FINE-SCALE ADAPTATIONS TO ENVIRONMENTAL VARIATION AND GROWTH

STRATEGIES DRIVE PHYLLOSPHERE *METHYLOBACTERIUM* DIVERSITY.

Jean-Baptiste Leducq[1,2,3], Émilie Seyer-Lamontagne[1], Domitille Condrain-Morel[2], Geneviève

Bourret[2], David Sneddon[3], James A. Foster[3], Christopher J. Marx[3], Jack M. Sullivan[3], B. Jesse

Shapiro[1,4] & Steven W. Kembel[2]

1 - Université de Montréal

2 - Université du Québec à Montréal

3 – University of Idaho

4 – McGill University

Abstract

Methylobacterium is a prevalent bacterial genus of the phyllosphere. Despite its ubiquity, little is

known about the extent to which its diversity reflects neutral processes like migration and drift,

or environmental filtering of life history strategies and adaptations. In two temperate forests, we

investigated how phylogenetic diversity within *Methylobacterium* was structured by

biogeography, seasonality, and growth strategies. Using deep, culture-independent barcoded

marker gene sequencing coupled with culture-based approaches, we uncovered a previously

underestimated diversity of *Methylobacterium* in the phyllosphere. We cultured very different

subsets of *Methylobacterium* lineages depending upon the temperature of isolation and growth

(20 °C or 30 °C), suggesting long-term adaptation to temperature. To a lesser extent than

temperature adaptation, *Methylobacterium* diversity was also structured across large (>100km;

between forests) and small geographical scales (<1.2km within forests), among host tree species,

and was dynamic over seasons. By measuring growth of 79 isolates at different temperature

treatments, we observed contrasting growth performances, with strong lineage- and season-

dependent variations in growth strategies. Finally, we documented a progressive replacement of

lineages with a high-yield growth strategy typical of cooperative, structured communities, in

favor of those characterized by rapid growth, resulting in convergence and homogenization of community structure at the end of the growing season. Together our results show how *Methylobacterium* is phylogenetically structured into lineages with distinct growth strategies, which helps explain their differential abundance across regions, host tree species, and time. This works paves the way for further investigation of adaptive strategies and traits within a ubiquitous phyllosphere genus.

Abstract importance

Methylobacterium is a bacterial group tied to plants. Despite its ubiquity and importance to their hosts, little is known about the processes driving *Methylobacterium* community dynamics. By combining traditional culture-dependent and –independent (metagenomics) approaches, we monitored *Methylobacterium* diversity in two temperate forests over a growing season. On the surface of tree leaves, we discovered remarkably diverse and dynamic *Methylobacterium* communities over short temporal (from June to October) and spatial scales (within 1.2 km). Because we cultured very different subsets of *Methylobacterium* diversity depending on the temperature of incubation, we suspected that these dynamics partly reflected climatic adaptation. By culturing strains in lab conditions mimicking seasonal variations, we found that diversity and environmental variations were indeed good predictors of *Methylobacterium* growth performances. Our findings suggest that *Methylobacterium* community dynamics at the surface of tree leaves results from the succession of strains with contrasted growth strategies in response to environmental variations.

Acknowledgments: FRQNT (funding), NSERC (funding), Canada Research Chairs (funding), NSF (DEB-1831838), Geneviève Lajoie, Dominique Tardif, Ariane Lafrenière, Hélène Dion-Phénix, Yves Terrat, Kenta Araya (help for sampling), Sylvain Dallaire (help for phenotyping screen), Sergey Stolyar (discussions), Gault Natural Reserve (McGill University), Station Biologique des Laurentides (UdeM), Centre d'Étude de la Forêt (CEF), QCBS.

Author contributions : J.B.L., E.S.L., D.C.M., G.B., B.J.S. and S.W.K. planned fieldwork and the experiments. J.B.L. E.S.L., D.C.M. and G.B. performed experiments. J.B.L., E.S.L., D.S. and J.M.S performed bioinformatic analyses. J.A.F., C.J.M. and J.M.S. provided discussion in the

early stages of this study. J.B.L. B.J.S. and S.W.K. drafted the manuscript with contributions

from C.J.M.

Data accessibility: raw reads for *16s* and *rpoB* barcoding on phyllosphere communities

(BioProject PRJNA729807; BioSamples SAMN19164946-SAMN19165146) were deposited in

NCBI under SRA Accession Numbers SRR14532212-SRR14532451. Partial nucleotide

sequences from marker genes obtained by SANGER sequencing on *Methylobacterium* isolates

(BioProject PRJNA730554 ; Biosamples SAMN19190155-SAMN19190401) were deposited in

NCBI under GenBank Accession Numbers MZ268514-MZ268593 (*16s*), MZ330152-MZ330358

(*rpoB*) and MZ330130-MZ330151 (*sucA*). R codes and related data were deposited on Github

(https://github.com/JBLED/methylo-phyllo-diversity).

Introduction

Phyllosphere, the aerial parts of plants including leaves, is a microbial habitat estimated as vaste as twice the surface of the earth (1). Although exposed to harsh conditions, like UVs, temperature variations and poor nutrient availability, the phyllosphere arbors a diverse community of microorganisms, of which bacteria are the most abundant (1). A key challenge in microbial ecology and evolution is understanding the evolutionary and ecological processes that maintain diversity in habitats such as the phyllosphere. Bacteria living in the phyllosphere carry out key functions including nitrogen fixation, growth stimulation and protection against pathogens (1–3). At broad spatial and temporal scales, bacterial diversity in the phyllosphere varies as a function of biogeography and host plant species, potentially due to restricted migration and local adaptation to the biotic and abiotic environment (4–6), leading to patterns of cophylogenetic evolutionary association between phyllosphere bacteria and their host plants (7). Whether those eco-evolutionary processes are important at short time scales, as microbes and their host plants migrate and adapt to changing climates, is still an open question (8). Another challenge is to link seasonal variation with plant-associated microbial community dynamics, as shifts in microbial community composition are tighly linked with host plant carbon cycling (9) and ecosystem functions including nitrogen fixation (10). More generally, we understand very little about how the ecological strategies of phyllosphere bacteria vary among lineages and in response to variation in environmental conditions throughout the growing season (9, 11).

Phylogenetic signal in traits or suites of correlated traits that are used as indicators of the ecological life history strategy of microbes suggest niche adaptation (12), and these phenotypic traits influence the assembly of ecological communities through their mediation of organismal interactions with the abiotic and biotic environment (13). Recent work evaluating the phylogenetic depth of microbial trait evolution has shown that many microbial phenotype traits exhibit phylogenetic signal, with closely related lineages possessing similar phenotypic traits, although the phylogenetic depth at which this signal is evident differs among traits (14). Most comparative studies of microbial trait evolution have focused on broad scale patterns across major phyla and classes (14), although some studies have found evidence for complex patterns of phenotypic and genomic evolution within microbial genera interacting to determine patterns of

community assembly and niche evolution (15, 16). Furthermore, to date the majority of studies of the diversity of plant-associated microbes have been based on the use of universal marker genes such as the bacterial 16S rRNA gene, providing a global picture of long-term bacterial adaptation to different biomes and host plants at broad phylogenetic scales (17), but lacking sufficient resolution to assess the evolutionary processes at finer spatial and temporal scales that lead to the origin of and adaptations within microbial genera and species (18, 19).

The Rhizobiales genus *Methylobacterium* (*Alphaproteobacteria*, *Rhizobiales*, *Methylobacteriaceae*) is one of the most prevalent bacterial genera of the phyllosphere, present on nearly every plant (20, 21). Characterized by pink colonies due to carotenoid production, *Methylobacterium* are facultative methylotrophs, able to use one-carbon compounds, such as methanol excreted by plants, as sole carbon sources (21–23). Experimental studies have shown the important roles of *Methylobacterium* in plant physiology, including growth stimulation through hormone secretion (24–26), heavy metal sequestration (26), anti-phytopathogenic compound secretion, and nitrogen fixation in plant nodules (27), sparking increasing interest in the use of *Methylobacterium* in plant biotechnology applications (26, 28, 29). Although up to 64 *Methylobacterium* species have been described (30–38), genomic and phenotypic information was until recently limited to a small number of model species: *M. extorquens, M. populi*, *M. nodulans*, *M. aquaticum* and *M radiotolerans*, mostly isolated from anthropogenic environments, and only rarely from plants (39–43). Newly available genomic and metagenomic data now allow a better understanding of *Methylobacterium* diversity across biomes (30), but we still understand relatively little about the drivers of the evolution and adaptation of *Methylobacterium* in natural habitats.

