Title: Gene co-expression reveals the modularity and integration of C$_4$ and CAM in *Portulaca*

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Abstract

C_4 photosynthesis and Crassulacean acid metabolism (CAM) have been considered as largely independent

adaptations in spite of sharing key biochemical modules. *Portulaca* is a geographically widespread clade

of over 100 annual and perennial angiosperm species that primarily use C_4, but facultatively exhibit CAM

when drought stressed, a photosynthetic system known as C_4+CAM. It has been hypothesized that

C_4+CAM is rare because of pleiotropic constraints, but these have not been deeply explored. We

generated a chromosome-level genome assembly of *P. amilis* and sampled mRNA from *P. amilis* and *P.*

oleracea during CAM induction. Gene co-expression network analyses identified C_4 and CAM gene

modules shared and unique to both *Portulaca* species. A conserved CAM module linked

phosphoenolpyruvate carboxylase (PEPC) to starch turnover during the day-night transition and was

enriched in circadian clock regulatory motifs in the *P. amilis* genome. Preservation of this co-expression

module regardless of water status suggests that *Portulaca* constitutively operate a weak CAM cycle that is

transcriptionally and post-transcriptionally upregulated during drought. C_4 and CAM mostly used

mutually exclusive genes for primary carbon fixation and it is likely that nocturnal CAM malate stores are

shuttled into diurnal C_4 decarboxylation pathways, but we find evidence that metabolite cycling may

occur at low levels. C_4 likely evolved in *Portulaca* through co-option of redundant genes and integration

of the diurnal portion of CAM. Thus, the ancestral CAM system did not strongly constrain C_4 evolution

because photosynthetic gene networks are not co-regulated for both daytime and nighttime functions.

Main

Modularity and evolvability have become central research areas in biology over the past three

decades[1,2]. Modularization generates simple building blocks that facilitate rapid and complex

adaptations through the combination of more discrete functions and the ability of simpler units to

explore mutational space with minimal pleiotropic effects[1–5]. Modern "-omics" strategies have

enabled detailed resolution of gene regulation in diverse study systems, and modeling results

have shown that carbon metabolic networks have high potential for exaptation into evolutionary

innovations in bacteria[6]. Empirical research has identified deeply conserved carbon metabolic

modules from anaplerotic pathways that have been repeatedly recruited into plant photosynthetic

adaptations known as carbon concentrating mechanisms (CCMs)[7]. CCMs provide classic

examples of rapid, adaptive evolution through the exaptation of existing metabolic modules that

are subsequently refined for new functions.

Since the early Oligocene, CCMs—typically taking the form of C_4 photosynthesis or

Crassulacean acid metabolism (CAM)—have evolved many dozens, if not hundreds, of times

independently[8–12]. Certain facets of CCMs, such as the main biochemical pathways, are

evolutionarily accessible to all green plant lineages because they belong to deeply conserved

photosynthetic and respiratory gene networks[7,13]. It is thought that by coupling these gene

networks to light responses (C_4)[14] and circadian oscillators (CAM)[15], CCMs create two-stage

carbon fixation pathways that address the most fundamental ecophysiological tradeoff in land

plants: balancing CO_2 influx with water loss to transpiration.

Most plants assimilate carbon using C_3 photosynthesis, in which CO_2 is directly fixed by

RuBisCO during the day in mesophyll cells. However, RuBisCO can also bind to O_2, triggering a

set of costly reactions called photorespiration, which is exacerbated by hot, dry conditions[16].

CCMs increase the efficiency of photosynthesis by increasing the concentration of CO_2 around

RuBisCO. This is achieved by first fixing carbon with phosphoenolpyruvate (PEP) carboxylase

(PEPC), which is either spatially (C_4) or temporally (CAM) decoupled from final fixation of CO_2

by RuBisCO (Fig. 1a, b). In both CCMs, CO_2 is first captured by beta carbonic anhydrase (BCA)

and PEPC, forming oxaloacetate (OAA) (Fig. 1a, b) in the mesophyll, but exclusively during the

night in CAM (Fig. 1b). OAA is then reduced to malate by malate dehydrogenase (MDH) and

stored in the vacuole overnight as malic acid. During the day, CAM plants limit gas exchange

with the external environment, and instead decarboxylate stored malate with malic enzymes

(MEs) to release CO_2. Most C_4 species also convert OAA to malate (NADP-type biochemistry),

but others first transform it to aspartate (NAD-type biochemistry) via aspartate aminotransferase

(ASP). These 4-carbon acids are transported to the bundle sheath cells and decarboxylated. In

NAD-type C_4 species, ASP reversibly transforms aspartate back into OAA in bundle sheath

mitochondria, where it is reduced to form malate by NAD-MDH and finally decarboxylated by

NAD-ME. By separating initial CO_2 capture in the mesophyll from assimilation in the bundle

sheath, C_4 increases photosynthetic rates and water use efficiency while minimizing energy and

carbon lost to photorespiration[17–19]. CAM does not always reduce photorespiration[20,21], but

greatly increases water use efficiency[22,23] and reduces the harmful effects of high heat and

radiation caused by oxidative stress[20].

C_4 and CAM boost the efficiency of photosynthesis in different ways and are therefore

hypothesized to have evolved in response to different stressors. C_4 has been primarily considered

as an adaptation to high rates of photorespiration[24,25], and CAM to water limitation[8,26], though

photorespiratory stress and drought stress are often experienced simultaneously[27]. Given the

overlapping environmental contexts of CAM and C_4 evolution, their repeated assembly of a

similar set of biochemical modules[28] (Fig. 1a, b), and their apparent ease of evolution, it is

perhaps surprising that use of both C$_4$ and CAM (hereafter C$_4$+CAM) has only been reported in

three lineages: *Portulaca* (Portulacaceae)[29], *Spinifex* (Poaceae)[30], and *Trianthema* (Aizoaceae)[31].

