1 **Supplementary Materials**

2 **1.** Collection and Site Information

3 Fish were collected from eleven populations from eight different lakes, rivers or 4 lagoons (from now on referred to as *location*): two marine, three solitary and three 5 species-pair locations (see Table S1 for details). The following collection permits were 6 used: Species at risk act permit number SARA 236 and British Columbia fish collection 7 permit number NA-SU12-76311. In order to measure opsin gene expression, six gravid 8 females were collected from each of the populations. All fish from a given population 9 were taken at the same time and the collections were taken between 10 am and 12 pm 10 during the period of May 16th to May 30th 2012. Fish were euthanized at the site using 11 buffered Tricaine methanesulfonate (MS-222). Both eyes were removed and 12 immediately stored in 1 ml RNAlater® (Oiagen, Netherlands) and moved to a -20⁰ C 13 freezer for up to a month until RNA was extracted. Irradiance was measured in July 14 2012.

15 Three families of Priest Benthic and three families of Oyster Marine fish were 16 generated by *in vitro* fertilization in May and June 2012 respectively. These fish were 17 hatched and reared in freshwater tanks under fluorescent lights on a 14 and 10 hour 18 light-dark cycle. Animals were treated in accordance with University of British 19 Columbia Animal Care protocols (Animal Care Permit # A11-0402). Gravid females 20 were sacrificed using MS-222 between June $5th$ and $7th$ 2013. One fish from each family 21 was surveyed (three fish per population). Both eyes were immediately removed and 22 put directly into RNAlater®. Samples were stored in RNAlater® for one week at -20^oC 23 until RNA was extracted.

24

25 **2. RT-qPCR Protocol**

26 Left and right eves were pooled for each individual. The pooled eves were 27 homogenized in a Retsch mm 400 Mixer Mill (Haan, Germany) using a carbide bead. 28 Total RNA was extracted using the AurumTM Total RNA Fatty and Fibrous Tissue 29 (BioRad®), which included a DNase I incubation step. The concentration and purity of 30 the extracted RNA was assessed on a NanoDrop® Spectrophotometer (Thermo 31 Scientific). Synthesis of cDNA was accomplished using the iScriptTM cDNA Synthesis 32 Kit (Bio-Rad®); 1000 ng of RNA was used as the input for the cDNA synthesis of each

33 sample. The resulting cDNA was diluted 1:100 in ultra-pure water for RT-qPCR 34 analysis.

35 RT-qPCR primers and probes were designed using sequences from the 36 stickleback genome (See Table S2 for primer and probe sequences). Primer sequences 37 were targeted to regions that were divergent between the five opsin gene subfamilies. 38 Despite the fact the stickleback have two *RH2* genes the primers were designed to pick 39 up only one of the duplicates because there is no evidence to suggest they would have 40 different absorption phenotypes and there is some evidence to suggest that the non-41 targeted duplicate may be a pseudogene [1]. For each gene one of the primers and/or 42 the RT-qPCR probe spanned an intron, this was done to avoid amplification of genomic 43 DNA. We used the PrimeTime® qPCR 5' Nuclease Assays from Integrated DNA 44 Technologies® (Iowa, USA) for each of the targeted genes. The assays used had a 45 double-quenched probe with 5' 6-FAMTM dye, internal ZENTM and 3' Iowa Black® FQ 46 Quencher.

47 Quantification of gene transcript copy number was done using RT-qPCR analysis 48 on a BioRad®IQ5 machine (BioRad, California USA). The polymerase used was the 49 SsoFast probes supermix (BioRad®) in a 25 μl reaction. Reactions were run in 96-well 50 plates (Fisher, Massachusetts USA), which were sealed using optical sealing tape 51 (BioRad®). Well-factors were collected from each of the experimental plates. Reactions 52 were run in duplicate or triplicate. No-reverse transcription and no template controls 53 were included and for every run and did not amplify. RT-qPCR conditions consisted of 54 1 cycle at 95 °C (3 minutes); 40 cycles of 95 °C (10 seconds) followed by 60 °C (30 55 seconds). We used a standardized luminance threshold value of 50 to calculate CT 56 values. Equation 1 was used to calculate the PCR efficiencies (E) for each of the primer 57 pairs,

$$
58 \t E = e^{-slope} - 1,\t(1)
$$

59 where the slope is determined from a linear least squares regression fit to critical 60 threshold (Ct) data from a cDNA dilution series $(1:10, 1:50, 1:100, 1:500, 1:1000)$.

