

# Co-evolution of house mouse and an intracellular parasite, *Eimeria* spp.

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## Context

- Parasite model: *Eimeria* spp., obligate intracellular parasite (Apicomplexa: Coccidia). **Two major clades (A & B)** of *Eimeria* spp. identified (3 markers) in the mice of the hybrid zone
- Host model: *Mus musculus domesticus*, *Mus musculus musculus*, and hybrids

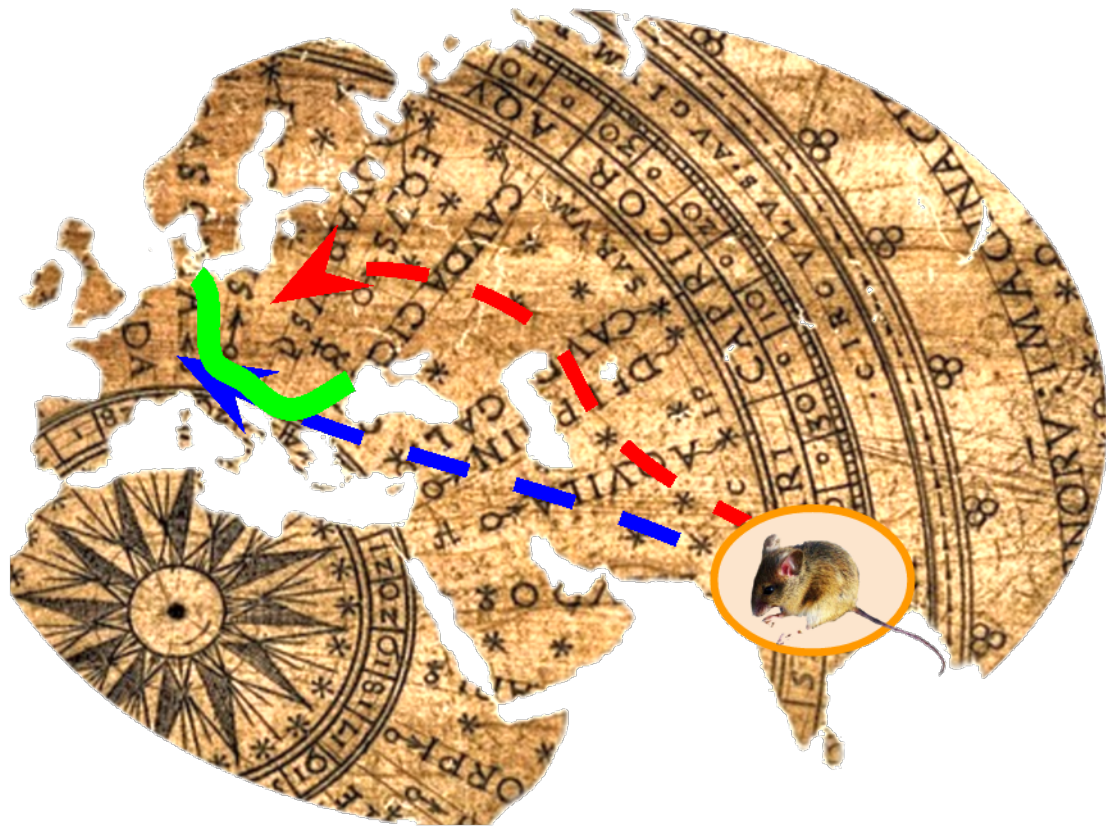


Fig. 1: The House Mouse Hybrid Zone (about 20km wide) is formed by hybrids of two sub-species of *Mus musculus*. After isolation for 500,000 years, secondary contact was established during the Bronze Age (Macholán *et al.* 2012)

## Aims of the study

- Investigate **hybrid vigor/resistance** of house mice to their parasite *Eimeria* spp. using prevalence and intensity data for parasite strains throughout the House Mouse Hybrid Zone
- Test **local adaptation** between the host and its parasite

