A case for sympatric speciation by cannibalism in South-American annual killifish

(*Austrolebias*)

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Adult body sizes in *Austrolebias* annual killifish vary a lot between species. The current

hypothesis is that large sizes and specialized piscivory have evolved in successive vicariance

speciation events with gradual evolution. We revisit this hypothesis using size measures

combined with range data and new phylogenetic trees based on mitochondrial and nuclear

molecular markers. Our analysis repeats biogeographic and Ornstein-Uehlenbeck trait evolution

modeling across the posterior distributions of phylogenetic trees. We identify three events where

large evolved from small. Our mtDNA phylogenetic trees reject the null hypothesis that all

speciations were allopatric, but we note that some sympatric speciations might mark

introgression events. Vicariance is unlikely to have played an important role: this type of

speciation event can be simplified out of the biogeographic models. We propose a new scenario

for the emergence of large piscivorous *Austrolebias* species: giant-dwarf speciation. In this eco-

evolutionary scenario a large morph evolves in a population due to disruptive selection driven by

character displacement and cannibalism. It can lead to the emergence of a sympatric large and

small species pair. The clade containing *A. elongatus* seems a plausible case of giant-dwarf

speciation. The species in it experience stabilizing selection with an optimum shifted towards

larger bodies and longer jaws. The branch leading to this clade has the fastest evolving jaw

lengths across the phylogeny. Our analysis suggests a potential alternative giant-dwarf scenario

where large body size evolved in sympatry first, followed by a fast increase in body and jaw

length for one daughter species in a subsequent event. *A. wolterstorffi* is selected towards a larger

body and longer jaw, but evolves with slower rates than the *elongatus* clade. Discordance

between mitochondrial and nuclear gene trees suggests introgression and the timing of trait

divergence cannot be determined well at this point. For the clade with the remaining large

species, we can reject the giant-dwarf hypothesis. The absence of substantial and rapid jaw

length evolution suggests that they evolved due to other selective processes.

Keywords: Character displacement, piscivory, temporary ponds, size evolution, comparative

analysis, biogeography, model averaging

Introduction

Allopatric speciation is generally seen as the default mode of speciation, or at least as the most

frequent one (Coyne and Orr 2004). Biogeographic models fitted to phylogenetic trees are

essential to construct and tests hypotheses on speciation modes (Crisp et al. 2011) and to infer

their frequencies. They are an improvement over previous approaches (Lynch 1989; Barraclough

and Vogler 2000). In comparison to the estimation of frequencies of speciation modes or testing

the null hypothesis that all speciation events are allopatric, inferring the mode and mechanism of

a specific speciation event, in particular when not recent and not between a pair of sister taxa,

seems particularly challenging and preoccupying (Coyne and Orr 2004). It might in many cases

never lead to the falsification of specific scenarios. However, the scope for that might improve

when a proposed scenario involves a particular pattern of phenotypic trait evolution that can be

modeled using phylogenetic comparative methods (Garamszegi 2014).

Austrolebias (Costa 2006) is a genus of South-Amerian annual killifish mostly occurring in

temperate zones. A biogeographic reconstruction based on large areas of endemism (Costa

2010), found many cladogenetic events without vicariance nor dispersal. Nevertheless, it is

believed that the dominant mode of speciation in the genus is allopatric with some potential

cases of sympatric speciation between sister taxa (Loureiro *et al* 2015). A null hypothesis where

all speciations are allopatric has not been falsified using statistical inference. Speciation events

within the genus where large species have evolved from small ones have contributed to a major

axis of life history variation in the genus and we aim to understand the mechanisms that drove

this divergence. Different elements of the evolution of large species from small and of piscivory

within *Austrolebias* have been studied separately and often with weak conclusions. Based on

morphological data alone, Costa (2009, 2011) concluded that there has been a single

evolutionary change from small to large size within *Austrolebias*, plus a single event leading to

its hypothesized sister genus with large species, *Cynolebias*. Large *Austrolebias* generally

coexist with small *Austrolebias*, while large *Cynolebias* species co-occur with *Hypsolebias*

small-bodied annuals (Costa 2010). For *Austrolebias*, Costa (2010) found the piscivores in an

apex position in his cladogram and concluded that large sizes and piscivory evolved gradually

within the genus in a series of vicariant speciation events where first body size increased and

then sporadic and subsequently specialized piscivory evolved. In contrast with a single origin of

large size within *Austrolebias*, the first phylogenetic trees of *Austrolebias* based on

mitochondrial DNA sequences (mtDNA, Garcia *et al* 2000, 2002) suggest repeated evolution of

large from small. However, these mtDNA trees nearly exclusively contained Uruguayan species

and had nodes with bootstrap support values below 50%. A simple biogeographic reconstruction

involving no modelling (Garcia *et al* 2000) assigned two origins of large species to sympatric

speciation events, but this was without taking phylogenetic uncertainty into account. A more

recent mtDNA-based study (Garcia *et al* 2014) suggested that there are three clades with large

Austrolebias species, a first one containing *A. elongatus*, a second including *A. robustus* and with

A. wolterstorffi as a third clade branching off at the origin of *Austrolebias*. This would falsify

Costa's (2010) hypothesis, but the posterior probability of the latter clade was 0.67 and the

placements of the two other clades had below 50% support, which we consider insufficient

support to reject the gradual scenario within a single clade proposed by Costa (2010).

As there seems a possibility that the scenario of vicariance and gradual specialization of large

Austrolebias will be rejected, we already propose an alternative hypothesis for the emergence of

these species. This gives us the opportunity to check whether our results are in agreement with

the new scenario. If not, we will need to propose further alternative scenarios.

Giant-dwarf sympatric speciation (Claessen et al 2000; Dercole and Rinaldi 2002) by

competition and cannibalism can be an alternative scenario for the evolution of large species

from small. The giant-dwarf eco-evolutionary scenario was proposed in theoretical studies by

Claessen *et al* (2000) and Dercole & Rinaldi (2002). Coexisting dwarf and giant morphs can

emerge within populations as a result of size-dependent cannibalism and plastic growth rate

variation between cohorts (Claessen *et al* 2000). Complementary to this, an evolutionary model

demonstrated that sympatric species pairs can be an outcome of the evolution of cannibalism

(Dercole and Rinaldi 2002). The possibility of sympatric speciation by giant-dwarf speciation

has been little investigated using comparative data. Leijs *et al* (2012) carried out a partial

assessment by estimating that subterranean beetle assemblages in isolated aquifers must have

evolved locally in a number of cases, but did not assess the evolution of traits involved in giant-

dwarf speciation along the phylogeny. We are aware that sympatric speciation remains a

contentious issue and that the presence of sympatry strongly depends on the scale and detail of

the ranges considered. In plants, examples of *in situ* speciation have turned out to be more likely

representing parapatric processes (Papadopulos *et al* 2014). Similarly, in two examples of

potential sympatric speciation in lacustrine fish (Schliewen *et al* 2001; Barluenga *et al* 2006),

emerging species tend to specialize on different resources that can be unevenly distributed across

habitats within a lake. In contrast, range overlap is required for cannibalism to be possible,

naturally limiting the scope for parapatry in giant-dwarf speciation. In this first assessment of

this scenario, we will therefore focus on results from phylogenetic comparative methods, and

will assess sympatry using the ranges considered by Costa (2010).

