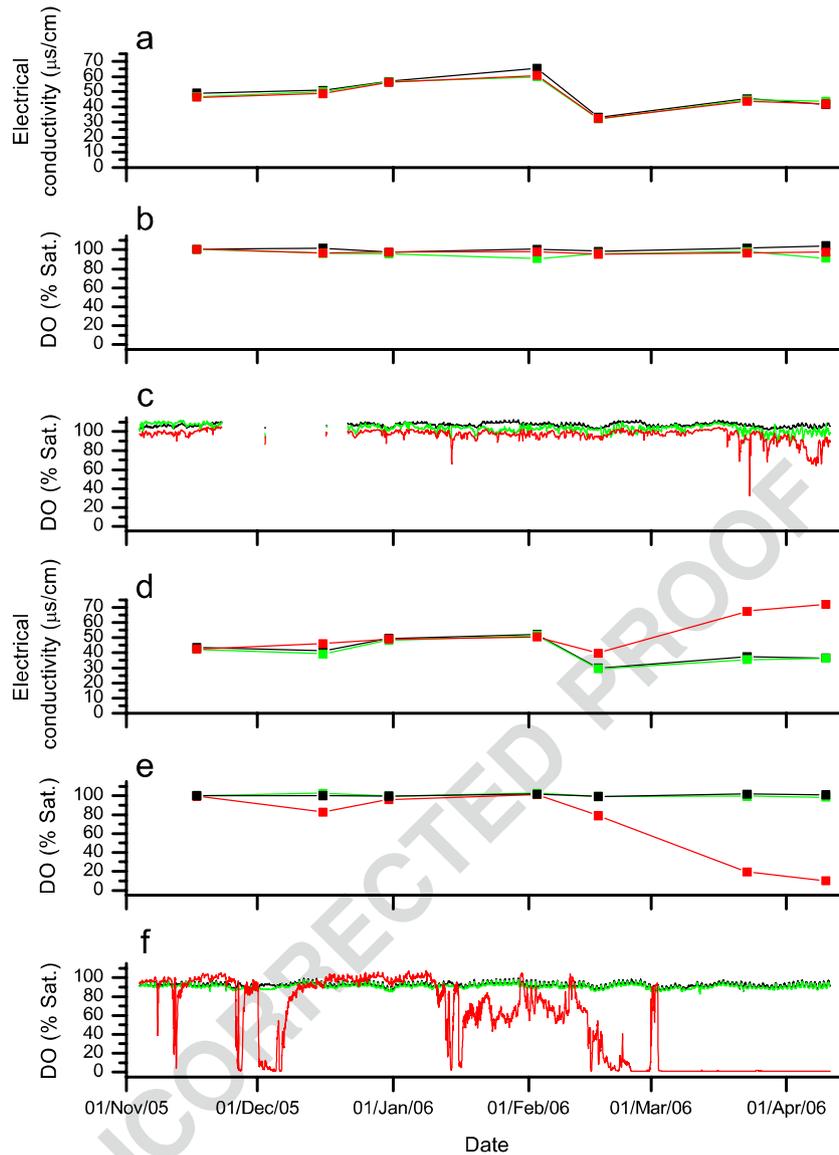
458 ova mortality was observed across the depth range 200–  
 459 250 mm. These mortalities are consistent with the sharp  
 460 DO concentration gradients observed at S7 for these  
 461 depths (Fig. 8). In contrast, survival at S16 was generally  
 462 higher than at S7, especially in the lower hyporheic zone,  
 463 though even here, survival at 250 mm was only 25%.