In this study, we assessed the diversity of *Methylobacterium* in temperate forests and asked whether *Methylobacterium* associated with tree leaves act as an unstructured population with large effective size, or if this diversity was maintained by regional factors (*e.g.* a combination of isolation by distance and regional environmental variation) or by niche adaptation (*e.g.* host tree or temperature adaptation) (12). First, we assessed *Methylobacterium* diversity by combining culturing and barcoding approaches along with phylogenetic analysis and quantified how this diversity varied across space, time, and environment in the phyllosphere. Second, we quantified

the extent of phylogenetic niche differentiation within the bacterial genus *Methylobacterium*,

with a focus on quantifying the evidence for adaptation to local environmental variation at

different spatial, temporal and phylogenetic scales. We hypothesized that distinct phylogenetic

lineages would be associated with distinct environmental niches. Third, we quantified

Methylobacterium growth performance under fine-scale environmental variations, with a focus

on temperature, to determine whether *Methylobacterium* diversity fine-scale dynamics over space

and time might result from environmental filtering of isolates with contrasting growth strategies

under local environmental conditions. We found that *Methylobacterium* phyllosphere diversity

consisted of deeply branching phylogenetic lineages associated with distinct growth phenotypes,

isolation temperatures, and large-scale spatial effects (forest of origin), while finer-scale spatial

effects, host tree species, and time of sampling were more weakly and shallowly phylogenetically

structured. Over the course of a year, from spring to fall, we observed a homogenization of

Methylobacterium community structure coinciding with the progressive replacement of isolates

with high yield strategy by isolates with rapid growth. Together our results show that this

ubiquitous phyllosphere genus is structured into lineages with distinct growth strategies, which

helps explain their differential abundance across space and time.

Results

Phylogenetics of plant-associated Methylobacterium diversity.

We evaluated the known *Methylobacterium* diversity associated with plants, especially the

phyllosphere, by compiling information about the origin of 153 *Methylobacterium* isolates for

which genomes were available. We found that plants (65% of genomes) and especially the

phyllosphere compartment (41% of genomes) were the most prevalent source of

Methylobacterium. From these genomes, we built a phylogenetic tree based on the complete

nucleotide sequence of *rpoB*, a highly polymorphic marker that experienced no copy number

variation in many bacteria taxa (44, 45), and that we confirmed to be single copy in

Methylobacterium and related genera *Microvirga* and *Enterovirga* (**Figure 1, Supplementary**

dataset 1a). In this phylogeny, we roughly identified main *Methylobacterium* groups (A, B, and

C) previously defined based on the 16S gene (30) and found that phyllosphere-associated

diversity was not randomly distributed in the *Methylobacterium* phylogenetic tree. Isolates from

the phyllosphere represented the largest part of diversity within group A (56% of isolates) but not

in groups B and C (17 and 12% of isolates, respectively). Most of diversity within group A

consisted of undescribed taxa falling outside previously well-described linages (**Figure 1,**

Supplementary dataset 1a). For the purpose of this study, we refined *Methylobacterium* group

A that we subdivided into 9 monophyletic clades (A1-A9), using a ∼92% pairwise similarity (PS)

cut-off on the *rpoB* complete sequence.

16S Community analyses reveal Methylobacterium ubiquity and diversity in the phyllosphere.

We focused on *Methylobacterium* phyllosphere diversity variation observable at the scale of

seasonal variation on individual trees within a geographic region, the temperate forests of

northeastern North America (**Figure 2a,b**). In two forests: Mont Saint Hilaire (**MSH;** 45.54 N

73.16 W ; **Figure 2c**) and Station biologique des Laurentides (**SBL;** 45.99 N 73.99 W ; **Figure**

2d), we marked 40 trees representative of diversity observed in 4-6 plots distributed along a 1.2

km transect (4-10 trees per plot). In MSH, the transect followed an elevation and floristic

gradient, while in SBL, it followed a relatively constant environment. For this time series, each

tree was sampled 3-4 times from June to October 2018 (**Figure 2b; Supplementary dataset 1b**).

We evaluated the microbial phyllosphere diversity in our time series based on sequencing and

identification of bacterial 16S gene amplicon sequence variants (ASVs; (46)) in a representative

subset of 46 phyllosphere samples from 13 trees (**Supplementary dataset 1c-e**). As observed in

previous studies (4), the distribution of the phyllosphere bacterial community was mostly

explained by differences among forests (31.6% of variation explained; $p<0.001$; PERMANOVA;

Hellinger transformation; 10,000 permutations), host tree species (15.6% of variation; $p<0.001$)

and time of sampling (12.0%; $p<0.05$; **Table 1**), indicating that between-forest variation and

adaptation to hosts were the main drivers of this diversity, which also varied greatly at the time

scale of a year. Although representing only 1.3% (0.0-3.2% per sample) of total 16S sequence

diversity, *Methylobacterium* was present in almost all analyzed samples (45 out of 46;

Supplementary dataset 1d,e). We assigned the 15 *Methylobacterium* ASVs identified by 16S

sequencing to clades from *Methylobacterium* group A: A9 (*M. phyllosphaerae/M.*

mesophilicum/M. phyllostachyos/ M. pseudosasicola/M. organophilum; 0.87% of total diversity,

nine ASVs), A6 (*M. sp.*, 0.29%; one ASV) and A1 (*M. gossipicola*; 0.13%, 3 ASVs; **Supplementary dataset 1e**). With two rare ASVs (<0.01% of relative abundance) assigned to *M. komagatae*, belonging to group A (30) but unrelated to any aforementioned clade, we defined a new clade (A10). No ASV was assigned to group B or group C, hence confirming observations from available genomes that *Methylobacterium* group A is tightly associated with the phyllosphere.

Development of a single-copy molecular marker to monitor fine-scale dynamics of Methylobacterium populations.

Although the 16S barcoding approach suggests that *Methylobacterium* is ubiquitous in the phyllosphere of temperate forests, regardless of location, time and host tree species, identification based on 16S sequencing presents some limits in assessing microbial population dynamics at local scales, and in assessing fine-scale evolutionary adaptations (18). First, the low polymorphism of the 16S rRNA gene does not permit distinguishing among species within clades typical of the phyllosphere, thus confounding species with potentially divergent evolutionary routes reflecting the distinct ecological niches they occupy within the phyllosphere. Second, 16S copy number variation within *Methylobacterium* (4-12) and even within groups of closely related isolates (4-6 copies in group A; 5 in group B; 6-12 copies in group C), may induce biases in estimating relative abundances of taxa, and thus in assessing the dynamics of populations over space, time and among host tree species.

To assess *Methylobacterium* diversity at a finer evolutionary level, we thus developed a molecular marker targeting all members of the *Methylobacteriaceae* family, using the core gene *rpoB* (**Figure 1** (44, 45)). Based upon *rpoB* sequences available for *Methylobacterium* (**Supplementary dataset 1a**), as well as sequencing of *rpoB* partial sequences from 20 *Methylobacterium* isolates from a pilot survey in MSH in 2017 (**Figure 2d; Table S1; Supplementary dataset 1f,g**) we determined that this gene is polymorphic enough to explore diversity within the aforementioned *Methylobacterium* clades (See **supplementary method**). For the rest of this study, we used the *rpoB* marker to monitor temporal trends in *Methylobacterium* diversity in the phyllosphere from our 2018 time series in both forests.

