Quartet Sampling distinguishes lack of support from conflicting support

in the plant tree of life[1]

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ABSTRACT

Premise of the Study— Phylogenetic support has been difficult to evaluate within the plant

tree of life partly due to the inability of standard methods to distinguish conflicted versus poorly

informed branches. As phylogenomic and broad-scale datasets continue to grow, support

measures are needed that are more efficient and informative.

Methods— We describe the Quartet Sampling (QS) method that synthesizes several

phylogenetic and genomic analytical approaches into a quartet-based evaluation system. QS

rapidly characterizes discordance in large-sparse and genome-wide datasets, overcoming issues of

sparse alignment and distinguishing strong conflict from weak support. We test this method with

simulations and recent plant phylogenies inferred from variously sized datasets.

Key Results— QS scores decrease in variance with increasing replicates and are not strongly

affected by branch depth. Patterns of QS support from different phylogenies leads to a coherent

understanding of ancestral branches defining key disagreements, including *Ginkgo*+cycad,

magnoliids+eudicots (excluding monocots), and mosses+liverworts. The relationships of ANA

grade angiosperms, major monocot groups, and bryophytes and fern families are found to likely

be the result of discordant evolutionary histories, rather than poor information. Also, analyses of

phylogenomic data show QS can detect discordance due to introgression.

Conclusions— The QS method represents an efficient and effective synthesis of phylogenetic

tests that offer more comprehensive and specific information on branch support than conventional

measures. The QS method corroborates growing evidence that phylogenomic investigations that

34 incorporate discordance testing are warranted to reconstruct the complex evolutionary histories

35 surrounding in particular ANA grade angiosperms, monocots, and non-vascular plants.

36 **Key words:** bootstrap; branch support; discordance; introgression; lineage sorting;

37 phylogenetics; phylogenetic methods; phylogenomics; plant tree of life; quartet sampling

38 INTRODUCTION

Discordance and uncertainty have emerged as a consistent feature throughout the history of our

evolving model of the plant tree of life (Crane, 1985; Chase et al., 1993; Palmer et al., 2004;

Soltis et al., 2011; Wickett et al., 2014). Furthermore, key points of uncertainty and contention

occur at pivotal transitions in the evolution of plant life on earth, such as the development of

vascular tissue (Pryer et al., 2001; Steemans et al., 2009; Banks et al., 2011), the rise of

seed-bearing plants (Chase et al., 1993; Chaw et al., 1997; Bowe et al., 2000; Qiu et al., 2006;

Jiao et al., 2011), and the explosive radiation of flowering plants (Crane, 1985; The Amborella

Genome Project, 2013; Goremykin et al., 2015; Taylor et al., 2015; Simmons, 2016; Edwards

et al., 2016). Modern phylogenomic datasets, rather than quelling these disagreements, have now

repeatedly shown that these phylogenetic conflicts are not only caused by methodological error or

data bias, but also are often the result of genuine biological processes. These forces most

commonly include incomplete lineage sorting (ILS), introgressive hybridization, and paralog

duplication-loss (e.g., Zhong et al., 2013b; Wickett et al., 2014; Zwickl et al., 2014; Yang et al.,

2015; Eaton et al., 2016; Pease et al., 2016b; Goulet et al., 2017; Walker et al., In Press). While

several methods have been proposed to deal with these issues in the context of species tree

inference (e.g., Zwickl and Hillis, 2002; Ogden and Rosenberg, 2006; Shavit Grievink et al.,

2010; Aberer et al., 2012; Anderson et al., 2012; Roure et al., 2012; Hinchliff and Roalson, 2013;

Mirarab et al., 2014), we still lack a generalized framework to quantify phylogenetic uncertainty

(specifically branch support) that distinguishes poorly informed branches from the increasingly

common case of multiple strongly supported, but mutually exclusive, phylogenetic histories.

Therefore, the development of systems of phylogenetic evaluation designed to utilize and describe

discordance (rather than minimize or control for it as error) offers strong promise to provide a

more holistic picture of the current state of the plant tree of life.

Quantification of branch support for molecular phylogenies has been proposed under many

methods over the last few decades (Felsenstein, 1985; Farris et al., 1996; Larget and Simon, 1999;

Anisimova and Gascuel, 2006; Anisimova et al., 2011; Ronquist et al., 2012; Larget, 2013).

Historically, one of the most commonly used tests has been the non-parametric bootstrap (NBS;

Felsenstein, 1985), which, along with recent variants like the rapid bootstrap (RBS; Stamatakis

et al., 2008), resamples the original data with replacement assuming that aligned sites are

independent and identically distributed (i.i.d.) samples that approximate the true underlying

distribution (Efron, 1992; Felsenstein, 1985). In practice, the assumptions of NBS (in particular

site independence) may rarely be met and can deteriorate under a variety of conditions

(Felsenstein, 1985; Felsenstein and Kishino, 1993; Hillis and Bull, 1993; Sanderson, 1995;

Andrews, 2000; Alfaro, 2003; Cummings et al., 2003). More recently the UltraFast bootstrap

approximation (UFboot) method, utilizing a likelihood-based candidate tree testing, was proposed

to address speed and score interpretation issues for NBS (Minh et al. (2013); and see comparison

in Simmons and Norton (2014)).

The other most common branch support metric has been the Bayesian posterior probability

(PP). PP scores are typically calculated from posterior distributions of trees generated using a

Markov chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) sampler and then summarized using a majority-rule

consensus tree (e.g, Larget and Simon, 1999; Drummond and Rambaut, 2007; Ronquist et al.,

2012; Larget, 2013). The interpretation of PP values is arguably more straightforward than

bootstrap proportions, as PP values represent the simple probability that a clade exists in the

underlying tree (conditioned on the model of evolution employed, and assuming the data have

evolved in a treelike fashion), and do not involve data resampling. The individual and relative

performance of PP has been well-documented and generally favorable (Wilcox et al., 2002;

Alfaro, 2003; Cummings et al., 2003; Huelsenbeck and Rannala, 2004). However, it has been

recognized that in some scenarios (e.g., oversimplified substitution models) PP may give liberal

support (Suzuki et al., 2002; Douady et al., 2003; Nylander et al., 2004), and there are indications

that PP also may fail under a multi-species coalescent framework with conflicting phylogenies

(e.g., Reid et al., 2013). Some studies have noted the disproportionate effects of a few genes in

tipping the scales in the case of low information in large datasets (Brown and Thomson, 2016;

Shen et al., 2017).

Modern phylogenetic datasets being assembled to model the plant tree of life are currently

trending in two directions. Ongoing efforts to expand genetic sampling to as many plant species

as possible have produced increasingly species-rich, but data-sparse, alignments (i.e., large-sparse

matrices). Meanwhile, the accelerating accretion of new genomes and transcriptomes will

continue to deepen genome-wide datasets with millions of aligned sites. Both types of data

present particular challenges to both the tractability and interpretation of phylogenetic branch

support methods. NBS scores are known to perform poorly for large-sparse matrices (Wiens and

Morrill, 2011; Smith et al., 2011; Roure et al., 2012; Hinchliff and Roalson, 2013; Hinchliff and

Smith, 2014b), where the sampling procedure generates uninformative pseudo-replicates that

mostly omit informative sites (or consist of mostly missing data). The problem of uninformative

pseudo-replicates also applies to alignment jackknifing used on sparse alignments, where

alignments are sampled without replacement. Therefore, alignment jackknifing also does not

offer a functional solution for large alignments with missing data.

Quantifying phylogenetic support from complete datasets brings unique challenges. By

"complete" dataset, we refer to any molecular data that is not a smaller subset of some larger

whole, which means not only whole genomes, but also whole transcriptomes, and even whole

plastid/mitochondrial genomes. PPs provide an appropriate testing framework and

straightforward interpretation, but available Bayesian methods of analysis and computational

speeds do not scale to typical phylogenomic datasets. Resampling methods (including NBS)

gauge how well the resampled dataset replicate the initial result, but complete datasets are not

samples of any larger whole. PP and NBS scores therefore both appear unsuitable for use on large

datasets, the former due to feasibility and the latter due to its assumption (Smith et al., 2009;

Hinchliff and Smith, 2014b).

A relatively well-studied, but less frequently applied, family of tests are the likelihood ratio

tests, such as the approximate likelihood ratio test (aLRT), the Shimodaira–Hasegawa [SH]-like

aLRT (SH-aLRT), and the Bayesian-like LRT (bLRT) (Anisimova and Gascuel, 2006; Guindon

et al., 2010; Anisimova et al., 2011). These tests conduct an approximated LRT of the alternative

nearest-neighbor interchange (NNI) moves at each branch of an optimized tree topology.

SH-aLRT has been shown to perform well (Anisimova et al., 2011; Simmons and Norton, 2014;

Simmons and Randle, 2014) and is computationally efficient enough to be run on large datasets in

large part because it does not require generation of multiple topology replicates (as in NBS).

Despite multiple implementations in PhyML and RAxML, and being the default support measure

in FastTree, this test has rarely been used in published studies (Guindon et al., 2010; Price et al.,

2010; Stamatakis, 2014).

As phylogenomics has developed over the last decade, a variety of methods have been

introduced to factor the increased data and inherent gene tree-species tree conflict. These methods

measure the concordance of gene trees (broadly referring to a phylogeny from any sub-sampled

genomic region), including the internode and tree certainty scores (IC/TC; Rokas et al., 2003;

Salichos et al., 2014; Kobert et al., 2016), Bayesian concordance factors (Ané et al., 2006), and

other concordance measures (Allman et al., 2017). These various certainty scores are developed

around the central concept of a branch support statistic that measures concordance of various

trees with a particular tree hypothesis. This perspective on phylogenetic evaluation offers much in

terms of partitioning phylogenetic discordance and analyzing larger alignments more rapidly in a

phylogenomic coalescent-based framework, but these methods that address discordance using

gene trees may not be as suitable for large-sparse alignments.