## 464 Discussion

465 **Influence of local GW–SW interactions on fine scale**  
 466 **spatio-temporal variability of hyporheic water quality**  
 467 At S7, DO concentrations varied spatially and temporally  
 468 in a manner that was consistent with changing groundwa-  
 469 ter contributions to the hyporheic zone. Low DO was  
 470 associated with higher electrical conductivities, thought to  
 471 be associated with increased residence times. Groundwa-

472 ter influence was associated with steep DO gradients 472  
 473 (distances of ca. 0.05 m), which shifted vertically over 473  
 474 time. This is contrary to the common conceptual under- 474  
 475 standing of a broad hyporheic mixing zone containing 475  
 476 groundwater and surface water (e.g. Malard et al. 2002) 476  
 477 and is more consistent with a temporally shifting sharp 477  
 478 boundary between groundwater and surface water, with 478  
 479 limited mixing. DO concentrations changed rapidly in 479  
 480 response to hydrological events (Malcolm et al. 2006). 480  
 481 The exact form of the response varied with antecedent 481  
 482 conditions and discharge magnitude. In general, dry, low 482  
 483 flow periods were characterised by high DO, while low 483  
 484 DO was observed during periods of wet antecedent 484  
 485 conditions, later in the winter, and the recession limb of 485  
 486 hydrological events where water table levels are high. 486

487 At S16, where surface water dominated the hyporheic 487  
 488 zone, DO concentrations in the stream bed were compa- 488



**Fig. 9** A comparison of ex-situ spot sample data (ca. fortnightly) with in-situ continuous (15 min) data for comparable depths. Plots show: **a** S16 electrical conductivity spot samples, **b** S16 dissolved oxygen spot samples, **c** S16 continuous dissolved oxygen, **d** S7 electrical conductivity spot samples, **e** S7 dissolved oxygen spot samples, and **f** S7 continuous dissolved oxygen. *Black lines* show surface water, *green lines* show hyporheic water at 150 mm, *red lines* show hyporheic water at 250 mm. *Symbols* denote spot-sampling occasions

t1.1 **Table 1** Percentage embryo survival for depths ranging from 25–250 mm at site 7 (S7) and site 16 (S16)

t1.2	Depth (mm)	% survival	
t1.3		S7	S16
t1.4	25	40	35
t1.5	50	25	40
t1.6	75	55	50
t1.7	100	60	60
t1.8	125	40	40
t1.9	150	40	45
t1.10	175	40	55
t1.11	200	0	45
t1.12	225	0	45
t1.13	250	0	25

rable with stream water and consequently near saturation 489  
 for the majority of the monitoring period, although low 490  
 DO episodes were observed towards the end of the study. 491  
 Reductions in DO were not associated with increased 492  
 electrical conductivity and thus appear unlikely to be 493  
 associated with intrusion of groundwater. On excavation, 494  
 the incubation chambers were found to be entirely free of 495  
 sediment, and therefore it also seems very unlikely that 496  
 reductions in DO were associated with intrusion of fine 497  
 sediment to the redd environment. It is possible that 498  
 changing DO levels reflected changing short residence 499  
 (hours to days) hyporheic dynamics at the site associated 500  
 with changing bed morphology during the study period. 501  
 High flows over the winter led to the development of a 502  
 substantial gravel bar immediately upstream of the 503

504 monitoring site. It is possible that hyporheic exchange  
 505 passing through the bar feature, re-emerged on the  
 506 downstream side under certain flow conditions (Tonina  
 507 and Buffington 2007) and that DO could have been  
 508 stripped from the water during transit (Claret et al. 1997).  
 509 Under these circumstances the residence time would be  
 510 too short for substantial changes to more conservative  
 511 water quality parameters but DO could be reduced.  
 512 Alternatively, it is possible that low DO episodes reflected  
 513 discharge of hyporheic water from the River Dee as S16  
 514 lies at the bottom of the Girnock catchment, within course  
 515 gravel sediments associated with the Dee floodplain. It is  
 516 therefore possible that high flows from the River Dee,  
 517 entering an abandoned channel adjacent to the Girnock  
 518 Burn, could have altered local hyporheic dynamics  
 519 resulting in discharge of Dee water or displacement of  
 520 Girnock floodplain water through S16 (Rodgers et al.  
 521 2004; Poole et al. 2006).