Species trees based on many markers are referred to as the true bifurcation history of species

(Mallet *et al* 2015) and seem to be preferably used for any comparative analysis. However, all

discordance between gene trees is regularly assumed to be due to lineage sorting (Liu and Pearl

2007), facilitating reconstructions while neglecting part of the true history, namely introgression

and hybridization between species. As explained above, the existing mtDNA phylogenetic trees

for *Austrolebias* have important nodes with poor support. In a comparative or biogeographic

analysis taking phylogenetic uncertainty into account, the consequence will be that the

phylogenetic uncertainty likely dominates the inference with an extreme loss of statistical power.

There is no molecular phylogenetic tree based on nuclear markers that includes large

Austrolebias. Therefore no assessment of introgression or hybridization based on mito-nuclear

discordance has been possible so far. Lab data demonstrate that at least some species pairs in

Austrolebias can be hybridized (Oviedo *et al* 2016) so that we should not opt too quickly for

methods assuming the absence of introgression and hybridization. If exchange has happened

between established species, there is a high likelihood of at least some spatial overlap during the

exchange, and the amount of trait divergence must still have allowed mating between the species.

Even while current biogeographic reconstruction methods allow for example constraining ranges

at nodes or the allowed dispersal jumps (Matzke 2014), nearly all comparative methods and all

biogeographic reconstructions assume a single true bifurcation history. There are currently no

reconstruction methods that arrive at predictions for ancestors that are compatible with the

historical patterns of several discordant gene trees in a single fit. It is therefore reasonable not to

consider a priori just a single species tree based on concatenated markers or coalescent methods,

or to try to obtain a species phylogenetic network using next-generation sequencing which can't

be used well for further analysis. Instead we will consider first of all a set of potentially

discordant bifurcation histories, those found in separate gene trees. We will assess the

hypotheses for each of these while checking consistency and discordance, and respecting

phylogenetic uncertainty.

In our analysis, we will propose that giant-dwarf speciation has occurred at some nodes in the

phylogeny. If the evolution of traits related to cannibalism and piscivory is not in agreement with

the divergence scenario, we will immediately falsify that hypothesis at a node and similarly so

when we reconstruct a non-sympatric speciation with sufficiently high probability. If giant and

dwarf species emerge in a sympatric process of evolutionary branching by negative frequency-

dependent selection (Geritz *et al* 1998), disruptive selection causes large phenotypic differences

to emerge from an ancestral population with much less phenotypic variation. Since a minimum

size difference is often necessary for cannibalism to be possible (e.g., Persson *et al* 2000), one

can assume that a relatively rapid and large size and gape change is necessary for evolutionary

branching by cannibalism. Fitness landscapes for species pairs that have arisen after branching

are bimodal, with each species sitting at a different optimum. In order to sustain the hypothesis,

phylogenetic comparative methods should detect these differences in optimal trait values as a

selection regime shift at nodes where the giant-dwarf speciation occurred. What is also apparent

from Claessen *et al* (2000) is that the emerging dwarfs do not become smaller when a giant

evolves, thus a single regime shift at the node is expected, for the cannibal.

We will test whether all speciation events in *Austrolebias* were allopatric and whether Costa's

(2011) proposed scenario for the evolution of large piscivores is true, using (1) two sets of

posterior distributions of molecular phylogenetic gene trees, one obtained by modeling nuclear

ribosomal DNA and one based on three mitochondrial markers (mtDNA); (2) a phylogenetic

comparative analysis of trait variation assessing selection regime shifts and rates of trait change

and (3) parametric biogeographic analysis. We use morphological and geographic data available

from previous studies on *Austrolebias* and focus on the Argentinian and Uruguayan *Austrolebias*

species because reliable community composition data are available for them and permanent

assemblages in many sites consist of *Austrolebias* species only. Our analysis will take

phyogenetic uncertainty into account throughout.

Materials and Methods

We used individuals from laboratory populations of South-American annual killifish species in

the Animal Ecology Lab in Leiden, the Netherlands (Supplementary Table S1) complemented

with two species from field samples (*A. monstrosus* and *A. vandenbergi*). Lab populations were

obtained from field trips or expert amateur breeders. They are systematically maintained by

crossing individuals from the same clutch, therefore individuals from the same population of

origin are kin. The sample consists of 112 individuals of species in the *Austrolebias,*

Hypsolebias, *Ophthalmolebias*, *Nematolebias* and *Spectrolebias* genera (Costa 2010) and of

Cynolebias albipunctatus, in order to confirm the monophyly of *Austrolebias* and to determine

whether *Cynolebias* is its sister taxon. Individuals of *Aphyolebias schleseri* (Costa 2003),

Pterolebias longipinnis (Garman 1895) and *Leptolebias citrinnipinnis* (Costa *et al* 1988) are

included as more distant outgroups.

DNA extraction and amplification

In the African annual *Nothobranchius* killifish, phylogenetic trees using nuclear markers had

poor resolution at the gene level (Dorn *et al* 2011, 2014) and used concatenated sequences

(Dorn *et al* 2014) or assumed a multispecies coalescent without introgression to obtain a species

tree where half the nodes have nodal support above 80% posterior probability (Dorn *et al* 2011).

Remarkably, a study on South-American annual *Simpsonichthys* subgenera using 842bp of

mtDNA markers (Ponzetto *et al* 2016) obtained nodal support values above 80% for most nodes

at the interspecific level suggesting that the lack of support in previous trees for *Austrolebias*

could be due to limited sequence length. In this first assessment of hypotheses regarding size

divergence in *Austrolebias*, where it was impossible to resolve the true phylogenetic history, we

constructed two gene bifurcation histories, one from concatenated mitochondrial markers and the

other with concatenated markers in different segments of a single nuclear gene. We have

investigated an additional set of nuclear DNA markers, but did not manage to obtain separate

gene tree with sufficient support for further analysis. Analyses based on the multispecies

coalescent or concatenation of nuclear markers in different genes will be presented elsewhere.

DNA was extracted from fin clips, muscle and liver tissue using the Qiagen DNEasy Blood and

Tissue kit following the manufacturer's protocol and then used for direct amplification by

Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) of mitochondrial sequences of cytochrome-*b* (*cytB*), 12S

ribosomal DNA (rDNA), 16S rDNA and nuclear 28S rDNA (3 regions). Primers used for PCR

and sequencing are listed in Table S2 and PCR reaction conditions in Table S3. PCR products

were cleaned using the Promega Wizard SV Gel and PCR Clean-Up System (Promega, Madison,

Wisconsin, USA). Cleaned PCR products were sent to a commercial sequencing facility

(Macrogen Inc., Korea, www.macrogen.com). Sequencing reactions were carried out using our

supplied primers and the sequence products were run on an ABI3730XL genetic analyser.