On the other hand, it may be precisely the large overlap in CCM gene networks and metabolites

that may make C$_4$ and CAM mutually exclusive in most lineages[32]. Plants that use both C$_4$ and

CAM seemingly must regulate the same gene networks in contrasting patterns that may result in

futile metabolite cycling and inefficient transport. For example, daytime decarboxylation activity

in the mesophyll during CAM would directly oppose C$_4$carboxylation activity.

Portulaca, a geographically widespread clade of over 100 annual and perennial herbs and

small shrubs, predominantly use C$_4$, but facultatively exhibit CAM in response to drought[28,29,33–

[41]. It has been hypothesized that their CAM cycle must be either spatially separated from the C$_4$

cycle, that is, relegated to a subpopulation of leaf cells such as water storage or bundle

sheath[32,35]; or alternatively, that *Portulaca* operate a novel two cell CAM system, whereby CAM

malate is decarboxylated in the bundle sheath[36,37]. Facultative CAM, the reversible induction of

CAM in response to drought stress, is assumed to be ancestral in *Portulaca* because it has been

observed in every major sub-clade assayed[38,39] as well as in *Portulaca*'s closest relatives[42–47]

(Fig. 1c). Transcriptomic studies of *Portulaca* and its close relatives suggest that the ancestral

CAM pathway used both NAD- and NADP-enzymes for CAM[40,41,44]. The biochemical diversity

of C$_4$ pathways in major *Portulaca* clades and the observation of intermediate photosynthetic

phenotypes (C$_3$-C$_4$) in the Cryptopetala clade[39,48,49] imply multiple origins of C$_4$ within a

facultative CAM context (Fig. 1c). Multiple C$_4$ origins are further evidenced by differences in

leaf ultrastructure among lineages[48–50], as Kranz anatomy is typically established early in C$_4$

evolution[25,51].

Photosynthetic gene activity has only been studied in detail in *P. oleracea*[40,41], an NAD-

type species. Similar experiments on other *Portulaca* are needed to answer fundamental

questions about the function and evolution of C_4+CAM, and the integration of new metabolic

modules more generally. Facultative CAM is hypothesized to be ancestral to *Portulaca*, but

expression of CAM-specific orthologs in multiple species has not yet been documented. And

although multiple carboxylation and decarboxylation pathways can co-exist in some C_4 plants[52],

it is not obvious why or how different C_4 biochemistries would evolve in lineages that shared an

ancestral, mixed CAM biochemistry type, nor do we know the extent to which these CCMs have

been integrated in various lineages.

Here, we present a chromosome-level genome assembly of *Portulaca amilis* (NADP-type

C_4), the first of any C_4+CAM plant. We analyzed transcriptomic data during a CAM-induction

experiment to understand the synergistic evolution of multiple metabolic modules. Concurrent

transcriptomic data for *P. oleracea* allowed us to compare C_4+CAM systems across a deep split

in the *Portulaca* phylogeny and discriminate between ancestral, inherited and lineage specific

gene networks. We confirm previous hypotheses that *Portulaca* species share one CAM-specific

PEPC ortholog *(PPC-1E1c)* and another C_4-specific ortholog *(PPC-1E1a')*[28], and that CAM

evolved by linking PEPC to starch catabolism via the circadian clock[13]. We found some evidence

for CAM-specific decarboxylation pathways, but the diurnal portion of CAM appears to have

been largely integrated into C_4 metabolism, and we predict that nocturnal acids produced by

CAM are likely shuttled into the diurnal pool of bundle sheath C_4-acids. Finally, although *P.*

amilis and *P. oleracea* share some central C_4 orthologs, exclusive use of orthologs from most

core gene families highlights the diversity of C_4+CAM systems and provides further evidence

that C_4 evolved largely independently in multiple *Portulaca* lineages.

Results

CAM induction experiment

Significant diel fluctuations in titratable leaf acidity indicative of CAM activity were observed

after seven and eight days without water in *P. amilis* and *P. oleracea*, respectively (Fig. 1d). Diel

fluctuations in titratable acidity were not significantly different from zero when well-watered

(one sample *t*-test; $t_{amilis}(6) = -0.522$, $p_{amilis} = 0.624$; $t_{oleracea}(6) = -0.573$, $p_{amilis} = 0.591$), but were

significantly different under drought (one sample *t*-test; $t_{amilis}(6) = 7.437$, $p_{amilis} = 0.00069$;

$t_{oleracea}(6) = 10.136$, $p_{amilis} = 0.00053$), and significantly greater than when well-watered (Fig. 1d).

There was no significant difference between the magnitude of diel fluctuations between species

(independent *t*-test, $t(12) = -1.713$, $p = 0.121$).

Genome and transcriptome assembly and annotation

The *Portulaca amilis* v1 genome assembly was 403.89 Mb in length and extremely contiguous

(L50/N50 = 5 scaffolds/42.598 Mb; L90/N90 = 9 scaffolds/39.183 Mb), with nine primary

scaffolds representing the nine expected chromosomes of the haploid *P. amilis* genome (Fig. 2a)

based on the karyotype of a close relative (*P. grandiflora*[53]). The scaffolds were 92.9% complete

and single copy as measured by the BUSCO v5 embryophyta database (C:96.9% [S:92.9%,

D:4.0%], F:1.5%, M:1.6%, n:1,614), and eukaryotic BUSCOs were similarly complete (C:98.0%

[S:82.7%, D:15.3%], F:1.2%, M:0.8%, n:255). Slightly less than half of the assembly was

masked as repetitive elements (46.96%), which primarily consisted of LTRs (41.96%), DNA

elements (29.36%), and LINEs (13.85%) (Fig. 2b). A repeat landscape of these elements did not

show any sudden bursts of element activity or multiple peaks (Fig. 2b), which can signify

genomic upheaval from hybridization or polyploidy events[54,55]. The final annotation contained

53,094 gene models with 58,732 unique coding sequences (Fig. 2c).

