

1 **RNA virome diversity and *Wolbachia* infection in** 2 **individual *Drosophila simulans* flies**

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23 **Keywords**

24 *Drosophila simulans*, *Wolbachia*, RNA virome, evolution, phylogeny, meta-transcriptomics

25 **Abstract**

26 The endosymbiont bacterium *Wolbachia* is associated with multiple mutualistic effects on
27 insect biology, including nutritional and antiviral properties. *Wolbachia* naturally occurs in
28 *Drosophila* fly species, providing an operational model host to study how virome
29 composition may be impacted by its presence. *Drosophila simulans* populations can carry a
30 variety of *Wolbachia* strains. In particular, the *wAu* strain of *Wolbachia* has been associated
31 with strong antiviral protection under experimental conditions. We used *D. simulans* sampled
32 from the Perth Hills, Western Australia, to investigate the potential virus protective effect of
33 the *wAu* strain on individual wild-caught flies. Our data revealed no appreciable variation in
34 virus composition and abundance between *Wolbachia* infected/uninfected individuals
35 associated with the presence/absence of *wAu*. However, it remains unclear whether *wAu*
36 might impact viral infection and host survival by increasing tolerance rather than inducing
37 complete resistance. These data also provide new insights into the natural virome diversity of
38 *D. simulans*. Despite the small number of individuals sampled, we identified a repertoire of
39 RNA viruses, including Nora virus, Galbut virus, Chaq virus, Thika virus and La Jolla virus,
40 that have been identified in other *Drosophila* species. In addition, we identified five novel
41 viruses from the families *Reoviridae*, *Tombusviridae*, *Mitoviridae* and *Bunyaviridae*. Overall,
42 this study highlights the complex interaction between *Wolbachia* and RNA virus infections
43 and provides a baseline description of the natural virome of *D. simulans*.

44 Introduction

45 The alpha-proteobacterium *Wolbachia* (order *Rickettsiales*) is a widespread endosymbiont of
46 arthropods and nematodes (i.e. filarial and plant-parasitic nematodes), that can establish
47 interactions with their hosts ranging from parasitic to mutualistic [1,2]. The genetic diversity
48 of *Wolbachia* is substantial and currently represented by 11 distinctive supergroups (denoted
49 A-J), although the majority of *Wolbachia* strains belong to supergroups A and B [3] that are
50 estimated to have diverged around 50 million years ago [4]. Although these bacteria are
51 commonly found in reproductive tissues and the germline of their hosts, they have also been
52 found in somatic tissues such as the brain, salivary glands and gut [5–9], such that
53 understanding infection dynamics in detail is not a trivial matter [7]. *Wolbachia* primarily
54 spread by vertical inheritance through transovarian transmission. However, the presence of
55 *Wolbachia* in a diverse range of host species suggests that horizontal transmission, likely
56 through antagonistic interactions (i.e. herbivory, parasitism and predation), also contributes to
57 the dissemination of the bacteria in nature [4,10].

58 The occurrence of *Wolbachia* bacteria in insects is often associated with their ability
59 to manipulate host reproductive mechanisms and induce a range of alterations, including
60 parthenogenesis, feminization, cytoplasmic incompatibility and sex-ratio distortion [11].
61 Among these, cytoplasmic incompatibility is the most common phenotypic effect, and as
62 such represents an appealing approach for vector population control. In this case, embryonic
63 lethality is contingent on the infection status and the strain type harboured by males and
64 females [2]. In addition, the study of *Wolbachia*-host interactions has revealed a variety of
65 mutualistic effects on host biology [1,12]. For instance, in filarial nematodes and the
66 parasitoid wasp *Asobara tabida*, the presence of some *Wolbachia* strains has been positively
67 associated with developmental processes, fertility and host viability [12–14]. Furthermore,
68 nutritional mutualism between *Wolbachia* and the bedbug *Cimex lectularius* as well as
69 *Wolbachia*-infected planthoppers, has been suggested as a means to explain B vitamin
70 supplementation [15–17].

71 Arguably the most important outcome of *Wolbachia* infection in insects is its potential
72 for virus-blocking, which also provides a basis for intervention strategies based on the control
73 of arbovirus transmission. This seemingly antiviral effect of *Wolbachia* has been well
74 documented in some species of insects, including flies and mosquitoes. A striking example
75 involves the transinfection of *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes with the *Wolbachia* strain infecting
76 *Drosophila melanogaster* (*wMel*). *A. aegypti* is the primary vector of a number of important

77 arboviruses, including Dengue (DENV), Zika (ZIKV) and Chikungunya virus (CHIKV), and
78 the establishment of the wMel strain in wild mosquito populations represents a powerful and
79 promising approach to decrease virus transmission [18,19]. Although the underlying
80 mechanisms remain to be fully determined, it has been suggested that *Wolbachia* can modify
81 the host environment or boost basal immunity to viruses by pre-stimulating the immune
82 response of their hosts [20]. Potential antiviral mechanisms impacted by *Wolbachia* include
83 gene expression of the Toll pathway, RNA interference, and modification of the host
84 oxidative environment that likely trigger an antiviral immune response and hence limit
85 infection [20–22].

86 Unlike *A. aegypti* mosquitoes, *Wolbachia* naturally occur in *Drosophila* species,
87 providing a valuable model system to study *Wolbachia*-related virus protection [23,24].
88 Natural populations of *Drosophila* can carry a diverse array of insect-specific viruses
89 belonging to the families *Picornaviridae*, *Dicistroviridae*, *Bunyaviridae*, *Reoviridae* and
90 *Iflaviridae* amongst others [25]. The co-occurrence of *Wolbachia* in *D. melanogaster* has
91 been associated with increased survival and different levels of resistance to laboratory viral
92 infections in fly stocks under experimental conditions [23,26]. For example, *Wolbachia*-
93 infected flies containing the dicistrovirus *Drosophila C virus* (DCV) showed a delay in
94 mortality compared to *Wolbachia*-free flies [26]. In contrast, other studies found no or limited
95 effect of *Wolbachia* on viral protection, as well as on virus prevalence and abundance in
96 field-collected flies [25,27]. Such contrasting data emphasize the need of further research
97 efforts to characterize the effect of *Wolbachia* strains on virus composition in *Drosophila* in
98 nature.

99 Although the origin of *D. simulans* is thought to have been in East Africa or
100 Madagascar, this species now has a cosmopolitan distribution [28]. In Australia, *D. simulans*
101 has been recorded along both east and west coasts as well as Tasmania, with the earliest
102 record dating to 1956 [29]. Human mobility and human-mediated activities have been
103 associated with the introduction and spread of both *D. simulans* and *Wolbachia* into
104 Australia, where wild fly populations occur near human settlements, feeding and breeding on
105 a variety horticultural crops [30,31]. Several *Wolbachia* strains from supergroups A and B
106 can naturally occur in populations of *D. simulans* (e.g. wAu, wRi, wHa, wMa and wNo)
107 [32,33]. From these, wAu is associated with strong antiviral protection against Flock House
108 virus (*Nodaviridae*) and *Drosophila C virus* (*Dicistroviridae*) under experimental conditions
109 [32]. The wAu infection in Australia was one of the first *Wolbachia* infections identified as

110 showing no cytoplasmic incompatibility despite being widespread at a low to intermediate
111 frequency [34]. *wAu* was subsequently demonstrated to be increasing in frequency along the
112 east coast of Australia, until it was replaced by *wRi* that shows cytoplasmic incompatibility
113 but which has not yet reached the west coast [30]. In this study, we used a meta-
114 transcriptomic (i.e. RNA shotgun sequencing) approach to determine the virome diversity of
115 individual field-collected *D. simulans* flies from Western Australia, and investigated how this
116 virome diversity might be impacted by the presence of the *wAu* strain of *Wolbachia*.

