1   **The evolution, diversity and host associations of rhabdoviruses**
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Abstract

The rhabdoviruses are a diverse family of RNA viruses that includes important pathogens of humans, animals and plants. We have discovered the sequences of 32 new rhabdoviruses through a combination of our own RNA sequencing of insects and searching public sequence databases. Combining this with previously known sequences we reconstructed the phylogeny of 195 rhabdoviruses producing the most in depth analysis of the family to date. In most cases we know nothing about the biology of the viruses beyond the host they were isolated from, but our dataset provides a powerful way to phylogenetically predict which are vector-borne pathogens and which are specific to vertebrates or arthropods. This allowed us to identify 76 new likely vector-borne vertebrate pathogens among viruses isolated from vertebrates or biting insects. By reconstructing ancestral states, we found that switches between major groups of hosts have occurred rarely during rhabdovirus evolution, with single transitions giving rise to clades of plant pathogens, vertebrate-specific pathogens, and arthropod-borne pathogens of vertebrates. There are also two large clades of viruses that infect insects, including the sigma viruses, which are vertically transmitted. There are also few transitions between aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. Our data suggest that throughout their evolution rhabdoviruses have occasionally made a long distance host jump, before spreading through related hosts in the same environment.

Keywords
Virus, Host shift, Arthropod, Insect, Rhabdoviridae, Mononegavirales

53 **Introduction**
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RNA viruses are an abundant and diverse group of pathogens. In the past, viruses were
typically isolated from hosts displaying symptoms of infection, before being
characterized morphologically and then sequenced following PCR [1, 2]. PCR-based
sequencing of novel RNA viruses is problematic as there is no single conserved region of
the genome of viruses from a single family, let alone all RNA viruses. High throughput
next generation sequencing technology has revolutionized virus discovery, allowing
rapid detection and sequencing of divergent virus sequences simply by sequencing total
RNA from infected individuals [1, 2]
63
One particularly diverse family of RNA viruses is the *Rhabdoviridae*. Rhabdoviruses are
negative-sense single-stranded RNA viruses in the order Mononegavirales [3]. They
infect an extremely broad range of hosts and have been discovered in plants, fish,
mammals, reptiles and a broad range of insects and other arthropods [4]. The family
includes important pathogens of humans and livestock. Perhaps the most well known is
Rabies virus, which can infect a diverse array of mammals and causes a fatal infection; it
kills 59,000 humans per year with an estimated economic cost of US$8.6 billion [5].
Other rhabdoviruses such as Vesicular Stomatitis Virus and Bovine Ephemeral Fever
Virus are important pathogens of domesticated animals, whilst others are pathogens of
crops [3].
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Arthropods play a key role in transmission of many rhabdoviruses. Many viruses found
in vertebrates have also been detected in arthropods, including sandflies, mosquitoes,
ticks and midges [6]. The rhabdoviruses that infect plants are also often transmitted by
arthropods [7]. Even the rhabdoviruses that infect fish have the potential to be vectored
by ectoparasitic copepod sea-lice [8]. Rhabdoviruses replicate upon infection of insects
(insects are not just mechanical vectors), which may explain why they are insects are
common rhabdovirus vectors [7].
82
Other rhabdoviruses are insect-specific. In particular, the sigma viruses are a clade of
vertically transmitted viruses that infect dipterans and are well-studied in *Drosophila*
[9-11]. Recently, a number of rhabdoviruses have been found to be associated with a
wide array of insect and other arthropod species, suggesting they may be common
arthropod pathogens [12, 13]. Furthermore, a number of arthropod genomes contain
integrated Endogenous Viral Elements (EVEs) with similarity to free-living
rhabdoviruses, suggesting that these species have been infected with rhabdoviruses
[14-17].
91
Here we aimed to uncover the diversity of the rhabdoviruses, and examine how they
have switched between different host taxa during their evolutionary history. Insects
infected with rhabdoviruses commonly become paralysed on exposure to CO_2 [18-20].
We exploited this fact to screen field collections of flies from several continents for novel
rhabdoviruses that were then sequenced using RNA-sequencing (RNA-seq). Additionally
we searched for rhabdovirus-like sequences in publicly available RNA-seq data. We
identified 34 novel rhabdovirus-like sequences from a wide array of invertebrates and
plants, and combined them with recently discovered viruses to produce the most