## Material & Methods: Field study

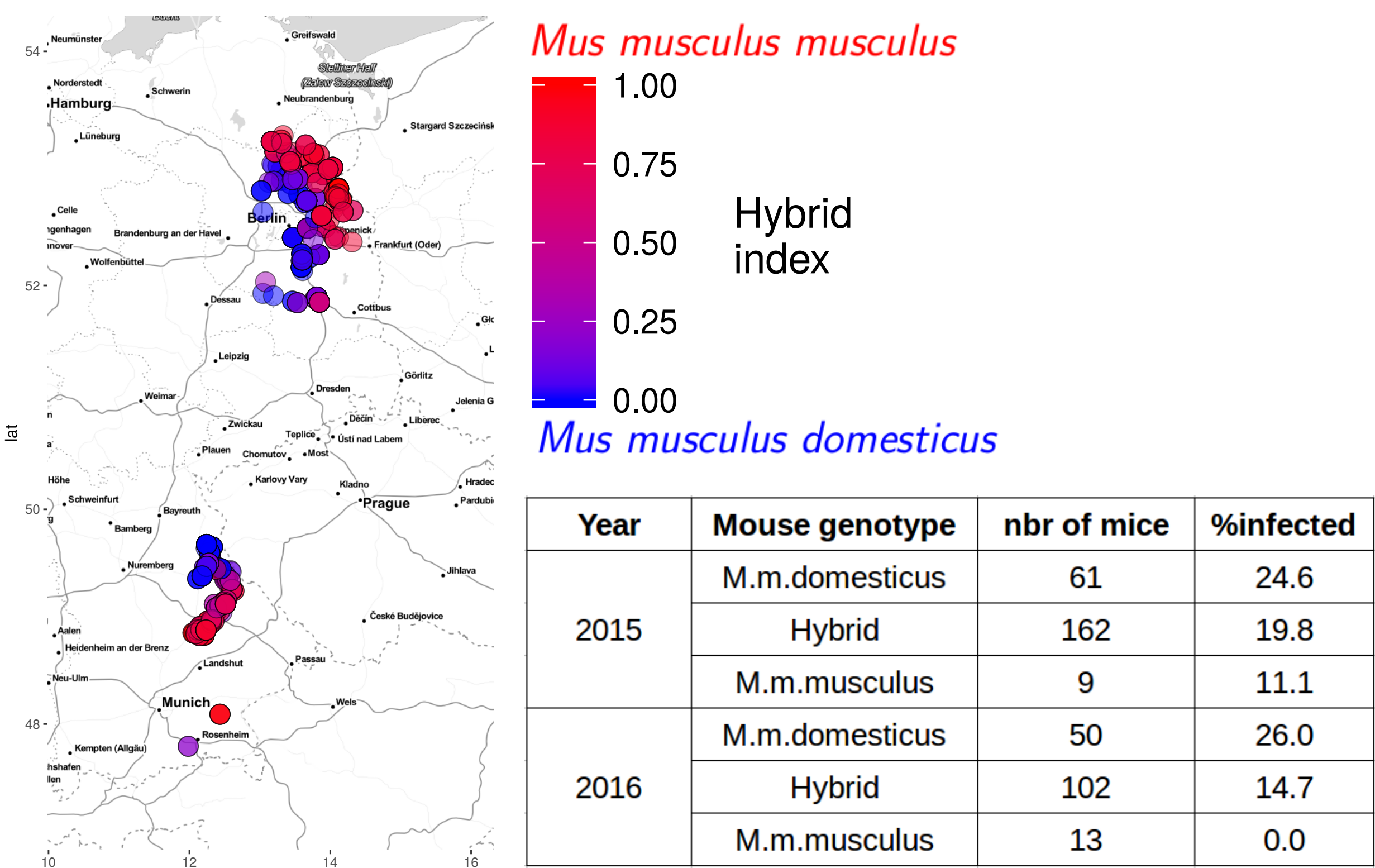


Fig. 2: Annual sampling every September. Oocyst counted in mice feces. Mice assigned to a hybrid index based on *M.m.domesticus*/*M.m.musculus* alleles ratio (Macholán *et al.* (2011))

## Material & Methods: Cross infection

- Parasite strains:  
*Eimeria* strain (clade B) isolated in the wild from *Mus musculus musculus*
- Host strains:
  - WSB** Wild-derived inbred strain. Derived from wild *Mus musculus domesticus*  
Region of capture: Eastern Shore, Maryland
  - PWD** Wild-derived inbred strain. Derived from wild *Mus musculus musculus*  
Region of capture: near Prague, Czech Republic
  - WP** Hybrids between the two previous strains

## Exploring hybrid vigor/resistance in the wild

Adaptation of the method of Stuart J.E. Baird (Baird *et al.* 2012):  
Maximum likelihood analysis explicitly linking parasite abundance to a gradient along the hybrid index as a proxy of host heterozygosity