Culture-based assessment of Methylobacterium diversity in the tree phyllosphere.

We evaluated the culturable part of *Methylobacterium* diversity from a subsample of 36 trees (18

per forest) representative of floral diversity in the 2018 time series in MSH and SBL. To date,

Methylobacterium was mostly isolated assuming its optimal growth was in the range 25-30 °C

(47), an approach that could lead to a bias toward mesophylic isolates in estimating microbial

diversity, especially in the case of microbes inhabiting temperate forests where temperatures

typically range from 10 to 20 °C during the growing season (48). We thus performed replicate

isolation of *Methylobacterium* at both 20 and 30 °C on minimum mineral salt (MMS) media with

0.1% methanol as sole carbon source. We successfully amplified the *rpoB* marker for 167 pink

isolates that we assigned to *Methylobacterium* based upon their phylogenetic placement

(**Supplementary dataset 1g,h; Supplementary method)**. As observed for 16S ASVs, most

isolates were assigned to clades from group A typical of the phyllosphere: A9 (59.9% of isolates),

A6 (24.6%), A1 (5.4%), A10 (3.6%) and A2 (1.8%). Few isolates were assigned to group B

(4.2% of isolates), mostly related to *M. extorquens*, and none to group C (**Table S2**). But the

higher polymorphism in the *rpoB* marker allowed us to uncover a considerable diversity within

clades, as we identified 71 unique *rpoB* sequences, in contrast to the smaller number obtained

with 16S barcoding (15 ASVs).

Such high diversity in *rpoB* suggests that standing genetic variation is segregating within

Methylobacterium populations inhabiting the phyllosphere. We hypothesized that the

maintenance of this divestity could be explained by regional factors (*e.g.* a combination of

isolation by distance and regional environmental variation) and/or by niche adaptation (*e.g.* host

tree or temperature adaptation)(12). To do so, we quantified associations between

Methylobacterium diversity assessed at varying depths in the *rpoB* phylogeny (**Supplementary**

method; **Figure 3a**) with four factors and their interactions (PERMANOVA with 10,000

permutations): (1) forest of sampling (2) temperature of isolation, (3) sampling time, and (4) host

tree species. For every phylogenetic depth tested, diversity had distinct associations with forest of

origin (4.5±1.0% of variance explained; $p<0.001$) and temperature of isolation (5.9±2.1% of

variance explained; $p<0.001$; **Figure 3a; Supplementary dataset 1i**). Interestingly, temperature

of isolation was the most important factor distinguishing deep phylogenetic divergences (pairwise

nucleotide similarity range: 0.948-0.993), while forest of origin was slightly more important in

structuring more recently diverged nodes (pairwise nucleotide similarity >0.993). This suggests

that mechanisms underlying isolation success at different temperatures played a significant role

in the early divergence among *Methylobacterium* clades associated with tree leaves, while spatial

variation among different forests evolved more recently. Time of sampling had a slight but

significant effect on diversity (2.1±0.2% of variance explained; $p<0.05$) and it was only observed

for higher pairwise nucleotide similarity values (range 0.994-1.000), suggesting seasonal

Methylobacterium diversity dynamics at the tip of the tree. We did not observe any significant

effect of host tree species on *Methylobacterium* isolate diversity, for any level of the phylogeny,

suggesting no strong specific associations between *Methylobacterium* isolates and the tree species

from which they were isolated.

We next asked specifically which nodes within the *Methylobacterium* phylogenetic tree were

associated with the two major factors contributing to overall diversity, namely forest and

temperature of isolation (**Figure 3a**). For every level in the *rpoB* phylogeny, we independently

tested for nodes (with at least 30% of support) associated with forest of origin (SBL and MSH) or

temperature of isolation (20 and 30 °C) by permutation (100,000 permutations per level and per

factor; **Figure 3b**). We identified two nodes strongly associated with temperature of isolation and

corresponding to clades A6 (20 °C; $p<0.001$) and A9+A10 (30 °C; $p<0.001$; **Figure 3b**). Other

clades were evenly isolated at 20 and 30 °C and we observed no significant association between

temperature of isolation and nodes embedded within clades. Nodes associated with forest of

origin also roughly corresponded to certain major clades, with clades A1+A2 almost exclusively

sampled in MSH *($p<0.01$)*. Overall, clade A9 was isolated significantly more often in SBL

($p<0.001$) but at least three of its subclades were significantly associated to either MSH or SBL

($p<0.05$), suggesting relatively recent migration events. The fact that *Methylobacterium* diversity

typical of the phyllosphere show contrasted associations with forest and temperature of isolation

suggests that their evolution was tightly linked with processes related to spatial and

environmental variation including isolation by distance as well as niche-based processes

including adaptation to local climatic conditions.

Comparison of Methylobacterium diversity assessed by rpoB barcoding and isolation

To determine if these culture-based results were representative of the potentially uncultured

Methylobacterium diversity, we developed a culture-independent barcoded amplicon sequencing

approach based on *rpoB*. We performed *rpoB* amplicon sequencing for 179 leaf samples from 53

trees in both forests, allowed a monthly monitoring for most trees (**Supplementary dataset 1c,j**).

We identified 283 *Methylobacteriaceae rpoB* ASVs in these samples (**Supplementary dataset**

1j,k), representing 24.6% of all sequences. Non-*Methylobacteriaceae* ASVs were mostly

assigned to other Rhizobiales families (850 ASVs, 70.33% of sequence abundance) and to

Caulobacterales (209 ASVs, 4.42% of sequence abundance) typical of the phyllosphere (see

Supplementary method), suggesting that our *rpoB* marker is not limited to *Methylobacteriaceae*

and can potentially be used at a broader taxonomic scale (**Figure S1a**). Within

Methylobacteriaceae, ASVs were mostly classified as *Methylobacterium* (200 ASVs, 23.05% of

sequence relative abundance), and *Enterovirga* (78 ASVs, 1.56%; **Supplementary dataset 1k**).

We assigned *Methylobacterium* ASVs to previously defined clades using a maximum likelihood

tree combining ASV sequences and reference genomes (**Figure S1b**). Most of *Methylobacterium*

diversity was within the previously cultured clades A9 (45.2% of *Methylobacterium* sequence

abundance), A6 (24.3%), A1 (6.1%) and A10 (1.0%; **Supplementary dataset 1j; Table S2**).

Estimates of *Methylobacterium* diversity based on *rpoB* sequences from culture-independent

sequencing or cultured isolates were generally concordant (**Figures S1c,d; Table S2**).

Nevertheless, we cannot exclude the possibility that some diversity was not isolated. For

instance, although 19.1% of total *Methylobacterium* diversity assessed by *rpoB* culture-free

barcoding was assigned to group B, it only represented 4.2% of isolates. One possible

explanation could be adaptation of some isolates from this group to temperatures below the range

used for isolation (20-30 °C), as temperatures at the very beginning (May) and end (October) of

the growing period in Quebec typically range between 5 and 15°C.