522 **Implications for hyporheic sampling**

523 Palmer (1993) identified a number of key challenges for  
 524 hyporheic zone research. These included the need to  
 525 conceptualise hyporheic zone boundaries through under-  
 526 standing of inter-site heterogeneity and the development  
 527 of methods to sample the hyporheic environment at small  
 528 spatial scales that could be calibrated and quantified in  
 529 terms of spatial extent. This study combined adaptations  
 530 of recently documented hyporheic sampling methodolo-  
 531 gies (Youngson et al. 2005; Malcolm et al. 2006) to

532 identify fine scale spatial and temporal differences in  
 533 hyporheic chemistry and embryo survival at two salmon  
 534 spawning locations with contrasting GW–SW interactions.

535 While in-situ methods revealed important temporal  
 536 variability, the stratified incubators and ex-situ sampling  
 537 method provided valuable information on the spatial  
 538 variability of water quality, embryo survival and also  
 539 provided supporting hydrochemical data. For the depths  
 540 and times for which data could be compared (150 and  
 541 250 mm), the two methods showed good agreement (no  
 542 significant difference between methods), indicating that  
 543 in-situ measurements did not reflect unrepresentative  
 544 micro-scale (mm's) conditions and, more importantly, that  
 545 the two methods generated comparable data and therefore  
 546 could be deployed in a stratified sampling programme to  
 547 give both high resolution spatial and temporal data in  
 548 future expanded studies.

549 **Implications for hydro-ecological studies**  
 550 **of the hyporheic zone**

551 Previous studies of the hyporheic environment have often  
 552 used large or unspecified sample volumes and infrequent  
 553 sampling intervals. These water quality data are then often  
 554 related to hyporheic ecology such as invertebrate commu-  
 555 nities (Boulton et al. 1997; Mermillod-Blondin et al. 2000;  
 556 Fowler and Death 2001) or salmonid embryo survival  
 557 without fully considering the spatial and temporal scales of  
 558 the water quality sampling, the variability of the hyporheic  
 559 environment or the scales relevant to the ecology. Table 2

t2.1 **Table 2** Comparison of hyporheic oxygen sampling methods and frequencies for studies investigating salmonid embryo survival

t2.2	Authors	Water sampling method (DO measurement method)	Sample volume	Sample depth (m)	Sample frequency
t2.3	Malcolm et al. (2006)	In-situ (Aanderaa DO optode)	NA	0.15, 0.3	30 s, averaged every 15 min
t2.4	Groves and Chandler (2005)	Buried incubators with sampling tubes and piezometers. (flow-through cell and YSI DO electrode)	3× dead volume discarded sample volume for measurement unknown	0.25	Monthly
t2.5	Greig et al. (2005)	Standpipe (YSI 250 DO electrode)	Not stated	Not stated	Weekly to fortnightly
t2.6	Youngson et al. (2005)	Sealed flexible hyporheic sampling tubes (Hannah DO electrode)	Dead volume discarded 200 ml sample	0.2–0.3	Fortnightly
t2.7	Bernier-Bourgault and Magnan (2002)	Sampling pipe installed on sampling date (YSI 57 DO electrode)	Not stated	0.05–0.15	Not stated
t2.8	Bowen and Nelson (2003)	Variable depth hyporheic sampling pipes (unspecified multi-parameter meter including DO electrode)	Not stated	0.3, 0.46	2 samples, 1 month apart
t2.9	Ingendahl (2001)	Flexible sampling tube (portable DO electrode)	60 ml discarded 60 ml sample	0.1, 0.2, 0.3	Fortnightly
t2.10	Peterson and Quinn (1996)	Sampling tube (titration)	Dead volume discarded 185 ml sample	Variable, depending on egg burial depth	Weekly to fortnightly
t2.11	Sowden and Power (1985)	Mini-piezometer (YSI 54 DO electrode)	150 ml sample	0.15	Approximately monthly
t2.12	Ringler and Hall (1975)	Standpipe (titration)	60 ml	0.25	3 samples per week
t2.13	Coble (1961)	Standpipe (not stated)	37 ml	0.25	Not stated