117

118 **Methods**

119 *D. simulans* collection and taxonomic identification

120 Flies used for the virus work were collected at Raeburn Orchards in the Perth Hills in
121 Western Australia (Long. 116.0695, Lat. -32.1036) in July 2018 using banana bait. The
122 *Wolbachia* frequency at two other locations in the area (Roleystone, Long. 116.0701, Lat. -
123 32.1396; Cannington, Long. 115.9363, Lat. -32.0243) was also established with additional
124 samples. Taxonomic identification to the species level was conducted based on the
125 morphology of reproductive traits of males and via DNA barcoding. Field-collected flies
126 were maintained at 19°C under standard laboratory conditions until F1 offspring were raised.
127 Parental and F1 generations were then stored at -80°C until molecular processing.

128 *Wolbachia* detection

129 *Wolbachia* infection of field females was determined using F1 offspring from each field
130 female. Note that *wAu* is transmitted at 100% from field females to the F1 laboratory
131 generation [34]. DNA extraction from heads was performed using the Chelex 100 Resin (Bio-
132 Rad Laboratories, Hercules, CA, USA) [35] as adapted in Shi *et al.* [27]. Screening of natural
133 *Wolbachia* infection was conducted using a real-time PCR/ high-resolution melt assay
134 (RT/HRM) and strain-specific primers targeting a 340-bp region of the surface protein of
135 *Wolbachia* (*wsp*) gene for *wRi* and *wAu* strains. The assay was run following the protocol of
136 Kriesner *et al.* [30]. In addition, reads were mapped to reference *Wolbachia wsp* gene
137 sequences for *wRi* (CP001391.1) and *wAu* (LK055284.1) with BMAP v.37.98 (minid=0.95)
138 (available at <https://sourceforge.net/projects/bbmap/>).

139

140 *RNA extraction and meta-transcriptome sequencing*

141 We screened a total of 16 individual flies to assess the effect of *Wolbachia* infection on
142 virome composition in *D. simulans*. Specimens were rinsed three times in RNA and DNA-
143 free PBS solution (GIBCO). Total RNA from individual flies was extracted using the RNeasy
144 Plus Mini Kit (Qiagen) following the manufacturer's instructions. RNA-seq libraries were
145 constructed using a TruSeq total RNA Library Preparation Kit (Illumina). Host ribosomal
146 depletion was performed using a Ribo-Zero Gold rRNA Removal Kit (Human/Mouse/Rat)
147 (Illumina). Paired-end transcriptome sequencing was generated on the HiSeq2500 platform
148 (Illumina).

149

150 *De novo meta-transcriptome assembly and viral genome annotation*

151 The overall quality assessment of reads was conducted in FastQC and Trimmomatic [36]. A
152 *de novo* assembly of RNA-Seq data was performed using MEGAHIT v.1.1.3, with default
153 parameters [37]. Assembled contigs were then annotated through comparisons against the
154 NCBI nonredundant (NCBI-nr) database using DIAMOND v2.0.4 [38], with a cut-off e-value
155 $<1e-05$. To identify protein-encoding sequences, open reading frames (ORFs) were predicted
156 in positive and reverse-complement strands, with a minimum length of 600 nt between two
157 stop codons using the GetOrf program (EMBOSS) [39]. Functional annotation was carried
158 out using InterProScan v5.39-77.0 [40], and the HMMer software (<http://hmmer.org/>) was
159 used to perform sequence-profile searches against the Pfam HMM database. To expand the
160 *de novo* assembled contigs of known viruses, the reads were mapped against reference
161 genomic sequences. Provisional virus names were derived from geographic locations in the
162 Perth Hills.

163

164 *Estimates of viral abundance*

165 Viral abundance was assessed using the number of reads per million (RPM). This metric
166 quantifies the number of reads per million mapped to a given contig assembly over the total
167 number of reads. RPM values lower than 0.1% of the highest count for each virus across
168 samples were presumed to be index-hopping artifacts and excluded from the remaining
169 analyses [41]. To compare abundance levels, reads were mapped to reference ribosomal and
170 mitochondrial genes from *Wolbachia* (*16S* and *cox1*), *D. simulans* (*rpl32* and *cox1*), as well
171 as against all the RNA viruses identified upon the annotation analyses. Mapping was
172 performed using BMap v.37.98 (available at <https://sourceforge.net/projects/bbmap/>).

173

174 *Sequence alignment and phylogenetic analysis*

175 RNA viral sequences identified in *D. simulans* were compared with homologous reference
176 sequences retrieved from the NCBI GenBank database and aligned with MAFF v7.450 (E-
177 INS-I algorithm) [42]. Phylogenetic trees on these data were then inferred using sequences of
178 the conserved RNA-dependent RNA polymerase (RdRp) gene. To this end, both the best-fit
179 model of amino acid substitution and phylogenetic relationships were estimated using the
180 Maximum Likelihood (ML) [43] approach implemented in IQ-TREE v1.6.12 [44]. Nodal
181 support was estimated combining the SH-like approximate likelihood ratio test (SH-aLRT)
182 and the Ultrafast Bootstrap Approximation (UFboot) [45]. Redundant contigs with over 99%
183 amino acid similarity were excluded from the phylogenetic analysis.

184
185 *Statistical analysis*

186 The assumption of data normality was assessed by visual inspection and using Kolmogorov-
187 Smirnov (K-S) and Shapiro-Wilk's tests. As the data was not normally distributed, a Mann-
188 Whitney-Wilcoxon test was used to compare the RNA virome composition with respect to
189 the presence/absence of *Wolbachia*. Comparisons were made using raw and transformed data
190 corresponding to RPM values (i.e. viral abundance) for each library. All the analyses were
191 performed using R software package rstatix.

192

193 **Results**

194 A total of 272 female flies were wild-caught in the Perth Hills in Western Australia and tested
195 for *Wolbachia* infection through their F1s. The overall prevalence of *Wolbachia* was 63.6%
196 (173/272), with frequencies at the three sampled locations varying from 54.8% (Raeburn
197 Orchard, N = 73) to 63.8% (Roleystone, N = 130) and 72.5% (Cannington, N = 69). From the
198 Raeburn Orchard field females, we randomly selected a subset of 16 flies representing eight
199 *Wolbachia*-positive and eight *Wolbachia*-negative specimens for individual sequencing and
200 RNA virus screening.

201 We identified the *Wolbachia* strain in *D. simulans* using sequence-specific primers
202 targeting the *wsp* gene. We further confirmed the occurrence of *Wolbachia* by mapping the
203 reads back to the *wRi* and *wAu* *wsp* gene. Most of the *Wolbachia*-infected flies showed a
204 median coverage >100 reads, number of mapping reads >40, and coverage percentage
205 >90% to the reference *wAu* strain, confirming that infected flies harbor *wAu* rather than the

206 wRi strain of *Wolbachia*. No reads mapped to the *wsp* gene for library RAPP88 (**Table S1**)
207 despite the positive infection status determined using a *Wolbachia* specific qPCR assay.

208 For the sake of comparison of virus diversity among libraries, we mapped the reads of
209 each library to stably expressed genes - *16S* and *cox1* in *Wolbachia* and *rpl32* and *cox1* in *D.*
210 *simulans*. This provided an internal control to identify any effect on viral abundance due to
211 potential biases introduced during RNA extraction or library preparation. Although, as
212 expected, there was moderate variation in the abundance values, expression levels of
213 reference maker genes were relatively stable across libraries in both *Wolbachia* and *D.*
214 *simulans* (**Figure 1**).