Fine-scale temporal and spatial distribution of Methylobacterium diversity assessed by rpoB

barcoding

Our isolate-based survey suggested that the distribution of *Methylobacterium* diversity was
driven by both spatial and seasonal variation. This result was largely supported using the culture-
free approach (*rpoB* barcoding). Specifically, we found that spatial variation at both large
(distance between forests: 100km) and local scales (distance between plots within forest: 150-
1,200 m), as well as sampling date during the growing season (1-5 months), explained the largest
part of variance in the community composition of 200 *Methylobacterium* ASVs (proportion of
variation explained: 32.4%, 8.0% and 4.8%, respectively; p<0.001; PERMANOVA; Hellinger
transformation, Bray-Curtis dissimilarity, 10,000 permutations; **Table 1**). A large proportion of
Methylobacterium ASVs (83 out of 200) were significantly associated with one or either forest
(ANOVA; Bonferroni correction; **Figure 4a; Supplementary dataset 1l**), regardless their clade
membership. The only exception was observed for clade A1, which was almost exclusively
observed (and isolated; see **Figure 3b**) in the MSH forest. Also consistent without our isolation-
based results, we found no clear association between ASV or clade with host tree species, nor
plots within forests (data not shown).
337
To focus on temporal variation and fine-scale spatial effects, we removed large-scale spatial
variation by analyzing each forest separately. We quantified fine-scale spatial and temporal
dynamics of *Methylobacterium* diversity (200 ASVs), using autocorrelation analysis based on
Bray-Curtis dissimilarity index (*BC*). We observed a weak but significant decrease of community
similarity with geographical distance separating two samples within MSH (ANOVA on linear
model; *p*<0.001) but not SBL (*p*>0.05, **Table 2, Figure 4b**), and a significant decrease of
community similarity with time separating two samples in both forests (ANOVA on linear
model; *p*<0.001; **Table 2**), which was more marked in MSH than in SBL (**Figure 4c**). Both
results indicate that *Methylobacteriaceae* diversity is heterogeneously distributed even at very
local space and time scales. The overall community dissimilarity consistently decreased from
June to October in both MSH (from 0.624 to 0.297) and SBL (from 0.687 to 0.522; **Table 2,**
Figure 4d), suggesting that *Methylobacteriaceae* diversity was progressively homogenized by
migration or ecological filtering between the beginning and the end of the growing season at the
scale of a forest, although without affecting locally its heterogeneous spatial distribution in MSH
(**Table 2, Figure 4e**). The heterogeneous spatial distribution of *Methylobacterium* diversity
observed in MSH forest suggests either more restricted migration than in SBL, and/or local

adaptation due to environmental gradients. One possible explanation is that the floristic and

altitudinal gradient observed in MSH (**Figure 2d**) – but not in SBL – might generate local

adaptation to host tree species for *Methylobacterium* colonizing leaves in this more

heterogeneous forest, hence counteracting the homogenizing effect of neutral processes like

migration (49). Accordingly, we found slight but significant effects of host tree species, and of

the interaction between host tree species and plots within forests, on *Methylobacterium*

community composition (explaining 7.1% and 4.3% of variation in community composition;

p<0.001 and ,p<0.01, respectively; PERMANOVA; **Table 1**).

We tested for temporal autocorrelation in each node of the ML tree (**Figure S1b**) supported by at

least 30% of bootstrapps (200 permutations) and observed significant temporal dynamics (as

attested by the positive slope between pairwise time and BC dissimilarity) in most testable nodes

(ANOVA, Bonferroni correction; **Figure 4f**). We observed the strongest temporal signals in

nodes embedded within clades A1 (MSH) and B (both forests), Accordingly, we found 25 ASVs

whose abundance significantly increased thourough the growing season (ANOVA; Bonferroni

correction; p<0.05), mostly belonging to clades A1 (n=11). Four ASVs increased significantly

with time in both forests and mostly belonged to group B (n=3), suggesting that at least a part of

the characteristics driving short-term dynamics of *Methylobacterium* communities are shared

among members of different clades within the genus (**Supplementary dataset 1l**).

Effect of short scale temperature variation in combination with other environmental and genetic

factors on Methylobacterium growth performances

A major environmental difference between forest sites and throughout the growing season relates

to shifts in temperature, suggesting, together with temperature preference of some clades during

the isolation step, that *Methylobacterium* diversity dynamics we observed over space and time

might result from clade contrasted growth performances under local climatic conditions. To

further explore the role of temperature, we measured growth of 79 *Methylobacterium* isolates

(sampled in 2018 in both forests; MSH: $n=32$, SBL: $n=47$; **Supplementary dataset 1m**) for four

temperature treatments mimicking temperature variations during the growing season. Each

treatment consisted of an initial pre-conditioning step (*P*) during which each isolate was

incubated on solid MMS media with methanol as sole carbon source for 20 days at either 20 °C

(*P20*) or 30 °C (*P30*), and a second monitoring step (*M*) during which pre-conditioned isolates

were incubated on the same media and their growth monitored for 24 days at 20 °C (*P20M20* and

P20M30) or 30 °C (*P30M20* and *P30M30***; Figure S2***). Treatments *P20M20* and *P30M30*

mimicked stable thermal environments, and treatments *P20M30* and *P30M20* mimicked variable

thermal environments. For each isolate and temperature treatment, logistic growth curves were

inferred from bacteria spot intensity variation observed over three time points during the

monitoring step (**Figures S2, S3**). From growth curves, we estimated maximum growth intensity,

or yield (*Y*) and growth rate (*r*) as the inverse of lag+log time necessary to reach *Y* (**Figure S4**

(50, 51)). Clade membership explained a large part of variation in *Y* and *r* (30.6 and 7.6% of

variation explained, respectively; ANOVA; *p*<0.001), indicating that *Methylobacterium* growth

performance is largely long-term inherited and tends to be shared among clade members (**Figures**

5a,b, Table 3). Certain clades had a higher yield range than others, suggesting differences in their

carbon use efficiency (51), here provided by methanol. For example, group B isolates (*Y* = 12.2 ±

5.0) have higher yield than group A (*Y* = 5.4 ± 3.5). Different growth rates rather suggest

contrasted growth strategies across clades (51, 52). Isolates from clades A1, A2 and B had the

highest growth rate (*r* range: 0.101±0.032 – 0.121±0.031), suggesting they have fast-growth

strategy. Other clades (A6, A9 and A10) had on average slower growth (*r* range: 0.082±0.021 –

0.088±0.024), suggesting that they have more efficient strategy (51).

Compared to clade membership, we observed that time of sampling, host tree species and forest

explained less variation in growth rate (5.4%, *p*<0.001; 2.2%, p<0.01 and 1.5%, p<0.05,

respectively; ANOVA; **Table 3**), suggesting that plasticity to the environment was a secondary

but still determining factor in strain growth strategy. The weak or non-significant interactions

between clade membership and the aforementioned environmental factors (ANOVA; **Table 3**)

suggest that these patterns were consistent across clades, indicating they are unlikely to result

from long-term adaptation but rather correspond to short-term responses to environmental

conditions. In both SBL and MSH, growth rate increased consistently from June (*r* =

0.075±0.018 and 0.085±0.033, respectively) to September/October (*r* = 0.097±0.031 and

0.103±0.027, respectively; **Figure 5c**). Growth rate increase thorough the season might result

from increasing competition within phyllosphere communities, for instance by selection for faster

growth. Accordingly, culture-independent *rpoB* confirmed that clades associated with faster

growth (clades B and A1) increased in abundance over time.

Temperature also had significant effects on growth performance. Temperature during the

monitoring phase explained respectively 2.0% and 15.8% of variation in yield and growth rate

($p<0.01$ and $p<0.001$, respectively; ANOVA; **Figure 5d, Table 3**), regardless of clade

membership (no significant interaction in the ANOVA). Isolates incubated at 20 °C have on

average higher yield ($Y=6.9\pm5.4$) but slower growth ($r=0.077\pm0.022$) than isolates incubated at

30 °C ($Y=4.9\pm3.6$; $r=0.100\pm0.030$), suggesting that higher temperature tends to shift

Methylobacterium toward faster growth but lower efficiency, a typical trade-off observed in other

bacteria (51). The effect of monitoring temperature on growth rate was also independent from

time of sampling (no significant interaction in the ANOVA), suggesting that *Methylobacterium*

also grow faster and less efficiently at 30 °C regardless temporal environmental variations.

Accordingly, the pre-conditioning temperature had no effect on growth rate ($p>0.05$; ANOVA),

and very limited on yield (1.4%; $p<0.05$; ANOVA), suggesting limited effect of short-time

temperature shift on *Methylobacterium* growth performance (**Table 3**).