The *P. oleracea de novo* transcriptome assembly contained 413,658 transcripts

corresponding to 230,086 "unigenes" (hereafter, "genes") that were highly complete but

infrequently single copy: BUSCO v5 embryophyta (C:94.7% [S:16.4%, D:78.3%], F:3.2%,

M:2.1%, n:1,614), eukaryota (C:98.9% [S:16.9%, D:82.0%], F:0.0%, M:1.1%, n:255). The high

number of duplicate BUSCOs was expected, as most members of the *P. oleracea* species

complex are polyploid[56]. Less than half of the transcripts (198,026) were predicted to be coding

sequences, which corresponded to 45,285 genes.

A total of 21,621 *P. amilis* and 44,532 *P. oleracea* genes passed filtering for differential

abundance analysis[57], and over half of these genes (*P. amilis*, 62%; *P. oleracea*, 51.0%) were

found to be significantly differentially abundant between well-watered and drought conditions

following Benjamini Hochberg corrections[57] for false discovery ($q < 0.01$; see Methods for

details).

Co-expression network analysis

The well-watered and drought *P. amilis* photosynthetic gene networks (PGNs) were similar in

size and density, but had different distributions of node degree due to a small number of

extremely highly connected genes belonging to modules paWW1 and paWW3 (Fig. 3a,

Supplementary Fig. 1c, and Supplementary Table 1). The 104 genes of paWW1 represented all

functional groups except starch synthesis, and paWW1 was characterized by C_4-like expression:

very high morning abundance that rapidly tapered off by late afternoon. Indeed, paWW1

contained at least one homolog of all core elements of the C_4 pathway; including *paPPC-1E1a'*,

the C_4-specific *PPC* ortholog used by *P. oleracea*[28,40,41] (Fig. 3c). The most similar drought

module to paWW1 in terms of constituent genes, paD6, was 31% smaller (72 genes), while the

largest drought module (paD1) was characterized by dark period peak expression and consisted

primarily of light response and circadian transcription factors, and starch catabolism-related

genes (Fig. 3b). Similar to *P. amilis*, the largest well-watered *P. oleracea* module (poWW2)

contained *poPPC-1E1a'*; however, the *P. oleracea* transcriptome contained five *poPPC-1E1a'*

transcripts distributed between two modules with C_4-like expression (poWW2 and poWW1)

(Fig. 3e). There was a greater size discrepancy between the *P. oleracea* PGNs, and the drought

PGN was much larger and denser than the well-watered PGN (Fig. 3e, f, and Supplementary

Table 1).

We expected the CAM cycle to be broken into two co-expression networks: one that

builds PEP from transitory starches and carboxylates CO_2 into malate via BCA, PEPC, and

MDH from dusk until dawn, and a second that decarboxylates malate into CO_2 for fixation by

RuBisCO during the day (Fig. 1b). As reported in *P. oleracea*[28,40,41], *P. amilis* used the *PPC*

paralog *paPPC-1E1c* for CAM (Fig. 3d), and this gene belonged to smaller modules with

abundance profiles that peaked across the light-dark transition, and were dominated by starch

degradation and circadian clock genes (paWW5 and paD4; Fig. 3a, b, d). Extracting the genes

that remained co-expressed (preserved) across well-watered and drought conditions resulted in

28 genes of the *paPPC-1E1c* modules (42%) (Fig. 4a). With the exception of one

photorespiratory gene (*paCAT1-2*, FUN_025647), all had functions related to carboxylation

(*paPPC-1E1c* and *paBCA1-2*), starch metabolism and catabolism, or circadian rhythm and light

response. At least one paralog of all members of the starch degradation pathway were preserved,

except amylase (*AMY*) and beta-amylase (*BAM*), but one *BAM* homolog (*paBAM3-2*,

FUN_041354) was recovered exclusively in the drought module, along with one paralog of

aluminum activated malate transporter 4 (*paALMT4-2*, FUN_033599), which imports malate into

the vacuole. However, no *MDH* homologs were recovered in this nocturnal CAM network, and

most were recovered in drought modules paD6, paD2, and paD5 with C_4-like expression.

The *P. oleracea* transcriptome contained multiple transcripts of *poPPC-1E1c* that were

recovered in two well-watered modules (poWW4 and poWW8) and three drought modules

(poD2, poD5, and poD9) that were consistent with use in CAM (Fig. 3e, f). The preserved genes

were functionally similar to those preserved in the *P. amilis* nocturnal CAM network, and were

involved with starch metabolism and catabolism, and the circadian clock (Fig. 4b). Among the

genes preserved with *poPPC-1E1c* was cytoplasmic *poNAD-MDH1*

(TRINITY_DN7462_c3_g1), which was the most highly expressed *NAD-MDH* under drought.

Furthermore, many of the genes that link phosphorylative starch degradation to PEP generation

were preserved in the nocturnal CAM network, including *AMY*, fructose-bisphosphate aldolase

(*FBA*), glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (*GAP*), and phosphofructokinase (*PFK*).

Although not preserved, the *poPPC-1E1c* drought modules included copies of

phosphoglucomutase (*PGM*) and enolase (*ENO*), the final two steps in PEP generation from

starch or soluble sugars.