comprehensive phylogeny of the rhabdoviruses to date. For many of the viruses we do
not know their true host range, so we used the phylogeny to identify a large number of
new likely vector-borne pathogens and to reconstruct the evolutionary history of this
diverse group of viruses.
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106   **Methods**
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108   *Discovery of new rhabdoviruses by RNA sequencing*
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Diptera species (flies, mostly Drosophilidae) were collected in the field from Spain, USA,
Kenya, France, Ghana and the UK (Data S1:
http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425432). Infection with Rhabdoviruses can
cause *Drosophila* and other insects to become paralysed after exposure to CO_2 [18-20],
so we enriched our sample for infected individuals by exposing them to CO_2 at 12°C for
15mins, only retaining individuals that showed symptoms of paralysis 30mins later. We
extracted RNA from 79 individual insects (details in Data S1
http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425432) using Trizol reagent (Invitrogen) and
combined the extracts into two pools. RNA was then rRNA depleted with the Ribo-Zero
Gold kit (epicenter, USA) and used to construct Truseq total RNA libraries (Illumina).
Libraries were constructed and sequenced by BGI (Hong Kong) on an Illumina Hi-Seq
2500 (one lane, 100bp paired end reads, generating ~175 million reads). Sequences
were quality trimmed with Trimmomatic (v3); Illumina adapters were clipped, bases
were removed from the beginning and end of reads if quality dropped below a
threshold, sequences were trimmed if the average quality within a window fell below a
threshold and reads less than 20 base pairs in length were removed. We *de novo*
assembled the RNA-seq reads with Trinity (release 2013-02-25) using default settings
and jaccard clip option for high gene density. The assembly was then blasted (tblastn)
with rhabdovirus coding sequences as the query to identify rhabdovirus-like sequences.
Contigs with hits were then reciprocally blasted against Genbank cDNA and RefSeq
databases and only retained if they hit a virus-like sequence. Raw read data were
deposited in the NCBI Sequence Read Archive (SRP057824). Putative viral sequences
have been submitted to Genbank (accessions in Tables S1 and S2).
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As the RNA-seq was performed on pooled samples, we assigned rhabdovirus sequences
to individual insects by PCR. cDNA was produced using Promega GoScript Reverse
Transcriptase and random-hexamer primers, and PCR performed using primers
designed using the rhabdovirus sequences. Infected host species were identified by
sequencing the mitochondrial gene *COI*. We were unable to identify the host species of
the virus from a *Drosophila affinis* sub-group species (sequences appear similar to both
Drosophila affinis and the closely related Drosophila *athabasca*), despite using other
mitochondrial and nuclear genes to try and identify the species with certainty. We
confirmed all sequences were only present in RNA using PCR, and so are likely free
living viruses rather than being integrated into the insect genome (i.e. endogenous virus
elements or EVEs [16]).
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We identified sigma virus sequences in RNA-seq data from *Drosophila montana* [21]. We
amplified the virus from an infected fly line by RT-PCR and carried out additional Sanger
sequencing with primers designed using the RNA-seq assembly. Additional sequences
from an RNA-seq analysis of pools of wild caught *Drosophila*: DImmSV from *Drosophila*
immigrans (collection and sequencing described [22]), DTriSV from a pool of *Drosophila*
tristis and SDefSV from *Scaptodrosophila deflexa* (both Darren Obbard, unpublished
data), accessions in tables S1 and S2.
153
154 *Discovery of rhabdoviruses in public sequence databases*
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Rhabdovirus L gene sequences were used to search (tblastn) against expressed
sequence tag (EST) and transcriptome shotgun assembly (TSA) databases (NCBI). All
hits were reciprocally blasted against Genbank cDNA and RefSeq databases and only
retained if they hit a virus-like sequence. We used two approaches to examine whether
sequences were present as RNA but not DNA. First, where assemblies of whole-genome
shotgun sequences were available, sequences were blasted to check whether they were
integrated into the host genome. Second, for the virus sequences in the butterfly *Pararge*
aegeria and the medfly *Ceratitis capitata* we were able to obtain infected samples to
confirm the sequences are only present in RNA by performing PCR on both genomic
DNA and cDNA (samples kindly provided by Casper Breuker/Melanie Gibbs, and Philip
Leftwich respectively)
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168 *Phylogenetic analysis*
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All available rhabdovirus-like sequences were downloaded from Genbank (accessions in
Data S2: http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425419). Amino acid sequences for
the L gene (encoding the RNA Dependent RNA Polymerase or RDRP) were used to infer
the phylogeny (L gene sequences: http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425067), as
they contain conserved domains that can be aligned across this diverse group of viruses.
Sequences were aligned with MAFFT [23] under default settings and then poorly aligned
and divergent sites were removed with either TrimAl (v1.3 strict settings, implemented
on Phylemon v2.0 server, alignment: http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425069)
[24] or Gblocks (v0.91b selecting smaller final blocks, allowing gap positions and less
strict flanking positions to produce a less stringent selection, alignment:
http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425068) [25]. These resulted in alignments of
1492 And 829 amino acids respectively.
182
Phylogenetic trees were inferred using Maximum Likelihood in PhyML (v3.0) [26] using
the LG substitution model [27], with a gamma distribution of rate variation with four
categories and using a sub-tree pruning and regrafting topology searching algorithm.
Branch support was estimated using Approximate Likelihood-Ratio Tests (aLRT) that is
reported to outperform bootstrap methods [28]. Figures were created using FIGTREE
(v. 1.4) [29].
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190 *Reconstruction of host associations*
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Viruses were categorised as having one of four types of host association: arthropod-
specific, vertebrate-specific, arthropod-vectored plant, or arthropod-vectored
vertebrate. However, the host association of some viruses are uncertain when they have
been isolated from vertebrates, biting-arthropods or plant-sap-feeding arthropods. Due
to limited sampling it was not clear whether viruses isolated from vertebrates were
vertebrate specific or arthropod-vectored vertebrate viruses; or whether viruses
isolated from biting-arthropods were arthropod specific viruses or arthropod-vectored
vertebrate viruses; or if viruses isolated from plant-sap-feeding arthropods were
arthropod-specific or arthropod-vectored plant viruses. We omitted three viruses that
were isolated from hosts outside of these four categories from our analyses.
202
We simultaneously estimated both the current and ancestral host associations, and the
phylogeny of the viruses, using a Bayesian analysis, implemented in BEAST v1.8 [30, 31].
Since accurate branch lengths are essential for this analysis, we used a subset of the
sites and strains used in the Maximum Likelihood analysis. We retained 189 taxa (all
rhabdoviruses excluding the divergent fish-infecting novirhabdovirus clade and the
virus from *Hydra*, as well as the viruses from *Lolium perenne and Conwentzia*
psociformis, which had a large number of missing sites). Sequences were trimmed to a
conserved region of 414 amino acids where data was recorded for most of these viruses
(the Gblocks alignment trimmed further by eye:
http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425431). We used the host-association
categories described above, which included ambiguous states. To model amino acid
evolution we used an LG substitution model with gamma distributed rate variation
across sites [27] and an uncorrelated lognormal relaxed clock model of rate variation
among lineages [32]. To model the evolution of the host associations we used an
asymmetric transition rate matrix (allowing transitions to and from a host association to
take place at different rates) and a strict clock model. We used a constant population
size coalescent prior for the relative node ages and the BEAUti v1.8 default priors for all
other parameters [30] (BEAUti xml http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1431922).
Convergence was assessed using Tracer v1.6 [33], and a burn-in (of 30%) removed prior
to the construction of a consensus tree, which included a description of ancestral host
associations. High effective sample sizes were achieved for all parameters (>200).
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The maximum clade credibility tree estimated
(http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425436) for the host association
reconstruction was very similar to the independently estimated maximum likelihood
phylogeny (http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425083), which made no
assumptions about the appropriateness or otherwise of applying a clock model. The
minor topological differences may be expected in reconstructions that differ in their
assumptions about evolutionary rates. In Figure 2 we have transferred the ancestral
state reconstruction from the BEAST tree to the maximum likelihood tree.
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236 **Results**
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238 *Novel rhabdoviruses from RNA-seq*