Discussion

Methylobacterium is ubiquitous on leaves in the temperate forests of Québec and its diversity in

this habitat is quite similar to what has been described in the phyllosphere throughout the world,

with three main clades A9 (*M. brachiatum*, *M. pseudosasicola*), A6 (*M. sp.*) and A1 (*M.*

gossipicola) dominating diversity in the canopy. Our barcoding approach based on a clade-

specific *rpoB* marker revealed astonishing diversity within these clades, as well as within several

other clades: B (*M. extorquens*), A2 (*M. sp.*), A4 (*M. gnaphalii*, *M. brachytecii*) and A10 (*M.*

komagatae) whose importance in the phyllosphere has been underestimated by classical 16S

barcoding or isolation approaches. This diversity, like that of the overall phyllosphere

community, was mostly determined by differences between forests, with barcoding approaches

suggesting combined effects of restricted migration, local adaptation to host tree species, and

climatic conditions at large geographical scales (>100km). With higher molecular resolution, we

observed that *Methylobacterium* diversity was structured even at the scale of a forest (within 2

km), which according to a fine-scale timeline survey over the growing season also showed a clear

pattern of temporal dynamics and succession. A finer analysis of *Methylobacterium* diversity

suggested that clade identity partly explained *Methylobacterium* geographical distribution at large

scale (forest) but not at finer scales (plots), nor was it an indicator of adaptation to a particular

host tree species, nor a determinant of temporal dynamics. Rather, the distribution of

Methylobacterium diversity at small temporal and geographical scales likely resulted from more

contemporaneous community assembly events selecting for phenotypic traits that evolved among

deeply diverging lineages of *Methylobacterium*, as has been observed in other bacterial (16) and

plant clades (53).

We explored mechanisms explaining the temporal dynamics of *Methylobacterium* diversity at the

scale of a growing season. Because we observed contrasting *Methylobacterium* isolable diversity

between 20 and 30 °C, we suspected that adaptation to temperature variation during the growing

season could explain part of these temporal dynamics. By monitoring *Methylobacterium* isolate

growth under different temperature treatments, we confirmed that temperature affected isolate

growth performances. The fact that most tested isolates grow slower but more efficiently at 20 °C

than at 30 °C (**Figure 5d**), regardless of their phylogenetic and environmental characteristics, is

in line with a temperature-dependent trade-off between growth rate and yield described in many

bacteria (reviewed in (51)). High yield strategies are typical of cooperative bacterial populations,

while fast growth-strategies are typical of competitive populations (51), suggesting that 20 °C is

likely closer to the thermal niche of a cooperative *Methylobacterium* community, in agreement

with average temperatures in temperate forests during the growing season. This observation also

stresses the importance of considering incubation temperature when interpreting results from

previous studies assessing *Methylobacterium* diversity based on isolation. We observed several

lines of evidence that factors other than direct adaptation to temperature drive *Methylobacterium*

responses to temperature variation, by affecting their growth strategy in different competitive

conditions rather than by affecting their metabolism directly. First, clade identity was one of the

main predictors of overall isolate performance, with some clades (A1, A2, B) possessing a rapid

growth strategy under all temperature conditions, while others (clades A6, A9, A10) had

systematically slower growth. These clade-specific growth strategies could explain for instance

why certain *Methylobacterium* isolates are less competitive and less frequently isolated at higher

temperatures. Still, we cannot rule out that clade-specific growth strategy also reflect
experimental conditions. Second, we observed strong associations between isolates growth
performance and time of sampling, regardless of clade association, suggesting that growth
dynamic strategies also respond to seasonal variations in environmental conditions, and to the
level of establishment and competition in the phyllosphere community (51). This observation,
together with clade identity, could explain why, assuming that environmental conditions at the
end of the growing season became unfavorable for most strains, isolates from clades A1 and B
with a fast-growth strategy consistently increase in frequency during this period and lead to the
homogenization of the community. Taken together, our temporal survey of diversity dynamics
and screening for growth performance suggest the following timeline of the dynamics of the
Methylobacterium phyllosphere community. At the very beginning of the growing season, a pool
of bacteria with mixed ecological strategies and genotypes colonizes newly emerging leaves. Due
to the stochasticity of this colonization, we initially observe strong dissimilarity among
phyllosphere communities, regardless of their spatial position. During the summer, optimal
environmental conditions allow the progressive establishment of a cooperative and structured
bacterial community with a high yield strategy (51). At the end of the growing season, with
migration, environmental conditions shifting and leaves senescing, isolates with a fast-growth
strategy are able to grow rapidly, dominating the phyllosphere community and leading to its
homogeneization before leaves fully senesce.

Our study illustrates that *Methylobacterium* is a complex group of divergent lineages with
different ecological strategies and distributions, reflecting long-term adaptation to highly
contrasted environments. Based upon a similar observation, some authors recently proposed to
reclassify *Methylobacterium* group B within a new genus (*Methylorubrum*) that they argue is
ecologically and evolutionarily distinct from other *Methylobacterium* clades (30). Although clade
B was well supported as a distinct clade in our analyses, our results suggest that it is in fact
embedded within clade A, which would render the genus *Methylobacterium* paraphyletic if clade
B is defined as a distinct genus (**Figure S5**), and group B was not particularly ecologically
distinct in comparison with other major clades (**Figure 1**). Our results emphasize the fact that
torough genomic investigations are needed to clarify the taxomonic status of *Methylobacterium*.
Beyond any taxonomic considerations, neither clade identity assessed by individual genetic

markers nor the tremendous ecological diversity among *Methylobacterium* clades can predict all
of the spatial and temporal variation in *Methylobacterium* diversity in nature. In order to define
the niches of *Methylobacterium* clades and to understand the metabolic mechanisms underlying
their contrasted life strategies, future characterization of their functions and genome structure will
be required using phylogenomic approaches.
514
In conclusion, we find that *Methylobacterium* adaptive responses to local environmental variation
in the phyllosphere are driven by both long-term inherited ecological strategies that differ among
major clades within the genus, as well by seasonal changes affecting habitat characteristics and
community structure in the phyllosphere habitat. Overall, our study combining sequencing- and
culture-based approaches provides novel insights into the factors driving fine-scale adaptation of
microbes to their habitats, and in the case of *Methylobacterium* our approach revealed the
particular importance of considering organismal life-history strategies to help understand the
small-scale diversity and dynamic of this ecologically important taxon.
523
524
525
526

    Figures and Table

Figure 1 - *Methylobacterium* **phylogeny and ecology.** Most of *Methylobacterium* diversity is found

in association with plants, especially in the phyllosphere. Phylogenetic consensus tree (nodal

posterior probabilities indicated next to the branches) from *rpoB* complete nucleotide sequences

available for 153 *Methylobacterium* genomes and rooted on 32 *Methylobacteriaceae* outgroups

(*Microvirga*, *Enterovirga*; no shown; see **Supplementary dataset 1a**). For each genome, species

name, the anthropogenic origin (black squares) and/or environmental origin (color code on top

right) are indicated. Groups A, B, C adapted from Green *et* Ardley (30). Monophyletic clades

within group A (A1-A9) were defined using a ◻92% nucleotide pairwise similarity cut-off on the

rpoB complete sequence.

Figure 2 - Sampling design. a) Locations of the two sampled forests MSH (green) and SBL

(orange) in the province of Québec (Canada). b) Time line survey in each forest in 2018 (2-4 time

points available per tree). c-d). Detailed map of each forest and each plot within forests (squares;

6 to 10 trees were sampled per plot; see **Supplementary dataset 1b**). In MSH, plots H0 and L0

were sampled once in 2017 for a pilot survey. In SBL and MSH, plots 1-6 were sampled 4 times

in 2018. For each plot, tree localizations are indicated by point colored according to their

taxonomie (color code on bottom left): ABBA (*Abies balsamea*), ACRU (*Acer rubrum*). ACSA

(*Acer saccharum*), OSVI (*Ostrya virginiana*), QURU (*Quercus rubra*), FAGR (*Fagus*

grandifolia), ASPE (*Acer Pennsylvanicum*). Shades of grey indicate elevation (50 m elevation

scale)

Figure 3 - Tests for phylogenetic association of traits with culture-based estimation of

***Methylobacterium* diversity.** a) Part of variance in *Methylobacterium* isolated diversity

explained by each trait and their interactions (PERMANOVA tests for association; 10,000

permutations; x-axis) in function of pairwise nucleotide similarity as a proxy for phylogenetic

depth (PS; y-axis; see **Supplementary dataset 1i**). PERMANOVA were conducted at different

depths within a consensus phylogenetic tree (nodes with less than 30% of support were collapsed;

legend on top right) drawn from partial *rpoB* nucleotide sequences of 187 isolates (pilot survey in

2017: n=20; timeline survey in 2018: n=167) and 188 *Methylobacteriaceae* reference sequences.