We used the *paPPC-1E1c* and *poPPC-1E1c* drought modules to identify the set of genes

common to both nocturnal CAM networks (Fig. 4c, d). By taking the intersection of the two sets

of *PPC-1E1c* drought module genes (i.e., preserved and drought exclusive genes), we uncovered

21 *P. amilis* and 24 *P. oleracea* orthologs (some genes had multiple paralogs in the *P. oleracea*

network). These orthologous nocturnal CAM networks contained one gene involved in starch

synthesis (starch branching enzyme 3, *SBE3*), five phosphorylative starch degradation genes, and

alpha-glucan phosphorylase 2 (*PHS2*), which is also part of phosphorylative starch metabolism

and catabolism (Fig. 4e). These orthologous nocturnal CAM networks covered much of the

phosphorylative starch degradation pathway that forms the basis of PEP generation in most

CAM plants[58,59], but the interactions among many genes were different between species (Fig. 4c,

d). The largest group of shared genes were core circadian clock elements: *Adagio* (*ADO*), also

known as *ZEITLUPE* (*ZTL*), *1* and *3*, two *Arabidopsis pseudo-response regulator 5* (*APRR5*)

paralogs, *EARLY FLOWERING* (*ELF*) *1* and *4*, *GIGANTEA* (*GI*), one *LUX ARRHYTHMO*

(*LUX*) paralog, and one *REVEILLE 6* (*RVE6*) paralog (Fig 4c, d, e). Although the two species'

nocturnal CAM networks shared many key orthologs, there were notable differences. The *P.*

oleracea network did not contain an *ALMT* homolog, but did contain three paralogs of *PEPC*

kinase 1 (*PPCK1*) that were all highly abundant and significantly upregulated under drought ($q <$

1.0×10^{-7}) (Supplementary Fig. 4). PPCK increases the activity of PEPC, which is inhibited by

malate, forming a negative feedback loop[60]. While all three *poPPCK* transcripts were

upregulated under drought with peak nighttime expression indicative of use in CAM, all had

higher daytime levels of abundance under drought as well—which points towards a dual role in

both C_4 and CAM. The single *PPCK* ortholog in *P. amilis* (FUN_002684) was also significantly

more abundant under drought ($q = 0.0011$) and had peak nocturnal expression (Supplementary

Fig. 3), but it was recovered in drought module paD1, which increased in abundance throughout

the night (Fig. 3b). PPCK activity is typically essential for highly active CCMs, and a CAM-like

expression pattern in *paPPCK1* would suggest low PEPC activity during C_4. However, we found

a derived amino acid residue, glutamic acid (E), in *paPPC-1E1a'* at the same location where an

aspartic acid (D) residue (D509) was demonstrated to reduce malate inhibition in *Kalanchoë* and

Phalaenopsis orchids[61]. In *Kalanchoë* and *Phalaenopsis*, the D509 residue was shown to be

derived from either arginine (R), lysine (K), or histidine (H), the latter of which is present at

position 509 in *poPPC-1E1a'*. Glutamic acid is functionally similar to aspartic acid, and may

similarly reduce malate inhibition; thus, allowing for high PEPC activity during C_4 without the

need for PPCK.

We considered two modules each in *P. amilis* (paWW1 + paWW3 and paD5 + paD6) and

P. oleracea (poWW2 + poWW1 and poD3 + poD4) when calculating the preservation of the C_4

pathway because these pairs of modules had C_4-like expression patterns and were strongly

connected (Fig. 3a, e). In the *P. amilis* C_4 PGNs, 86 genes (38%) were preserved (Supplementary

Fig. 4), which represented of all core C_4 (*ALAAT*, *ASP*, *BCA*, *ME*, *MDH*, *PPC-1E1a'*) and PEP

regeneration gene families (adenylate kinase (*ADK*), sodium/pyruvate cotransporter (*BASS*),

sodium-hydrogen antiporter (*NDH*), soluble inorganic pyrophosphatase (*PPA*), pyruvate,

phosphate dikinase (*PPDK*), and PEP/phosphate translocator (*PPT*)). It also contained members

of the entire transitory starch pathway that builds and transports various sugars and

carbohydrates (e.g., *ENO*, *GAP*, phosphoglycerate kinase (*PGK*), *PGM*, and triose

phosphate/phosphate translocator (*TPT*)). In addition to *paBASS2-1* (FUN_026309), which

imports pyruvate into the chloroplast as a substrate for PEP generation, we recovered two

paralogs of methyl erythritol phosphate (*MEP*), also known as *RETICULATA-RELATED* (*RER*),

4 (*A. thaliana* ortholog AT5G12470). MEP transporters have been implicated as mesophyll

pyruvate importers and bundle sheath pyruvate exporters in maize[62,63], and thus may serve a

similar function to BASS. The preserved modules also contained key enzymatic regulators (e.g.,

serine/threonine-protein phosphatase (*PP2A*) subunits and RuBisCO activase (*RCA*)) and

transcription factors and clock elements (e.g., *CIRCADIAN CLOCK ASSOCIATED 1* (*CCA1*)).

Portulaca amilis and *P. oleracea* span a fairly deep node in the *Portulaca* phylogeny

(Fig. 1c) and it was unclear which facets of C_4 they might share. A similar fraction of C_4 module

genes were preserved between well-watered and drought C_4 PGNs in *P. oleracea* (117; 41.2%),

and these largely consisted of the same gene families (58.3% overlap with preserved *P. amilis* C_4

gene families). To identify the orthologous components of the *P. amilis* and *P. oleracea* C_4 gene

networks, we took the intersection of their well-watered C_4 PGNs, which contained 186 and 165

homologs, respectively, that represented 258 unique ortholog groups. Roughly one quarter

(69/258; 26.7%) of these ortholog groups were recovered in the common C_4 networks, while 117

(45.3%) and 72 (27.9%) were exclusive to *P. amilis* and *P. oleracea*, respectively. The common

networks included many of the most highly expressed copies of key C_4 genes, including the PEP

generation pathway, and most of the photorespiratory pathway (Supplementary Fig. 5).