Finally, quartet methods—in particular quartet puzzling methods—have been examined

extensively in phylogenetics, especially in relation to phylogenetic reconstruction (Strimmer

et al., 1997; Strimmer and von Haeseler, 1997; Ranwez and Gascuel, 2001; Chifman and

Kubatko, 2014; Mirarab et al., 2014). A quartet support method called "reliability values," which

correlates with NBS values, is calculated as a side effect of the quartet puzzling procedure

(Strimmer et al., 1997; Strimmer and von Haeseler, 1997). More recently, quartet procedures have

been explored to facilitate sampling of large-sparse alignments (Misof et al., 2013) and as part of

coalescent-based quartet inference methods (Gaither and Kubatko, 2016; Sayyari and Mirarab,

2016). These quartet methods benefit not only from the speed advantages of a smaller alignment,

but also from the statistical consistency of quartet trees, which avoid complex lineage sorting

issues that occur with more speciose phylogenies (Rosenberg, 2002; Degnan and Salter, 2005).

Few measures of support (except concordance methods) explicitly operate with the

expectation of multiple histories, or fail to distinguish different causes of poor support for a

branch in the phylogeny. In practice, this means when a phylogenetic relationship shows poor

support under NBS or PP, the specific cause is not apparent since these tests do not distinguish

between the case of multiple supported-but-conflicting phylogenetic relationships and the case of

simply low information. Being able to distinguish among these causes of low phylogenetic

support and to identify branches that have a strong consensus and a strong secondary evolutionary

history would provide valuable insight into the plant tree of life (among others; and see also

Brown and Lemmon, 2007).

Here, we describe the Quartet Sampling (QS) method (Fig. 1 and Table 1), which blends

aspects from many of the evaluation methods described above and leverages the efficiency of

quartet-based evaluation. The goal of the QS method is to evaluate phylogenies (particularly

large-sparse and genome-wide) by dissecting phylogenetic discordance to distinguish among (1)

differences in phylogenetic branch support due to lack of information (the general goal of

bootstrap or Bayesian posteriors), (2) poor support due to discordance as a result of lineage

sorting or introgression (as in concordance measures), and (3) low support due to particular taxa

with poor or conflicted information (i.e., "rogue taxa"; Wilkinson, 1996; Aberer et al., 2012).

These various causes of discordance are frequently surveyed separately in many modern

phylogenetic and particularly phylogenomic studies (e.g., Xi et al., 2014a; Wickett et al., 2014;

Yang et al., 2015; Pease et al., 2016b; Walker et al., In Press), but the QS method provides a

unified method for their execution, interpretation, and reporting. Additionally, the QS method

offers a viable means to describe branch support in large phylogenies built from sparse

alignments (10,000–30,000 tips with >80% missing data), datasets for which Bayesian analyses

are simply not tractable. We also describe how QS enhances analysis of both genome-wide

datasets and smaller-scale multi-gene data sets conventionally used in systematics.

In this study, we will (1) describe the features, parameters, and interpretation of the QS

method, (2) validate the QS method with simulations that demonstrate its effectiveness, and (3)

evaluate and discuss the plant tree of life by testing the QS method on recently published

large-sparse and phylogenomic datasets at timescales spanning from Viridiplantae to sub-generic

clades. The goal of the re-analysis of these phylogenies is not to compare the methods of tree

inference or dataset composition, but instead to use the QS method to collectively analyze these

data as a diverse set of alternative phylogenetic hypotheses of the plant trees of life. We show

consistently through these datasets that the QS method acts as a more conservative test of branch

support that provides greater discrimination between highly supported and poorly supported

branches than other support measures. We also show that the QS method can identify branches in

a phylogeny where biological conflict is likely occurring, which can inform targeting of more

detailed investigations within a clade. Finally, we show several cases where low support for the

given phylogenetic relationship and strong counter-support for an alternative relationship together

indicate a coherent consensus. In other cases, QS specifically indicate the likely presence of

alternative phylogenetic histories, as distinct from low branch support. We hope this study

encourages additional discussion, testing, and innovation of new phylogenetic evaluation

methods. We also hope it contributes to the broader discussion about moving the plant tree of life

beyond the increasingly difficult goal of resolving a single unified 'Species Tree' (Hahn and

Nakhleh, 2015; Smith et al., 2015), and into a future where the complex "multiverse" of

phylogenetic relationships that is manifest throughout the plant tree of life are more fully

explored and appreciated.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Quartet Sampling—   The Quartet Sampling (QS) procedure outlined here was inspired by

aspects from several quartet-based and concordance methods, most particularly the process

originally outlined by Hinchliff and Smith (2014b). The QS method takes an existing

phylogenetic topology (which can be inferred by any method) and a molecular dataset (not

necessarily the one that generated the phylogeny) and separately evaluates one or more internal

branches on the given phylogeny. The QS method (Fig. 1) was designed to rapidly and

simultaneously assess the confidence, consistency, and informativeness of internal tree

relationships, concurrent with an analysis of the reliability of each terminal branch.

For a given phylogeny, each observed internal tree branch partitions the tree into four

non-overlapping subsets of taxa (Fig. 1A). These four sets of taxa can exist in three possible

relationships: the concordant relationship that matches the configuration in the given topology

and two alternative discordant configurations. The QS method repeatedly and randomly samples

one taxon from each of the four subsets and then evaluates the likelihood all three possible

phylogenies given the sequence data for the randomly selected quartet spanning that particular

branch.

For each quartet sampled for the focal branch, the likelihood is evaluated (using RAxML or

PAUP*; Stamatakis, 2014; Swofford and Sullivan, 2003) for all three possible topologies that

these four sampled taxa can take. The quartet topology with the best likelihood is then recorded

and tabulated across all replicates, generating a set of counts (across all replicates per branch) for

the concordant and each of the two discordant relationships. If a minimum alignment overlap is

specified, then quartets must contain the minimum number of overlapping non-empty sites for all

four taxa to be considered suitable for any calculations. Additionally, a parameter of a minimum

likelihood differential may be set. If the most-likely topology (of the three) does not exceed the

likelihood of the second-most-likely phylogeny by the set threshold then the quartet is considered

"uninformative" and tabulated separately. Therefore, for a given internal branch, the QS method

generates counts of the three possible topologies (and uninformative replicates) sampled from

different quartets of taxa spanning the particular branch.

The QS method uses these resampled quartet tree counts to calculate three scores for each

internal branch of the focal tree (Fig. 1B, Table 1, and Appendix S1; see Supplemental Data with

this article). The QC (Quartet Concordance) score is an entropy-like measure (similar to the ICA

score; Salichos et al. 2014) that quantifies the relative support among the three possible

resolutions of four taxa. When the most commonly sampled topology is concordant with the input

tree, then the QC takes positive values in the range (0,1]. Thus, QC=1 when all quartet trees are

concordant with the focal branch. When one of the discordant topologies is the most commonly

resampled quartet, QC takes negative values in the range [–1,0), approaching –1 when all quartet

trees are one of the two discordant phylogenies. When support is evenly split among the three

alternative topologies (or two if only two of the three possible are sampled), QC equals 0.

The QD (Quartet Differential) score uses the logic of the f- and D-statistics for introgression

(Reich et al., 2009; Green et al., 2010; Durand et al., 2011; Pease and Hahn, 2015) and measures

the disparity between the sampled proportions of the two discordant topologies (though with gene

tree proportions, rather than site frequencies). The QD score does not specifically quantify

introgression nor identify introgressing taxa, but does indicate that one alternative relationship is

sampled more often than the other. High values of QD report that there is one clearly preferred

topology among the two discordant topologies, a potential indication of a biased biological

process beyond background lineage sorting on the given branch, including introgression, strong

rate heterogeneity, heterogeneous base compositions, etc. QD varies in the range [0,1] with a

value of 0, meaning no skew in the proportions of discordant trees, and the extreme value of 1,

which means all discordant trees sampled are only from one of the two possible alternative

relationships.

The QU score (Quartet Uncertainty) quantifies the overall proportion of quartets for a given

branch where the tree with the best likelihood value has a likelihood that is not higher than the

next most likely tree by a given differential cutoff. This ensures that replicates are not counted as

being concordant or discordant when the molecular data itself is effectively equivocal on the

topology by all three options having nearly indistinguishable likelihood scores. QU is measured

in the range [0,1], which indicates the proportion of sampled quartets that did not exceed of the

cutoff. A QU of 0 means no "uncertain" quartets (i.e., highly informative data), while a value of 1

indicates 100% of quartets were uncertain (i.e., no information for the given branch). QU reports

the informativeness of the branch, which in conjunction with QD and QC distinguishes between

branches that have low information versus those with conflicting information (i.e., high

discordance).

Finally, for each terminal taxon, a QF (Quartet Fidelity) score is calculated to report what

proportion of the time inclusion of a given taxon in a quartet (across all branches) results in a

discordant quartet topology. QF is therefore similar in approach to a "rogue taxon" test

(Wilkinson, 1996; Aberer et al., 2012). For a given taxon, the QF score is measured in the range

[0,1] as the proportion of quartet topologies involving the taxon that are concordant with the focal

tree branch. Therefore, QF=1 indicates a given taxon always produces concordant topologies

when used in a quartet replicate. QF values approaching zero indicate mostly discordant

topologies involving this taxon, and may indicate poor sequence quality or identity, a

lineage-specific process that is distorting the phylogeny, or that the taxon is significantly

misplaced in the given tree. Note that QF differs specifically from QC/QD/QU by being a

taxon-specific test across internal branch tests rather than a branch-specific test.

Collectively, these four tests represent a means to distinguish the consistency of a branch

(QC), the presence of a secondary evolutionary history (QD), the amount of information

regarding a branch (QU), and the reliability of individual taxa in the tree (QF; Fig. 1B and see

Table 1). Taken together these tests provide a means to disentangle these effects rather than have

them conflated under a summary score as in standard measures of phylogenetic support. For a full

technical description of the QS method, see Appendix S1.

Guidelines for implementation of QS— We implemented the above procedure in `Python` in

a program `quartetsampling` that samples an alignment randomly to generate many

representative quartet topology replicates for each internal branch in a corresponding focal tree

(https://github.com/fephyfofum/quartetsampling). This procedure has a number of advantages

over NBS for larger datasets. First, alignment columns are not resampled (as in NBS and RBS),

which allows even very sparse alignments to be used. Second, the number of likelihood

calculations that are required is the number of internal branches in the tree multiplied by the

number of replicates per branch multiplied by three possible topologies. Since computation time

scales linearly with the number of taxa, individual replicates are fast, and the computations can be

readily parallelized across processors and furthermore discretized across systems (with results

combined later). This allows QS to be efficiently applied to large alignments beyond the practical

limits of NBS and PP. The most extensive computational time was for the Zanne et al. (2014b)

31,749 taxon dataset (see below), which we ran on the Wake Forest University DEAC

high-performance cluster using 8 nodes with 16 CPU each. This analysis completed 200

replicates for the full tree in 13 hours. Smaller genome-wide datasets finished 1000 gene-tree

replicates on quad-core desktops approximately 12 hours, and conventional multi-gene datasets

took only a few minutes to a few hours to run on a standard desktop.