The four following traits and their interactions were tested (see Venn diagram on top left for color code): forest of origin, host tree species, sampling date and temperature of isolation. Points indicate significant part of variance (legend on the left). b) Test for node association (100,000 permutations) with forest of origin and temperature of isolation (color code on top) mapped on the *rpoB* phylogeny (scaled on PS values). Frames in the tree indicate nodes significantly associated with at least one factor (ANOVA; Bonferroni correction; $p<0.001$: "***"; $p<0.01$:"**"; $p<0.05$:"*"). For each isolate (names in bold), colored boxes at the tip of the tree indicate forest of origin and temperature of isolation.

Figure 4 - Short-scale spatial and temporal dynamics of *Methylobacterium* communities assessed by *rpoB* barcoding. a) A principal component analysis (PCA) on 200 *Methylobacterium* ASVs relative abundance (Hellinger transformation, Bray-Curtis (*BC*) dissimilarity) shows that 179 phyllosphere samples cluster according to forest of origin (MSH: open triangles, SBL: full triangles) and date of sampling (detail showed only for MSH). The significant association of 83 and 25 ASVs with forest of origin and/or sampling date, respectively (ANOVA, Bonferroni correction; $p<0.05$; point size proportional to variance; legend on bottom left) is shown (points colored according to clade assignation; legend on top right). b) Spatial and c) temporal autocorrelation analyzes conducted in each forest separately. Points represent BC dissimilarity in function of pairwise geographic (*pDist*; b) or pairwise time (*pTime*; c) distance separating two communities. For each forest and variable, the predicted linear regression (*BC~pDIST* or *~pTime*) is indicated (full line: $p<0.001$; dotted line: $p>0.05$; ANOVA). d) *BC* in function of sampling time for each forest. e) Detail of spatial autocorrelation analyzes in MSH, conducted for each sampling time point separately. f) Scaled ML tree (original tree from **Figure S1b** scaled on pairwise nucleotide similarity (PS)) of 200 *Methylobacterium* ASV (points) and 176 reference *rpoB* sequences rooted on *Microvirga* and *Enterovirga* (out group not shown). Temporal autocorrelation analyzes per forest were conducted for each node supported by at least 30% of bootstraps (200 permutations). For each forest and node, the strength of the slope (estimate of the linear regression *BC~pTime*; proportional to point size) was displayed when highly significant ($p<0.001$; ANOVA, Bonferroni correction).

Figure 5 - Analysis of 79 *Methylobacterium* isolate growth performances under 4 different temperature treatments. For each isolate and temperature treatment, the yield (*Y*: maximal growth intensity) and growth rate (*r*; inverse of log+lag time) were estimated from growth curves. a) Average growth curves (growth intensity in function of time) for each clade (line: mean value; frame: 1/3 of standard deviation; point: average maximal growth). b) *r* in function of *Y*. Each point represents the average *r*/*Y* values for an isolate and a temperature treatment (79 isolates x 4 treatments), colored according to clade membership. Ellipsoides are centered on average values per clade and represent 30% of confidence interval (standard deviation). c) *r* (log scale) in function of time at which samples strains were isolated from were collected, colored according to the forest of origin. Points: real data; bars: average *r* value per forest (n=2) and time (n=4) category. d) *r* in function of Y, corrected for clade assignement (residuals of the *r*~Clade and *Y*~Clade linear regressions). Each point represents the average *r*/*Y* residual values for an isolate and a temperature treatment (79 isolates x 4 treatments), colored according to monitoring temperature (legend on top right).

Table 1 - PERMANOVA analysis of variance in *Bacteria* and *Methylobacterium* community diversity. *Bacteria* diversity was assessed by *16s* barcoding in 46 phyllosphere samples. *Methylobacterium* was assessed by *rpoB* barcoding after filtering out non-*Methylobacterium* diversity in 179 phyllopshere samples. Part of variance in dissimilarity (R^2; Bray-Curtis index) among samples associated with four factors and their possible interactions (*F*: forest of origin; *D*: date of sampling; *H*: host tree species; *P*: plot within forest) and their significance are shown (10,000 permutations on ASV relative abundance, Hellinger transformation; "***": $p<0.00l$; "**": $p<0.01$; "*": $p<0.05$.) For 16s, *P* was omitted to conserve degrees of freedom.

	Bacteria (*16s*)		*Methylobacterium (rpoB)*	
Samples	**46**		**179**	
Factor	R^2	Pr(>F)	R^2	Pr(>F)
Forest of origin (F)	0.316***	<0.000	0.324***	<0.001
Host tree specie (H)	0.156***	<0.001	0.071***	<0.001
Time of sampling (D)	0.120*	0.016	0.048***	<0.001
Plot within forests (P)	-	-	0.080***	<0.001
F:H	0.020	0.080	0.004	0.110
H:D	0.239	0.217	0.074**	0.028
H:P	-	-	0.043**	0.007
D:P	-	-	0.058	0.455
H:D:P	-	-	0.085	0.052
Residuals	0.150	-	0.213	-

Table 2 - Summary of statistics from autocorrelation analyzes on 179 phyllosphere *Methylobacterium* **samples assessed by** *rpoB* **barcoding (200 ASVs).** For each model, pairwise dissimilarity between two communities was assessed with the Bray-Curtis dissimilarity index (*BC*) from ASV relative abundance (Hellinger transformation) under a linear model. *Spatial autocorrelation general models*: *BC* in function of pairwise spatial distance separating two sampled trees (*pDist*) and date of sampling (*Date*) and their interaction (*pDist:Date*). Samples from forests MSH and SBL were analyzed separately (two models). Only pairwise comparisons among samples from a same date were considered. *Spatial autocorrelation models per date*: *BC* in function of pairwise spatial distance (*pDist*). Each sampling date (n=4) and forest (n=2) was analyzed separately (eight models). *Temporal autocorrelation: general models*: *BC* in function of pairwise spatial time separating two sampled trees (*pTime*). Samples from forests MSH and SBL were analyzed separately (two models) and all spatial scales were considered. For each model, the average and standard deviation of the intercept (mean BC value) are indicated. For each factor (*pDist*, *Date*, *pDist:Date* and *pTime*), the average and standard deviation of estimates (slope) are indicated. Significance of estimates was assessed by ANOVA ("***": $p < 0.00l$; "**": $p < 0.01$; "*": $p < 0.05$).

Categories (*n*)		Intercept (sd)		Estimates*10^{-3} (sd)		
Spatial autocorrelation general models: lm(BC~pDist*D)						
Site (within dates)		*BC*	*pDist*	*D*		*pDist:Date*
MSH		0.5965 (0.0107)	**-0.0041 (0.0192)*****	**-2.7648 (0.1313)*****		**0.0007 (0.0002)****
SBL		0.6493 (0.0097)	0.0157 (0.0145)	**-1.5575 (0.1646)*****		0.0000 (0.0002)
Spatial autocorrelation models per date: lm(BC~pDist)						
Site	**Date**	*BC*	*pDist*			
MSH	**27 Jun.**	0.6237 (0.0340)	-0.0425 (0.0725)			
	6 Aug.	0.4919 (0.0112)	**0.0503 (0.0192)****			
	7 Sept.	0.3746 (0.0059)	**0.0313 (0.0099)****			
	18 Oct.	0.2966 (0.0045)	**0.0795 (0.0073)*****			
SBL	**20 Jun.**	0.6868 (0.0146)	0.0082 (0.0216)			
	16 Jul.	0.5819 (0.0113)	0.0215 (0.0174)			
	16 Aug.	0.5415 (0.0105)	0.0114 (0.0150)			
	20 Sept.	0.5222 (0.0089)	0.0145 (0.0130)			
Temporal autocorrelation general models (BC~pTime)						
Site		*BC*	*pTime*			
MSH		0.4086 (0.0032)	**1.0786 (0.0607)*****			
SBL		0.5789 (0.0030)	**0.3012 (0.0617)*****			

Table 3 - Part of variance in yield (Y) and growth rate (r) measured in 79 _Methylobacterium_ isolates grown under 4 temperature treatments. Y and r values were transformed in log to meet normal distribution. Significance of Y and r response were evaluated by ANOVA in linear models: $\log(Y) \sim F*H*D*T_p*T_M*C$ _and_ $\log(r) \sim F*H*D*T_p*T_M*C$, respectively, with following factors : clade (C), forest of origin (F), host tree species (H), time of sampling (D), temperature of incubation during pre-conditioning (T_P) and monitoring (T_M) steps and their interactions (only significant are shown: "***": p<0.00l; "**": p<0.01; "*": p<0.05).