Sequence analysis

Electropherograms were edited in Sequencher 4.1.4 (GeneCodes, Madison, Wisconsin), and

sequences aligned using ClustalX 1.83 (Thompson *et al* 1997; Jeanmougin *et al* 1998) using

default parameters (gap opening = 10.00, gap extension = 0.20, delay divergent sequences =

30%, DNA transition weight = 0.50). Alignments were straightforward for cytB, but contained

indels in the rDNA sequences. We identified stems and loops in the mitochondrial rDNA

sequences based on an alignment in RNAalifold (Bernhart *et al* 2008) resulting in improved

alignments containing few ambiguous bases except for some regions within indels. Ambiguous

regions were removed from the alignments used for further analysis of the 12S and 16S

sequences. Indels were coded as presence-absence using simple indel coding in SeqState 1.37

(Müller 2005). The final alignments used for the phylogenetic analyses contained 1590

(mitochondrial) and 727 (nuclear) base pairs and an additional 82 (mtDNA) and 27 (28S rDNA)

binary indel-coding characters.

Bayesian phylogenetic inference was carried out in MrBayes 3.2.5 (Huelsenbeck and Ronquist

2001; http://mrbayes.csit.fsu.edu). Datasets for the mitochondrial and nuclear markers were

analysed separately but with each subset concatenated. Each dataset was partitioned into separate

character sets for the DNA sequence and indels per marker. Character sets for 12S and 16S

mtDNA sequences were further partitioned into stems and loops. In a first assessment, we fitted

different substitution models, with parameters shared between partitions or not and estimated

marginal likelihoods of each model using the stepping stone approximation (Xie *et al* 2011) to

determine which model fitted each dataset best. Based on these comparisons, General Time

Reversible models with a proportion of invariant sites and gamma distributed rate variation

(GTR+I+G) were implemented, with different parameter estimates per partition of DNA

sequence data, except for the stems in the 12S and 16S alignments, where we used the doublet

model (Schöniger and von Haseler 1994). Changes in indel state were fitted with binary models.

A doublet model would also be appropriate for 28S stems. We aligned our partial 28S rDNA

sequences to the best-matching complete sequence of the gene we could find (from *Oreochromis*

auratus), for which we determined its secondary structure using RNAfold (Hofacker *et al* 1994).

Assuming that our aligned sequences would have stems and loops as in the complete sequence,

we observed that stem distributions differed when the structure was determined using minimal

free energy or ensemble prediction, that stems often consisted of a sequence in our data and

another outside of it, and that some stems consisted of sequences we obtained for different

markers. This would cripple an implementation of the doublet model for 28S stems and we used

the GTR+I+G model instead. Per run, base frequency parameters were estimated assuming a

Dirichlet distribution and prior settings were the defaults in MrBayes 3.2.5 except for the prior

on branch lengths, which was exponential with parameter 20. Per model, two separate runs of

four Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) chains were ran until convergence to a stationary

regime allowed sampling at least 4000 trees spaced by 5000 generations. The selection of

phylogenetic hypotheses continued on the basis of 50% majority consensus trees for these

samples, by removing individuals from the dataset and refitting the model. Our sample contained

24 pairs or groups of sibs (same species/population). We preferred consensus trees with each sib

group as sister branches and removed some individuals to achieve such a configuration. We

checked for long-branch attraction by removing individuals with long branches (Bergsten 2005),

and removed subsets of species from the dataset when long-branch attraction was identified. We

also ran models for data subsets where only those individuals with data for all mitochondrial or

nuclear markers were included.

The biogeographic and phenotypic analyses require species trees. We constructed species trees

from mtDNA and 28S gene trees separately using the GLASS approach (Mossel and Roch 2010;

Liu *et al* 2010). Gene trees were forced to be ultrametric using the penalized likelihood method

of Sanderson (2002) with parameter lambda fixed at value zero (variable rates). Morphological

and biogeographical analysis focused on the individuals of the genus *Austrolebias* and we pruned

the trees for that. We first carried out phenotypic and biogeographic modeling on the mtDNA

and 28S consensus trees, for illustration and to understand potential pitfalls in the analysis. Most

modeling was then repeated on random samples of 500 trees from the posterior distributions and

results summarized through averaging parameter estimates and predictions across the sampled

posterior distributions.

Phenotypic Trait Analysis

For comparability and to maximise the number of species with data in the analysis, we used the

morphological field data obtained from the tables of Costa's (2006) revision of the *Austrolebias*

genus, which include standard lengths. Other measures are given as fractions of standard length,

and size measures of the head given as fractions of head length. Maximum and minimum values

were reported per trait making allometry analyses requiring individual data or calculation of size-

independent principal components impossible. We did not use the minimum standard lengths

reported. Fish have indeterminate growth and information on individual age is lacking. Traits

pertaining to our hypothesis are sex-specific maximum standard lengths and maximum and

minimum lower jaw lengths. Before further analysis, we calculated scores for the most important

principal components (PC) of (1) the two size traits and (2) the four measures of jaw length. We

did not carry out phylogenetic PC's as it was undetermined what the evolutionary model should

be to derive correlations between species from. The scores were used as body size and relative

jaw size traits in further analysis. The *Austrolebias* species in our analysis that are commonly

denoted as large and that form a single monophyletic group in Costa (2006, 2010) are *A.*

vazferreirai, cinereus, robustus, wolterstorffi, monstrosus, elongatus, prognathus and

cheradophilus (we will often omit the genus abbreviation from now on). There is a single large

species missing from our analysis, which is similar to *robustus*, *cinereus* and *vazferreirai* (Costa

2006). We were unable to obtain recent samples from it.

We did not *a priori* assign these eight species as large in our comparative analysis of trait

evolution. Per tree, we fitted Ornstein-Uhlenbeck (OU) models to species trait values with a

single or multiple optima for stabilizing selection (Butler and King 2004). We determined the

number of selection regimes in the OU model by applying an automated routine with a modified

AICc to the size and jaw scores combined (surface R library. Ingram and Mahler 2013), for each

species tree in the samples from the posterior distributions of gene trees. Only the 500 AICc

selected models are included in the averaging of parameters and predictions. To calculate

average differences between estimated selection optima, we carried out a parametric bootstrap on

each selected model and averaged across the replicates and trees. In the samples of 500 trees,

trees recur. We therefore limited bootstrap replication to ten per tree.