Although the SH-aLRT was by far the fastest method we consider here, the QS was fast

enough for large scale analyses. QS can also be applied separately to only a few branches,

allowing for more thorough exploration of particular branches of interest. Furthermore, the QS

does not require the tree tested to be the maximum likelihood topology, a requirement for

SH-aLRT. For our simulated data, we found that performing 200 QS replicates per branch was

adequate to achieve low variance in QS score. As would be expected, more replicates per branch

should generally be used for larger trees to sample a greater fraction of the total possible quartets.

Furthermore, some branches, especially in large trees, may be entirely unsupported by the

alignment due to a lack of sampling overlap among appropriate taxa (i.e., no sites in the

alignment contain data from each of the four subsets of taxa; Fig. 1A). Therefore, no

phylogenetic information exists to inform the branch (i.e., are ''"indecisive" *sensu* Steel and

Sanderson, 2010), and the QS procedure identifies these branches rather than discarding them or

marking them as simply low support.

Guidelines for interpretation of QS support values— An important consideration with any

measure used to ascertain confidence is the precise interpretation. In order to facilitate accurate

interpretation of the QS scores, we provide a concise visual description of the tests (Fig. 1) and a

table describing example scores and their interpretations (Table 1). Particularly notable as shown

in Table 1 and in the results, the QS method can not only "support" or "fail to support" a given

branch hypothesis, but also can offer "counter-support" for an alternative branch (as in the

IC/ICA scores; Salichos et al., 2014; Kobert et al., 2016). Therefore, even "inaccurate" branch

hypotheses can offer information in the form strength of the "counter-support" for an alternative

quartet topology (i.e., the degree of negativity of the QC score; for examples see Fig. 6).

The QS scores we have described calculate the sensitivity of the resolution of a particular

branch to different combinations of taxa sampled around that branch. Each QS replicate

calculates whether the four sampled taxa support the resolution of the branch found in the tree

over the alternative resolutions. This framework is similar to the interpretation made by those

using taxon jackknife analyses for outgroup sensitivity (e.g., Edwards et al., 2005) and the IC

score when used with incomplete trees (Kobert et al., 2016). We argue that this interpretation is

richer in information than the NBS, and in our simulations the QC score also appears to more

conservatively and accurately assign high support values to branches that are present in the true

tree (i.e., relatively low false positive rates, at least when the likelihood threshold is small, i.e., in

the range of ∼2 used here; Appendix S2). QC scores are particularly helpful in terms of clarifying

strength of support for branches with concordant tree frequencies not close to 1 (Appendix S3).

Generation and evaluation of simulated phylogenies— We first tested the method by

generating simulated phylogenies under the pure birth (birth = 1) model of evolution with 50,

100, and 500 tips using `pxbdsim` from the `phyx` toolkit (Brown et al., 2017). Using these trees,

we generated 1000 bp alignments (no indels) under the Jukes-Cantor model with INDELible v.

1.03 (Fletcher and Yang, 2009). Trees were scaled so that the average branch lengths were about

0.2, based on the observation that this generated reasonable trees with most branches recovered

correctly from ML analyses. Using the same procedure, we also simulated trees with 500 tips and

associated alignments with ten nucleotide partitions, each with 500 sites under the Jukes-Cantor

model. We simulated both the full alignment with partitions and a modified randomly resampled

sparse alignment to examine the behavior of QS in the presence of missing data (see Appendix S1

for details). These partitioned and sparse alignments had the same qualitative features as the full

alignment.

Unlike the NBS method, which generates a set of trees from which branch support is

estimated, the QS method requires only a single input topology for which branch support will be

measured. We calculated QC, QD, QU, and QF scores for the true underlying tree as well as the

ML tree generated by RAxML, but we focus on results for the ML tree. To examine how the

number of replicates impacts the QS precision, we conducted simulations varying the number of

replicates for randomly drawn branches in the simulated trees (Fig. 2A; Appendix S4). Based on

these simulations, we elected to use 200 replicates per branch, since the variation in the QC score

was generally low across all tree sizes when this many replicates were performed. We used

RAxML and PAUP* to estimate the ML for the three alternative topologies for each QS replicate

(using the $-f$ N option and the GTRGAMMA model in RAxML). We also calculated

branch-specific QC/QD/QU and taxon-specific QF scores using likelihood differential cutoffs of

$\Delta L = 0$ (no filtering) and $\Delta L = 2.0$, which requires stronger conflicting signal to interpret

branches in the input tree as unsupported.

Testing of Empirical Datasets— While the simulations show the general reliability of the

method, our primary goal was to use this test to holistically evaluate recent large-scale plant

phylogenies, and also to show the utility and versatility of this method in subgroup and even

sub-genera analyses. Using published phylogenies and public datasets, we evaluated five recent

large-scale phylogenies, including (1) an 103-transcriptome dataset spanning Viridiplantae from

Wickett et al. (2014, abbreviated hereafter as WI2014), (2) two large-sparse phylogenies spanning

land plants from Hinchliff and Smith (2014b, abbreviated HS2014) and Zanne et al. (2014b,

abbreviated ZN2014), and (3) phylogenies spanning Magnoliophyta (angiosperms) with hundreds

of genes from Xi et al. (2014a, abbreviated XI2014) and Cannon et al. (2015b, abbreviated

CN2015). Additionally, to demonstrate the utility of this method at medium and short time scales,

we evaluated two whole transcriptome datasets from the wild tomato clade *Solanum* sect.

Lycopersicon from Pease et al. (2016b, abbreviated PE2016) and carnivorous plants from the

order Caryophyllales from Walker et al. (In Press, abbreviated WA2017). Finally, we tested this

method on a more typical medium-sized multi-locus dataset from Polypodopsida (ferns) from

Pryer et al. (2016b, abbreviated PR2016), such as might appear in many phylogenetic studies of

large subgroups. Data for these studies were obtained from datadryad.org and iplant.org

(Hinchliff and Smith, 2014a; Matasci et al., 2014; Xi et al., 2014b; Zanne et al., 2014a; Cannon

et al., 2015a; Pease et al., 2016a; Pryer et al., 2016a; Walker et al., 2017).

In addition, we analyzed the datasets using 200 individual gene trees for XI2014 and

WA2017, and 1000 gene trees for PE2016 and WI2014. For these datasets, quartets are sampled

as usual, but only the individual gene sequence alignments are assessed. These phylogenies were

all evaluated using a minimum alignment overlap per quartet of 100 bp and a minimum likelihood

differential of 2 (i.e., the optimal tree's log-likelihood must exceed the second-most likely tree by

a value of at least 2). We also calculated the phylogenies with and without partitioning in

RAxML, but in all cases the partitioned datasets did not qualitatively differ from the results of the

unpartitioned datasets. These data are provided as supplementary data, but are not shown here.

We also either re-calculated other measures of branch support or used values from the

published studies for comparison to the QS method for each phylogeny, except HS2014 and

ZN2014 where the size and sparseness of the datasets prohibited the calculation of other measures

of support. For the datasets from CN2015, PR2016, WA2017, and XI2014 100 replicates each of

RAxML NBS and SH-test were performed. Additionally, PP scores for PR2016 were calculated

using MrBayes (Ronquist and Huelsenbeck, 2003; Ronquist et al., 2012), and IC scores for

calculated for Walker et al. (In Press). For PE2016 and WI2014, RAxML NBS, MP-EST, or IC

scores were taken from published values.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of simulated and empirical datasets shows that QS components are consistent,

convergent, and complementary— In order to examine the consistency and reliability of the

Quartet Sampling method, we first tested QS on a set of simulated phylogenies. As expected, the

QC score was generally correlated in a sigmoid fashion with the frequency of concordant trees

(Appendix S5). In order to determine the appropriate number of testing replicates and

demonstrate convergence, we conducted an analysis of the variance of the QS score by running

the QS analysis 100 times on randomly selected branches with different numbers of per-branch

replicates for trees with 50, 100, and 500 taxa. This analysis showed that the QC scores converge

(with decreasing variance as expected) on a consistent mean value for each branch as the number

of replicates increased (Fig. 2A). Sampling 200 quartets per branch reduced the variance to less

than 0.003 in all cases. Similar patterns of convergence were also found for QD values, though

with high variance (Appendix S5). We also note that since QS is a branch-specific test (not a

tree-wide test), key branches of interest can be tested individually at much higher numbers of

replicates without the need to re-test the entire tree.

QC and QD both incorporate the frequencies of discordant quartets in different ways, but for

that same reason run the risk of redundancy. However, we observed in the Hinchliff and Smith

(2014b) dataset (abbreviated as HS2014) that QD can take on a range of values for QC (Appendix

S5). As QC goes to the limits of its range (–1,1), QD values tend to have more extreme values.

These extreme values for QD were either due to a lack of discordant trees that limits sampling

(when QC approaches 1) or a high amount of one discordant tree (when QC approaches –1). This

made QC and QD related, but not strictly correlated, measures. Overall, the mean QC for the

HS2014 (0.15; interquartile range (IQR) = [–0.13, 0.46]) and Zanne et al. (2014b) (abbreviated

ZN2014; 0.17; IQR = [–0.10, 0.63]) were low compared to the less speciose phylogenies (Fig.

2B; Appendix S5). Applying a minimum log-likelihood differential threshold to small trees

tended to push scores toward extremes, resulting in more 0s and 1s (Appendix S2). As expected,

given the sparsity of the matrices for ZN2014 and HS2014, the proportion of uninformative

quartets was high in both cases (mean QU of 0.65 and 0.85, respectively).

Notably, QS found that 33.4% and 29.8% of branches in HS2014 and ZN2014, respectively,

had QC values less than –0.05. This meant that about a third of the branches in these consensus

phylogenies reported not just "low support" for the given branch, went further to report

"counter-support" for one of the two alternative topological arrangements at that branch (see

Table 1). Many empirical cases have been documented where one anomalous lineage can distort

not only its own phylogenetic placement, but can exert a wide-ranging set of distortions on the

topology (e.g., Fig. 8A, among many others). Resampling methods that infer a complete set of

tips (like NBS) will produce replicates that may also be distorted and thus firmly support these

relationships rather than highlight this discordance. Therefore, as pointed out by many other

quartet methods (Mirarab et al., 2014; Sayyari and Mirarab, 2016), the use of quartets breaks

down the problem in more manageable units that cannot be distorted by these complex lineage

sorting effects.