215 Overall, we detected ten viruses in the 16 *D. simulans* studied here, five of which
216 were novel (**Figure 2**). Specifically, five viruses shared high sequence identity at the amino
217 acid level ($> 96\%$, e-value = $0.00E+00 - 4.2E-41$) to the RdRp of known RNA viruses,
218 whereas the newly discovered viruses shared only between 32.6% to 62.6% amino acid
219 identity to the best viral hit (e-value = $0.00E+00 - 1.4E-06$) (**Table 1, Table S4**). Similarly, in
220 five cases phylogenetic analysis of the virus sequences identified revealed close relationships
221 with known *Drosophila*-associated viruses: Galbut virus (*Partitiviridae*), La Jolla virus
222 (*Iflaviridae*), Thika virus (*Picornaviridae*), Nora virus (*Picornaviridae*) and Chaq virus
223 (unclassified) (**Figure 3**). The novel viruses identified, that did not share close phylogenetic
224 relationships to known viruses, were: Raeburn bunya-like virus (*Bunyaviridae*), Araluen
225 mito-like virus (*Mitoviridae*), Carmel mito-like virus (*Mitoviridae*), Lesley reo-like virus
226 (*Reoviridae*), and Cannin tombus-like virus (*Tombusviridae*) (**Figure 3**). Similarity searches
227 against the NCBI/nr database showed that individual flies carried multiple invertebrate-
228 associated viruses from different virus families. For example, up to six viruses were observed
229 in a single wAu-negative library (RAPN56) (**Figure 4, Table S2**).

230 Some of the newly discovered RNA viruses identified here were likely infecting hosts
231 other than *D. simulans*, and hence might be associated with the fly diet or microbiome.
232 Specifically, these viruses were closely related to *Phytomonas* sp. TCC231 leishbunyavirus 1
233 (in the case of Raeburn bunya-like virus), *Leptomonas pyrrocoris* RNA virus (Cannin
234 tombus-like virus) and two mito-like viruses (Araluen mito-like virus and Carmel mito-like
235 virus) (**Figure 3, Table S3**), that are associated with trypanosomatid protozoans and fungal
236 hosts, respectively. In contrast, Lesley reo-like virus is likely a *bona fide* arthropod virus. The
237 five newly identified viruses in this study corresponded to full or nearly complete genomes
238 (see below). However, for the majority of the known *Drosophila* viruses we only were able to

239 identify ORFs encoding the RdRp: the exceptions were La Jolla virus and Thika virus for
240 which we also predicted structural components corresponding to coat and capsid proteins.

241 We next characterized the virome profile present in *D. simulans* in relation to the *wAu*
242 infection status (**Figure 2, Table 1, Table S4**). Accordingly, we identified a slightly higher
243 number (n=10) of viruses in *Wolbachia*-negative flies compared to *Wolbachia*-positive flies
244 (n=7). Among these, Galbut virus, Chaq virus, Nora virus, Thika virus, as well as three novel
245 viruses identified in this study - Raeburn bunya-like virus, Araluen mito-like virus and
246 Cannin tombus-like virus - were present in *D. simulans* regardless of *Wolbachia* infection. In
247 contrast, La Jolla virus, as well as the novel Carmel mito-like virus and Lesley reo-like virus,
248 were only found in *wAu*-negative flies. Overall, assembled viral contigs displayed high
249 sequence similarity at nucleotide and amino acid level within and between libraries and
250 regardless of the presence/absence of *Wolbachia* (**Table S3**).

251 We also assessed the potential effect of *Wolbachia* infection on the abundance of
252 RNA viruses present in *wAu*-infected and *wAu*-uninfected flies. Overall, the number of non-
253 rRNA reads represented ~50% of the total of reads (n= 743,389,696 pair-end reads) (**Figure**
254 **S1**). Furthermore, the RPM values among viruses infecting *Wolbachia* negative and positive
255 infected flies was highly heterogeneous, ranging from 47 to 232,346 and 7 to 37,688 virus
256 RPM, respectively. With the exception of Thika virus, viruses present in both *wAu*-positive
257 and *wAu*-negative flies were 1.87 – 40.17-fold more abundant in the *wAu*-negative
258 individuals than *wAu*-positive *D. simulans*. In contrast, the abundance of Thika virus was
259 0.39-fold higher in the *Wolbachia*-positive flies (**Figure 3, Table S2**). However, despite this
260 variation in virus abundance levels between groups, there was a non-significant difference
261 between *wAu*-negative and *wAu*-positive *D. simulans* (Mann-Whitney-Wilcoxon test; **Figure**
262 **5**). In the case of the viruses only detected in the *wAu*-negative flies, La Jolla virus was
263 present in a single library in moderate abundance (RPM = 378), whilst the newly discovered
264 Lesley reo-like virus was detected in 4/8 libraries (RPM = 3360 - 8749) (**Table S2**).

265

266 Discussion

267 The occurrence and spread of *Wolbachia* infection has been widely documented in natural
268 populations of *Drosophila* [10,30,46]. Indeed, *D. simulans* is commonly used as an
269 experimental model to investigate the interactions within the tripartite *Drosophila*-
270 *Wolbachia*-virus system. In Australia, *D. simulans* can be naturally infected with two
271 *Wolbachia* strains from supergroup A - *wAu* and *wRi*. While *wRi* has been gradually

272 displacing *wAu* in eastern Australia, reflected in the changing infection frequencies in
273 surveyed populations since 2004, *D. simulans* from the west coast of Australia only harbor
274 the *wAu* strain [30]. A simple and plausible explanation for this difference is the geographic
275 separation of *D. simulans* populations inhabiting the east and west coasts of Australia and the
276 challenging environmental conditions posed by the intervening desert [30].

277 We corroborated the presence of *Wolbachia* infection across samples by identifying
278 the *wsp*, *16S* and *cox1* marker genes. The lack of reads mapping to the library RAPP88 might
279 reflect either low levels of *wsp* RNA molecules present in the input for library preparation or
280 high variability compared to the reference sequence. Although *Wolbachia* density was not
281 experimentally assessed, the similar levels of *16S* and *cox-1* abundance across libraries
282 suggest no appreciable biases in the library preparation and RNA sequencing steps.

283 Estimates from previous surveys showed that the frequency of the *wAu* strain in
284 Western Australia exceeded 50% in *D. simulans* [30]. This is consistent with the data
285 provided here and suggests that *Wolbachia* might be present in a significant proportion of the
286 natural fly population, at least around Perth. Although *wAu* does not cause cytoplasmic
287 incompatibility, its spread is hypothesized to confer fitness advantages (increased survival
288 and/or reproduction) to the host, including antiviral protection [47,48], that might favour its
289 spread and prevent the bacteria from being eliminated from *D. simulans* populations [30,49].
290 However, our comparison of *Wolbachia*-infected and uninfected *D. simulans* in western
291 Australia revealed no clear effect of *Wolbachia* infection on virome composition and viral
292 abundance between *Wolbachia* infected/uninfected animals. Although our analysis is based
293 on a small sample of individual flies, the apparent absence of a *Wolbachia*-mediated virus
294 protection effect in natural *D. simulans* is compatible with previous findings on *D.*
295 *melanogaster* naturally infected with *wMel* in eastern Australia [27], in which virus
296 protection was not observed regardless of the *Wolbachia* infection status and *Wolbachia*
297 density. Even so, the absence of significant association between *wAu* infection and virus
298 diversity does not necessarily translate into a homogeneous effect of *wAu* on the different
299 viruses identified here. For example, it is plausible that the restricted presence of La Jolla
300 virus and the newly identified Lesley reo-like virus in *Wolbachia*-free flies could reflect some
301 impact of antiviral protection in *D. simulans* [27,50]. Indeed, contrasting results were
302 observed in *D. melanogaster*, where La Jolla virus was widely distributed across different
303 libraries [27].