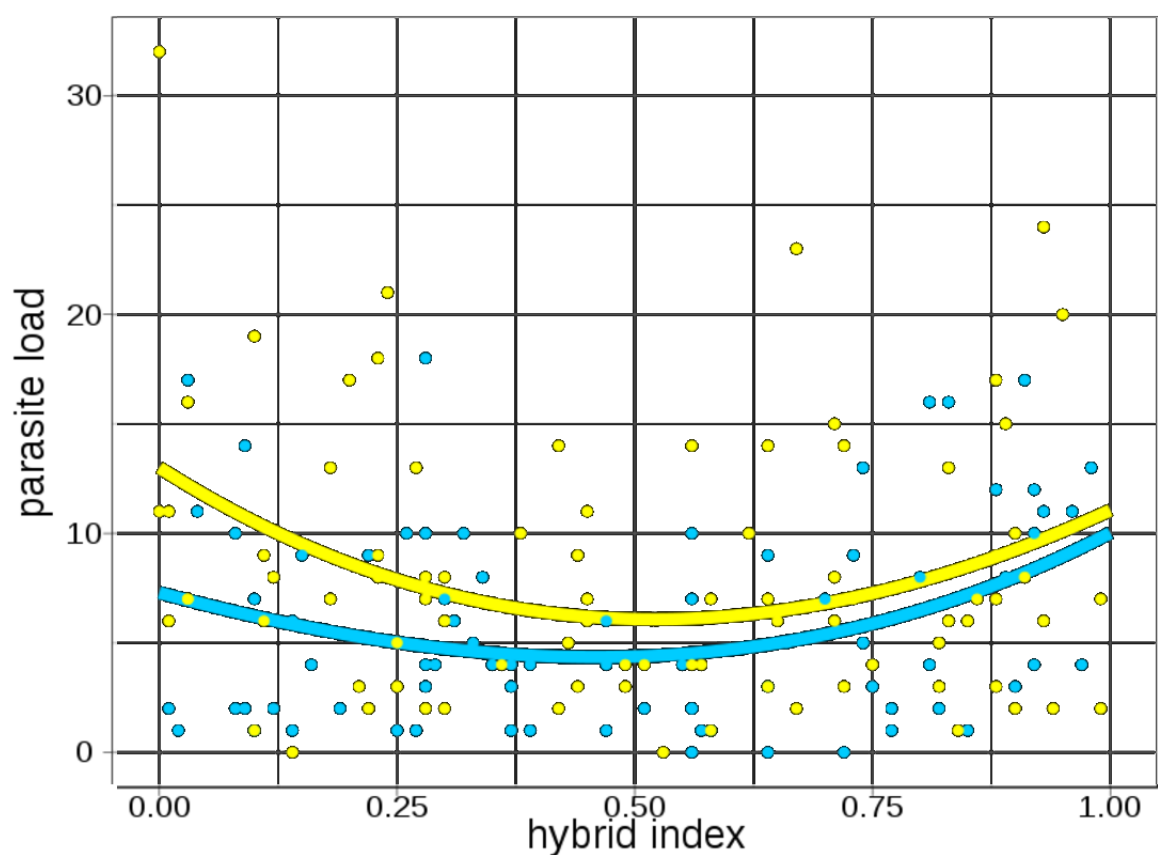


Fig. 3: Generalized linear model with negative binomial distribution: **glm.hybrid** applied to simulated data, two groups both presenting a hybrid vigor

R package under development: [https://github.com/alicebalard/Parasite\\_Load](https://github.com/alicebalard/Parasite_Load)  
**Goal: assesment of hybrid vigor/resistance, taking into account parasite strains**

$$\text{Parasite load} \sim \text{mouse heterozygosity level} * \text{parasite strain}$$

## Results of the infection experiment

- Less pathology** (weight lost) but **better parasite reproduction** (oocyst shed) in PWD compared to WSD
- Less pathology** in mice hybrids compared to both pure strains, and **lower parasite reproduction** in mice hybrids than in PWD