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240 To search for new rhabdoviruses we collected a variety of different species of flies,
241 screened them for CO_2 sensitivity and sequenced total RNA of these flies by RNA-seq. We
242 identified rhabdovirus-like sequences from a *de-novo* assembly by BLAST, and used PCR
243 to identify which samples these sequences came from.
244
This approach resulted in eleven rhabdovirus-like sequences from nine (possibly ten)
species of fly. Seven of these viruses were previously unknown and four had been
reported previously from shorter sequences (Tables S1 and S2). Rhabdoviruses known
from other species of *Drosophila* typically have genomes of ~12.5Kb [11, 34], and six of
our sequences were approximately this size, suggesting they are near-complete
genomes. None of the viruses discovered in our RNA-seq data appeared to be integrated
into the host genome (see Methods for details).
252
To investigate the putative gene content of the viruses, we predicted genes based on
open reading frames (ORFs). For the viruses with apparently complete genomes (Figure
1), we found that those from *Drosophila ananassae, Drosophila affinis, Drosophila*
immigrans and *Drosophila sturtvanti* contained the five core genes found across all
rhabdoviruses, with an additional gene between the P and M genes. This is the location
of the X gene found in sigma viruses, and in three of the four viruses it showed sequence
homology to the X gene of other sigma viruses. The virus from *Drosophila busckii* did not
contain an additional ORF between the P and M genes, but instead contained an ORF
between the G and L gene. Using the gene content and the phylogeny described below,
we have classified our newly discovered viruses as either sigma viruses or other
rhabdoviruses and named them after the host species they were isolated from (Figure
1) [35]. We also found one other novel mononegavirales-like sequence from *Drosophila*
unispina that groups with a recently discovered clade of arthropod associated viruses
(Nyamivirus clade [12], see Table S5 and the full phylogeny:
http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425083), confirming our approach can detect a
wide range of divergent viruses.
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270 [Figure 1 here]
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272 *New Rhabdoviruses from public databases*
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We identified a further 26 novel rhabdovirus-like sequences by searching public
databases of assembled RNA-seq data with BLAST. These included 19 viruses from
arthropods (Fleas, Crustacea, Lepidoptera, Diptera), one from a Cnidarian (*Hydra*) and 5
from plants (Table S3). Of these viruses, 19 had sufficient amounts of coding sequence
(>1000bp) to include in the phylogenetic analysis (Table S3), whilst the remainder were
too short (Table S4).
280
Four viruses from databases had near-complete genomes. These were from the moth
Triodia sylvina, the house fly *Musca domestica* (99% nucleotide identity to Wuhan house
fly virus 2 [12]), the butterfly *Pararge aegeria* and the medfly *Ceratitis capitata*, all of
which contain the five core rhabdovirus genes. The sequence from *C. capitata* had an
additional gene predicted between the P and M genes with sequence similarity to the X