304 It has previously been shown that the *wAu* strain of *Wolbachia* has a protective role
305 against virus infection in *D. simulans* when flies are challenged with Flock House virus
306 (FHV) and Drosophila C virus (DCV) in a laboratory setting [24,32]. Moreover, the *wAu*
307 strain is protective against the Dengue and Zika viruses in *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes [51].
308 Although our observation of an apparent lack of *Wolbachia*-mediated antiviral protection
309 contrasts with those obtained previously, it is likely that differences may depend on
310 *Wolbachia*-host species combinations and natural/artificial viral infections, which may also
311 explain the contrasting results for La Jolla virus. Indeed, most of the available studies have
312 documented the antiviral effect in transinfected insect hosts with non-natural *Wolbachia*
313 strains/viruses under laboratory conditions, as opposed to the study of the natural virome
314 undertaken here. This highlights the importance of careful studies of the interactions within
315 the host-virus-*Wolbachia* system along with environmental factors in natural populations
316 [52–54].

317 As well as the small sample size, an important caveat of our work is that we explored
318 the *Wolbachia*-mediated virus protection in terms of virus abundance levels reflected in RPM
319 values. This provides insights into virus resistance, but not on tolerance or host survival.
320 Thus, it is still possible that *Wolbachia* is increasing tolerance to virus infection as have been
321 documented for DCV [32]. In addition, although we were not able to assess *Wolbachia*
322 density, previous studies have shown that *wAu* is maintained at high-density in *D. simulans*
323 and has a role on virus blocking [55]. Further research is clearly needed to assess these
324 features in natural populations in order to determine any link with antiviral protection.

325 Collectively, comparisons of the virome composition in *wAu* infected/uninfected *D.*
326 *simulans* showed the presence of natural and relatively highly abundant *Drosophila*
327 associated viruses in both groups [25,27,56]. In addition to insect-associated viruses, we
328 identified viruses that are likely to infect other hosts and hence were likely associated with
329 components of *D. simulans* diet or microbiome [57]. For instance, novel viruses from the
330 families *Tombusviridae* and *Bunyaviridae* were related to virus in trypanosomatid protozoa
331 (*Leptomonas* and *Leishmania*). Similarly, given their normal host range distribution, the
332 novel viruses from the family *Narnaviridae* might be associated with fungal hosts. Evidence
333 of trypanosomatids and fungi have been reported in the gut of several species of *Drosophila*,
334 with effects on larvae eclosion and pupation times [57,58]. This, in turn, highlights the extent
335 to which Australian *D. simulans* can be parasitized in nature [58–62].

336

337 **Authors and contributors**

338
339 Conceptualization, M.S., A.A.H. and E.C.H.; methodology, A.S.O.-B., M.S., A.A.H. and
340 E.C.H., formal analysis, A.S.O.-B.; investigation, A.S.O.-B. and M.S.; resources, A.A.H.
341 and E.C.H.; writing—original draft preparation A.S.O.-B.; writing—review and editing
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344

345 **Conflicts of interest**

346 The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

347

348

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354

355 **Data summary**

356 The viral genome sequence data generated in this study has been deposited in the
357 NCBI/GenBank database under the accession numbers MW976812-MW976882. Sequence
358 reads are available at the public Sequence Read Archive (SRA) database under the BioProject
359 accession PRJNA706433 (BioSample accessions: SAMN18132282- SAMN18132297).

360

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364

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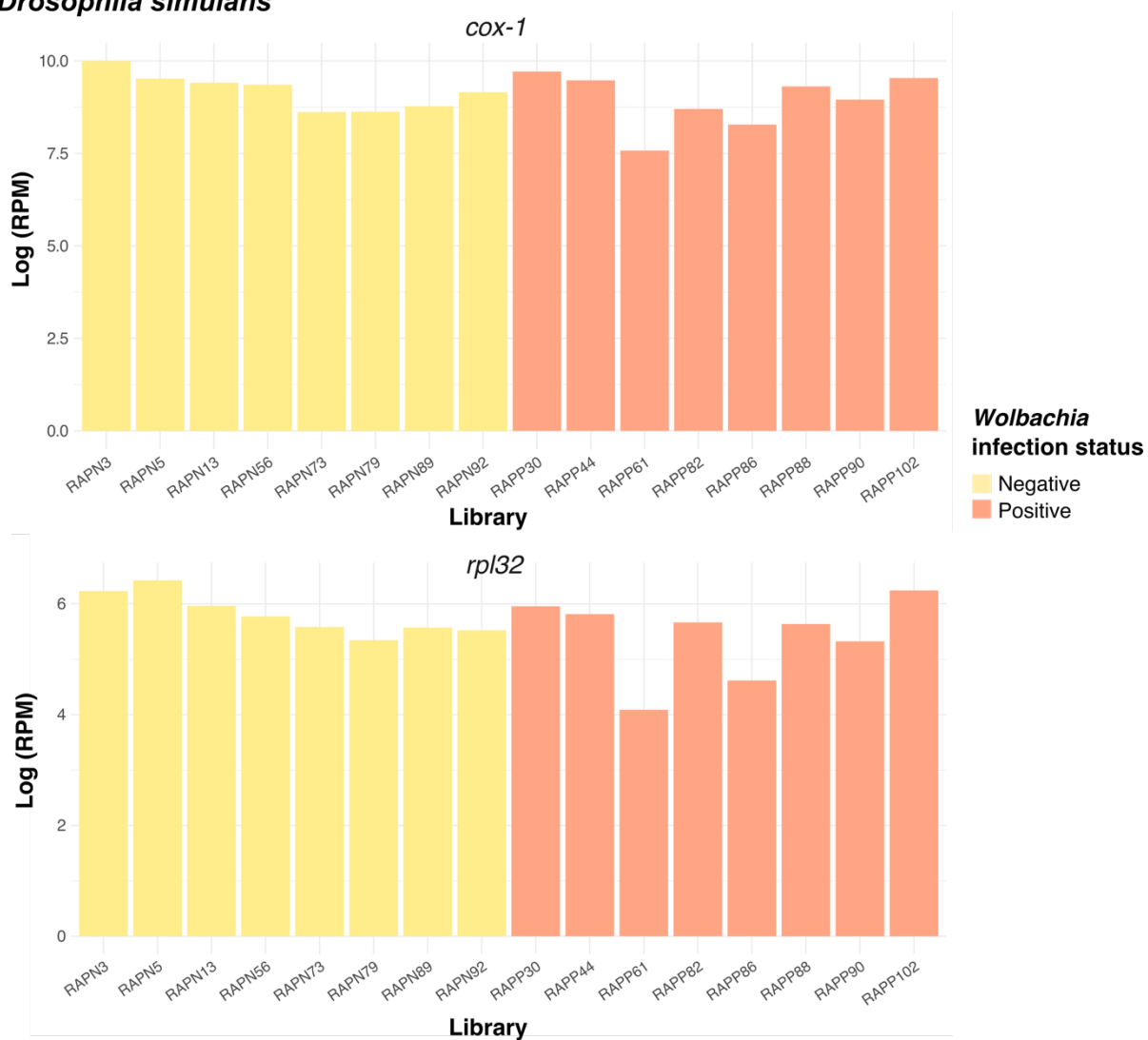
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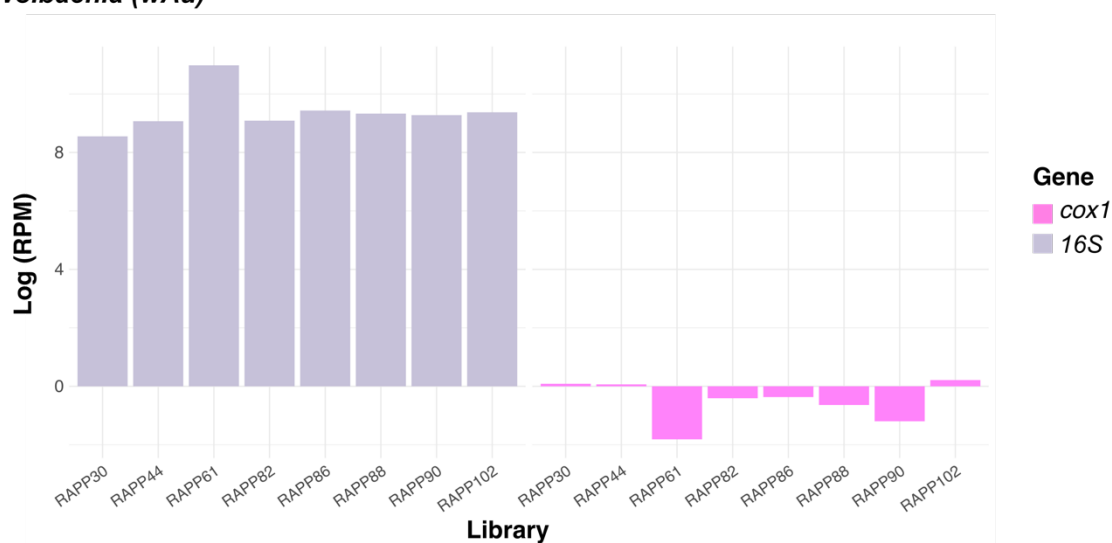
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Drosophila simulans