560 shows a comparison of hyporheic studies, where the  
 561 research focus was to understand salmonid embryo  
 562 survival. It can be seen that sample depths generally  
 563 reflect the reported range of egg burial depths (DeVries  
 564 1997). However, the number of reported depths is typically  
 565 only 1–3 (relatively coarse) and the sampling methods and  
 566 volumes are highly variable or are not clearly specified.  
 567 This effectively means that, depending on streambed  
 568 characteristics and equilibration times, individual studies  
 569 will be reporting hyporheic water quality for highly  
 570 variable, but generally poorly delineated volumes of  
 571 extracted streambed water that are unlikely to reflect the  
 572 environmental conditions experienced by the hyporheos, in  
 573 this case salmonid embryos. If the temporal variability of  
 574 hyporheic water quality and the general inadequacy of  
 575 sampling frequency is also considered, then it is unsur-  
 576 prising that the results of field (Sowden and Power 1985;  
 577 Rubin and Glimsater 1996; Ingendahl 2001) and laborato-  
 578 ry (Alderdice et al. 1958; Silver et al. 1963) based studies  
 579 of salmonid embryo survival are not in good agreement.  
 580 Disparities in the apparent findings of these approaches  
 581 probably reflect the controlled nature of laboratory experi-  
 582 ments and problems with adequately characterising an  
 583 environment that is as temporally and spatially highly  
 584 variable and inaccessible as the hyporheic zone.

585 **Implications for salmonids**

586 At S7, there was a sharp transitional gradient in hyporheic  
 587 water quality over distances of <0.05 m which was reflected  
 588 in the total mortality of embryos at greater depths. In recent  
 589 years there has been frequent discussion of the benefits of  
 590 greater burial depth to avoid washout or overcutting by later  
 591 arriving female fish (Steen and Quinn 1999). Since larger  
 592 fish generally bury their eggs deeper (Crisp and Carling  
 593 1989; DeVries 1997; Steen and Quinn 1999), there has been  
 594 debate as to whether larger fish are favoured in locations  
 595 where scour or super-imposition are likely to be problem-  
 596 atic. However, the results of this study show that burial  
 597 depth can also impact on survival where reduced hyporheic  
 598 water quality is associated with groundwater upwelling.  
 599 Moreover, very small (0.025 m) differences in burial depth  
 600 can have a potentially very large impact on survival.  
 601 Therefore, in terms of spawning, there may be a careful  
 602 tradeoff to be made between avoiding scour on the one hand  
 603 and avoiding hypoxia of developing embryos on the other.

604 Much salmon-focussed research to date has focussed  
 605 on the sediment component of hyporheic dynamics. This  
 606 has led to proposals for fine sediment water quality  
 607 standards under legislation such as the Water Framework  
 608 Directive and Habitats Directive (Naden et al. 2002) of the  
 609 European Union. It has also led to the development of  
 610 simplified tools (Alonso et al. 1996; Wu 2000) which do  
 611 not consider the full range of hyporheic processes relevant  
 612 to an understanding of embryo survival. This paper has  
 613 highlighted both the importance of appropriate sampling  
 614 methods and a holistic understanding of hyporheic  
 615 processes, which includes understanding of local GW–  
 616 SW interactions for understanding hyporheic ecology.

**Future research**

This study lasted only for 1 year, focussing on a particular  
 aspect of hyporheic ecology over a relatively short, but  
 ecologically relevant time period. The issues highlighted  
 in relation to the spatial and temporal scale of sampling  
 are clear. However, further work is required to assess the  
 influence of local GW–SW interactions on other aspects of  
 the ecology and to characterise and understand the  
 influence of antecedent conditions on catchment hydrology  
 (e.g. Tetzlaff et al. 2007b) and the effect that this has  
 on GW–SW interactions at longer temporal scales.

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