Indicative of the unique evolutionary histories of *P. amilis* and *P. oleracea*, each species'

C_4 PGN contained exclusive orthologs of most C_4 gene families, some of which represent

species-specific duplication events. Both species exhibited exclusive use of orthologs of *ADK*,

ALAAT, *ASP*, *BCA*, *MDH*, *ME*, *NDH*, *PP2A*, *PPA*, mitochondrial uncoupling protein (*PUMP*),

RuBisCO, and *RCA*, among others. Some exclusive homologs fit biochemical expectations.

Exclusive to *P. amilis* (NADP-type C_4) were three chloroplastic *NADP-ME4* paralogs

(FUN_006401, FUN_006404, and FUN_006411) which did not have orthologs in the *P.*

oleracea transcriptome. These three copies were on the same strand and physically close in the

genome (within ~85kb); they possibly represent tandem duplication events of *paNADP-ME4-4*

(FUN_006423), which is ~50kb downstream of FUN_006411 (Fig. 2a). In *P. oleracea*, two *ASP*

(TRINITY_DN71325_c0_g1 and TRINITY_DN346_c1_g3) and three *ALAAT*

(TRINITY_DN43865_c0_g1, TRINITY_DN43865_c0_g2, and TRINITY_DN81553_c0_g1)

homologs were found in orthogroups that had no *P. amilis* members. Many of the genes that

were exclusive to either C_4 PGN were circadian clock and light response transcription factors, or

regulatory enzymes. For example, unique orthologs of the *FAR-RED IMPAIRED RESPONSE*

family were part of each C_4 PGN, while only the *P. amilis* C_4 PGN contained an *APRR* homolog,

and only the *P. oleracea* C_4 PGN contained a *LATE ELONGATED HYPOCOTYL* (*LHY*)

transcription factor.

We used the drought C_4 PGNs to identify orthologous ancestral elements of the daytime

portion of the CAM cycle. We expected this portion of the CAM cycle to be nearly

indistinguishable from the C_4 cycle (Fig. 1a, b), but to only exhibit C_4-like expression under

drought stress. To be considered part of the ancestral CAM cycle, elements needed to both be

shared between the two drought C_4 PGNs and be significantly upregulated under drought ($q <$

0.05). Eleven orthologs met these potentially CAM-induced criteria, but only one had a function

directly related to daytime CO_2 release from nocturnal malate stores: chloroplastic *NADP-ME4-5*

(FUN_015913; TRINITY_DN81025_c0_g1). *PUMP5-1*—also known as dicarboxylate

transporter 1 (*DIC1*)—of both species also appeared CAM-induced, but was not significantly

differentially abundant when considering the entire time series in *P. oleracea* ($q = 0.24$). The *P.*

amilis C_4 PGNs contained a drought exclusive mitochondrial *NAD-ME2-1* (FUN_037145) that

was significantly upregulated ($q < 0.01$), and a second, preserved ortholog (*NAD-ME1-1*;

FUN_021996) that was significantly upregulated under drought ($q < 0.05$). Coupled with

upregulated *PUMP5-1* expression, this suggests that the NAD decarboxylation pathway, which

occurs mainly in the mitochondria, may still be elicited by CAM in *P. amilis* despite NADP-type

C_4. In contrast, constitutive expression of the same mitochondrial orthologs in *P. oleracea*

(*poNAD-ME1-1* and *poNAD-ME2-1*) is consistent with use in C_4, suggesting that *P. oleracea*

may have recruited its ancestral CAM NAD-decarboxylating pathway into its C_4 system. Finally,

and unexpectedly, one *P. amilis* paralog of the RuBisCO small subunit B (*paRBCS-B-1*;

FUN_016561) fit a CAM induced abundance pattern ($q < 0.001$) and was expressed on the same

order of magnitude as other *RBCS* homologs.

Motif identification and enrichment

Enriched motifs were detected in at least one region (i.e., 3'UTR, 5'UTR, introns, or upstream

promoter) for gene models in many *P. amilis* modules. However, no enriched motifs were

identified for paWW1 or paWW3—which contained the bulk of C_4 genes when well-watered. In

contrast, the 5'UTRs and upstream promoter regions of the preserved *paPPC-1E1c* module were

enriched in 10 unique motifs ($p < 0.01$), all of which had circadian or light response functions

(Table 1). These motifs were all annotated to Myb-related families, except bHLH74, which

contains a G-box motif (CACGTG), and governs flowering time in response to blue light[64]. All

enriched motifs contained either an Evening Element (EE; AAATATCT) or GATA (HGATAR)

motif. EE and GATA motifs often serve as binding sites for core circadian oscillator

transcription factors such as RVEs, CCA1, LHY, and APRR1, also known as TIMING OF CAB

1 (TOC1)[65–67].

There were no enriched motifs in or near genes preserved with *paPPC-1E1a'*, and the *P.*

amilis C_4 PGN genes were only enriched in four motifs: one Myb (MA1028.1), two bZIP

(MA0968.1, MA1033.1), and one AP2/ERF (MA1261.1) factor (Supplementary Table 2). While

these motifs were significantly enriched ($p < 0.01$), they were much less widespread than the

enriched motifs found in the preserved CAM genes. At the low end, the KAN4 motif

(MA1033.1) was present in just five 5'UTRs (8.5% of sequences), and the most widespread

(bZIP68, MA0968.1) was present in 12 sequences (20.3%). Motifs found in the preserved

paPPC-1E1c genes were present in 20.7-58.6% of the sequences, and all 10 enriched motifs

were found at least once in the 5'UTR and promoter region of *paPPC-1E1c*.