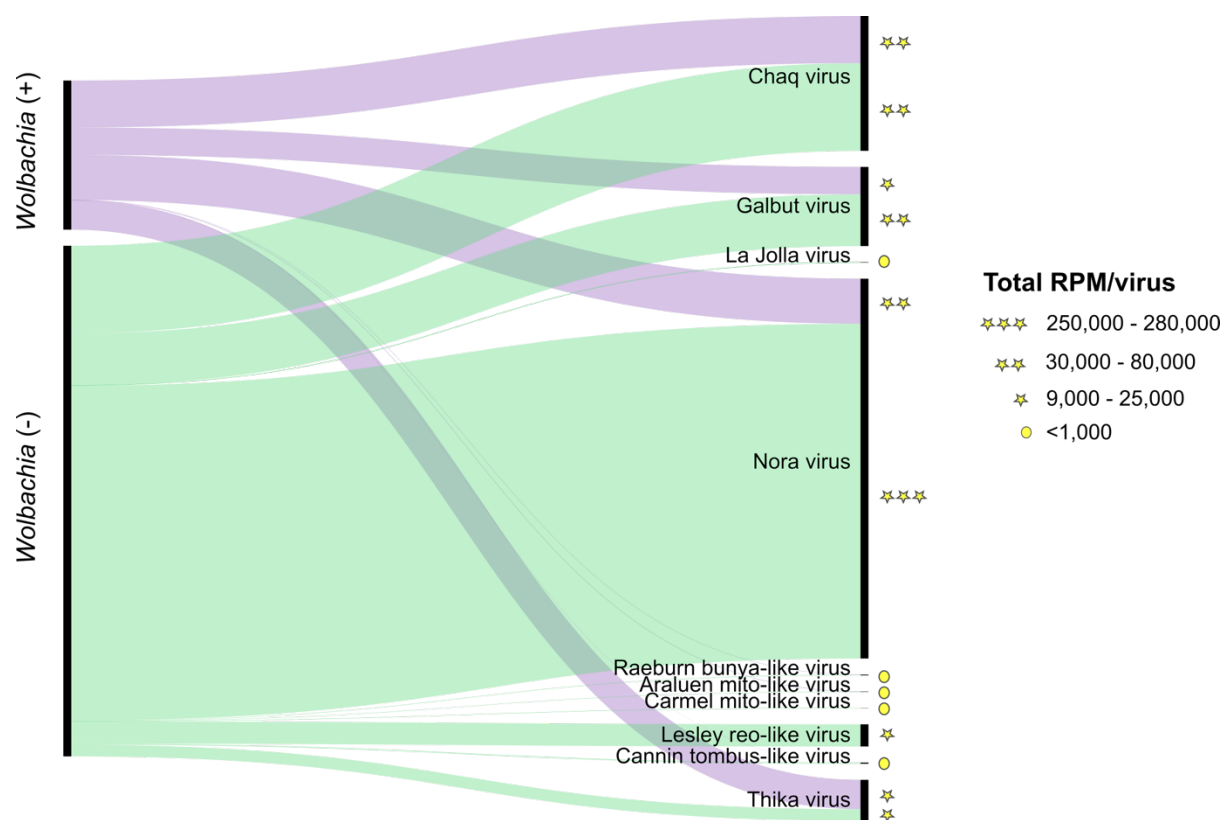
Wolbachia (wAu)



529

530 **Figure 1.** Comparison of the abundance levels of reference genes in *Wolbachia*-positive and
531 *Wolbachia*-negative individual *D. simulans* (*rpl32* and *cox-1*) and *Wolbachia* sp. (*16S* and
532 *cox-1*).