	Rate	Yield
Forest (*F*)	0.015*	0.002
Host tree species (*H*)	0.022**	0.013**
Date of sampling (*D*)	0.054***	0.013**
Pre-conditioning temperature (*TP*)	0.001	0.014**
Monitoring temperature (*TM*)	0.158***	0.020**
Clade (*C*)	0.076***	0.306***
F:D	0.006	0.036***
H:D	0.001	0.015**
H:C	0.006	0.058***
D:C	0.032*	0.022*
F:H:D	0.019**	0.035***
F:H:C	0.013*	0.006
other interactions	0.142	0.084
Residuals	0.456	0.377

References

1.   Vorholt JA. 2012. Microbial life in the phyllosphere. 12. Nature Reviews Microbiology 10:828–840.

2.   Lindow SE, Brandl MT. 2003. Microbiology of the Phyllosphere. Appl Environ Microbiol 69:1875–1883.

3.   Fürnkranz M, Wanek W, Richter A, Abell G, Rasche F, Sessitsch A. 2008. Nitrogen fixation by phyllosphere bacteria associated with higher plants and their colonizing epiphytes of a tropical lowland rainforest of Costa Rica. 5. The ISME Journal 2:561–570.

4.   Laforest-Lapointe I, Messier C, Kembel SW. 2016. Host species identity, site and time drive temperate tree phyllosphere bacterial community structure. Microbiome 4:27.

5.   Laforest-Lapointe I, Messier C, Kembel SW. 2016. Tree phyllosphere bacterial communities: exploring the magnitude of intra- and inter-individual variation among host species. PeerJ 4:e2367.

6.   Noble AS, Noe S, Clearwater MJ, Lee CK. 2020. A core phyllosphere microbiome exists across distant populations of a tree species indigenous to New Zealand. PLOS ONE 15:e0237079.

7.   Kembel SW, O'Connor TK, Arnold HK, Hubbell SP, Wright SJ, Green JL. 2014. Relationships between phyllosphere bacterial communities and plant functional traits in a neotropical forest. PNAS 111:13715–13720.

8.   Shade A, Gregory Caporaso J, Handelsman J, Knight R, Fierer N. 2013. A meta-analysis of changes in bacterial and archaeal communities with time. 8. The ISME Journal 7:1493–1506.

9.   Malik AA, Martiny JBH, Brodie EL, Martiny AC, Treseder KK, Allison SD. 2020. Defining trait-based microbial strategies with consequences for soil carbon cycling under climate change. 1. The ISME Journal 14:1–9.

10.   Moyes AB, Kueppers LM, Pett□Ridge J, Carper DL, Vandehey N, O'Neil J, Frank AC. 2016. Evidence for foliar endophytic nitrogen fixation in a widely distributed subalpine conifer. New Phytologist 210:657–668.

11.   Lajoie G, Kembel SW. 2019. Making the Most of Trait-Based Approaches for Microbial Ecology. Trends in Microbiology 27:814–823.

12.   Nemergut DR, Schmidt SK, Fukami T, O'Neill SP, Bilinski TM, Stanish LF, Knelman JE, Darcy JL, Lynch RC, Wickey P, Ferrenberg S. 2013. Patterns and Processes of Microbial

Community Assembly. Microbiol Mol Biol Rev 77:342–356.

13.   Cavender☐Bares J, Kozak KH, Fine PVA, Kembel SW. 2009. The merging of community ecology and phylogenetic biology. Ecology Letters 12:693–715.

14.   Martiny JBH, Jones SE, Lennon JT, Martiny AC. 2015. Microbiomes in light of traits: A phylogenetic perspective. Science 350.

15.   Tromas N, Taranu ZE, Castelli M, Pimentel JSM, Pereira DA, Marcoz R, Shapiro BJ, Giani A. 2020. The evolution of realized niches within freshwater Synechococcus. Environmental Microbiology 22:1238–1250.

16.   Tromas N, Taranu ZE, Martin BD, Willis A, Fortin N, Greer CW, Shapiro BJ. 2018. Niche Separation Increases With Genetic Distance Among Bloom-Forming Cyanobacteria. Front Microbiol 9.

17.   Thompson LR, Sanders JG, McDonald D, Amir A, Ladau J, Locey KJ, Prill RJ, Tripathi A, Gibbons SM, Ackermann G, Navas-Molina JA, Janssen S, Kopylova E, Vázquez-Baeza Y, González A, Morton JT, Mirarab S, Zech Xu Z, Jiang L, Haroon MF, Kanbar J, Zhu Q, Jin Song S, Kosciolek T, Bokulich NA, Lefler J, Brislawn CJ, Humphrey G, Owens SM, Hampton-Marcell J, Berg-Lyons D, McKenzie V, Fierer N, Fuhrman JA, Clauset A, Stevens RL, Shade A, Pollard KS, Goodwin KD, Jansson JK, Gilbert JA, Knight R. 2017. A communal catalogue reveals Earth's multiscale microbial diversity. 7681. Nature 551:457–463.

18.   Poretsky R, Rodriguez-R LM, Luo C, Tsementzi D, Konstantinidis KT. 2014. Strengths and Limitations of 16S rRNA Gene Amplicon Sequencing in Revealing Temporal Microbial Community Dynamics. PLOS ONE 9:e93827.

19.   Ranjan R, Rani A, Metwally A, McGee HS, Perkins DL. 2016. Analysis of the microbiome: Advantages of whole genome shotgun versus 16S amplicon sequencing. Biochemical and Biophysical Research Communications 469:967–977.

20.   Corpe WA, Rheem S. 1989. Ecology of the methylotrophic bacteria on living leaf surfaces. FEMS Microbiol Ecol 5:243–249.

21.   Keppler F, Hamilton JTG, Braß M, Röckmann T. 2006. Methane emissions from terrestrial plants under aerobic conditions. 7073. Nature 439:187–191.

22.   Clarke PH. 1983. The biochemistry of Methylotrophs by C. Anthony Academic Press; London, New York, 1982 xvi + 432 pages. £24.00, $49.50. FEBS Letters 160:303–303.

23.   Anthony C. 1991. Assimilation of carbon by methylotrophs. Biotechnology 18:79–109.

24. Ivanova EG, Doronina NV, Trotsenko YuA. 2001. Aerobic Methylobacteria Are Capable
of Synthesizing Auxins. Microbiology 70:392–397.

25. Madhaiyan M, Poonguzhali S, Lee HS, Hari K, Sundaram SP, Sa TM. 2005. Pink-
pigmented facultative methylotrophic bacteria accelerate germination, growth and yield of
sugarcane clone Co86032 (Saccharum officinarum L.). Biol Fertil Soils 41:350–358.

26. Madhaiyan M, Poonguzhali S, Sa T. 2007. Metal tolerating methylotrophic bacteria
reduces nickel and cadmium toxicity and promotes plant growth of tomato (Lycopersicon
esculentum L.). Chemosphere 69:220–228.