Evolutionary models fitted to phenotypic and phylogenetic data should take measurement error

into account (Silvestro *et al* 2015). We carried out an approach similar to SIMEX extrapolation

(Cook and Stefanski 1994). Pseudo-data were generated by adding random error terms of

increasing variance to the length and jaw scores and we ran the automated model selection

procedure using a random tree from the posterior for each pseudo-data set. Low sensitivity of the

results to increasing values of the added measurement error would suggest that measurement

error in our data has limited effects on inference.

To investigate the relative magnitudes of trait changes, we fitted stable distributions as the model

for trait changes (Elliot and Mooers 2014) to each of the species trees in the samples from the

posteriors and the size and jaw scores separately. These distributions can be heavy-tailed and

thus enriched for large changes. In the results, we inspected whether relatively large changes

occurred on branches towards large species by calculating ranks of the estimated median rates of

trait change on each branch. Reported are the averages of these ranks for particular branches.

Biogeographical analysis

Four areas of endemism occur among the species used in this analysis (Costa 2010, Table 1),

which we used as discrete single-area species ranges. Each extant species occurs in a single area,

but the analysis allows for multi-area ranges in ancestors and extant species. Two areas in which

small *Austrolebias* occur are lacking in our data, namely the Iguaçu River basin inhabited by *A.*

carvalhoi and *araucarianus* (Costa 2006, 2014) and the upper Uruguay River basin with *varzeae*

(Costa 2006).

We used an extension of the likelihood framework and modeling approach of Ree (Ree *et al*

2005, Ree and Smith 2008) as implemented in the BioGeoBEARS package (Matzke 2014) which

allows for anagenetic migration and extinction along branches and different cladogenetic

scenarios at each tree node: a jump dispersal to a different area in one descendant, vicariance of a

multi-area range, sympatric speciation within a single-area range, and subset speciation when a

multi-area range occupied by the ancestor is also occupied by one descendant and the other

descendant becomes limited to a single area. Weaknesses pointed out by Losos and Glor (2003)

are reduced in these newer methods which allow range changes in between speciation events. In

order not to *a priori* bias the overall plausibility of certain scenarios of speciation, we first

implemented a model with the largest possible number of parameters that could be estimated and

applied it to the samples of species trees. Simplified models without vicariance or without

sympatric and subset speciation were fitted too and the average change in AICc reported. If the

overall rate of sympatric speciation is non-zero and models allowing for sympatric speciation

have lower AICc than the simplification without, we reject the null hypothesis that all speciation

events were allopatric for the ranges considered. If models without vicariance have lower AICc,

then the hypothesis where piscivores have evolved in a series of vicariance events has

insufficient support. To assess the probability of vicariance and sympatric speciation at specific

nodes in the full model, we used stochastic mapping (100 replications) given the tip data and

model parameter estimates (Matzke 2014) and then averaged probabilities of events across the

gene species trees.

Results

Mitochondrial and nuclear gene trees

In the analyses of the mitochondrial data, 5 or 7 individuals were removed from the dataset

(Supplementary Material Figures S4-S6) depending on whether the model was fitted to

individuals with full or partial data. The resulting phylogenetic hypothesis for the mitochondrial

markers resolved all species (consensus species tree Fig. 2, gene tree Figure S6) and grouped the

Austrolebias species traditionally seen as large in three well delineated and separated clades: in

only 4% of the trees in the posterior, there are two clades with large species. Two of the three

clades with large species are not recognized as species complexes by Garcia *et al* (2014).

Overall, partition posterior probabilities at nodes are above 0.8 for 80% of nodes within the

genus *Austrolebias*, when within-species nodes are excluded. The consensus gene tree for the

nuclear 28S data showed long branch attraction between *A. vandenbergi* and *Pterolebias* and

Aphyolebias outgroups (Figures S1-2). We removed these outgroups. Additionally, five more

individuals were removed that did not group with kin or conspecifics (Fig. S3). We obtained a

phylogenetic hypothesis for this gene with the species traditionally seen as large in three clades

in each of the trees in the posterior. These are again well separated, but *robustus* is paraphyletic

to *vandenbergi*. The mitochondrial and nuclear phylogenetic trees reject Costa's (2010)

hypothesis with a single origin of large *Austrolebias*.

The large polytomy involving the placement of 34 of the 72 *Austrolebias* individuals in the

consensus phylogenetic trees in Figs. 2 and S3 corresponds to very short branch lengths in the

separate trees of the posterior distribution. Note that contrary to the results of Ponzetto *et al*

(2015), we found *Ophthalmolebias* as a basal split in the mtDNA tree, and therefore rooted the

nuclear tree on *O. suzarti*. Our two gene trees confirm that there is no reason to consider *A. apaii*

and *bellotti* as different species, as already suggested by the results of Garcia *et al* (2012). The

large C*ynolebias albipunctatus* apparently originated within *Hypsolebias* (Figure S3) and is not a

sister taxon to *Austrolebias*.

We observed discordance between nuclear and mitochondrial trees (Figs 2, S3 and S6). This was

the case for *S. chacoensis*, *A. nigripinnis* and for the placement of *A. cheradophilus* within one

clade of large *Austrolebias* (Fig. 2). More importantly, some taxa with discordances show a

geographic association: *A. wolterstorffi, gymnoventris* and *luteoflammulatus* are sister species in

the mitochondrial tree and co-occur in The Patos Lagoon system and associated plains. In the

nuclear 28S tree *A. wolterstorffi* is placed at the root of *Austrolebias*, and *luteoflammulatus* is the

sister taxon of the group of large species that includes *elongatus*. *A. periodicus*, *juanlangi* and

affinis are grouped together in the mitochondrial tree and all three occur in the "Negro" area of

endemism. In the 28S tree *affinis* is the sister taxon of *alexandri*, occurring in the "La Plata" area

of endemism. These last two sets of species and their geographic associations suggest that

introgression (and potentially mitochondrial capture) or hybridization might have taken place

among the species of each clade (Toews and Brelsford 2012) such that the true phylogeny will

probably be a reticulate network.

Species Trees

We determined species trees for the genus *Austrolebias* using the posterior distribution for the

mitochondrial gene tree with full data on all included individuals (Fig. S6). Removing

individuals with partial mtDNA data improved the properties of the consensus phylogenetic tree

considerably. We used the posterior nuclear trees that include individuals with partial data (Fig.

S3).

Morphological Traits

The large and piscivorous *Austrolebias* are not belonging to a single apical taxon, invalidating

Costa's (2010) scenario. We can therefore start considering our new hypothesis, that large and

piscivorous species evolved according a giant-dwarf scenario.

Fitting multivariate OU models to the size and jaw scores and the mitochondrial trees resulted in

95% of the cases in a model with three selection regimes as the model with lowest AICc (Fig 2).

The model selection routine applied to the consensus mtDNA species tree prefers three regimes

and two shifts (Fig. 2a). In comparison to an OU model with a single optimum, adding selection

regime shifts decreased the AICc on average with 45 (s.d. 1.7). When optimal trait values of

different regime shifts were allowed to be equal, the AICc could be decreased further with an

average of 9.6 (2.5). Multivariate OU models fitted to the size and jaw scores and the nuclear

phylogenetic trees also selected a model with three selection regimes most often (95%, Fig. 2).