61 We calculated opsin expression relative to the *beta actin* reference gene, 62 however for the purposes of this study we were more interested in the expression of 63 each opsin gene relative to the total opsin levels present in the retina, rather than 64 absolute levels of expression, so we used the proportion of total opsin expression for a 65 given gene. The estimate of the initial amount of gene transcript (T_i) was calculated for 66 each individual (i) using equation 2, where E is the PCR efficiency for a given gene 67 calculated from equation 1 and C_t is the critical threshold for fluorescence. 68 $T_i = \frac{1}{(1+E)^{C_t}}$ (2) 69 Then for each individual we summed the opsin gene expression across the four opsin 70 genes and calculated the proportion of total expression that each gene exhibited. 71 72 Amplicons from the RT-qPCR for each gene (primer pair) were sequenced from 73 one individual and are reported in Table S2. Sanger sequencing of the amplicons was 74 done at the NAPS Sequencing Centre at the University of British Columbia. 75 76 **3. Deriving Spectral Sensitivity** 77 We used the absorbance templates for A1 chromophore (unless otherwise stated) for 78 each of the four cone opsins from Govardovskii *et al.* [2] and the wavelengths of 79 maximum absorbance (λ_{max}) for each opsin from Flamarique et al. [3] The spectral 80 sensitivity of an individual (i) at a given wavelength (λ) for a particular opsin (*o*) is the 81 multiplication of its absorbance $(A_o(\lambda))$ and relative expression $(E_{i,o})$. The overall 82 sensitivity of an individual is the sum over of all opsins and is defined across the visible 83 wavelength range (350 to 700 nm) by

84

85 $S_i(\lambda) = \sum_{0 \leq \alpha \leq 5} A_{\alpha}(\lambda) E_{i_{\alpha}}$

86

87 **4. Plasticity in the Laboratory Environment**

88 To assess the effect of plasticity on opsin gene expression, we looked at the 89 difference between wild and lab-reared fish derived from one marine and one 90 freshwater location (Figure 4). While much of the differentiation in gene expression 91 between marine and freshwater individuals was maintained in the lab, some plasticity 92 was still seen; the level of *SWS1* (UV) expression was reduced in both types of lab 93 reared fish relative to their wild counterparts (marine difference = 0.16 ± 0.04 SE, 94 p=0.003, $F_{1,7}=19.9$; freshwater difference = 0.06 ±0.02 SE, p=0.007, $F_{1,7}=14.3$) (Figure 95 4). There was also a significant increase in *SWS2* (blue) expression for the lab-reared 96 marine fish compared to wild individuals, although the effect size was small (difference 97 = 0.013 \pm 0.004 SE, p=0.009, F_{1,7}=12.9) (Figure 4). However, this was not seen for the

98 freshwater population (p=0.2) (Figure 4). There was not a significant difference in the 99 *LWS* or *RH2* expression of wild and lab reared fish (p>0.09) (Figure 4).

100 These results indicate that there is a small contribution of plasticity in 101 stickleback opsin gene expression. Raising the fish under artificial (fluorescent) lighting 102 that lacked UV wavelengths likely contributed to the reduction in *SWS1* expression that 103 we saw in lab-reared fish. This same pattern has been previously described in cichlids, 104 where lab-reared individuals raised under artificial lighting had reduced *SWS1* 105 expression compared to wild caught fish $[4]$.

106

107 **5. Association between differences in Spectral Sensitivity and Ambient Light**

108 We use two functions of wavelength (λ) to characterize ambient light: the 109 irradiance $I_s(\lambda)$ and the transmission $K_s(\lambda)$, with the values of λ between 350 and 700 110 nm. Recall from the main text that the irradiance is taken to be the irradiance measured 111 at depth 50m. To construct $K_s(\lambda)$ we use transmission coefficients, as defined by the 112 Beer-Lambert law, which gives transmission T_s at depth (d) and wavelength (λ) as 113 $T_{s,d}(\lambda) = b(\lambda)e^{-K_s(\lambda)d}$.