27. Dourado MN, Aparecida Camargo Neves A, Santos DS, Araújo WL. 2015.
Biotechnological and Agronomic Potential of Endophytic Pink-Pigmented Methylotrophic
Methylobacterium spp. Biomed Res Int 2015.

28. Ryu JH (Chungbuk NU, Madhaiyan M (Chungbuk NU, Poonguzhali S (Chungbuk NU,
Yim WJ (Chungbuk NU, Indiragandhi P (Chungbuk NU, Kim KA (Chungbuk NU, Anandham R
(Chungbuk NU, Yun JC (National I of AS and T, Kim KH (The U of S, Sa TM (Chungbuk NU.
2006. Plant Growth Substances Produced by Methylobacterium spp. and Their Effect on Tomato
(Lycopersicon esculentum L.) and Red Pepper (Capsicum annuum L.) Growth. Journal of
Microbiology and Biotechnology.

29. Lee HS, Madhaiyan M, Kim CW, Choi SJ, Chung KY, Sa TM. 2006. Physiological
enhancement of early growth of rice seedlings (Oryza sativa L.) by production of phytohormone
of N2-fixing methylotrophic isolates. Biol Fertil Soils 42:402–408.

30. Green PN, Ardley JK. 2018. Review of the genus Methylobacterium and closely related
organisms: a proposal that some Methylobacterium species be reclassified into a new genus,
Methylorubrum gen. nov. International Journal of Systematic and Evolutionary Microbiology
68:2727–2748.

31. Chen W-M, Cai C-Y, Li Z-H, Young C-C, Sheu S-Y. 2019. Methylobacterium
oryzihabitans sp. nov., isolated from water sampled from a rice paddy field. International Journal
of Systematic and Evolutionary Microbiology, 69:3843–3850.

32. Feng G-D, Chen W, Zhang X-J, Zhang J, Wang S-N, Zhu H. 2020. Methylobacterium
nonmethylotrophicum sp. nov., isolated from tungsten mine tailing. International Journal of
Systematic and Evolutionary Microbiology, 70:2867–2872.

33. Jia L juan, Zhang K shuai, Tang K, Meng J yu, Zheng C, Feng F ying. 2020.

Methylobacterium crusticola sp. nov., isolated from biological soil crusts. International Journal of
Systematic and Evolutionary Microbiology, 70:2089–2095.

34.   Kim J, Chhetri G, Kim I, Lee B, Jang W, Kim MK, Seo T. 2020. Methylobacterium
terricola sp. nov., a gamma radiation-resistant bacterium isolated from gamma ray-irradiated soil.
International Journal of Systematic and Evolutionary Microbiology, 70:2449–2456.

35.   Kim J, Chhetri G, Kim I, Kim MK, Seo T. 2020. Methylobacterium durans sp. nov., a
radiation-resistant bacterium isolated from gamma ray-irradiated soil. Antonie van Leeuwenhoek
113:211–220.

36.   Ten LN, Li W, Elderiny NS, Kim MK, Lee S-Y, Rooney AP, Jung H-Y. 2020.
Methylobacterium segetis sp. nov., a novel member of the family Methylobacteriaceae isolated
from soil on Jeju Island. Arch Microbiol 202:747–754.

37.   Jiang L, An D, Wang X, Zhang K, Li G, Lang L, Wang L, Jiang C, Jiang Y. 2020.
Methylobacterium planium sp. nov., isolated from a lichen sample. Arch Microbiol 202:1709–
1715.

38.   Pascual JA, Ros M, Martínez J, Carmona F, Bernabé A, Torres R, Lucena T, Aznar R,
Arahal DR, Fernández F. 2020. Methylobacterium symbioticum sp. nov., a new species isolated
from spores of Glomus iranicum var. tenuihypharum. Curr Microbiol 77:2031–2041.

39.   Marx CJ, Bringel F, Chistoserdova L, Moulin L, Farhan Ul Haque M, Fleischman DE,
Gruffaz C, Jourand P, Knief C, Lee M-C, Muller EEL, Nadalig T, Peyraud R, Roselli S, Russ L,
Goodwin LA, Ivanova N, Kyrpides N, Lajus A, Land ML, Médigue C, Mikhailova N, Nolan M,
Woyke T, Stolyar S, Vorholt JA, Vuilleumier S. 2012. Complete Genome Sequences of Six
Strains of the Genus Methylobacterium. J Bacteriol 194:4746–4748.

40.   Tani A, Ogura Y, Hayashi T, Kimbara K. 2015. Complete Genome Sequence of
Methylobacterium aquaticum Strain 22A, Isolated from Racomitrium japonicum Moss. Genome
Announc 3.

41.   Minami T, Ohtsubo Y, Anda M, Nagata Y, Tsuda M, Mitsui H, Sugawara M,
Minamisawa K. 2016. Complete Genome Sequence of Methylobacterium sp. Strain AMS5, an
Isolate from a Soybean Stem. Genome Announc 4.

42.   Morohoshi T, Ikeda T. 2016. Complete Genome Sequence of Methylobacterium populi P-
1M, Isolated from Pink-Pigmented Household Biofilm. Genome Announc 4.

43.   Belkhelfa S, Labadie K, Cruaud C, Aury J-M, Roche D, Bouzon M, Salanoubat M,

Döring V. 2018. Complete Genome Sequence of the Facultative Methylotroph Methylobacterium extorquens TK 0001 Isolated from Soil in Poland. Genome Announc 6.

44.   Vos M, Quince C, Pijl AS, Hollander M de, Kowalchuk GA. 2012. A Comparison of rpoB and 16S rRNA as Markers in Pyrosequencing Studies of Bacterial Diversity. PLOS ONE 7:e30600.

45.   Ogier J-C, Pagès S, Galan M, Barret M, Gaudriault S. 2019. rpoB, a promising marker for analyzing the diversity of bacterial communities by amplicon sequencing. BMC Microbiol 19:171.

46.   Callahan BJ, McMurdie PJ, Rosen MJ, Han AW, Johnson AJA, Holmes SP. 2016. DADA2: High resolution sample inference from Illumina amplicon data. Nat Methods 13:581–583.

47.   Green PN. 2015. Methylobacterium, p. 1–8. *In* Bergey's Manual of Systematics of Archaea and Bacteria. American Cancer Society.

48.   Charron G, Leducq JB, Bertin C, Dube AK, Landry CR. 2014. Exploring the northern limit of the distribution of Saccharomyces cerevisiae and Saccharomyces paradoxus in North America. FEMS Yeast Res 14:281–8.

49.   Leducq JB, Charron G, Samani P, Dube AK, Sylvester K, James B, Almeida P, Sampaio JP, Hittinger CT, Bell G, Landry CR. 2014. Local climatic adaptation in a widespread microorganism. Proceedings Biological sciences / The Royal Society 281:20132472.

50.   Zwietering MH, Jongenburger I, Rombouts FM, Riet K van 't. 1990. Modeling of the Bacterial Growth Curve. Appl Environ Microbiol 56:1875–1881.

51.   Lipson DA. 2015. The complex relationship between microbial growth rate and yield and its implications for ecosystem processes. Front Microbiol 6.

52.   MacArthur RH, Wilson EO. 2001. The Theory of Island Biogeography. Princeton University Press.

53.   Cavender☐Bares J, Ackerly DD, Baum DA, Bazzaz FA. 2004. Phylogenetic Overdispersion in Floridian Oak Communities. The American Naturalist 163:823–843.

a

Forest of origin · Host tree species · Sampling time · Isolation temperature

- ● p ≤ 0.001
- ● p ≤ 0.01
- · p ≤ 0.05

PS

Part of variance

b

Forest of origin: SBL | MSH
Isolation temperature: 30°C | 20°C

Nodal support
30   65   100

B

A5a

A9

MSH*

SBL*

SBL***
30°C***

SBL**

MSH**

20°C***

A10

A6

Enterovirga

Microvirga

C

A4
A7
A8
A5b
A2
A1
A3