Adding selection regime shifts with selection to different optima decreased the AICc with 42.6

(4.2). When optimal trait values of different regime shifts were allowed to be equal, the AICc

decreased a further 5.6 (1.4) on average. In the selected models, optimal trait values for the

smallest species are always well separated from the others (Figs. 2 c&d). The less reliable 28S

trees classify intermediate optima as clearly different (Fig. 2d), whereas the better resolved

mtDNA trees don't. There, the largest and second largest species have overlapping 95% posterior

density regions (Fig. 2c). Jaw length scores for the intermediate optima are often overlapping

with these for the smallest species. Adding measurement errors of gradually increasing

magnitude to both traits leads to two selection optima being more often preferred than three

(Figure S7). For the 28S trees, this already occurs for small added errors. The large *elongatus*,

monstrosus and *prognathus* are generally selected towards a different optimum than all other

species irrespective of measurement error. Small shifts in estimated values of the selection

optima depend more strongly on the trees sampled from the posteriors than on the magnitude of

measurement error (Fig. S7). The general pattern across the assessment of measurement error is

that it blurs the detection of some selective optima, not that it generates additional spurious

selection regimes.

From inspection of the posterior distributions, it seems appropriate to assess the plausibility of

giant-dwarf speciation at the nodes leading towards the most recent common ancestor (*mrca*) of

two clades with large species (*elongatus, prognathus, monstrosus, cheradophilus*; *vazferreirai,*

cinereus, robustus) and at the node leading to *wolterstorffi*. The results on the 28S species trees

below demonstrate that changes at the mrca of *elongatus, prognathus* and *monstrosus* needs to

be assessed as well. Table 2 lists how often regime shifts were fitted at these nodes, and what the

changes in selection optima were. For the mtDNA trees the most recent common ancestor of the

clade containing *elongatus* shows a regime shift with changes in size and jaw length in nearly all

trees (Table 2),. Regimes shifts towards *wolterstorffi* and the clade with *robustus* are fitted in a

large percentage of trees, but the jaw length changes there are much smaller. We cannot reject

the possibility of giant-dwarf speciation here. Remarkably, the 28S trees all have a regime shift

with large changes in body size and jaw length towards the subclade containing *elongatus,*

prognathus and *monstrosus*. In half of the trees this shift is preceded by a different one which is

mainly for body length. We thus recover an element of the previously hypothesized scenario,

with evolution of more specialized piscivory within a clade of large *Austrolebias* in two

successive trait regime shifts. Regime shifts towards *wolterstorffi* are preferred for more than

half of the 28S trees, again with moderate jaw length changes. The clade with *robustus,*

vazferreirai and *cinereus* often has a regime shift for body length and jaw length on the 28S tree,

but not often so for the mtDNA trees for which the consensus resolved these species well.

Figure 3 shows the estimated median evolutionary rate parameters (speeds) for all branch

segments (per arrival node) and sampled trees, i.e., score changes according the stable

distribution model divided by branch lengths. Trait changes towards the clade containing

elongatus systematically rank among the fastest for size and jaw length (Table 2). The rate on the

branch towards *wolterstorffi* shows rapid change - even on the 28S trees - for jaw length and less

extreme rates for body length. Evolutionary rates leading towards the clade with *robustus* are

never very fast. This rejects the giant-dwarf scenario for that clade.

Biogeography

The rates of anagenetic dispersal and extinction are consistently estimated to be zero. Model

comparison between models with and without vicariance revealed that this model simplification

reduced the AICc (mtDNA reduction 0.47 (s.d. 0.21); 28S rDNA 0.92 (s.d. 0.49)). We conclude

that scenarios including vicariance are not supported. Allowing sympatric speciation decreases

the AICc on average with 23.84 (1.7) across the mtDNA trees. For the nuclear 28S trees, it does

not improve the model substantially. The AICc of a model without sympatric speciation is on

average 3.78 (6.1) smaller, and in 60% of the sampled trees, the model does not fit a positive

weight of sympatric speciation (Table 2). We refitted the models to sub-trees where all species

that were not well resolved were removed, and found that all model fits then assign a positive

weight to sympatric speciation. However, given that there are only 13 species in these trees, the

AICc remains the smallest for a model without sympatric speciation.

Figure 4 shows ancestral ranges of largest marginal likelihood at each node for the consensus

trees, for the full biogeographic model. The mtDNA tree has a single multi-area range, namely

the La Plata – Negro range at the root of *Austrolebias* (Figure 4a). According to that

reconstruction, area Negro has been invaded four times, La Plata and Western Paraguay each

three times, and the Patos area of endemism has been invaded once. Of the three events leading

to species that were traditionally denoted as large, two occurred in Patos and one in La Plata.

Most ancestral ranges are single-area ranges. Across the posterior tree distributions, stochastic

mapping placed a vicariance event at a node where large species evolved in less than 0.1% of the

simulations, except for *wolterstorffi* in the 28S tree, where vicariance occurred in 49.5% of the

simulations. Therefore we can reject that vicariance was involved in the origin of the large

species of the *elongatus* and *robustus* clades.

We report further results concerning the giant-dwarf scenario in Table two. For the 28S trees, we

present the results for trees in the posterior with a non-zero estimate of sympatric speciation

(199/500) separately. When stochastic mapping is used to determine probabilities of event types

given the mtDNA posterior tree distribution, tip ranges and model parameters, the split towards

wolterstorffi is given probability 0.97 of being a sympatric speciation. At the node towards the

clade containing *vazferreirai* and *bellottii* this probability is 0.82. At the node towards the clade

with *elongatus* it is 0.61. When inspecting the models fitted to the 28S nuclear data that do not

estimate a probability of sympatric speciation (Fig. 4b), it becomes clear that the predictions are

not parsimonious, if jump dispersals are seen as events. In the clade with *elongatus* in the

consensus tree it favours four dispersal events and not two (Figure 4b). For the clade containing

robustus the overall probability that the split was a sympatric speciation is 0.07 given our 28S

phylogenetic tree. Taking all evidence for this clade together, there appears a scope to reject the

giant-dwarf scenario with a better resolved nDNA tree. Among the trees in the 28S posterior

with non-zero weights for sympatric speciation, the probability of sympatric speciation is also

small for the clade containing *robustus*, intermediate for *wolterstorffi*, 0.75 for the split where

large species diverge from *luteoflammulatus* and one half for the subsequent speciation event

where *cheradophilus* originates.

When inspecting stochastic mapping results, it became clear that probabilities differ between

nodes directly connected to a tip and nodes two edges away from a tree tip (Figure 5). We

inspected them separately to assess whether probabilities found at specific nodes were extreme.