gene in sigma viruses. There were several unusual sequences. Firstly, in the virus from
P. aegeria there appear to be two full-length glycoprotein genes between the M and L
gene (we confirmed the stop codon between the two genes was not an error by Sanger
sequencing). Secondly, the *Agave tequilana* transcriptome contained an L gene ORF on a
contig that was the length of a typical rhabdovirus genome but did not appear to contain
typical gene content, suggesting it has very atypical genome organization, has been
misassembled or is integrated into its host plant genome [36]. Finally, the virus from
Hydra magnipapillata contained six predicted genes, but the L gene (RDRP) was
unusually long. Some of the viruses we detected may well be EVEs inserted into the host
genome and subsequently expressed [17]. For example, this is likely the case for the
sequence from the silkworm *Bombyx mori* that we also found in the silkworm genome,
and the L gene sequence from *Spodoptera exigua* that contains stop codons. Assuming
viruses integrated into the host genome once infected those hosts, this does not affect
our conclusions below about the host range of these viruses [14-16]. We also found
nine other novel mononegavirale-like sequences that group with recently discovered
clades of insect viruses [12] (see Table S5 and
http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425083).
303
304 *Rhabdovirus Phylogeny*
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To reconstruct the evolution of the *Rhabdoviridae* we have produced the most complete
phylogeny of the group to date (Figure 2). We used an alignment of the relatively
conserved L gene (RNA Dependant RNA Polymerase) from our newly discovered viruses
with sequences of known rhabdoviruses to give an alignment of 195 rhabdoviruses (and
26 other mononegavirales as an outgroup). We reconstructed the phylogeny using
different sequence alignments and methodologies, and these all gave qualitatively
similar results with the same major clades being reconstructed (Gblocks:
http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425083, TrimAl:
http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425082 and BEAST:
http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425436). The branching order between the
clades in the dimarhabdovirus supergroup was generally poorly supported and differed
between the methods. Eight sequences that we discovered were not included in this
analysis as they were considered too short, but their closest BLAST hits are listed in
Table S4.
320
We recovered all of the major clades described previously (Figure 2), and found that the
majority of known rhabdoviruses belong to the dimarhabdovirus clade (Figure 2b). The
RNA-seq viruses from *Drosophila* fall into either the sigma virus clade (Figure 2b) or the
arthropod clade sister to the cyto- and nucleo- rhabdoviruses (Figure 2a). The viruses
from sequence databases are diverse, coming from almost all of the major clades with
the exception of the lyssaviruses.
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328 [Figure 2 here]
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330 *Changes in host species*
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With a few exceptions, rhabdoviruses are either arthropod-vectored pathogens of plants
or vertebrates, or are vertebrate- or arthropod- specific. In many cases the only
information about a virus is the host from which it was isolated. Therefore, it is not clear
whether viruses isolated from vertebrates are vertebrate-specific or arthropod-
vectored, or whether viruses isolated from biting arthropods (e.g. mosquitoes, sandflies,
ticks, midges and sea lice) are arthropod specific or also infect vertebrates. Likewise, it
is not clear whether viruses isolated from sap-sucking insects (all Hemiptera: aphids,
leafhoppers, scale insect and mealybugs) are arthropod-specific or arthropod-vectored
plant viruses. However, in the absence of these data, we used the phylogenetic
relationships of the viruses to predict both the ancestral and present host associations
(http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425436).
343
This approach identified a large number of viruses that are likely to be new arthropod-
vectored vertebrate pathogens (Figure 2b). 87 of 92 viruses with ambiguous host
associations were assigned a host association with strong posterior support (>0.95). Of
the 52 viruses found in biting arthropods, 45 were predicted to be arthropod-vectored
vertebrate viruses, and 6 to be arthropod-specific. Of the 33 viruses found in
vertebrates, 31 were predicted to be arthropod-vectored vertebrate viruses, with none
being vertebrate-specific. Of the 7 viruses found in plant-sap-feeding arthropods (Figure
2a), 3 were predicted to be plant-associated and 2 arthropod-associated.
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353   We were also able to infer the ancestral host association of 182 of 188 of the internal
354   nodes on the phylogenetic tree with strong support (>0.95). In addition to the switches
355   of host-type that occur deep in the tree, there are a small number of changes on the
356   terminal branches of the phylogeny. These could either represent errors in the host
357   assignment (e.g. cross-species contamination), or recent host shifts.
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359
A striking pattern that emerged from our reconstructions of host associations is that
switches between major groups of hosts have occurred rarely during the evolution of
the rhabdoviruses, excluding a few rare transitions on terminal branches (Figure 2).
There has been one clear switch to become insect-vectored plant pathogens (cyto- and
nucleo- rhabdoviruses). A single virus isolated from the hop plant *Humulus lupulus* sits
in the dimarhabdovirus clade, but this may be because the plant was contaminated with
insect matter, as the same RNA-seq dataset contains *COI* sequences with high similarity
to thrips. A single transition to being vertebrate–specific has occurred in the
lyssaviruses clade [3]. There has also been a single transition to vertebrate viruses that
are vectored by arthropods in the dimarhabodovirus clade.
370
There are two main clades of arthropod-specific viruses. The first clade is a sister group
to the large plant virus clade. This novel group of largely insect-associated viruses are
associated with a broad range of insects, including flies, butterflies, moths, ants, thrips,
bedbugs, fleas, mosquitoes, water striders and leafhoppers. The mode of transmission
and biology of these viruses is yet to be examined. The second clade of insect associated
viruses is the sigma virus clade [10, 11, 18, 34]. These are derived from vector-borne
dimarhabdoviruses that have lost their vertebrate host and become vertically
transmitted pathogens of insects [10]. They are common in Drosophilidae, and our