QS indicates strong relationships within, but not among, major land plant lineages— While

simulations and general characterizations of the QS method are necessary to demonstrate its

effectiveness, the primary goal of this study was to use QS to reanalyze and compare several

recent speciose and phylogenomic datasets to address ongoing debates of phylogenetic

relationships in the plant tree of life. We used QS methods to evaluate two of the most speciose

phylogenies of land plants presently assembled by Hinchliff and Smith (2014b) and Zanne et al.

(2014b), and one of the most comprehensive phylogenies of Viridiplantae from Wickett et al.

(2014) (abbreviated as WI2014). HS2014 spanned 13,093 taxa with a total alignment of 148,143

sites (Fig. 3), but extremely sparse overall coverage (96.4% missing characters). The alignment

used for ZN2014 (Fig. 4) contained 31,749 taxa and an alignment length of 12,632 bp, but also

with sparse coverage (82.3% missing characters). However, the QS method accommodates large,

sparse matrices, by evaluating alignment overlap only for each replicate quartet without requiring

complete occupancy for any partition of the alignment. Finally, the WI2014 (Fig. 5) contains only

80 taxa, but, as the pilot study for the 1000 Plants Project (1KP), spans the deepest time scale of

these three (including Chlorophyta) and had a highly occupied alignment of 290,718 bp with only

10.7% missing data.

Most major plant groups showed strong support in HS2014 and ZN2014, including

angiosperms (QC=0.68 and 0.75, respectively), Anthocerotophyta (hornworts; QC=0.54,0.92),

Acrogymnospermae (gymnosperms; QC=0.37,0.32), and Polypodopsida (ferns; QC=0.23,0.46).

Marchantiophyta (liverworts), rosids, and asterids all showed low support in HC2014 (QC<0.2).

Monocots (both including and excluding *Acorus*) had poor support in both HS2014 and ZN2014

(–0.05<QC<0.05). In WI2014, all the major groups (i.e., labeled internal branches in Fig. 5)

showed high support. In contrast to the generally high support for these major established groups,

we frequently found low support on the "backbone" relationships among these groups, in a

manner consistent with most previous phylogenies of land plants.

The relationships among Marchantiophyta, Bryophyta (mosses), Anthocerotophyta,

lycophytes, and "euphyllophytes" (i.e., ferns and seed-bearing plants) has also been under

substantial ongoing debate (Shaw et al., 2011). HS2014 places mosses as sister to the remaining

land plants, followed successively by liverworts, hornworts, and lycophytes. However, HS2014

indicates QC=–0.04 for a branch defining liverworts + all other land plants the exclusion of

mosses (Figs. 3B, 6A), indicating that the most common quartet branch among the replicates was

not the branch shown in the tree. By contrast WI2014 shows strong support (QC=0.67) for the

branch leading to a moss+liverwort common ancestor (Fig. 5). While ZN2014 contains only

embryophytes, it shows weak support (QC=0.15) for the branch separating moss+liverwort from

the rest of land plants. WI2014 has hornworts (represented by two *Nothoceros*) as sister to a clade

of mosses and liverworts+tracheophytes (as in Renzaglia et al., 2000), with high support for all

relationships. However, note that WI2014 showed substantial counter-support against a common

mosses+liverworts+tracheophyte ancestor to the exclusion of hornworts. Coalescent analyses in

WI2014 also support this finding of a monophyletic Bryophyta+Marchantiophyta clade.

Therefore, while the topology of HS2014 was consistent with the order of many previous

phylogenies (Nickrent et al., 2000; Qiu et al., 2006; Chang and Graham, 2011), QS supported the

alternative configuration of mosses and liverworts as sister groups (as in WI2014 and ZN2014;

see also Zhong et al., 2013a).

In all three datasets, the monophyly of vascular plants was strongly maintained, despite the

inclusion of *Selaginella* that have unusual GC content (Banks et al., 2011). However, the branch

leading to *Selaginella* often was accompanied by a higher QD value, which could be a result of

the biased composition or indication of a secondary evolutionary history. The QF value for

Selaginella in all cases was moderate, indicating that overall it did not more often produce

discordant topologies compared to other lineages. We also observed substantial discordance and

counter-support for relationships tested among various bryophyte groups and key taxa in HS2014,

possibly indicative of substantially under-appreciated hybridization among mosses (Nylander

et al., 2004). The collective results indicated a (perhaps complicated) monophyly of liverworts

and mosses, inconsistent placement of hornworts, and strong support for tracheophytes.

QS analysis of ferns confirms close relationship to seed plants and shows QS is effective on

smaller datasets— Another notable similarity of both HS2014 and ZN2014 was the poor score

at the base of "euphyllophytes" that placed ferns in a clade with seed plants. QC scores on this

branch were near zero in HS2104 and ZN2014 (0.02 and –0.06, respectively) and relatively low

for the WI2014 tree (QC=0.33); QD values were also relatively large (0.44–1). Within ferns the

arrangement of major clades in ZN2014 (Fig. 4E) was mostly consistent with the recently

published phylogeny by The Pteridophyte Phylogeny Group (PPG I, 2016). Those clades whose

relationships were counter-supported (Marratiales, Salviniales, Hymenophyllales) were

discordant with the PPG I consensus and other recent phylogenies (Pryer et al., 2004; Testo and

Sundue, 2016) demonstrating the utility of QS in highlighting suspect relationships. Some key

areas of known high uncertainty (e.g., *Saccoloma* and *Lindsaea*) were highlighted with low and

negative QC scores. Additionally, the debated position of *Equisetum* was also reflected by low

scores.

While QS was designed for large datasets, we also found that QS can perform well on smaller

multi-gene datasets conventionally used for systematics studies. Using the phylogeny and data

from Pryer et al. (2016b), we reanalyzed the 5778 bp alignment using QS, NBS, SH, and PP

scores (Fig. 7). The QS scores were more conservative, but confirmed the conclusions of Pryer

et al. (2016b) regarding the monophyly of maidenhair ferns (*Adiantum*) and its placement in a

clade with the Vittarioids. In terms of QC/QD/QU scores, ZN2014 also supported the monophyly

of *Adiantum* (0./1.0/0.83; 14 taxa), the Vittarioids (0.20/1/0.71; 8 taxa), and their common

ancestor (0.22/1/0.87). We also found that among different branches in PR2016 with fairly similar

NBS and PP values, QS offers a wide range of support values (including negative-QC

counter-support).

Gymnosperms are monophyletic under QS and support Ginkgo in a clade with cycads—

Another question that has attracted substantial debate is the relationships among the major

gymnosperm lineages and angiosperms. Under QS evaluation, HS2014, ZN2014, XI2014, and

WI2014 all indicate strong support for monophyly of recognized gymnosperm lineages. However,

the relationships among cone-bearing lineages differ among these four phylogenies. ZN2014 and

WI2014 place *Ginkgo* in a clade with cycads (consistent with Qiu et al., 2006; Bowe et al., 2000;

Lee et al., 2011; Xi et al., 2013, ; Fig. 6B). While the HS2014 topology places cycads as sister to

the remaining gymnosperms (i.e., not monophyletic with *Ginkgo*), the QS evaluation

counter-supports this relationship. Therefore, even though HS2014/WI2014 and ZN2014 had

different topological arrangements of these taxa, the QS analyses of these datasets indicates a

consistent message of a *Ginkgo*+cycads clade separate from the rest of gymnosperms.

This pattern of disagreement in topology but consistent QS interpretation was observed again

in the placement of Gnetales relative to the conifer linages (Fig. 6C). ZN2014 indicates Gnetales

in a clade with a monophyletic Pinales (consistent with Lee et al. 2011) whereas HS2014 and

WI2014 show a Gnetales+Pinaceae ancestor distinct from other conifers (i.e., the "Gnepine"

hypothesis; Bowe et al., 2000; Xi et al., 2013). However, again the HS2014 and WI2014 QS

scores offer counter-support against the "Gnepine" relationship (QC=-0.19 and -0.67,

respectively) and show that one alternative was strongly preferred (QD=0.5 and 0.1). Here again,

in evaluating different competing topologies the QS method can offer consistent interpretations

that in this case indicates the monophyly of Pinales, but perhaps also offer some (albeit weak)

evidence that warrants further examination of possible gene flow between Gnetales and Pinales.

Finally, among the non-Pinaceae conifers, we observed conflicting patterns of poor backbone

support for monophyletic clades. In both ZN2014 and HS2014, *Amentotaxus* and *Torreya* form a

clade with the rest of Taxaceae to the exclusion of *Cephalotaxus*. Relationships between these

three Taxaceae lineages are both strongly counter-supported by QS. The high values of QD

(0.56–0.8) offer indication of possible introgression among these lineages. Therefore, again QS

scores highlight a part of the phylogenetic tree that may be mis-modeled by these consensus

phylogenies.

Quartet Sampling indicates biased conflict among the ANA grade angiosperms— Few

issues in angiosperm evolution have garnered more recent debate than the relationship among the

so-called "ANA grade" angiosperms, which include *Amborella*, Nymphaeales, and

Austrobaileyales. Of the four datasets where this phylogenetic relationship was testable, only

WI2014 inferred the "*Amborella*-first" hypothesis (Figs. 5, 6D; Qiu et al., 1999; Stefanović et al.,

2004; Qiu et al., 2006; Moore et al., 2007; Soltis et al., 2011; The Amborella Genome Project,

2013). ZN2014 shows a "Nymphaeales-first" relationship (Fig. 4B), and HS2014 and XI2014

indicate "*Amborella*+Nymphaeales"-first (Fig. 3B; Appendix S6). Regardless of the resolution

inferred in the consensus phylogenies from each dataset, the branches surrounding the

ANA-grade were all counter-supported (QC<0) and biased in their discordance (QD>0.8; Fig.

6D). ZN2014 offers weak support for *Amborella*+Nymphaeales, while XI2014 counter-supports

this relationship. In HS2014, WI2014, and ZN2014, the scores on the branch that placed

Austrobaileyales as the closest relative group to the remainder of angiosperms were strongly

QC-counter-supported and QD-biased.