114 For each site and each value of λ , we estimated the unknown parameters $b(\lambda)$ and 115 $K_s(\lambda)$ using the *nls* function in R. We then smoothed the resulting $K_s(\lambda)$ values using a 116 rolling mean approach (as implemented in the R *zoo* library [5] with window width 10 117 nm). For each site, these smoothed $K_s(\lambda)$ values were then normalized to sum to 1, as 118 we want to compare the difference in relative absorbance between different locations. 119 Hereafter, $K_s(\lambda)$ refers to the smoothed and normalized values of the site-specific 120 transmission coefficients. For each location, we then constructed the 'representative' 121 transmission coefficient curve, $\overline{K}_s(\lambda)$, by calculating at each value of λ the median of the 122 $K_s(\lambda)$'s from all sites within that location.

123 To quantify ambient light differences between freshwater and marine locations, 124 we chose a reference marine location (A), and refer to its curve of transmission 125 coefficients as $\bar{K}_{s,A}(\lambda)$. We then calculated the difference between the transmission 126 coefficients for each freshwater location (B) that we wanted to test and the reference 127 marine location (A) as $\Delta K_s(\lambda) = -1(\overline{K}_{s,B}(\lambda) - \overline{K}_{s,A}(\lambda))$. We multiplied the difference 128 by -1 to facilitate the comparison between ΔS_{i} , ΔK_s and ΔI_s (see Supplementary Figure 129 4). Note that, in our definition, ΔK_s is a measure of light propagation (instead of rate of 130 absorbance). A positive value of $\Delta K_s(\lambda)$ indicates more transmission of light (*i.e.* fewer

131 photons are lost as light travels through water) at wavelength λ at the freshwater

132 location *B* than at the reference marine location. For this analysis we used Oyster

133 Lagoon as our marine reference location (A). We repeated this procedure (without

134 multiplying by -1) to calculate the difference between environments in irradiance (ΔI_s) .

135 Again for irradiance a positive value of $\Delta I_s(\lambda)$ indicates that there are more photons

136 present at wavelength λ at the freshwater location (B) relative to the marine reference 137 environment (A).

138 To quantify differences in spectral sensitivity between each location B and the 139 reference marine location A, at each wavelength λ we first calculated $\bar{S}_A(\lambda)$ as the 140 median of the spectral sensitivities of all measured individuals from the reference 141 location A. For each individual *i* in location B, we calculated the difference between that 142 individual's spectral sensitivity at each wavelength $S_{i,B}(\lambda)$ and the marine location A 143 spectral sensitivity: $\Delta S_{i,B}(\lambda) = S_{i,B}(\lambda) - \bar{S}_A(\lambda)$.

144 We are now able to proceed with studying association between differences in 145 spectral sensitivity and ambient light, using each fish's spectral sensitivity and its light 146 environment (transmission and irradiance) at each wavelength, all measured relative 147 to the reference marine location A. A scatterplot of spectral sensitivity difference 148 against difference of light environment at all wavelengths allows us to visually assess 149 the association between the two variables. To proceed with a statistical analysis, for 150 each fish, we summarized and quantified this strength of association via the correlation 151 coefficient (r). If the correlation coefficient calculated for fish *i* is positive, then, for that 152 fish, wavelengths showing elevated sensitivity (positive $\Delta S_{i,B}(\lambda)'$ s) are associated with 153 increased light propagation (higher transmission) in our transmission calculations and, 154 in our irradiance calculations, are associated with more photons (higher irradiance). 155 We calculated this association summary for every fish in location B. We tested whether 156 the mean association (that is, the mean of the correlations in the population) in location 157 B was zero using a one-sample t-test. We did this for all locations. Our results are 158 contained in Table S3 and reported in the main text. We also tested simultaneously the 159 equality of the means of the individual level measures of association of all freshwater 160 locations by fitting a mixed-effects model to the measure of association, with location 161 as a random effect.

162 To study differences in environment (pelagic versus littoral) we carried out 163 separate analyses for each of the two species pair lakes with data on light environment 164 (Paxton and Priest). For each lake, we took as reference the limnetic population, and 165 thus the pelagic environment. Our calculations were the same as in the 166 marine/freshwater comparison above, with the littoral environment (with benthic 167 fish) being substituted for 'location B' in our calculations. Thus, in each lake, for each 168 benthic fish, we considered the relationship between differences in its spectral 169 sensitivity (relative to median limnetic sensitivity) and differences in light environment 170 (relative to that lake's median - representative pelagic environment). We summarized 171 that relationship for each benthic fish by the correlation and then tested whether these 172 correlations were expected to equal to 0. The results did not differ greatly if the benthic 173 population was used as the reference. See Table S4 for complete results, including 174 those discussed in Supp. Mat. Section 6.