We observe that simulated probabilities of speciation for each taxon with large species are

consistently among the largest probabilities on the mtDNA trees, except for the clade with

robustus (Fig. 5a). On the 28S rDNA trees and when a non-zero probability of sympatric

speciation is estimated, probabilities are much more dispersed and smaller (Fig. 5b). This

confirms that the 28S trees provide generally weaker support for the occurrence of sympatric

speciation.

Discussion

The large *Austrolebias* are not monophyletic in either gene tree we constructed. A scenario for

the evolution of piscivory in *Austrolebias* with gradual evolution and vicariance in a single clade

of large species (Costa 2010) can be rejected. Our results on the mtDNA trees reject the null

hypothesis that all speciation events were allopatric for ranges consisting of areas of endemism

(Costa 2009). The clade with the most specialized piscivores evolved without vicariance events

and with significant selection regime shifts and the fastest evolving trait changes.

At the three nodes where species traditionally seen as large originate, OU model comparisons

detect selection regime changes for size and jaw length traits in at least half of the sampled trees

up to in as good as all of them, except for the clade containing *robustus*. If we assess whether

trait changes at these nodes were large, then in particular the clade containing *elongatus,*

prognathus and *monstrosus* originated with rapid trait changes for body size and relative lower

jaw length. The changes for the clade with *robustus* are small. The biogeographical analysis

finds a model-based probability of sympatric speciation which is above zero for all mtDNA trees

and for 40% of the 28S rDNA trees.

A plausible case of giant-dwarf speciation

For the clade with *A. elongatus*, *monstrosus* and *prognathus* we propose that it originated by

giant-dwarf speciation. Their piscivory is uncontested, entire fish have been found in the guts of

species from this clade (Costa 2009). We do need to consider a new scenario suggested by the

28S trees where body length would show evolutionary branching in a first speciation followed by

body and jaw length divergence at a subsequent one. It should be investigated whether this

scenario can occur completely in sympatry or imposes allopatry/parapatry between the different

large species originating. The probability that the speciation events were sympatric is not

extreme for this clade but high relative to the probabilities at other comparable nodes and

requires further investigation.

For *A. wolterstorffi* trait changes were smaller and slightly less rapid. The placement in the

mtDNA tree leads to a high predicted probability of sympatric speciation at the range scale

considered, but the event might mark an introgression. The placement of *wolterstorffi* in the 28S

tree near the root makes the probability of a trait shift less likely. We need to assess introgression

in more detail such that constraints on trait and range divergence can be determined. Costa

(2009) identified tooth characteristics indicative of molluscivory in this species. Gut content data

will need to show whether it is indeed such a specialist or whether piscivory does occur. Costa's

(2010) analysis based on morphological characteristics did place it among the species of the

previous clade.

For the clade containing *A. vazferreirai*, *cinereus* and *robustus,* the analysis allows us to draw the

conclusion that it is unlikely that giant-dwarf speciation was involved. Rates of trait change are

not high. On the mitochondrial gene tree, this clade is selected towards an optimum with

intermediate jaw length. The nuclear gene tree is not well resolved for this clade, but the absence

of substantial jaw length evolution suggests that these large species evolved due to other

selective processes than the ones occurring in giant-dwarf speciation. The probability of

sympatric speciation for the node at the base of this clade is intermediate for a node connected to

a descendant tip (mtDNA) or low. The 28S trees nearly reject sympatric speciation as a

hypothesis for this clade.

Austrolebias phylogenetic trees and biogeography

Our results indicate that the purely mitochondrial trees used so far to generate phylogenetic

hypotheses for this genus (e.g. Garcia *et al* 2014) should be systematically complemented with

nuclear ones now that mito-nuclear discordance is suggested. The species complexes described

in Garcia *et al* (2014) are only partially supported. The clade of large species with long jaws

containing *elongatus* is confirmed by our analysis. *C. albipunctatus* is a sister taxon to some of

the *Hypsolebias* species in our analysis, and has maybe originated within a clade of *Hypsolebias*

species. Contrary to what Costa (2010) concluded, *Cynolebias* is most likely not paraphyletic to

Austrolebias. It is clearly worthwhile to repeat the assessment carried out here for as many

Cynolebias species as possible, to assess whether all speciation events in the genus were

allopatric or not and if not, whether giant-dwarf speciation could have occurred.

Our biogeographical analysis reconstructs ancestral ranges differently from Costa (2010), who

hypothesized a three-area range at the root node of *Austrolebias*. For the mitochondrial species

tree, a root range consisting of the La Plata – Negro areas is predicted. However, numerous small

species were still missing from our tree and also including non-*Austrolebias* sister taxa might

lead to different inference on the geographic origin of the genus. Our nuclear 28S tree did not

resolve all species well. We should not interpret the predicted range at the root node. It is striking

that the evolution of two clades with large species is predicted to have occurred in the region of

the Patos Lagoons (mtDNA). Previous studies also hypothesized sympatric speciation in this

region (Loureiro *et al* 2015). It has apparently been less affected by marine incursions in the

Miocene (Hubert and Renno 2006). Combined with the lack of secondary immigration of

Austrolebias species from elsewhere, this could have increased the scope for local

diversification. The third taxon with large species (which includes *vazferreirai*) is more

associated with the areas where marine incursions have taken place, such that one can now

hypothesize that the large sizes in these species maybe correlate with increased dispersal

capabilities into newly available and more rapidly changing habitats.

Determining the odds of "mechanistic" speciation scenarios

Whether sympatric speciation occurs easily and with appreciable frequency has been repeatedly

debated (Coyne and Orr 2004; Dieckmann *et al* 2004; Bolnick and Fitzpatrick 2007; Fitzpatrick

et al 2009). It has been noted (Coyne and Orr 2004) that overall probabilities across groups of

sympatric speciation are easier to obtain that conclusive proof for individual cladogenetic events.

Studies that combine an empirical example with a specific model tend to focus on a single

exemplary case (Gavrilets *et al* 2007; Gavrilets and Vose 2007; Duenez-Guzman *et al* 2009;

Sadedin *et al* 2009), while it might be more fruitful to tailor models such as the ones for giant-

dwarf speciation to entire taxonomic groups and use them to predict events across a group.

Advantageous side conditions can make it easier to demonstrate sympatric speciation (Bolnick

and Fitzpatrick 2007). Geographic isolation on islands or isolation in habitat systems with similar

properties such as isolated subterranean aquifers in the case of blind beetles (Leijs *et al* 2012),

prevent regular dispersal. This allows constraining dispersal parameters at zero so that they don't

have to be estimated. Current methods allow assigning probabilities of different biogeographical

scenarios at particular nodes in a phylogeny (Nylander *et al* 2008; Ree and Smith 2008; Buerki *et*

al 2011; Ronquist and Sanmartin 2011; Matzke 2014) and we have used such a parametric model

to predict probabilities of sympatric speciation at specific nodes, after checking that the model

predicts an overall non-zero probability of sympatric speciation events. A thorough inspection of

the results and fitting models to pruned trees (see below) revealed that these models have their

own advantageous side conditions to predict sympatric speciation at deeper nodes in a tree: sister

species with identical ranges.