Two questions surround the relationships of the ANA grade angiosperms. First, what was the

relationship among these lineages? Second, are the longstanding disagreements in inference of

these relationships the result of genuine biological conflict (i.e., introgression, horizontal transfer,

etc.), limitations in the data, or a methodological artifact arising from the depth of this branch, the

monotypic status of *Amborella*, and/or the rapidity of the angiosperm radiation? On the first

question, QS lacks support for "Nymphaeales-first". Whether there more support exists for

Amborella+Nymphaeales or "*Amborella*-first" (as found also by The Amborella Genome Project,

2013) is unclear. The results we present suggest that both relationships have support in the data,

depending on changes in the dataset composition (as also found by Wickett et al. 2014).

On the second question, however, the strong QD values indicate a biased conflict that suggests

a secondary evolutionary history conflicting with the primary tree in a way that has so far evaded

comprehensive characterization. Demonstrations that bryophyte mitochondrial sequences are

present in *Amborella* (Rice et al., 2013; Taylor et al., 2015) indicate that these lineages have

experienced ancient introgressive events that might create competing evolutionary narratives in

the manner indicated by the QS results shown here (and see also Shen et al., 2017). Given the

intensity of effort to address these relationships without a broad community consensus and the

specific evidence of long-range introgression in *Amborella*, a greater understanding of

ANA-grade evolution likely lies in an examination of complex evolutionary histories rather than

in a continuation of the debate over appropriate sampling or models.

QS supports a magnoliid+eudicot ancestor and raises questions about the placement of the

Chloranthaceae and Ceratophyllaceae—   The timings and order of the relationships among the

three "core angiosperm" lineages (eudicots, monocots, and magnoliids) represent the evolution of

three clades that have transformed the biosphere. ZN2014, WI2014, and XI2014 all indicate the

existence of a magnoliid+eudicot clade (Figs. 4B, 5 Fig. 6E, Appendix S6; also in Qiu et al.,

2006; Burleigh et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2011). An alternative monocot+eudicot clade appears in

HS2014 (Fig. 3B), which has been suggested by many other past phylogenies (Jansen et al., 2007;

Moore et al., 2007; Qiu et al., 2010; Soltis et al., 2011). However, in HS2014 the QS scores

counter-support both eudicot+monocots and magnoliids/monocot+eudicot clades. Here again,

despite disagreement among the topologies of the three large-scale phylogenies, the supporting

and counter-supporting QS scores indicate a common evolutionary history.

In addition to the three major core angiosperm groups, the Chloranthaceae have frequently

been placed in a clade with magnoliids (as in Jansen et al. 2007; Moore et al. 2007; Soltis et al.

2011; Group et al. 2016, and Fig. 3 in Wickett et al. 2014). However, both HS2014 and ZN2014

place Chloranthaceae in a clade with magnoliids, monocot, and eudicots, while WI2014 places it

in a clade with just eudicots (excluding monocots and magnoliids) that is, however,

counter-supported by the sampled quartets (QC=–0.54, QD=0.95).

Ceratophyllum, often placed as the most closely related group to eudicots (Jansen et al., 2007;

Soltis et al., 2011), in HS2014 appears in a clade with the Chloranthaceae among the prior to

monocot/magnoliid/eudicot splits. However, the branch placing Chloranthaceae+*Ceratophyllum*

lineage in a clade with magnoliids+monocots+eudicots was counter-supported (Fig. 3B) with a

strongly biased QD (0.81). ZN2014 supports *Ceratophyllum* as separate from the core

angiosperms. Given that this question is inextricably linked with the relationships of the three

core angiosperm groups, a consensus was not reached by this information alone. However, this

evidence reopens the question of the relationship of Chloranthaceae and Ceratophyllaceae, both to

each other and to the ANA grade angiosperm lineages (see discussion in Eklund et al., 2004).

Relatively consistent topology but poor support found within monocots— Within monocots,

Acorus was weakly but consistently supported as a separate clade from the rest of monocots in

HS2014, ZN2014, and WI2014 (Figs. 3B, 4B, 5). In general, the arrangement of monocot orders

in both HS2014 (Fig. 3C) and ZN2014 (Fig. 4C) agreed with recent consensus phylogenies

(Givnish et al., 2010; Soltis et al., 2011; Barrett et al., 2015; Givnish et al., 2016; McKain et al.,

2016).

One exception was the placement of Liliales, which has varied in consensus trees and, here,

either was sister to commelinids with weak support (HS2014) or was sister to Asparagales

(ZN2014). The commelinid orders were resolved inconsistently between studies. The

commelinid stem branch was counter-supported in both ZN2014 and HS2014 with high QD

values. In HS2014, Arecales were separate from the rest of the commelinids, but the ancestral

commelinid branches both including and excluding Arecales were counter supported. In ZN2014,

Arecales was supported in a clade with Zingiberales and Commelinales, but the ancestral branch

for these three orders has a QD=0.79. This arrangement was consistent with previous phylogenies

(e.g., Givnish et al. (2010)) that have poor support to these relationships. From the QS results, we

would cautiously infer that (1) the relationships among the commelinids are still unknown, (2)

there may be uncharacterized secondary evolutionary history distorting the phylogenetic

placement of these groups, and (3) likely the variable data from both Liliales and Arecales

together have a joint effect that is causing inconsistency in the phylogenetic inference.

Finally, in Poaceae, Quartet Sampling made clear the well-characterized discordance and

complex relationships (e.g., Washburn et al., 2015; McKain et al., 2016). The "BOP" clade

(Bambusoideae, Oryzeae, Pooideae) was counter-supported in HS2014 and both paraphyletic and

counter-supported in ZN2014. Within the "PACMAD" clade, many of the named subgroupings

were counter-supported with negative QC values. There were particularly high QU values in both

HS2014 and ZN2014 for this clade indicating not only complex support but also low information.

Therefore, even if someone were unfamiliar with the controversies surrounding monocot

phylogenetics (as a whole and within groups), the QS evaluation framework clearly highlights

this group as one with consistently high conflict and counter-support values for the consensus

phylogenies in HS2014 and ZN2014.

Non-rosid/asterid eudicot lineages show substantial disagreement and rogue taxa— Within

eudicots, Ranunculales were supported as a separate clade from the rest of eudicots by WI2014,

HS2014, XI2014, and CN2015, or among the non-rosid/asterid eudicots in ZN2014 (Figs. 3B,

4B, 5; Appendix S6, Appendix S7). Notably in both ZN2015 and HS2014, *Nelumbo* (sacred

lotus) was placed sister to a highly supported Proteales clade, but support for the

Proteales+*Nelumbo* clade was strongly counter-supported by the QC and QD scores. This again

demonstrates a situation where QS effectively highlights this lineage's conflicted relationship

with the Proteales in a way that raises questions about a possible genuine biological (rather than

artifactual) cause of phylogenetic discordance.

Vitis vinifera (common grape vine) has also had variable inferred positions throughout

eudicots. WI2014, XI2014, and CN2015 all place *Vitis* as a "superrosid" and most closely related

clade to the rosids, but with widely ranging support and skew (QC=–0.13 to 0.63, QD=0.56 to

1.0) consistent with the conflict noted by Cannon et al. (2015b) (abbreviated CN2015; Appendix

S7). HS2014 (which sampled 64 Vitales) supported a Dilleniales+Gunnerales+Vitales clade,

while ZN2014 places Vitales+*Tetrastigma* among the rosids in a Vitales+malvid clade to the

exclusion of fabids. In the case of the grape vine, the high support in WI2014 (analyzed by gene

trees) accompanied by a high QD value (1.0) gives strong indication that while Vitales may

belong among the superrosids, an investigation of a secondary evolution history for grapes might

be warranted.

For the relationships among the superasterid groups (Caryophyllales, Berberidopsidales,

Santalales, and asterids), a common pattern was found in HS2014, ZN2015, WI2014, and XI2014

of near-zero QC values (–0.03 to 0.08), modest QD values (0–0.03), and high QU values

(0.49-0.86). This led to a consensus QS interpretation of low phylogenetic information, likely as a

result of the rapid radiation of these lineages. Generally, these phylogenies tended to support

weakly the controversial placement of Caryophyllales as most closely related to the eudicot

ancestor.

QS shows strong support for the consensus rosid phylogeny, but substantial discordance

both within and among asterid clades— HS2014 (Fig. 3D) find similar resolutions among rosid

lineages (Wang et al., 2009; Moore et al., 2010; Soltis et al., 2011; Zhao et al., 2016) (the lone

exception was the Sapindales+Huertales clade). Among the branches leading to major groups, all

were supported and most of the backbone branches were either supported or only weakly

negative. The QS scores also correctly identified a poorly supported relationship in HS2014

between *Cynomorium* and Cucurbitales (QC=–0.31). *Cynomorium*, a non-photosynthetic

parasitic plant with unusual morphology, has been placed tenuously and variably in groups as

diverse as Rosales (Zhang et al., 2009) and Saxifragales (Nickrent et al., 2005), so its poor score

here was expected and confirms the QS method's ability to detect poorly placed species. This

"rogue" status was corroborated by the below-average QF score of QF=0.18 (mean 0.21 for

HS2014). This means that for quartets that include *Cynomorium* as a randomly sampled taxon,

only 18% produced a quartet topology concordant with the HS2014 tree.

In contrast to the analysis of the rosid phylogeny from HS2014, the asterid phylogeny from

ZN2014 (Fig. 4D) appears to have substantial discordance and disagreement with most published

phylogenies (Soltis et al., 2011; Beaulieu et al., 2013; Refulio-Rodriguez and Olmstead, 2014).

ZN2014 QS scores supported the unusual hypothesis of a common Ericales+Cornales ancestor,

weakly support the campanulid clade, and counter-support a common lamiid ancestor. The

arrangement of families within Asterales either roughly conforms to Soltis et al. (2011) and

Beaulieu et al. (2013), or counter-supports branches (QC<0) that do not agree with these

consensus phylogenies. However, most of the branches that define the relationships among asterid

orders in ZN2014 were counter-supported by the data, though most have QC and QD values close

to zero. This indicates a scenario of a rapid radiation rather than hybridization (though these are

not mutually exclusive). The lamiid groups show strong support for the monophyly of the

Lamianae core orders, though in an order different from Stull et al. (2015). Among the asterids

there were also several notably low QF scores for singular genera like *Oncotheca*, *Vahlia*, and

Pentaphragma (all QF<0.16). Thus, the QS method in asterids does not necessarily add clarity to

this group, but perhaps more concretely puts into focus the combinations of discordance and low

information occurring in this group.