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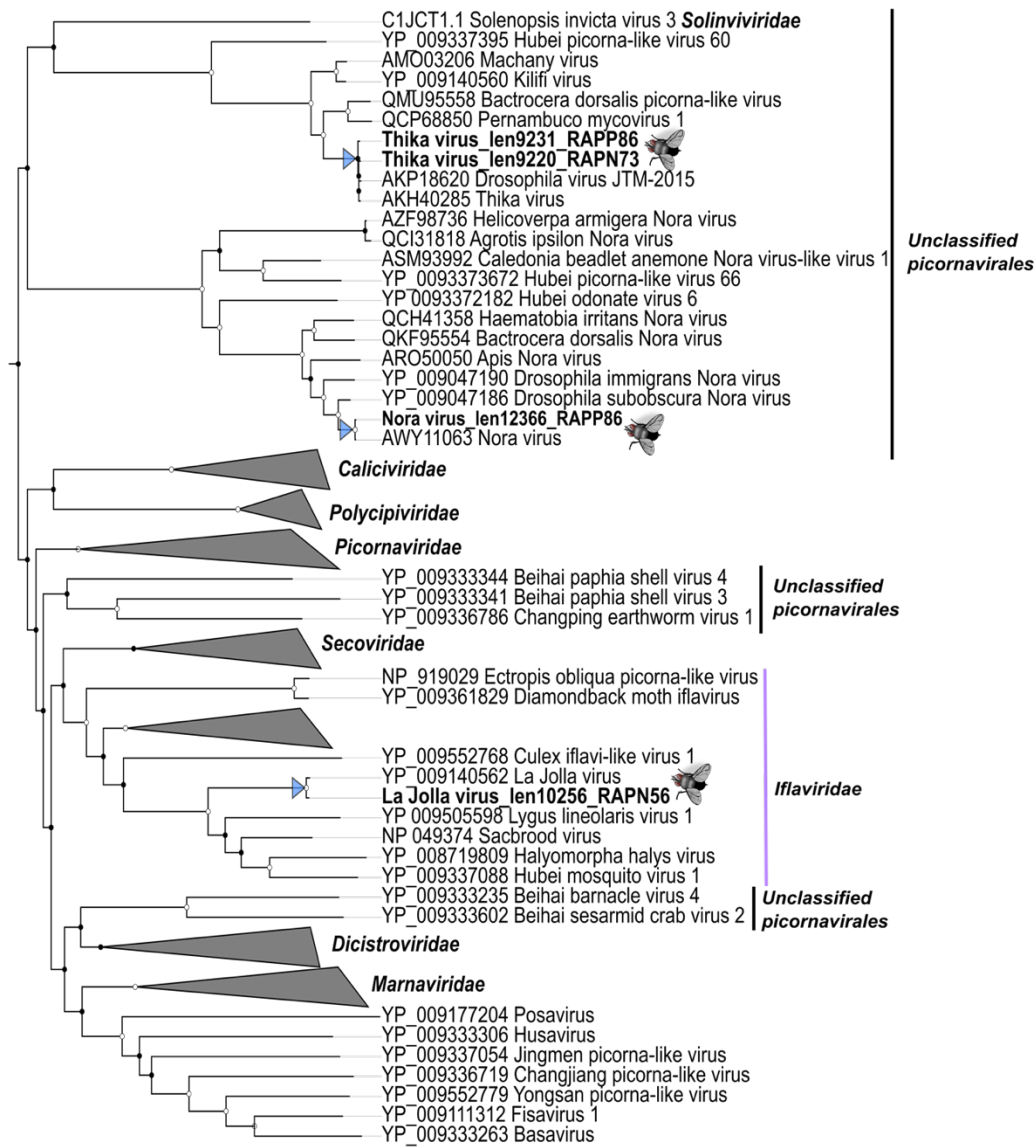
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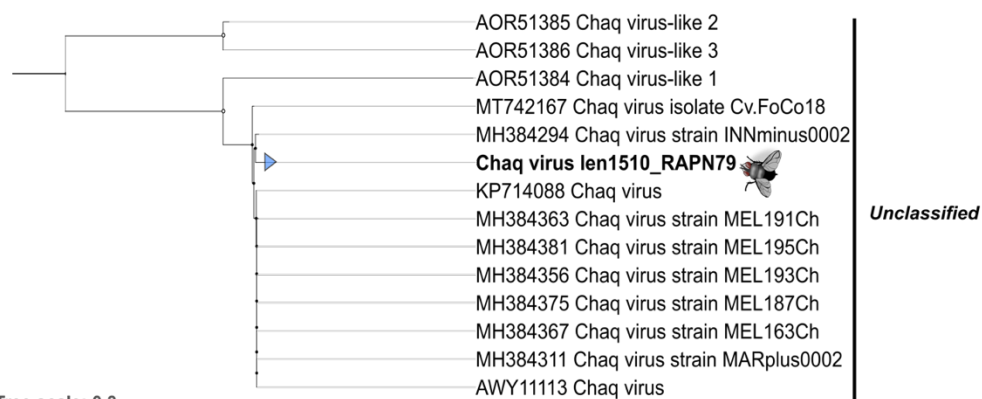
536 **Figure 2.** Comparison of viruses found in *Wolbachia*-positive and *Wolbachia*-negative *D.*
537 *simulans*. The thickness of links is proportional to the total abundance (RPM) of each virus
538 across the samples studied. The range of RPM values are represented with a star and circular
539 shapes.

A

Picornavirales

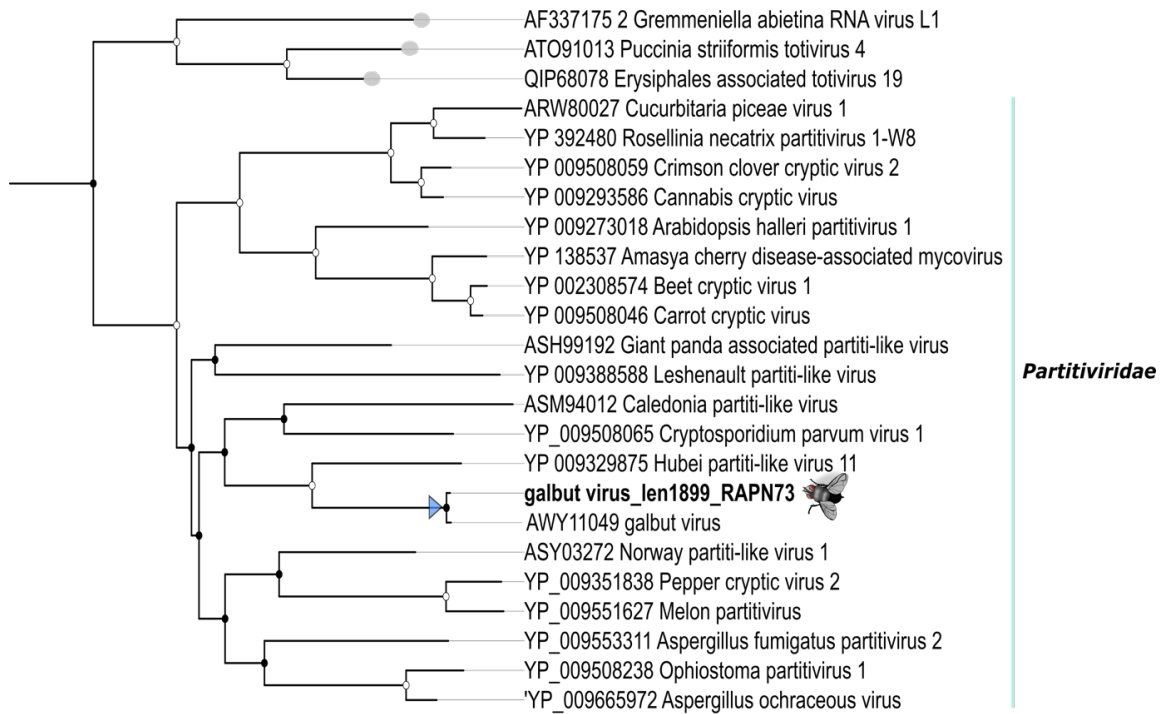
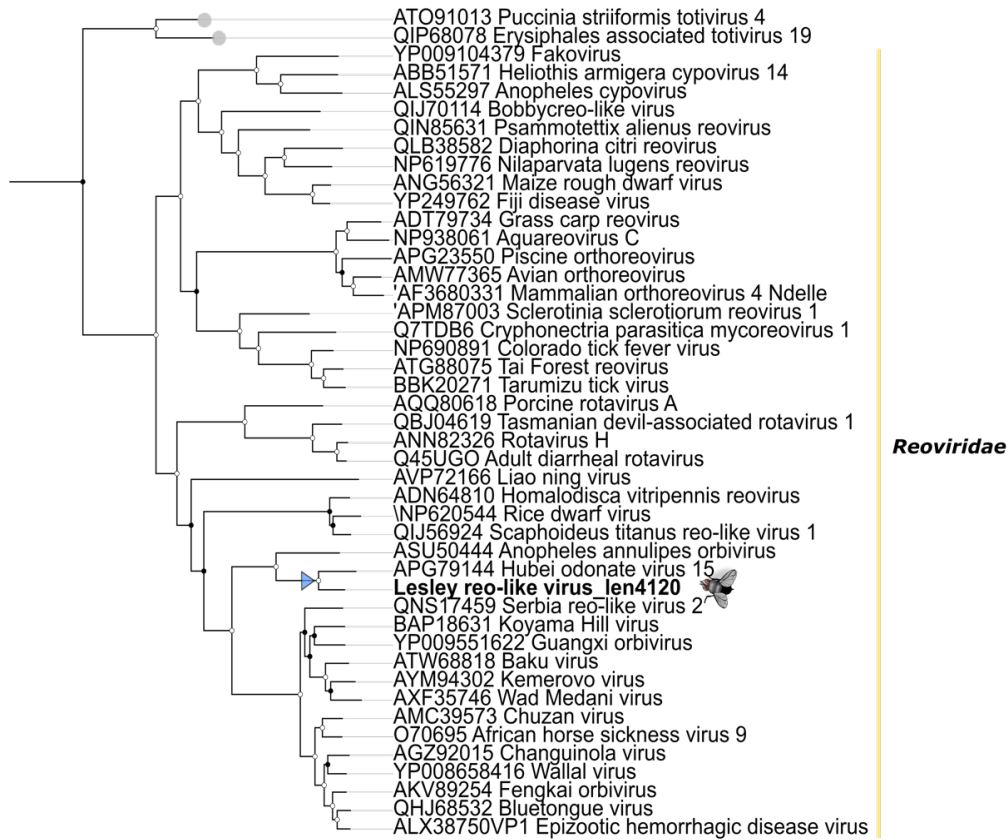