results suggest that they may be widespread throughout the Diptera, with occurrences
in the Tephritid fruit fly *Ceratitis capitata*, the stable fly *Muscina stabulans,* several
divergent viruses in the housefly *Musca domestica* and louse flies removed from the skin
of bats. All of the sigma viruses characterised to date have been vertically transmitted
[10], but some of the recently described virus may be transmitted horizontally – it has
been speculated that the viruses from louse flies may infect bats [37] and Shayang Fly
Virus 2 has been reported in two fly species [12] (although contamination could also
explain this result). For the first time we have found sigma-like viruses outside of the
Diptera, with two Lepidoptera associated viruses and a virus from an aphid/parasitoid
wasp. Drosophila sigma virus genomes are characterised by an additional X gene
between the P and M genes [34]. Interestingly the two louse fly viruses with complete
genomes, Wuhan insect virus 7 from an aphid/parasitoid and Pararge aegeria
rhabdovirus do not have an X gene. Overall, our results suggest sigma-like viruses may
be common in a wide array of insect species.
393
The rhabdoviruses cluster on the phylogeny not only by the hosts they infect, but also by
whether they are found in terrestrial or aquatic environments. There has been one shift
from terrestrial to aquatic hosts during the evolution of the basal novirhabdoviruses,
which have a wide host range in fish. There have been other terrestrial to aquatic shifts
in the dimarhabdoviruses: in the clade of fish and cetacean viruses and the clade of
viruses isolated from sea-lice. The sea-lice viruses may be crustacean-specific as the two
viruses from *Lepeophtheirus salmonis* do not seem to infect the fish they parasitise and
are present in all developmental stages of the lice suggesting they may be transmitted
vertically [38].
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405   **Discussion**
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Viruses are ubiquitous in nature and recent developments in high-throughput
sequencing technology have led to the discovery and sequencing of a large number of
novel viruses in arthropods [12, 13]. Here we have identified 43 novel virus-like
sequences, from our own RNA-seq data and public sequence repositories. Of these, 32
were rhabdoviruses, and 26 of these were isolated from arthropods. Using these
sequences we have produced the most extensive phylogeny of the *Rhabdoviridae* to
date, including a total of 195 virus sequences.
414
In most cases we know nothing about the biology of the viruses beyond the host they
were isolated from, but our analysis provides a powerful way to predict which are
vector-borne pathogens and which are specific to vertebrates or arthropods. We have
identified a large number of new likely vector-borne pathogens – of 85 rhabdoviruses
isolated from vertebrates or biting insects we predict that 76 are arthropod-borne
viruses of vertebrates (arboviruses). Along with the known arboviruses, this suggests
the majority of known rhabdoviruses are arboviruses, and all of these fall in a single
clade known as the dimarhabdoviruses. In addition to the arboviruses, we also
identified two clades of likely insect-specific viruses associated with a wide range of
species, suggesting rhabdoviruses may be common arthropod pathogens.
425