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176 **6.** Effect of Changing Chromophore or Reference Population in the Analyses of 177 **Differences in Sensitivity and Differences in Light Environment**

178 Recall that, in our initial analyses (reported in the main text), spectral sensitivity was 179 modeled using exclusively the A1 chromophore. Our reference population for the 180 marine-freshwater comparison was Oyster Lagoon and our reference population for 181 the species pair analysis was the limnetic population. We studied the robustness of our 182 results to using different chromophores and different reference populations.

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184 To study the importance of the reference location in the marine/freshwater 185 comparison, we first made a direct comparison of Oyster Lagoon and the other marine 186 location, Little Campbell River, using Oyster Lagoon as reference. That is, Oyster Bay 187 served as "A" and Little Campbell River served as "B" in the analysis in Supp. Mat. 188 Section 5. We found that there was no significant association between differences in 189 sensitivity and differences in transmission (data not shown), but there was a significant 190 association for the irradiance. In other words, changes in sensitivity in Little Campbell 191 relative to the reference Oyster Lagoon population did not significantly covary with 192 changes in transmission but did significantly covary with changes in irradiance. Thus, 193 we might infer that Little Campbell River and Oyster Lagoon are equivalent reference 194 populations for transmission analysis, but perhaps not for irradiance analysis. 195

196 In order to further study whether reference population affected the results we re-did 197 the analysis, described in the main text and in Supp. Mat. Section 5, using Little 198 Campbell River instead of Oyster Lagoon as the marine reference (Supplementary 199 Figure 1A and B). The results are given in Table S3. Overall the results with the two 200 base lines agree; the mean correlations and significance levels are very similar for 201 transmission. When the A1 chromophore is used for estimation of sensitivity the 202 correlation for irradiance is also similar, however when other chromophores are used 203 the correlation becomes significantly negative. We believe that Little Campbell River is 204 a much less reliable marine reference population because the measurements were 205 taken in the tidal (marine) part of the river where turbidity increases significantly 206 when the tide comes in. The light measurements were taken with incoming tide and 207 hence may give a biased view of the light environment the stickleback experience most 208 of the time, and this may explain the odd result for irradiance.

210 Supplementary Figure 1. Quantification of correlation between differences in spectral 211 sensitivity and differences in local light transmission (A) and irradiance (B) for marine 212 and freshwater populations. Circles indicate individuals' correlations. All populations 213 are presented relative to the marine reference location, Little Campbell River.

215 To determine the importance of the reference population in the analyses for the 216 two species pair locations (Priest and Paxton), we repeated the analysis using the 217 benthic ecotype as reference instead of the limnetic. For all chromophore combinations 218 the results are very similar to those obtained using the limnetics as a reference for both 219 transmission (Supplementary Figures 2 and Table S4).

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223 Supplementary Figure 2. Quantification of correlation between differences in spectral 224 sensitivity and differences in local light transmission (A) and Irradiance (B) for benthic 225 and limnetic populations. Circles indicate individuals' correlations, using the benthics 226 as reference population.

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228 7. Effect of Changing Chromophore in the Analysis of the Correlation Between 229 **Spectral Sensitivity and Ambient Light (Spectral Matching).**

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231 To study the effect of chromophore on our spectral matching results, we 232 repeated the analysis reported in the main text with various different chromophore 233 combinations in the freshwater population. The combinations and the results are 234 presented in Table S5. Switching the ratio of chromophore used did little to affect the 235 magnitude of the correlation between spectral sensitivity and Transmission. However 236 the magnitude of the correlation strengthened for irradiance when there was a 50:50 237 mix of A_1 and A_2 used.

239 **8. Supplementary Figures and Tables**

- 240
- 241 Table S1. Stickleback populations used, their locations, and sample sizes (# of fish) for
- 242 opsin expression and environmental light conditions (irradiance) for shallow $(\leq 6m)$
- 243 and deep $(> 6m)$ sampling sites.
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257 Table S2.