Discussion

Plant photosynthetic adaptations can serve as models for exploring central themes of biology,

such as the evolution of modularity and evolvability, gene and genome duplication, convergent

evolution, and the evolution of novel phenotypes. Network analyses provide powerful tools for

identifying and comparing modules of genes related to functions of interest against a background

of tens of thousands of genes with complicated temporal expression patterns. C_4+CAM

photosynthesis has only been reported in three plant lineages, *Portulaca*[29], *Spinifex*[30], and

Trianthema[31], but CCMs have evolved many dozens of times[8–12] and the use of multiple CCMs

has been documented in aquatic plant lineages[68,69]. CCM evolution is a classic example of the

repeated assembly of a new function via the integration of multiple, existing gene networks[7].

When coupled with patterns of transcript abundance and placed in an evolutionary context, our

network results provide an initial interpretation of how these metabolic pathways interact in

Portulaca, and how they were evolutionarily assembled.

The evolution of C_4+CAM in Portulaca

Facultative CAM is ancestral in *Portulaca*, and likely evolved by coupling elements of the TCA

cycle (i.e., PEPC and BCA) to the phosphorylative starch degradation pathway via the circadian

clock. CAM in both species was restricted to a minimal set of tightly regulated nocturnal

pathways that linked *PPC-1E1c* to the transitory starch pathway, with only parts of the

decarboxylation pathways distinguishable from C_4. This aligns with previous hypotheses that the

initial steps in CAM evolution do not require "rewiring" of gene networks, but rather occur by

upregulating nocturnal organic acid production that occurs in all plants[13]. Subsequent

canalization of these fluxes occurs by bringing these networks under circadian control. If C_4

evolution began in *Portulaca* while the nighttime portion of CAM included derived gene

networks, but the daytime portion did not, CAM would have likely imposed few pleiotropic

constraints given redundant paralogs, because recruitment of genes into C_4 would not have

required modification of existing CAM decarboxylation pathways in the mesophyll. Sufficient

paralogs of NAD- and NADP-type enzymes were present in the most recent common ancestor of

P. amilis and *P. oleracea* to allow C_4 and CAM to use separate genes, and for differential

enzyme co-option during their independent C_4 origins. However, transcriptomic data presented

here and elsewhere[40,44] imply that CAM-specific decarboxylation pathways did exist in the

common ancestor to *Portulaca*. It therefore seems likely that the initial steps towards C_4 evolved

within a particular window of CAM evolution before other aspects of CAM were fixed, such as

diurnal stomatal closure or changes to leaf ultrastructure that greatly reduced intercellular

diffusion of metabolites.

Shared use of some enzymes and pathways suggests that the most recent common

ancestor of *Portulaca* may have had some C_4 characters. Shared use of photorespiratory

modules, found here, and proto-C_4 anatomy in C_3-C_4 intermediate taxa[49,50] suggest that C_2

metabolism—the enhanced refixation of photorespired CO_2 by preferential expression of various

photorespiratory enzymes[25,70]—may also be ancestral to *Portulaca*. Like other CCMs, C_2

requires the recruitment of existing gene networks, and our comparison of well-watered C_4 gene

networks revealed many shared photorespiratory orthologs that may point to a single origin.

However, it is difficult to distinguish between a scenario in which these orthologs were co-opted

into C_2 metabolism once near the stem of extant *Portulaca*, or more recently along multiple

branches in parallel. Shared use of PEPC-1E1a' in C_4 has been hypothesized to have occurred

through parallel recruitment[28], stemming from "preconditioning", such as increased expression[71]

or adaptive amino acid substitutions[29]. C_2 metabolism is hypothesized to typically be followed by

rapid evolution of a C_4 system[25,70], and therefore represents a limit of what we expect to be

shared among *Portulaca* lineages with distinct morphologies and biochemistries. Broader

sampling across the *Portulaca* phylogeny is needed to precisely delimit the shared initial steps

towards C_4 and subsequent parallel refinement of C_4+CAM.

Integration of C_4 and CAM in Portulaca

Portulaca amilis and *P. oleracea* have canonical C_4 pathways, but constitutively operate very

weak CAM cycles (at least at the transcriptional level) that are upregulated under drought. The

core elements of C_4 and CAM were moderately preserved in both species, and where parts of the

C_4 and CAM pathways could theoretically overlap, we often found alternative homologs.

Increased CAM activity was associated with a reduction in size of C_4 PGNs, but there was no

evidence that this was due to dual roles of genes in nocturnal CAM physiology under drought. If

transcript abundances of C_4 and CAM related genes can serve as a proxy for enzymatic and

metabolic activity, conflicting intracellular physiological cues from CAM likely played a minor

role in altering C_4 activity. Given the strong diffusion gradients between mesophyll and bundle

sheath of C_4 species[72], we suspect that the evolution of C_4 in *Portulaca* has resulted in two-cell

CAM, as has been previously hypothesized[37], where malate produced by CAM in the mesophyll

is largely decarboxylated in the bundle sheath, but it is unclear if overnight storage occurs in the

mesophyll, bundle sheath, or both (Fig. 5). Drought-induced upregulation of decarboxylating

enzymes was consistent with expectations given C_4 biochemistries. Upregulation of *paNAD-*

ME1-1 and *paNAD-ME2-1* during CAM induction in *P. amilis* indicated that C_4 did not co-opt

the entirety of the diurnal portion of the CAM cycle (Fig. 5). In contrast, constitutive use of

poNAD-ME1-1 and *poNAD-ME2-1* in *P. oleracea* was consistent with recruitment and

integration of the ancestral CAM NAD-decarboxylating pathway into C_4, while the NADP-

pathway maintained its role in CAM (Supplementary Fig. 6).