We found that shifts between distantly related hosts are rare in the rhabdoviruses,
which is perhaps unsurprising as both rhabdoviruses of vertebrates (rabies virus in
bats) and invertebrates (sigma viruses in Drosophildae) show a declining ability to
infect hosts more distantly related to their natural host [39-41]. It is thought that sigma
viruses may sometimes jump into distantly related but highly susceptible species [40,
42, 43], but our results suggest that this rarely happens between major groups such as
vertebrates and arthropods. It is nonetheless surprising that arthropod-specific viruses
have arisen rarely, as one might naively assume that there would be fewer constraints
on vector-borne viruses losing one of their hosts. Within the major clades, closely
related viruses often infect closely related hosts (Figure 2). For example, within the
dimarhabdoviruses viruses isolated from mosquitoes, ticks, *Drosophila*, Muscid flies,
Lepidoptera and sea-lice all tend to cluster together (Figure 2B). However, it is also
clear that the virus phylogeny does not mirror the host phylogeny, suggesting that
following major transitions between distantly related host taxa, viruses preferentially
shift between more closely related species.
441
There has been a near four-fold increase in the number of rhabdovirus sequences in the
last five years. In part this may be due to the falling cost of sequencing transcriptomes
[44], and initiatives to sequence large numbers of insect and other arthropods [45]. The
use of high-throughput sequencing technologies should reduce the likelihood of
sampling biases associated with PCR based discovery where people look for similar
viruses in related hosts. This suggests that the pattern of viruses forming clades based
on the host taxa they infect is likely to be robust. However, these efforts are
disproportionately targeted at arthropods, and it is possible that there may be a great
undiscovered diversity of viruses in other organisms.
451
452   Rhabdoviruses infect a diverse assortment of host species, including a large number of
453   arthropod species. Our limited search has unearthed a large number of novel
454   rhabdovirus genomes, suggesting we are only just beginning to uncover the diversity of
455   these viruses.
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457   **Data accessibility**
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459   **All data has been made available in public repositories:**
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NCBI Sequence Read Archive Data: SRP057824
Data S1, sample information: http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425432
Data S2, virus ID, Genbank accessions and host information:
http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425419
L gene sequences fasta: http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425067
TrimAl alignment fasta: http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425069
Gblocks alignment fasta: http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425068
Phylogenetic tree Gblocks alignment: http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425083
Phylogenetic tree TrimAl alignment: http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425082
BEAST alignment fasta: http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425431
BEAUti xml file: http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1431922
Bayesian analysis tree: http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.1425436
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474   Supplementary materials: Tables S1-5 List of newly discovered viruses.
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476   **Competing interests**
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478   We have no competing interests.
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481
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485
486   **Contributions**
487
488   BL and FMJ conceived and designed the study. BL and JD carried out molecular work. BL,
489   WJP, DJP and DJO carried out bioinformatic analysis. BL, GGRM and JJW carried out
490   phylogenetic analysis. BL and FMJ wrote the manuscript with comments from all other
491   authors. All authors gave final approval for publication.
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500