258 Primer, probe and amplicon sequences from RT-qPCR assays.

Gene	Probe Sequence	Primer Sequences	Amplicon	RT-qPCR Amplicon Sequence
	$5' - 3'$	$5' - 3'$	Size (bp)	
SWS1	CCGTAGCAGGAC	Forward:	279	GGTGTTTGTCGCATCTGCGA
	TGGTGACAGC	ACATCACCTTGGC		GGGGTTACTACTTCCTGGGT
		AGGATTC		TACACCTTGTGCGCGCTGGAG
		Reverse:		GCTGCGATGGGATCCGTAGC
		GTGGGCTGGAACA		AGGACTGGTGACAGCCTGGT
		ACAGATT		CTTTGGCTGTTTTGTCTTTCG
				AGAGATATCTGATCATCTGT
				AAACCTTTTGGAGCCTTTAA
				GTTTACCAGTAACCACGCTCT
				CGGTGCTGTCGCCTTCACCTG
				GTTTATGGGAATCTGTTGTT
				CCAGCCCA
SWS2A	GAAAATGGCGGC	Forward:	261	GGCGGCAAGGCCCAAGCAGA
	AAAGGCC	TCTGCACAATTTG		ATCCGCCTCGACCCAGAAGGC
		CTTCTGC		GGAGCGGGAGGTGACCAGGA
		Reverse:		TGGTGGTTCTCATGGTGATG
		GGTTGTAAACTGC		GGCTTCCTGGTGTGCTGGAT
		GGAGGAC		GCCGTACGCCTCATTCGCTCT
				TTGGGTGGTCAACAACCGCG
				GGCAGACTTTTGACCTGAGG
				TTTGCTTCTATTCCGTCCGTC
				TTTTCCAAGTCCTCCGCAGTT
				TACAAC
RH2	TTGGCTGGTCCA	Forward:	174	CTGGATCCTTTTCCCTGGACC
	GGTACCTTCC	GGGATTCATGGCC		ATGGCTATGGCATGTGCTGC
		ACATTAG		TCCCCCTCTTTTTGGTGGCCA
		Reverse:		GGTACCTTCCTGAGGGCATGC
		TAGTCAGGTCCAC		AGTGCTCGTGTGGACCTGA
		ACGAGCA		
LWS	TGGATGGAGCAG	Forward:	297	TGGAAGTGAAGACCCTGGAG
	GTACTGGCC	GATATGGTCTGCC		TCCAGTCCTACATGATTGTTC

260

261

262 Table S3. Mean correlation between the change in spectral sensitivity and the shift in

263 ambient light from marine to fresh water under various chromophore scenarios. O.L.

264 (Oyster Lagoon) and L.C.R. (Little Campbell River) are alternative reference marine

265 populations. Means that are significantly different from 0 are in bold.

268 Table S4. Mean correlation between the change in spectral sensitivity and shift in 269 ambient light, from limnetic to benthic environment (limnetic reference), and from

270 benthic to limnetic environment (benthic reference).

271

- 274 Table S5. Mean correlation between spectral sensitivity and local light environment
- 275 (measured as transmission and irradiance) under various chromophore scenarios.

276 Means that are significantly different from 0 are in bold.

277

281 Supplementary Figure 3. Estimated mean spectral sensitivity of benthic (red) and 282 limnetic (blue) populations. The center lines are the fitted values of spectral sensitivity 283 from the mixed effects model. The shaded regions are one standard error above and 284 below the fitted values, with standard errors also derived from the mixed-effects 285 model. 286

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289 Supplementary Figure 4. Each subplot depicts the change in (A) spectral sensitvity 290 (ΔS), (B) transmission (ΔK_s), and (C) irradiance (ΔI_s), of four freshwater populations 291 (Kirk, Paxton, Priest and Trout) relative to the reference marine population (Oyster 292 Lagoon). Each population is labelled with a unique colour that is consistent among the 293 three panels. Positive values indicate those wavelengths for which the freshwater 294 populations have higher sensitivity, transmission or irradiance, than the marine 295 reference population, and negative values indicate wavelengths for which the 296 freshwater population has lower sensitivity, transmission or irradiance.

298 **Supplementary Materials References:**

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