QS of shallow-timescale phylotranscriptomic datasets— So far, we have demonstrated the

utility of quartet sampling on large, sparse alignments which are often computationally intractable

with other support measures. We have also shown, in the case of WI2014, that a relatively large

and full occupied matrix from deep-timescale transcriptomic data can also be evaluated by QS.

However, the QS method can be used to rapidly evaluate phylogenetic support on genome-wide

datasets with little missing data for shorter evolutionary timescales. We tested the QS method on

two phylotranscriptomic datasets for the wild and domesticated tomato clade *Solanum* sect.

Lycopersicon (Fig. 8A; Pease et al., 2016b) and carnivorous plants spanning the Caryophyllales

(Fig. 8B; Walker et al., In Press).

The *Solanum* phylogeny from Pease et al. (2016b) was inferred from coding sequence

alignment of 33,105,168 nucleotide sites for 30 populations spanning all 13 wild and

domesticated tomato species, and two outgroup species. As described in Pease et al. 2016b, this

dataset contains a high level of phylogenetic discordance, but had a consensus phylogeny with

100% NBS support at all but two branches (occurring within a large species complex). However,

gene tree analysis of this group clearly showed evidence of massive phylogenetic discordance.

When we applied QS to this phylogeny using the entire alignment, scores for many branches were

also perfect (i.e., 1/0/0; Table 1). However, several of the other branches in the "Peruvianum

group" species complex had lower QS scores in the full alignment (Fig. 8A). When gene trees

were used (both a quartet of taxa and a gene alignment were randomly chosen for 1000 QS

replicates), all branches had QC<1 in a manner consistent with the gene tree discordance found

previously in this clade. We also observed the presence of high QD values within the major

subgroups reported for this clade, while nodes defining these groups showed high QC and low

QD values. This accurately captures the results found by Pease et al. (2016b) in terms of the low

discordance between groups versus high discordance within the major groups.

Most notably, the tree shown in Fig. 8A includes *S. huaylasense* accession LA1360. This

accession has been known (both from this and other datasets) to mostly likely be a hybrid

between populations from the green-fruited and red-fruited lineages (essentially those accessions

above and below LA1360, respectively, in Fig. 8A). Thus, the inclusion of this putative hybrid

lineage distorted the phylogeny as tree inference methods tried to cope with inherited and

introgressed alleles from two separate groups to place this accession in a consensus location on

the tree. While NBS scores were high for the branches surrounding the placement of LA1360, QS

showed negative QC scores and high QD scores (QD=1 for full alignment). This supports the

presence of the alternative phylogenetic history that has been previously corroborated by other

studies (see additional discussion in the Supplementary Results of Pease et al. 2016b). These data

show clearly that QS was able to distinguish between consistently supported relationships and

branches known to have conflict due to introgression (whereas NBS does not).

An analysis of transcriptomes of carnivorous plants from Caryophyllales (Fig. 8B; Walker

et al. In Press) showed QC scores consistent with IC scores. The QS scores for the ancestor of

"core Caryophyllales" were near zero and the high QD value when gene trees were used

(QD=0.68) supported the hypothesis of Walker et al. (In Press) that introgressive gene flow may

have occurred among these lineages. The evidence for placing *Drosophyllum* among the

carnivorous Caryophyllales has always been tenuous. The QS analysis here showed not only a

low QF value (QF=0.76, average for WA2017 was 0.89) for this taxon, but also low-QC/high-QD

values for the two branches that form the clade with *Ancistrocladus* and *Nepenthes*. As with the

tomato example above, this example demonstrates how QS scores can highlight an entire region

that may be distorted by the inclusion of a taxon with a strong potential for a secondary

evolutionary history (i.e., possible introgression).

CONCLUSION

In this study, our goal was to reanalyze several key and long-contested conflicts in the plant tree

of life by embracing the apparently complex relationships in the plant tree of life. The Quartet

Sampling method that we have described and demonstrated here synthesizes a blend of

phylogenetic and phylogenomic methods to provide a coherent framework for distinguishing

several causes of low phylogenetic branch support. QS also provides a tractable means to analyze

sparse datasets with tens of thousands of taxa but poor sequence overlap. Bootstrap and posterior

probability values have been shown to exhibit irregular behavior or to report uniformly high

confidence scores for large-scale datasets, despite substantial underlying conflict. Even when

conventional support measures do report low support, the specific cause of the low support is not

indicated, leaving it open to broad interpretation and speculation. Despite the decades of

documented concerns about the limitations of these support measures, bootstrap proportions

remain the dominant support measure in systematics. Our results, as well as those reported in

many other studies cited here, demonstrate the need for continuing discussion about the nature of

phylogenetic disagreement itself and how best to quantify this complexity. While much testing

and refinement of the QS method is undoubtedly left to be done, we find it provides a key

function that has been missing from other support measures, namely the ability to distinguish

among different causes of low support that commonly occur in modern molecular phylogenies.

The application of the QS method to the plant tree of life has also yielded some intriguing

results. The comparison of several recent consensus phylogenies showed that they differ at

several key, disputed relationships. However, when QS scores were compared, only one topology

was supported with the alternatives showing weak support, conflicted support, or even

counter-support (e.g., *Ginkgo* placed in a clade with cycads, Gnetales in a clade with a common

conifer ancestor, monocots separate from a magnoliid+eudicot clade, and Caryophyllales sister to

asterids). QS scores for some other relationships indicated the existence of multiple conflicting

but supported evolutionary histories (e.g., the placement of *Amborella*, possible widespread gene

flow in the monocots, and notoriously difficult-to-place genera like *Haplomitrium*, *Nelumbo*, and

Cynomorium). The artist Man Ray once remarked that "We have never attained the infinite variety

and contradictions that exist in nature." Overall, the picture painted by QS is one of substantial

contradiction, but this conflict can be a richly informative (not just confounding) illustration of

the interwoven evolutionary histories contained within the plant tree of life.

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Table 1: Quartet Sampling (QS) score interpretation. See text for details.

Example QS Score (QC/QD/QU)*	Interpretation
1.0/-/0.0	**Full support:** All sampled quartet replicates support the focal branch (QC=1) with no uncertainty when likelihood cutoffs are used (QU=0).
0.5/0.02/0.03	**Strong support:** A strong majority of quartets support the focal branch (QC=0.5) and the low skew in discordant frequencies (QD≈0) indicate no alternative history is favored.
0.7/0.9/0.03	**Strong support with discordant skew:** A strong majority of quartets support the focal branch (QC=0.7), but the skew in discordance (QD=0.9) indicates the possible presence of a supported secondary evolutionary history.
0.05/0.04/0.03	**Weak support:** Only a weak majority of quartets support the focal branch (QC=0.05), and the frequency of all three possible topologies are similar (QD≈0).
0.1/0.9/0.03	**Weak support with discordant skew:** Only a weak majority of quartets support the focal branch (QC=0.1), and the skew in discordance (QD=0.9) indicates the possible presence of a supported secondary evolutionary history.
-0.5/0.9/0.07	**Counter-support:** A strong majority of quartets support one of the alternative discordant quartet arrangements history (QC<0; QD expected to be high).
1/0.03/0.95	**Poorly informed:** Despite supportive QC/QD values, 95% of quartets failed the likelihood cutoff (QU=0.95), likely indicating few informative sites.
0.0/0.0/0.0	**Perfectly conflicted:** The (unlikely) case where the frequency of all three possible trees was equal with no uncertainty, indicating a rapid radiation or highly complex conflict.

1102   *Notes:* * QC = Quartet Concordance; QD = Quartet Differential; QU = Quartet Uncertainty.

FIGURE LEGENDS

Fig. 1. Description of the Quartet Sampling method. (A) The focal branch "*b*" divides the phylogeny into four subclades $\{S_1, S_2, S_3, S_4\}$ from which tips (A–J) are sampled. Two replicates with different sampled tips for the given branch are shown with the three possible unrooted topologies (one concordant and two discordant). (B) Each internal branch is labeled with a set of three scores (QC/QD/QU), which offer different, but complementary, information. Terminal branches are evaluated by the QF score, which reports the frequency of a taxon generating concordant topologies. (See Materials and Methods for full details and Supplementary Methods for a technical description.)

Fig. 2. Results of Simulation Testing of the Quartet Sampling Method. (A) QC values converge on a central value with increasing numbers of replicates from randomly selected branches from simulated trees with 50, 100, and 500 taxa. (B) Distributions of QC, QU, and QF values for HS2014 (black), ZN2014 (dotted black), and XI2014/CN2015/PR2016/WA2017 (similar distributions; gray solid). (C) Mean QC values (diamond) with 5%ile to 95%ile (whiskers) for branches in HS2015 binned by the number of subtending taxa (i.e., moving root-ward in the tree left-to-right). Overall mean is shown with horizontal dotted line.

Fig. 3. Phylogeny from Hinchliff and Smith (2014b). (A) Full phylogeny with heat map coloration of branches by QC scores for internal branches: dark green (QC>0.2), light green (0.2≤QC>0), light orange (0≤QC≤–0.05, or dark orange (QC>–0.05). (B) QC/QD/QU scores (200 replicates of full alignment) for major plant groups and key orders within angiosperms. QC/QD/QU scores after group names are for the ancestral branch (i.e., the "stem" branch), and a single QF score is shown for monotypic tips. Major subgroups groups are highlighted with vertical labels. (C) QS scores for monocots (excluding *Acorus*). (D,E,F) QS scores for rosids, Bryophyta, and gymnosperms. Abbreviations: Acro, Acrogymnospermae; ANA, ANA grade; Aru, Arundinoideae; Bry, Bryophyta, Chl, Chloridoideae; Dan, Danthonioideae; Mar, Marchantiophyta; Poly, Polypodopsida.