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640   **Figure legends**
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Figure 1. Genome organization of newly discovered viruses. Predicted ORFs are shown
in colour, non-coding regions are shown in black. ORFs were designated as the first start
codon following the transcription termination sequence (7 U's) of the previous ORF to
the first stop codon. Dotted lines represent parts of the genome not sequenced. These
viruses were either from our own RNA-seq data, or were first found in in public
databases and key features verified by PCR and Sanger sequencing. Rhabdovirus
genomes are typically ~12-13kb long and contain five core genes 3'-N-P-M-G-L-5' [3].
However, a number of groups of rhabdoviruses contain additional accessory genes [46].
Online version in colour.
651
Figure 2. Maximum likelihood phylogeny of the *Rhabdoviridae.* **A** shows the basal fish-
infecting novirhabdoviruses, an unassigned group of arthropod associated viruses, the
plant infecting cyto- and nucleo- rhabdoviruses, as well as the vertebrate specific
lyssaviruses. **B** shows the dimarhabdovirus supergroup, which is predominantly
composed of arthropod-vectored vertebrate viruses, along with the arthropod specific
sigma virus clade. Branches are coloured based on the Bayesian host association
reconstruction analysis. Black represents taxa omitted from host-state reconstruction or
associations with <0.95 support. The tree was inferred from L gene sequences using the
Gblocks alignment. The columns of text are the virus name, the host category used for
reconstructions, and known hosts (from left to right). Codes for the host categories are:
vs= vertebrate-specific, vv= arthropod-vectored vertebrate, a= arthropod specific, ba =
biting-arthropod (ambiguous state), v = vertebrate (ambiguous state) and ap=plant-sap-
feeding-arthropod (ambiguous state). Names in bold and underlined are viruses
discovered in this study. The tree is rooted with the Chuvirus clade (root collapsed) as
identified in [12]. Nodes labelled with question marks represent nodes with aLRT
(approximate likelihood ratio test) values less than 0.75. Scale bar shows number of
amino-acid substitutions per site. Online version in colour.
669

A

Associated hosts
- Arthropod-vectored plant (green)
- Arthropods (orange)
- Vertebrate specific (red)
- Arthropod-vectored vertebrate (blue)

B

Fig 2A

Associated hosts
- **Plants** (green)
- **Arthropods** (orange)
- **Vertebrate specific** (red)
- **Arthropod-vectors and vertebrates** (blue)