Our network results confirmed that the nocturnal portion of CAM is a fixed gene

network—rather than the result of drought-induced rewiring—that is both transcriptionally and

post-transcriptionally regulated under drought to increase CAM activity. Gas exchange

measurements in *Portulaca* species show substantial net CO_2 loss during the night when well-

watered[39–42]. Therefore, well-watered expression levels of the preserved CAM-related genes are

either not high enough to re-fix all nocturnally respired CO_2 or must have their products

regulated at a post-transcriptional level. Evidence for the latter is given by expression patterns of

PPCK, which increases the activity of PEPC[60]. *PPCK* was upregulated in both species under

drought, and during the dark period in particular, which implies a role in increasing nocturnal

PEPC activity for CAM under drought. In *P. oleracea*, the maintenance of high daytime

poPPCK expression with a nocturnal peak in abundance suggests that PPCK may play a dual

role in both C_4 and CAM. In contrast, we were surprised to find that *paPPCK* had expression

only consistent with use in CAM, as we are not aware of other C_4 species without high morning

expression of *PPCK*; but a derived amino acid residue in PEPC-1E1a' has the potential to

increase its activity by reducing malate inhibition, as has been show in *Kalanchoë* and

Phalaenopsis[61]. Therefore, the avoidance of pleiotropic effects has occurred through redundant

homologs (e.g., decarboxylating enzymes) and adaptive mutations, but *P. oleracea* provides

evidence that pleiotropy may not constrain some genes.

421
Portulaca as a model for metabolic evolution

The natural history of *Portulaca* provides a compelling model system for studying many

evolutionary and ecophysiological questions, and its unique metabolism and experimental

practicality make it a powerful tool for genetic engineering. Forward engineering of both C_4[73]

and CAM[74] have become priorities for agriculture as arid lands expand and populations grow.

Portulaca comprises over 100 species that are found in nearly every country and have invaded

some continents multiple times[56]. Despite the small genome size of *P. amilis*, duplication events

deeper in the history of the Portulacineae[75] have played large roles in the evolution of C_4+CAM,

with implications for neofunctionalization and the evolution of modularity. With the generation

of the first *Portulaca* genome, we provide a resource for studying these past events and for the

functional genetic work to understand and engineer CCMs.

CAM is found in every major clade of the Portulacineae to varying degrees[34,43,45,46,76,77]

(Fig. 1c), and stronger and constitutive CAM have evolved in *Portulaca*'s closest relatives,

Anacampserotaceae and Cactaceae[43,78,79]. These three clades overlap in climate space[77] and in

many parts of their geographic ranges[80], exhibit succulent morphologies capable of

photosynthesis in their stems[43,81], and likely share the same ancestral CAM cycle. It remains an

open question why only *Portulaca* evolved C_4+CAM, while stronger CAM evolved in close

relatives. C_4 and CAM consume more energy than C_3 photosynthesis, and we lack models to

predict environmental conditions that would select for C_4 in a CAM plant (or vice versa).

Selective pressures to evolve C_2 in the facultative CAM ancestor of *Portulaca* may have been no

different than in C_3 plants, as CAM does not necessarily reduce photorespiration, and in some

cases can exacerbate it[20]. Future progress on these topics will be made through continued study

of the C_3-C_4 Cryptopetala clade that uses C_2 metabolism.

Despite an increased general interest in CCMs over recent years, and *Portulaca*'s

C_4+CAM system in particular, we have only a limited understanding of the benefits of

combining C_4 and CAM. The advantages of facultative CAM vary between lineages, as does

carbon gain, which is typically <10% of the daytime photosynthetic activity[82,83]. Facultative

CAM increases water use efficiency and can prevent reduced growth and reproductive output

under drought while also reducing photoinhibition (radiation induced damage to

photosystems)[82,83]. Measures of chlorophyll *a* in *P. oleracea* over a water limitation experiment

provide evidence that facultative CAM reduces photoinhibition[40]. A photoprotective role of

CAM is further corroborated by rapid recovery of photosynthetic rate upon rewatering[38,39],

indicating little or no damage is done to photosystems. Gas exchange measurements also

demonstrate that *Portulaca* continue to grow despite several days of drought stress[38,39].

Furthermore, drought stress may increase CO_2 leakiness of bundle sheath in C_4 plants, a problem

augmented when carboxylation activity decreases relative to decarboxylation[84]. Facultative CAM

may provide some carbon and photoprotection during drought that accelerates the transition to

full photosynthetic capacity upon rewatering and allows for growth and reproduction despite

large water deficits.

The annotated *P. amilis* genome and metabolic modules identified here, combined with

recent resources for transgenic research in *Portulaca*[85] signal a significant shift toward the

development of an experimental, functional genomics-based research program in C_4+CAM. On

one level, we suggest that *P. amilis* is a better candidate than *P. oleracea* for further model

system development, in part because *P. oleracea* exists within the context of a larger species

complex of over a dozen described species and subspecies with uncertain relationships and

multiple whole genome duplication events[56]. *P. amilis* has an indistinguishable life history from

P. oleracea (i.e., 3-5 week life cycle, thousands of seeds produced, self-fertilization), but does

not suffer from the same taxonomic challenges and variations in ploidy. On the other hand, we

view the *Portulaca* clade as providing not one, but at least three, evolutionary origins of

C_4+CAM systems, and there is much to be learned in understanding their similarities and

differences.

Conclusions

The evolution of modularity is a common theme in studies of evolutionary development and the

origination of novel phenotypes. Network-based analyses can distinguish complex and highly

overlapping metabolic modules, and establish their orthology between species. C_4+CAM

provides a unique opportunity to understand how a single module that is typically recruited into

two distinct functions is regulated when both of the new functions operate in a single organism.