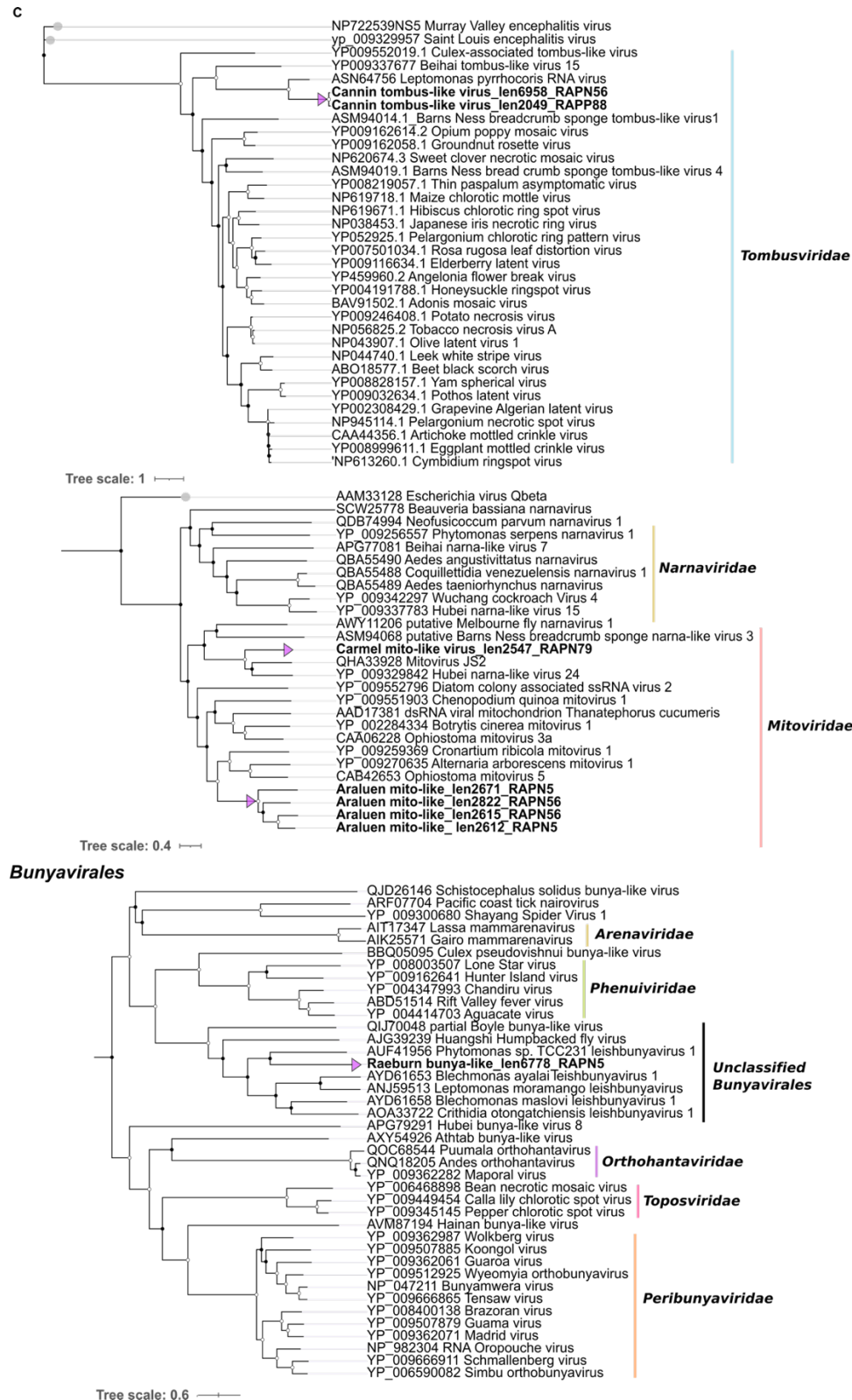
Tree scale: 0.4



Tree scale: 0.3

B





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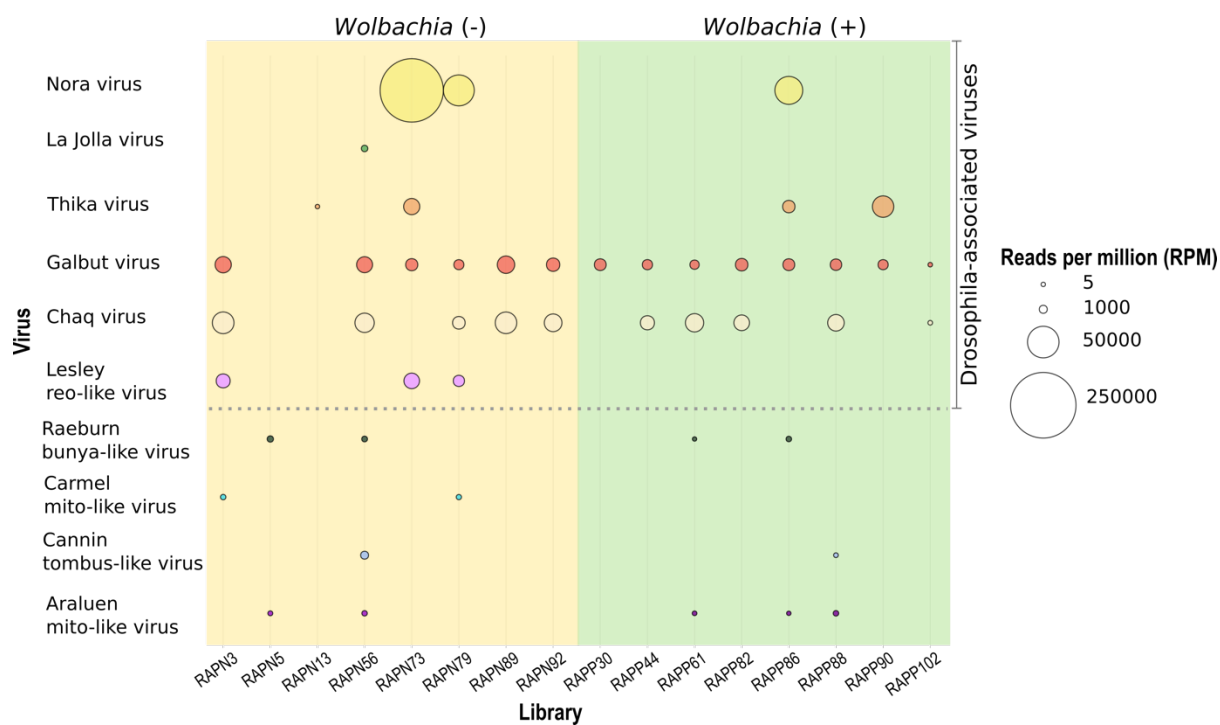
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545 **Figure 3.** Maximum likelihood phylogenetic trees of the viruses identified from *D. simulans*.