Fig. 4. Phylogeny from Zanne et al. (2014b). (A) Full phylogeny with heat map coloration of branches by QC scores

for internal branches using same color scheme as (Fig. 3). (B) QC/QD/QU scores (200 replicates of full alignment)

for major plant groups and key orders within angiosperms, using same color scheme as (Fig. 3). (C) QS scores shown

for monocots (except *Acorus*). (D) QS scores for asterids. (E) QS scores for fern lineages and (F) QS scores for

gymnosperm lineages respectively. Abbreviations: Alseu, Alseuosmiaceae; ANA, ANA grade angiosperms; Argo,

Argophyllaceae; Aster, Asteraceae; Bory, Boryaceae; Caly, Calycanthaceae; Eriach, Eriachneae; Good,

Goodeniaceae; gym, gymnosperms; Hypox, Hypoxidaceae; Isach, Isachneae; Phell, Phellinaceae; Poly,

Polypodopsida.

1136

1137   **Fig. 5.** Maximum likelihood phylogeny spanning Viridiplantae from Fig. 2 in Wickett et al. (2014) with QC/QD/QU

1138   scores for 200 replicates of the full alignment. Nodes are colored according to QC score using same color scheme as

1139   (Fig. 3). Bootstrap values (italicized in square brackets) from Wickett et al. (2014) are shown for comparison.

1140   Missing QS or bootstrap values indicate a perfect score. The three taxa with the lowest QF values are highlighted.

1141   Species names have been excluded or abbreviated in the case where two congeners are included.

1142

1143   **Fig. 6.** Key phylogenetic disagreements with QC scores using compared across various datasets. Branches for

1144   HS2014 and ZN2014 were resampled with 10000 replicates. Branches for WI2014 and XI2014 were exhaustively

1145   sampled (>1000 replicates). Highlighting on QC values follows the same colors as Fig. 3. "Conifers-II" refers to a

1146   hypothesized clade comprising the non-Pinales orders in Pinidae. Abbreviations: Gnet, Gnetidae; Pin, Pinidae.

1147

1148   **Fig. 7.** Phylogeny of Pteridaceae ferns from Pryer et al. (2016b) with QC/QD/QU scores for 200 replicates of the full

1149   alignment. Nodes are colored according to QC score using same color scheme as (Fig. 3).

1150   Bootstrap/SH-test/posterior probability values (italicized in square brackets) are shown for comparison. Omitted

1151   values indicate a perfect score. The three taxa with the lowest QF values are highlighted. Abbreviations: *Pityro*,

1152   *Pityrogramma*.

1153

1154   **Fig. 8.** QS scores for phylogenies from whole-transcriptome data. Omitted values indicate a perfect score. Nodes are

1155   colored according to QC score using same color scheme as (Fig. 3). (A) Phylogeny of *Solanum* sect. *Lycopersicon*

1156   from Pease et al. (2016b) Bootstrap values (italicized in square brackets) are shown for comparison. (B) Phylogeny

1157   of Caryophyllales from Walker et al. (In Press) IC scores (light grey) are shown for comparison (all bootstrap and

1158   SH-test scores were 100). The three taxa with the lowest QF values are highlighted.

APPENDICES

1159 **APPENDICES**

1160 **Appendix S1.** Supplementary Methods providing a technical description of the QS method

1161

1162 **Appendix S2.** Comparison of QC and bootstrap ICA (information criterion-all; Salichos, et al. 2014) scores on trees

1163 reconstructed from 100 simulated datasets with 50 taxa with 1,000 base pairs under a Jukes-Cantor model of

1164 evolution. Blue circles represent branches in the true tree, with the size of the circle proportional to the log of the

1165 number of substitutions. Red triangles represent branches not in the true tree.

1166

1167 **Appendix S3.** Comparison of the rapid bootstrap and quartet sampling on the ML/PP consensus tree. For each

1168 branch, the RBS, QS (raw concordant frequency (Freq1), QC score), SH, and PP scores are presented (clockwise

1169 from top left in each legend). Black dots identify clades that are not in the true tree.

1170

1171 **Appendix S4.** Shows the consistency of the frequency of concordant quartets (f_1), QC, and QD toward a central

1172 value with increasing number of per-branch replicates for a randomly selected branch. Trees with 50 taxa (left), 100

1173 taxa (center), and 500 taxa (right) are shown. Boxes show median $\pm$ IQR. Whiskers show 5th–95th percentile, with

1174 values outside this range shown as circle points.

1175

1176 **Appendix S5.** Histograms (top row) showing the distributions of QC (left), QU (middle), and QF (right) values for

1177 the HS2014 dataset (green), ZN2014 (black), and smaller dataset (XI2014, CN2015, PR2016, WA2017) with similar

1178 distributions (orange). Scatter plots (bottom row) showing the close (but non-linear) relationship between QC and

1179 raw concordant quartet frequency (f_1; left), bounded but otherwise uncorrelated relationships between QC and QD

1180 (middle), and QC and QU (right). See main text for dataset abbreviations.

1181

1182 **Appendix S6.** Phylogeny of angiosperms from Xi et al. (2014a) with QC/QD/QU scores for 200 replicates of the full

1183 alignment and for 200 replicates from individual gene trees (in parentheses). Nodes are colored according to QC

1184 score using same color scheme as (Fig. 3). MrBayes PP/RAxML NBS values (italicized in square brackets) from Xi

1185 et al. (2013). are shown for comparison. Perfect scores for any given test are omitted or shown as '*' indicates

1186 bootstrap of 100, while '-' indicates a missing value. The three taxa with the lowest QF values are highlighted.

1187

1188 **Appendix S7.** Phylogeny from Cannon et al. (2015b) with QC/QD/QU scores for 200 replicates of the full alignment.

1189 Nodes are colored according to QC score using same color scheme as (Fig. 3). Bootstrap values (italicized in square

1190 brackets) are shown for comparison. Perfect scores for any given test are omitted or shown as '*' indicates bootstrap

1191 of 100, while "–" indicates a missing value. The three taxa with the lowest QF values are highlighted.

1192

1193 **Appendix S8.** Relationship between QC and frequencies of the three possible alternative quartet topologies from QS

1194 runs on simulated data. Points represent branches in the trees, with the "test topology" axis identifying the frequency

1195 at which the topology consistent with the tree was recovered across all QS replicates for that branch, and the "alt n"

1196 axes identifying the frequencies of the two alternative (conflicting) topologies.

A

B

Quartet Sampling
Internal Node Scores $=$ 0.52 / 0.04 / 0.01

Quartet Concordance (QC)
How often is the concordant quartet inferred over both discordant quartets?

QC=1 → all concordant
QC=0 → equivocal conc./disc.
QC<0 → disc. > concordant

Quartet Differential (QD)
Are discordant #1 and #2 frequencies equal or skewed?

QD=0 → all concordant
QD=0.3 → skewed
QD=1 → all #1 or #2

Quartet Uncertainty (QU)
What proportion of replicates were uninformative?
(failed likelihood differential cutoff)

Examples:
QU=0 → no uninformative
QD=0.3 → 30% uninform.
QD=1 → none informative

Quartet Sampling
Terminal Node Scores $=$ (0.52)

Quartet Fidelity (QF)
When this taxon is sampled, how often does it produce a concordant topology?

Examples:
QF=1 → all concordant
QF=0.1 → 10% concordant
QF=0 → none concordant

A

magnoliids — monocots — other eudicots — superrosids — rosids — ANA — Acrogym — Poly — Mar — Bry — Coleochaetales+Charales — superasterids — asterids

B

Coleochaetales (green algae;0.48/0.94/0.24;2)
Charales (stoneworts;0.95/1/0.01;6)
Bryophyta (0.41/0.78/0.25;760)
0.35/0.37/0.29
Marchantiophyta (0.15/0.56/0.41;280)
-0.04/0.31/0.43
Anthocerotophyta (0.54/0.4/0.33;13)
0.33/0.26/0.32
Selaginella (0.35)
0.24/0.83/0.29
Isoetes (0.35)
0.38/0.14/0.37
Lycopodiales (0.71/0.67/0.27;5)
0.14/0.28/0.42
Polypodopsida (0.23/0.35/0.45;310)
0.02/0.18/0.43
Acrogymnospermae (0.37/0.2/0.34;87)
0.23/0.35/0.45
Amborella (0.53)
0.3/0.33/0.24
Nymphaeales (0.7/0.17/0.23;9)
0.68/0.38/0.09
Austrobaileyales (0.39/0.38/0.29;5)
-0.34/0.75/0.35
Chloranthales (0.66/1/0.35;4)
0.12/0.5/0.43
Ceratophyllum (0.35)
-0.26/0.81/0.43
magnoliids (0.2/0.09/0.34;264)
-0.29/0.84/0.39
Acorus (0.26)
0.04/0.33/0.45
monocots (0.01/0.1/0.44;2536)
-0.06/0.31/0.39
Ranunculales (0.11/0.04/0.42;186)
0.16/0.21/0.38
Nelumbo (0.31)
-0.18/0.53/0.45
Proteales (0.39/0.91/0.28;81)
-0.08/0.47/0.46
Sabiaceae (0.7/0.25/0.51;2)
0.58/0.55/0.17
Trochodendrales (0.86/0.5/0.32;2)
-0.04/0.11/0.53
Buxales (0.63/0.89/0.29;6)
-0.01/0.14/0.44
Dilleniales (0.18/0.31/0.26;10)
0.24/0.09/0.29
Gunnerales (-0.11/0.59/0.51;2)
-0.12/0.59/0.44
Vitales (0.91/1/0.17;14)
0.14/0/0.35
Saxifragales (0.26/0.38/0.38;116)
-0.05/0.34/0.45
rosids (0.05/0.06/0.35;3243)
0.03/0.05/0.33
Santalales (0.23/0.11/0.41;141)
0.04/0.25/0.38
Berberidopsidales (0.14/0.43/0.48;2)
0.07/0.08/0.47
Caryophyllales (0.16/0.12/0.31;598)
0.01/0.12/0.38
asterids (-0.01/0.04/0.41;4402)

embryophtes, tracheophytes, euphyllophytes, spermatophytes, Magnoliophyta, eudicots