Limitations and prospects

When we pruned the mtDNA trees to remove four species where secondary contact might have

been mistaken for sympatric speciation (*A. wolterstorffi*, *gynmoventris*, *periodicus*, *affinis*), zero

probabilities for sympatric speciation were estimated for all trees in the posterior. If range

changes and dispersal jumps are seen as events and range copying with sympatric speciation as

non-events, unparsimonious reconstructions were made here with more events than necessary,

just as in Fig. 4b. This seems to be a side effect occurring when all pairs of sister species in the

tree occupy pairwise different ranges. It seems likely that this type of analysis is sensitive to the

range patterns of missing species, as predictions at deeper nodes can strongly depend on the

occurrence of events near tip nodes. Fortunately, stratification of this type of analysis is already

possible (Matzke 2014), with different parameter values in different parts of a tree. To avoid

model selection bias and cherry picking, it should be embedded in an automated routine such as

surface (Ingram and Mahler 2013) which we did not develop here. We believe that such an

approach would reduce the effects of missing data.

Our analysis and results note that introgression between sympatric species could lead to

overestimates of sympatric speciation on mtDNA phylogenetic trees while incomplete lineage

sorting in nuclear genes might blur geographic associations between species and underestimate

sympatric speciation. Moreover, species trees based on nuclear genes alone are consistent in the

statistical sense when the number of loci goes to infinity and with accurate trees per gene (e.g.,

Liu *et al* 2010), such that the now commonly used species trees based on nuclear markers with

low gene tree resolution might lead to aggravated underestimation of the probability of sympatric

speciation. Our results based on the 28S gene trees suggest such underestimation, while a

comparison of our mtDNA and 28S trees suggests introgression. The true probability of

sympatric speciation would then be in between the estimates obtained from mtDNA and nuclear

DNA trees and we expect that only a robust phylogenetic network will resolve the probabilities

reliably.

At several instances in our analysis, we had to scrutinize results and reconsider data and models.

We believe that this effort has payed off, given the limitations of the data used. Our data indicate

that a reticulate phylogeny is probable for *Austrolebias*, but for the moment we based our

analysis on a pair of species trees which we interpreted as alternative bifurcation histories

suggested by each gene tree. It would be advantageous if it were generally easy to constrain trait

and range evolution along certain branches and at nodes in phylogenetic trees, even for

exploratory purposes. Phylogenetic comparative modeling now does start allowing for exchange

between branches, by modeling hybridization effects on traits (Jhwueng and O'Meara 2015) but

the models will inevitably become more parameter-rich hence sacrificing statistical power. We

stated in the Methods section that biogeographic models already allow different types of

constraints. It is not obvious how to construct these in agreement with introgressions suggested

by different gene trees.

Measurement error in the morphological species traits could not be estimated jointly with multi-

modal OU phylogenetic comparative models, motivating our simulation of measurement error

effects. In future studies, replacing field measurements by lab measurements in standardized

environments might allow for a more precise assessment of variability in species traits. The areas

of endemism we used to delineate species ranges might be too crude as well, and more detailed

range assessments would be useful. This study motivates more ecological life history

assessments. In the field, annual killifish occur in different local assemblages with the large

species sometimes absent, which might facilitate investigations of current selective pressures on

body size and jaw length. The demonstration of multi-peaked adaptive landscapes or local fitness

minima in the absence of piscivores would lend further indirect support to the plausibility of

giant-dwarf speciation. However, since the main traits involved will be size-related, we will need

to discriminate between this scenario and other types of character displacement (Schluter 2000;

Pfennig and Pfennig 2010).

Given that our phylogenetic hypotheses were based on limited data, much scope seems left to

reject our new hypotheses with better trees. It will be useful to investigate whether introgression,

hybridization and the associated genomic consequences are common in *Austrolebias*, also from a

life history perspective. Hybridization events might be an alternative avenue towards

diversification, leading to sudden jumps in trait values for a lineage.

Alternative scenarios

The giant-dwarf diversification scenario we propose for the evolution of large piscivorous

Austrolebias may not necessarily lead to sympatric speciation. In general, disruptive frequency

dependent selection can lead to multiple alternative evolutionary outcomes (Rueffler *et al* 2006)

of which speciation is one, and growth plasticity another (Claessen *et al* 2000). It is likely that

the ecological and evolutionary processes involved in size divergence are affected by growth

plasticity, but so far the necessary data to test this are lacking. We note that polymorphisms with

cannibal morphs were predicted to be possible by Dercole and Rinaldi (2002). The fact that

killifish life histories are annual combined with a large size divergence between incipient species

may result in assortative mating and thus a smaller probability of hybridization. This makes

diversification without speciation less likely. On the other hand, species that are both under

selection towards a shared size optimum might interbreed more easily and allow the

introgressions causing mito-nuclear discordance.

Giant-dwarf diversification could also be temporary and lead to extinction of a species or the

disappearance of a morph. In addition, the result of divergence within a population is often

identical to that of repeated invasions from elsewhere (Rundle and Schluter 2004), calling again

for a combined phenotypic-biogeographical comparative analysis. In this study, the Patos area

where the largest jaw length and size divergences occurred, was invaded only once by

Austrolebias (mtDNA). The La Plata and Chaco areas where we did not detect a dwarf-giant

speciation were invaded several times. We therefore did not find an association between

potential cases of giant-dwarf speciation and repeated invasions. In the near future however,

effects of climate change in the regions where *Austrolebias* occur might cause new invasions,

changes in local population composition and changed selection pressures. Using eco-

evolutionary modeling, we might be able to predict whether giant-dwarf speciation might be

favoured or take place again, and where it would be most or least likely.

In conclusion, we reject the hypothesis that large piscivorous *Austrolebias* annual killifish

evolved in a series of vicariance events with gradual evolution. We have demonstrated selection

regime shifts for size and jaw length in the annual killifish genus *Austrolebias*, and estimated a

non-zero probability of sympatric speciation for the genus. We have identified a particular

speciation event (the node in the phylogeny where the clade containing *elongatus* originates)

where, given all limitations of the methods and data used, giant-dwarf speciation is plausible.

Concerning the clade with *robustus*, we propose that large sizes might have been selected for

their effects on dispersal capabilities.

Acknowledgements. We thank Leonie Doorduin and Azahara Barra who collected part of the

DNA sequence data while the first three authors worked at the Institute of Biology in Leiden.

TVD was supported by an NWO Veni grant, the Amsterdam Treub foundation and received

support from Killidata.org. VS and AJH were supported by NERC. Heber Salvia, Martin

Fourcade, Lucho Lobo and Fabiana Cancino are thanked for help with obtaining samples.