546 The phylogenies were inferred based on the amino acid sequences of the RdRp of seven virus

547 taxonomic groups. Virus family trees were rooted with relevant outgroups that are indicated

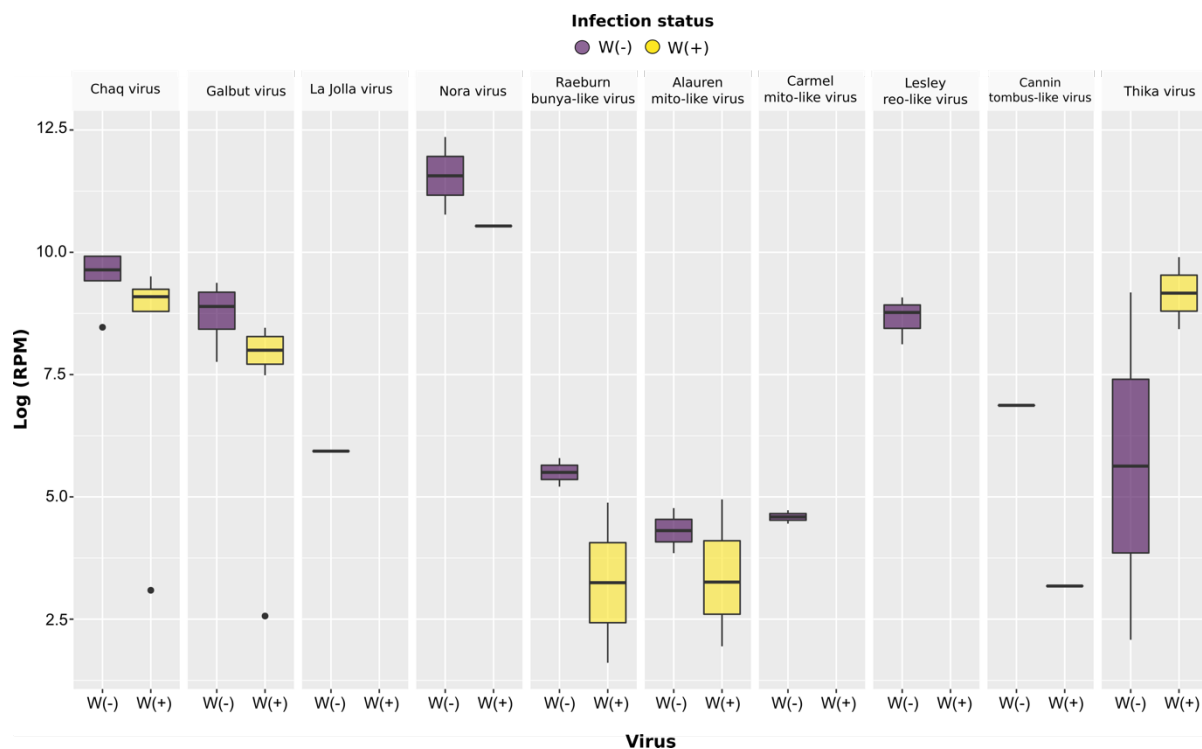
548 with grey tips. Order-level trees and the Chaq virus phylogeny (for which no suitable
549 outgroup existed) were midpoint rooted. Coloured arrow tips represent likely (A-B)
550 *Drosophila*-associated viruses and (C) non-*Drosophila*-associated viruses (i.e. that were more
551 likely associated with a component of fly diet or microbiome). Nodal support values greater
552 than 80% (SH-aLRT) and 95% (UFboot) are indicated with white circular shapes at the
553 nodes. Branch lengths are projected using scale bars below each tree.



554

555

556 **Figure 4.** Representation of virome composition and abundance (RPM) across *Wolbachia*-
557 positive and negative libraries. Each library represents an individual *D. simulans* fly. All
558 reads likely due to index-hopping have been excluded.



559
560
561

562 **Figure 5.** Abundance distribution of seven RNA viruses identified across individual
563 *Wolbachia*-positive and *Wolbachia*-negative *D. simulans*. A non-significant difference was
564 observed between *Wolbachia*-infected and uninfected flies using the Mann-Whitney U test.

565 **Table 1.** Summary of sequence similarity searches for viruses against the NCBI non-redundant database. Viral sequences listed below
 566 correspond to those included in phylogenetic analyses.

567

| Query sequence | Library | <i>Wolbachia</i> infection | Length (nt) | Best match against the BLAST/nr database | Similarity | e-value |
|--|---------|-------------------------------|----------------|--|------------|----------|
| k119_3301_len12366_nora virus | RAPP86 | + | 12366 | AWY11063.1 putative replicase [Nora virus] | 98.7 | 0.00E+00 |
| k119_19486_len10256_La Jolla virus | RAPN56 | - | 10256 | AWY11061.1 putative polyprotein [La Jolla virus] | 98 | 0.00E+00 |
| k119_20553_len9231_thika virus | RAPP86 | + | 9231 | YP_009140561.1 putative polyprotein [Thika virus] | 96.2 | 0.00E+00 |
| k119_5914_len9220_thika virus | RAPN73 | - | 9220 | YP_009140561.1 putative polyprotein [Thika virus] | 97.1 | 0.00E+00 |
| k119_3227_len6958_Cannin tombus-like virus | RAPN56 | - | 6958 | ASN64756.1 putative RNA-dependent RNA polymerase, partial [Leptomonas pyrrhocoris RNA virus] | 44.6 | 1.80E-96 |
| k119_2329_len2049_Cannin tombus-like virus | RAPP88 | + | 2049 | ASN64759.1 putative RNA-dependent RNA polymerase, partial [Leptomonas pyrrhocoris RNA virus] | 48.4 | 3.80E-95 |
| k119_4103_len1899_galbut virus | RAPN73 | - | 1899 | AWY11176.1 putative RNA-dependent RNA polymerase [Galbut virus] | 96.7 | 0.00E+00 |
| k119_13353_len1510_chaq virus | RAPN79 | - | 1510 | AWY11113.1 hypothetical protein [Chaq virus] | 85.9 | 1.6E-153 |
| k119_2075_len4120_Lesley reo-like virus | RAPN73 | - | 4120 | APG79144.1 RNA-dependent RNA polymerase [Hubei odonate virus 15] | 48.6 | 0.00E+00 |
| k119_10165_len2547_Carmel mito-like virus | RAPN79 | - | 2547 | YP_009329842.1 RNA-dependent RNA polymerase [Hubei narna-like virus 24] | 32.7 | 2.0e-76 |
| k119_273_len2671_Araluen mito-like virus | RAPN5 | - | 2671 | QDH87474.1 RNA-dependent RNA polymerase, partial [Mitovirus sp.] | 40.3 | 8.0E-96 |
| k119_22084_len2612_Araluen mito-like virus | RAPN5 | - | 2612 | QDH87474.1 RNA-dependent RNA polymerase, partial [Mitovirus sp.] | 43.2 | 2.3E-103 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--------|---|------|--|------|---------|
| k119_14037_len2615_Araluen mito-like virus | RAPN56 | - | 2615 | QDH87474.1 RNA-dependent RNA polymerase, partial [Mitovirus sp.] | 41.7 | 1.7E-98 |
| k119_14318_len2822_Araluen mito-like virus | RAPN56 | - | 2822 | QDH87474.1 RNA-dependent RNA polymerase, partial [Mitovirus sp.] | 38.1 | 9.7E-92 |