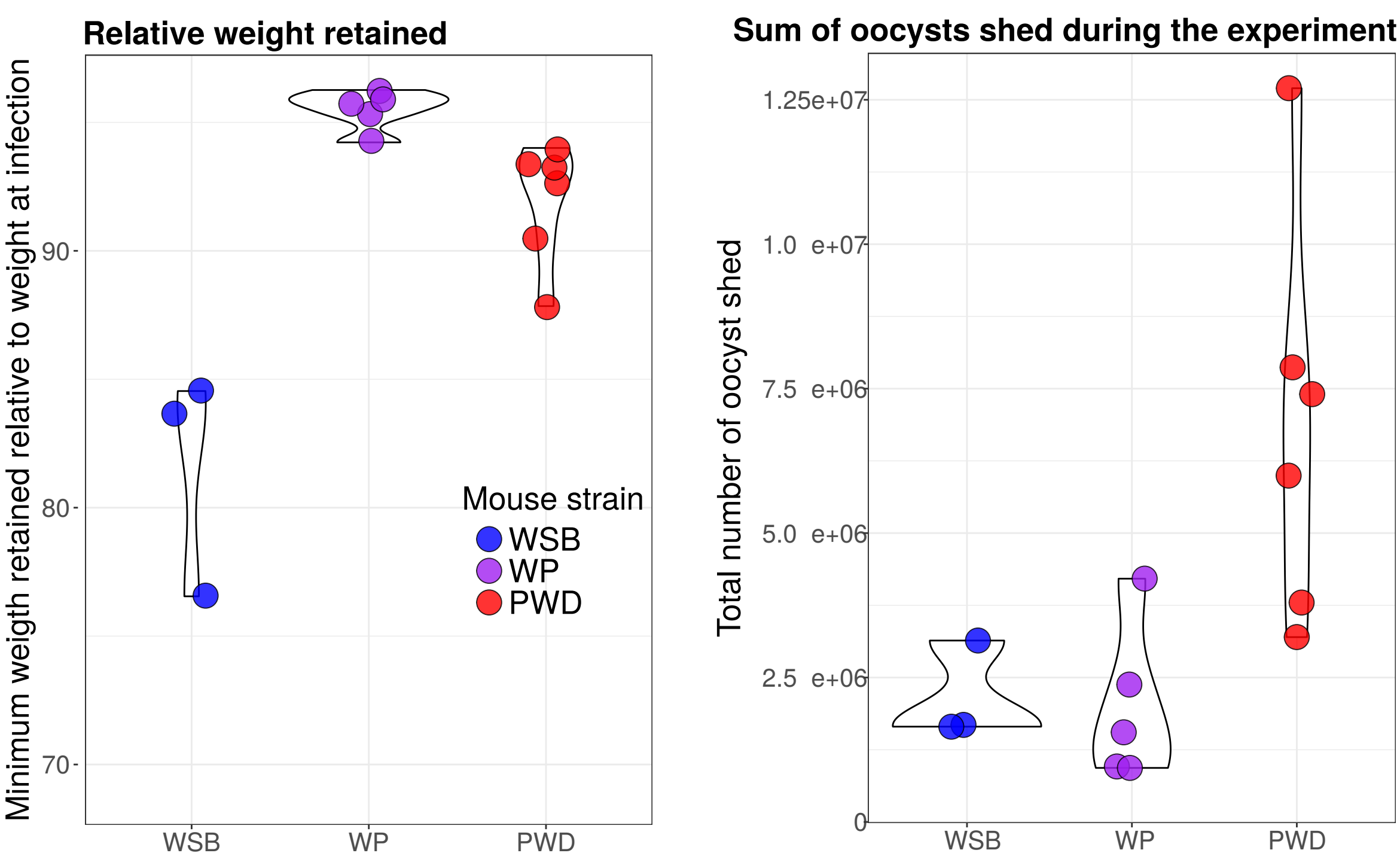


Fig. 4: First indications of **local adaptation** and **hybrid vigor**

## Perspective

- Next cross infection experiment:
- Test our hypothesis of hybrid vigor (within subspecies heterosis vs between subspecies)
  - Assess local adaptation in other parasite strains
- Field data:
- Obtain enough data (Sept. 2017) to test our hypotheses of hybrid vigor and local adaptation in the wild

## References

Baird *et al.* (2012) Where Are the Wormy Mice? A Reexamination of Hybrid Parasitism in the European House Mouse Hybrid Zone *Evolution* 66 (9): 2757–72  
Heitlinger *et al.* (2014) The genome of *Eimeria falciformis*-reduction and specialization in a single host apicomplexan parasite *BMC genomics* 15 (1), 696  
Macholán *et al.* (2011) Assessing Multilocus Introgression Patterns: A Case Study on the Mouse X Chromosome in Central Europe *Evolution* 65: 1428–1446  
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