C. Monocots

Alismatales (0.04/0.3/0.41;176)
Petrosaviales (0.02/0.16/0.57;2)
0.48/0.04/0.19
Dioscoreales (0.05/0.29/0.49;19)
0.21/0.33/0.35
Pandanales (0.34/0.53/0.37;26)
-0.1/0.38/0.43
Orchidaceae (0.62/0.33/0.17;679)
0.16/0.16/0.35
other Asparagales (0.02/0.15/0.5;347)
-0.02/0.23/0.42
Liliales (0.27/0/0.38;67)
0.03/0.24/0.39
Arecales (0.09/0.08/0.47;196)
-0.06/0.45/0.36
Zingiberales (0.38/0.11/0.18;97)
0.08/0/0.33
Commelinales (0.05/0.31/0.28;52)
-0.12/0.54/0.34
Bromeliaceae (0.49/0.11/0.46;55)
0.32/0.2/0.23
other Poales families (-/-/-;204)
-0.01/0.16/0.44
Bambusoideae (0.19/0.54/0.51;88)
-0.04/0.33/0.46
Ehrhardteae (0.45/0.85/0.43;4)
-0.09/0.52/0.49
Oryzeae (0.69/0.67/0.34;11)
0.04/0.1/0.46
Pooideae (-0.07/0.45/0.53;188)
0.13/0.59/0.54
Micrairoideae (0.01/0.12/0.67;8)
0.04/0.21/0.43
Aristidoideae (0.28/0.65/0.74;3)
0.08/0.28/0.6
Aru+Chl+Dan (-0.14/0.16/0.76;136)
0.32/0.48/0.58
centothecoids (-0.12/0.52/0.81;8)
0.3/0.93/0.7
panicoids (0.16/0.36/0.72;170)

commelinids, Poales, Poaceae

D. Rosids

Geraniales (0.14/0.29/0.38;16)
-0.02/0.22/0.43
Myrtales (0.35/0.61/0.33;280)
0.04/0.06/0.42
Crossosomatales (0.21/0.49/0.47;13)
-0.01/0.16/0.47
Picramniales (0.6/0.76/0.36;2)
-0.05/0.27/0.43
Sapindales (0.5/0.04/0.28;374)
0.05/0.12/0.38
Huerteales (0.3/0.57/0.53;5)
0.12/0.41/0.36
Malvales (0.27/0.35/0.38;280)
-0.08/0.48/0.41
Brassicales (0.16/0.18/0.27;387)
-0.09/0.52/0.34
Zygophyllales (0.55/0.2/0.28;23)
-0.01/0.15/0.37
Celastrales (0.44/0.55/0.25;90)
0.12/0.12/0.41
Oxalidales (0.06/0.36/0.38;41)
-0.05/0.38/0.38
Malpighiales (0.17/0.15/0.27;440)
0.12/0.04/0.41
Fabales (0.11/0.33/0.33;680)
-0.02/0.18/0.41
Rosales (0.51/0.09/0.29;240)
0.26/0.44/0.39
Fagales (0.52/0.24/0.32;36)
Cynomorium (0.18)
-0.25/0.61/0.38
Cucurbitales (0.08/0.4/0.32;124)

malvids, fabids

E. Bryophyta

Funaria (0.35)
Archidium (0.3)
0.24/0.75/0.61
Leucobryaceae (0.7/0.78/0.48;12)
0.25/0.43/0.56
Diphysciales (0.87/0/0.27;3)
-0.42/0.71/0.43
Buxbaumia (0.27)
-0.01/0.06/0.52
Andreaea (0.38)
0.7/0.33/0.25
Andreaeobryum (0.41)
0.29/0.89/0.36
Takakia (0.35)
-0.14/0.66/0.47
Sphagnales (0.64/0.33/0.42;3)
-0.36/0.92/0.46
Oedipodium (0.33)
-0.13/0.5/0.67
Tetraphidaceae (0.93/1/0.45;2)
0.33/0.57/0.49
Polytrichaceae (0.41/0.48/0.47;18)
-0.45/0.82/0.41
Timmia (0.19)
-0.21/0.65/0.39
Luisierella (0.26)
0.5/0.45/0.67
Chrysoblastella (0.21)
0.03/0.22/0.49
Catoscopium (0.23)
0.03/0.28/0.58
Funariidae (0.33/0.71/0.54;18)
0.54/0.26/0.33
Dicranidae (0.05/0.15/0.68;169)
-0.04/0.37/0.56
Bryanae (-0.17/0.1/0.64;91)
0.23/0.65/0.56
Hypnanae (0.38/0.81/0.63;432)

F. Acrogymnospermae

Cycadales (0.65/0.08/0.34;10)
Ginkgo (0.29)
-0.02/0.14/0.47
Gnetidae (0.76/0.82/0.15;3)
-0.19/0.54/0.25
Pinaceae (0.63/0.16/0.09;11)
0.44/0.50/0.41
Araucariaceae (0.35/1/0.13;3)
0.24/0.46/0.46
Podocarpaceae (0.73/1/0.23;20)
0.44/0.20/0.22
Sciadopitys (0.39)
0.12/0/0.49
Cupressaceae (0.93/0/0.28;32)
0.71/0.83/0.31
Cephalotaxus (0.24)
0.22/0.8/0.51
Amentotaxus (0.33)
0.58/0.73/0.46
Torreya (0.35)
-0.05/0.21/0.64
Taxaceae (0.55/0.33/0.46;3)

A. Non-vascular plants

HS2014

-0.01
Bryophyta
Marchantiophyta
tracheophytes
Anthocerotophyta
non-embryophtes
0.28

WI2014
0.22
-0.12

ZN2014
0.19
Bryophyta
Marchantiophyta
Anthocerotophyta
Lycopodopsida
euphyllophytes
0.52

B. *Ginkgo* + cycads

ZN2014
WI2014
0.24
0.38
Ginkgo
Cycadales
Gnet+Pin
all other

HS2014
-0.03

C. Gnetidae + conifers

ZN2014
0.22
Pinaceae
Conifers-II
Gnetidae
all other

HS2014
WI2014
-0.14
-0.39

D. "ANA grade" angiosperms

HS2014 ("Ambo+Nym-first")
-0.29
other angiosperms
Austrobaileyales
Nymphaeales
Amborella
all other
0.34

WI2014 ("*Amborella*-first")
-0.20
-0.10

ZN2014 ("Nymphaeales first")
-0.16
other angiosperms
Austrobaileyales
Amborella
Nymphaeales
all other
-0.26

XI2014 ("Ambo+Nym-first")
0.50
magnoliids+eudicots
monocotss
Amborella
Nymphaeales
euphyllophytes
-0.24

E. Magnoliids, monocots, and eudicots

WI2014 0.10
ZN2014 0.00
XI2014 0.00

eudicots
magnoliids
monocots
all other

HS2014
-0.06

A. *Solanum* sect. *Lycopersicon*

(0.97/0.5/0.2) — *S. sitiens* 4116 (0.91,0.49)

S. lycopersicoides 2951 (0.87,0.42)

(0.87/0.12/0.47) — *S. lycopersicoides* 4126 (0.87,0.40)

sect. *Lycopersicon*

(0.61/0/0.48) — *S. pennellii* 0716 (0.89,0.36)

S. pennellii 3778 (0.87,0.37)

(0.98/0.33/0.2) (0.06/0.31/0.68) — *S. habrochaites* 0407 (0.9,0.39)

(0.69/0.02/0.42) — *S. habrochaites* 1777 (0.88,0.37)

(0.11/0.19/0.66) (0.27/0.04/0.62) — *S. chilense* 1782 (0.84,0.23)

S. chilense 4117 (0.82,0.23)

(0.14/0/0.65) 0.86/1/0 — *S. peruvianum* 2964 (0.84,0.19)

(0.01/0/0.74) 0.61/1/0 — *S. huaylasense* 1358 (0.79,0.16)

(-0.09/0.49/0.66) [68] — *S. corneliomulleri* 0444 (0.8,0.16)

-0.34/1/0 (0/0.03/0.71) — *S. corneliomulleri* 0107 (0.82,0.17)

0.71/0/0 [68] — *S. peruvianum* 2744 (0.49,0.16)

-0.24/1/0 — *S. huaylasense* 1364 (0.57,0.17)

(-0.12/0.55/0.7) — *S. huaylasense* 1360 (0.8,0.21)

(-0.07/0.46/0.71) (0.84/0.08/0.64) — *S. chmielewskii* 1316 (0.92,0.29)

-0.12/1/0 — *S. chmielewskii* 1028 (0.94,0.29)

(-0.06/0.43/0.7) (0.56/0.02/0.5) — *S. arcanum* 2172 (0.94,0.25)

-0.00/1/0 (0.09/0.07/0.71) — *S. neorickii* 1322 (0.92,0.26)

(0.12/0.2/0.64) (0.24/0.1/0.74) — *S. neorickii* 2133 (0.93,0.25)

(0.18/0.44/0.82) — *S. lycopersicum* 2933 (0.94,0.20)

(0.15/0.52/0.81) — *S. pimpinellifolium* 1589 (0.94,0.21)

S. pimpinellifolium 1269 (0.91,0.23)

(0.9/0.17/0.4) — *S. lycopersicum* 3475 (0.94,0.25)

(0.72/0.58/0.69) — *S. lyco.* "Heinz 1706" (0.94,0.23)

(0.17/0.32/0.76) — *S. cheesmaniae* 3124 (0.95,0.21)

(0.19/0.44/0.75) — *S. cheesmaniae* 0429 (0.94,0.18)

(0.52/0.68/0.82) — *S. galapagense* 0436 (0.91,0.18)

(0.5/0.71/0.96) — *S. galapagense* 3909 (0.93,0.19)

B. Caryophyllales

Beta vulgaris (0.89,0.74)

(1/-/0.06) [0.96] — *Spinacia oleracea* (0.88,0.76)

(1/-/0.05) [0.96] — *Frankenia laevis* (0.87,0.64)

(1/-/0.14) [0.83] — *Reaumuria trigyna* (0.89,0.74)

(0.74/0.6/0.29) [0.63] — *Plumbago auriculata* (0.81,0.55)

(0.01/0.08/0.56) 0.27/0.68/0.04 — *Ruprechtia salicifolia* (0.97,0.57)

[0.40] (0.88/0/0.15) — *Drosera binata* (0.98,0.61)

Dionaea muscipula (0.86,0.60)

(0.42/0.09/0.45) — *Aldrovanda vesiculosa* (0.89,0.53)

(0.27/0.11/0.38) — *Drosophyllum lusitanicum* (0.76,0.65)

(0.45/1/0.3) [0.99] — *Ancistrocladus robertsonorium* (0.97,0.61)

[0.47] (0.06/0.26/0.48) — *Nepenthes alata* (0.86,0.67)

[0.42] 0.08/1/0 — *Nepenthes ampullaria* (0.86,0.64)

[0.99]

"non-core" Caryophyllales