0.4

Virus	Host code	Host
Arboretum virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Puerto Almendras virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Muir Springs virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Bahia Grande virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Harlingen virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Moussa virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Sawgrass virus	BA	Ticks
New Minto virus	BA	Ticks
Connecticut virus	VV	Ticks and rabbits
Long Island tick rhabdovirus	BA	Ticks
Taishun Tick Virus	BA	Ticks
Huangpi Tick Virus 3	BA	Ticks
Bole Tick Virus 2	BA	Ticks
Tacheng Tick Virus 3	BA	Ticks
Wuhan Tick Virus 1	BA	Ticks
Humulus lupulus TSA	P	Hops
Beaumont virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Culex tritaeniorhynchus rhabdovirus	BA	Mosquitoes
Conwentzia psociformis TSA		Lacewing
North Creek Virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Durham virus	V	Birds
Klamath virus	V	Voles
Tupaia virus	V	Tree shrews
Kwatta virus	VV	Mosquitoes, ticks and mammals
Oak Vale virus	VV	Mosquitoes and swine
Garba virus	V	Birds
Sunguru virus	V	Domestic chickens
Almpiwar virus	V	Lizards
Sripur virus	BA	Sandflies
Niakha virus	BA	Sandflies
Chaco virus	V	Lizards
Sena Madureira virus	V	Lizards
Caligus rogercresseyi 11114047 TSA	BA	Sea louse
Caligus rogercresseyi 11125273 TSA	BA	Sea louse
Lepeophtheirus salmonis rhabdovirus 127	BA	Sea louse
Lepeophtheirus salmonis rhabdovirus 9	BA	Sea louse
La Joya virus	VV	Mosquitoes and rodents
Wongabel virus	VV	Midges and birds
Ord River virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Parry Creek virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Ngaingan virus	VV	Midges, cattle and macropods
Marco virus	V	Lizards
Joinjakaka virus	VV	Mosquitoes and cattle
Gray Lodge virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Landjia virus	V	Birds
Manitoba virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Mosqueiro virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Hart Park virus	VV	Mosquitoes and birds
Flanders virus	VV	Mosquitoes and birds
Kamese virus	VV	Mosquitoes and humans
Mossuril virus	VV	Mosquitoes, birds and mammals including humans
Itacaiunas virus	BA	Midges
Inini virus	BA	Sandflies
Curionopolis virus	VV	Midges and mammals
Rochambeau virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Santa barbara virus	A	Psychodidae drain fly
Inhangapi virus	VV	Sandflies and rodents
Aruac virus	VV	Mosquitoes and birds
Xiburema virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Bas Congo virus	V	Humans
Coastal Plains virus	V	Bovids
Sweetwater Branch virus	VV	Midges and cattle
Bivens Arm virus	VV	Midges and cattle
Tibrogargan virus	VV	Midges and bovids
Koolpinyah virus	V	Cattle
Yata virus	V	Cattle
Adelaide River virus	V	Cattle
Kimberley virus	VV	Midges, mosquitoes and cattle
Malakal virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Berrimah virus	BA	Cattle
Bovine ephemeral fever virus	VV	Midges, mosquitoes and ruminants
Drosophila ananassae sigma virus	A	Drosophila fruit fly
Pararge aegeria rhabdovirus	A	Speckled wood butterfly
Spodoptera exigua TSA	A	Beet army worm moth
Wuhan Insect virus 7	A	Aphid or its parasitoid wasp
Drosophila immigrans sigma virus	A	Drosophila fruit fly
Drosophila obscura sigma virus	A	Drosophila fruit fly
Ceratitis capitata sigma virus	A	Tephritid fruit fly
Wuhan Louse Fly Virus 10	BA	Louse fly
Wuhan Louse Fly Virus 8	BA	Louse fly
Wuhan Louse Fly Virus 9	BA	Louse fly
Scaptodrosophila deflexa sigma virus	A	Drosophilid fruit fly
Drosophila melanogaster sigma virus HAP23 isolate	A	Drosophilid fruit fly
Drosophila melanogaster sigma virus AP30 isolate	A	Drosophilid fruit fly
Wuhan House Fly Virus 1	A	Muscid house fly
Muscina stabulans sigma virus	A	False stable fly
Shayang Fly Virus 2	A	Diptera species (Muscid house fly and Calliphorid laterine fly)
Wuhan Fly Virus 2	A	Muscid house fly
Drosophila sturtevanti sigma virus	A	Drosophilid fruit fly
Drosophila tristis sigma virus	A	Drosophilid fruit fly
Drosophila montana sigma virus	A	Drosophilid fruit fly
Drosophila affinis sigma virus	A	Drosophilid fruit fly
Drosophila affinis or athabasca sigma virus	A	Drosophilid fruit fly
Yongjia Tick Virus 2	BA	Ticks
Nkolbisson virus	VV	Mosquitoes and humans
Barur virus	VV	Ticks, mosquitoes, fleas and mammals
Nishimuro virus	V	Wild boar
Fukuoka virus	VV	Midges, mosquitoes and cattle
Kern Canyon virus	V	Bats
Keuraliba virus	V	Rodents
Oita virus	V	Bats
Fikirini bat rhabdovirus	V	Bats
Wuhan Louse Fly Virus 5	BA	Louse fly
Mount Elgon bat virus	V	Bats
Scophthalmus maximus rhabdovirus	V	Cultured turbot
Dolphin rhabdovirus	V	Dolphins and porpoise
Eel Virus European X	V	European eel
Starry flounder rhabdovirus	V	Starry flounder
Siniperca chuatsi virus	V	Mandarin fish
Spring viremia of carp virus	V	Common carp
Grass carp rhabdovirus	V	Grass carp
Pike fry rhabdovirus	V	Northern pike
Tench rhabdovirus	V	Tench
Wuhan Louse Fly Virus 11	V	Louse fly
Radi virus	BA	Sandflies
Yug Bogdanovac virus	BA	Sandflies
Jurona virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Malpais Spring virus	BA	Mosquitoes
Chandipura virus	VV	Sandflies and mammals including humans
Isfahan virus	VV	Mosquitoes, ticks, sandflies, mammals including humans
Perinet virus	VV	Mosquitoes and sandflies
Carajas oncolytic virus	BA	Sandflies
Vesicular stomatitis virus New Jersey Hazelhurst	BA	Mammals including humans, biting and non-biting diptera
Vesicular stomatitis virus New Jersey	BA	Mammals including humans, biting and non-biting diptera
Maraba virus	BA	Sandflies
Vesicular stomatitis virus Indiana	VV	Mammals including humans, sandflies and mosquitoes
Morreton virus	BA	Sandflies
Vesicular stomatitis virus Cocal	VV	Mites, mosquitoes and mammals
Vesicular stomatitis virus Alagoas Indiana 3	VV	Mammals including humans

dimarhabdovirus supergroup

sigma viruses