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Figure legends

Figure 1. Photos of different *Austrolebias* species, the population of origin is given between

brackets. Top left: *A. prognathus* female (front) and male (large species, "Salamanca"); Top

right: *A. wolterstorffi* female (bottom) and male (large species "Canal Andreoni"); Bottom left:

A. luteoflammulatus male (small species, "La Pedrera"); Bottom right: *A. cinereus* male (large

species, "Arroyo de las Viboras").

Figure 2. Top. Alternative consensus species trees for either (a) the three mitochondrial or (b)

three 28S nuclear rDNA markers, with selection regimes of the selected OU model painted onto

the branches. Panel (a) has three different selection optima and two regime shifts, (b) four

selection optima and four shifts. Bottom. Scatter plots of estimated trait values at selection

optima, where a model is selected and parameters estimated on each tree in a sample of 500 from

the posterior distributions of species trees; (c) mtDNA data and (d) 28S rDNA data. The regimes

with the smallest trait values at the selection optima are plotted as black points, the regimes with

the largest trait values in each model with blue points. Intermediate selection regimes are in grey

(when 3 regimes are selected) or red (when 4 regimes are selected). Per selection regime,

ellipsoids are added containing 95% of the posterior density in parametric bootstrap simulations

of the trait values at the selective optima. The ellipsoid contours are grey for the selection

regimes with intermediate trait values when selected models have four regimes and black

otherwise. The selected models contain three selection regimes for 95% of the mtDNA and 28S

species trees, in 2% (mtDNA) and 5 % (28S rDNA) of the cases two regimes are preferred, and

for the remainder of the trees four regimes. The three black ellipsoids therefore represent the

models selected in the majority of cases.

Figure 3. Rates of evolution on each branch in a phylogenetic tree estimated from a fit of stable

trait distributions. Median rates for all branches in samples of 500 trees from the posterior tree

distributions are represented, (a) for mtDNA species trees and (b) for 28S rDNA species trees.

The rates on the branches leading towards *A. wolterstorffi* are in red, towards the most recent

common ancestor of the three-species clade with *robustus* in black. The rates on the branches

towards the most recent common ancestor of the four-species clade with *elongatus* are in blue. In

the panel for the 28S trees, open blue points are added for the rates towards the most recent

common ancestor of *elongatus, monstrosus* and *prognatus*.

Figure 4. Biogeographical reconstruction of areas of endemism at ancestral nodes along

consensus phylogenetic trees for (a) mtDNA (b) 28S rDNA data. Areas are abbreviated as

indicated in Table 1. B: the lower La Plata River basin and middle–lower Uruguay River basin,

blue; R: Patos lagoon system and adjacent coastal plains to the south, yellow; S: the western part

of the Paraguay River basin, white; M: Negro River drainage of the Uruguay River basin, and

upper and middle sections of the Jacuí, Santa Maria, Jaguarão and Quaraí river drainages, red. At

each cladogenetic event in the tree, the descendant ranges with largest probability are shown.

Figure 5. Results from stochastic mapping given samples of phylogenetic trees and selected

biogeographic models. (a) Simulations on 500 trees sampled from the posterior for the mtDNA

data, (b) 500 trees sampled from the posterior for the 28S rDNA data. Per node in a phylogenetic

tree, the proportion of mappings which represent sympatric speciation is determined and

histograms pooling these proportions over all trees and nodes are shown. We observed that these

probabilities have very different distributions when nodes are directly connected to a tip or not.

For that reason we plot these categories in separate columns. A probability of one in a panel

means that all 100 mappings for a node in a tree corresponded to sympatric speciation, a

probability zero that no mappings represented sympatric speciation. When extreme probabilities

occurred much more often than intermediate ones, we adjusted the scale of the histogram to

make these last ones easily visible and wrote the counts next to the bars for the extreme

probabilities. Per row, the nodes leading to a particular node written above the panel are colored

black and superimposed on the pooled nodes in grey (mrca: most recent common ancestor).

Under each histogram, the range of probabilities occurring for that node is indicated by black

bars. In column (b) we only represent the nodes of models which estimated a non-zero

probability of sympatric speciation, i.e., which rejected the null hypothesis of no sympatric

speciation.

Table 1. Biogeographical Areas. After Costa 2010.

Area of endemism	Abbreviation	Properties
Western Paraguay	S (Salta)	the western part of the Paraguay River basin
La Plata	B (Buenos Aires)	the lower La Plata River basin and middle–lower Uruguay River basin
Negro	M (Melo)	Negro River drainage of the Uruguay River basin, and upper and middle sections of the Jacuí, Santa Maria, Jaguarão and Quaraí river drainages
Patos	R (Rocha)	Patos lagoon system and adjacent coastal plains to the south

Table 2. Robustness of results across posterior distributions of phylogenetic trees. Each analysis was repeated on a sample of 500 trees from the posterior distributions. Per node for a particular most recent common ancestor (MRCA), the fraction of trees with a regime shift and when a regime shift was predicted at that node, the average trait changes for body length (size) and jaw length scores (Surface) are given. For cladogenetic events leading to that node, the average proportion of stochastic character mappings (BioGeoBears) with sympatric speciation is given and the average rank of the rate of evolution (stabletraits) averaged across the posterior. Between brackets: standard deviations. For the 28S trees, BiogeoBears often converges to a model with no sympatric speciation. For that reason, we give average proportions of mappings with sympatric speciation at particular nodes for two groups of models (italic): with non-zero weights of sympatric speciation / with zero weights.

Gene tree	MRCA *elongatus, monstrosus, prognathus, cheradophilus*	MRCA *elongatus, monstrosus, prognathus*	Ancestor *wolterstorffi*	MRCA *robustus, vazferreirai, cinereus*
Surface				
mtDNA	0.99 Size score 93 (23) Jaw score 33 (16)		0.98 Size score 43 (26) Jaw score 16 (12)	0.17 Size score 31 (6) Jaw score 9 (3)
28S rDNA	0.50 Size score 38 (17) Jaw score 7 (6)	1.00 Size score 77 (26) Jaw score 21 (8)	0.57 Size score 33 (5) Jaw score 6 (2)	0.63 Size score 34 (6) Jaw score 6 (2)
Stabletraits				
mtDNA	Size score 40 (1) Jaw score 42 (0)		Size score 34 (3) Jaw score 40 (2)	Size score 18 (2) Jaw score 28 (2)
28S rDNA	Size score 36 (2) Jaw score 41 (0)	Size score 42 (0) Jaw score 42 (0)	Size score 39 (1) Jaw score 40 (1)	Size score 24 (6) Jaw score 15 (10)
BioGeoBEARS				
mtDNA	0.61		0.97	0.82
28S rDNA	*0.75 / 0*	*0.5 / 0*	*0.49 / 0*	*0.18 / 0*

Figure 1

Figure 2.

Figure 3.

Figure 4.

Figure 5

(a) mtDNA

(b) 28S rDNA

P[the speciation event is sympatric]