Remarkably, their integration appears possible in part via additional modularization, with little

overlap in C_4 and CAM gene networks. Assignment of homologs to functions and generation of

a high-quality genome for *P. amilis* were necessary first steps for future functional genetic work

on C_4+CAM. Perhaps the most pertinent questions surround the utility of C_4+CAM, which could

be addressed in part by knock-down or knock-out *PPC-1E1c* lines to study the fitness of a purely

C_4 *Portulaca*. In addition to functional genetic experiments, similar CAM-induction experiments

are needed throughout *Portulaca* to establish homology between metabolic pathways across the

multiple origins; especially in the C_3-C_4 Cryptopetala clade, which will provide greater clarity on

which elements of C_4+CAM are ancestrally shared across multiple origins in *Portulaca*.

Materials and Methods

Plant materials and CAM-induction experiment

Specimens of *Portulaca amilis* and *P. oleracea* were collected in Casselberry, Florida, U.S.A.

and propagated in the Plant Environmental Center at Brown University. All studied *Portulaca*

are selfing, and many are primarily cleistogamous[86,87]; cleistogamous flowers self-pollinate in

the developing flower bud without the need of a vector, and most buds progress directly to fruit

set without opening. S2 seeds were germinated at Yale's Marsh Botanical Garden. One S2 *P.*

amilis was removed from soil, gently washed to remove soil, flash frozen whole in liquid N_2, and

shipped overnight to Dovetail Genomics (Scotts Valley, CA, U.S.A.) for whole genome

sequencing and assembly. An S4 individual was collected and vouchered at the Yale University

Herbarium in the Peabody Museum of Natural History.

S3 *P. amilis* and S2 *P. oleracea* were germinated in a growth chamber with the following

environmental conditions: 00:00-06:00, dark, 22°C; 06:00-20:00, lights on, 25°C; 20:00-23:59,

dark, 22°C. Plants were regularly bottom watered and the mean photosynthetically active

radiation (PAR) at plant level was ~385 mol · m^{-2} · s^{-1} during the 14 hour photoperiod. After

plants had reached maturity and branched sufficiently (~4 weeks), eight plants of each species

were selected for CAM-induction: six biological replicates and two indicator plants. Indicator

plants were monitored daily for fluctuations in titratable acidity to determine CAM induction,

and were not included in any further analyses. To induce CAM, water was withheld from plants,

and significant (one sample *t*-test, $p < 0.01$) increases in nocturnal titratable acidity were

observed in *P. amilis* and *P. oleracea* indicator plants after seven and eight days, respectively.

Leaf tissue was collected from all six biological replicates for titratable acidity assays at 16:00

and 04:00 (the following day) and bulk RNA at 10:00, 16:00, 22:00, and 04:00 (the following

day) on day 0 (referred to as "well-watered") and days 8 and 9 (referred to "drought").

Titratable acidity was assessed by boiling 0.2-0.3g fresh leaf tissue in 60mL 20% EtOH

until the volume was reduced by half (~30mL). Distilled water was then added to return the

volume to 60mL. This process was repeated, and the supernatant was then covered and allowed

to cool to room temperature. Samples were then titrated to a pH of 7.0 using 0.002M NaOH, and

recorded in units of μEq H$^+$ per gram fresh mass—calculated as volume titrant (μL) ✕ titrant

molarity (M) / tissue mass (g).

Total leaf RNA was extracted using Option 2 (CTAB/TRIzol/sarkosyl) from Jordon-

Thaden et al.[88]. Sample purity was measured using a NanoDrop (Invitrogen by Thermo Fisher

Scientific, Carlsbad, CA), and a representative set of 12 samples were further assayed on using a

2100 Bioanalyzer (Agilent Technologies, Santa Clara, CA) for fragment length distribution and

RNA integrity (RIN); RIN scores ≥ 7 were considered high quality. Library preparation included

poly(A) tailing to pull down mRNA, and sequencing was done on an Illumina HiSeq (2x100bp

paired-end reads), with an expected 25 million reads per sample. Four of the 96 total libraries

failed during sequencing; all were *P. oleracea* samples (one 10:00 drought, one 16:00 drought,

and two 04:00 drought).

Genome and transcriptome assembly and annotation

The *Portulaca amilis* v1 genome was assembled *de novo* by Dovetail Genomics, using one

Chicago[89] and two Dovetail Hi-C[90] libraries. The Chicago library was sequenced on an Illumina

HiSeqX, resulting in 178 million 2x150bp paired-end reads that yielded 169.1x physical

coverage of the genome (1-100kb pairs). The two Dovetail Hi-C libraries were also sequenced

on an Illumina HiSeqX; libraries one and two contained 202 million and 342 million 2x150bp

paired-end reads, respectively, which together provided 52,626.57x physical coverage of the

genome (10-10000kb pairs). Meraculous 2[91] was used to generate an assembly from 791 million

paired-end shotgun read pairs (mean insert size ~550bp and ~350bp) with kmer size 91. The

Meraculous assembly and shotgun, Chicago, and Hi-C reads were then used for iterative

scaffolding using HiRise v2.1.6-072ca03871cc[89,90] to create the final assembly consisting of

4,053 scaffolds.

The *P. amilis* v1 genome was annotated using funannotate v1.6.0

(http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3354704), a modular software package for genomic scaffold

cleaning, genomic element prediction (i.e., genes, UTRs, tRNAs, etc.), functional annotation,

and comparative genomics. All annotation steps after genome assembly were run within

funannotate unless otherwise noted, and a step-by-step walkthrough of the entire annotation

process can be found on GitHub (https://github.com/isgilman/Portulaca-amilis-genome).

Using funannotate's 'clean' function, scaffolds were checked for duplicates with a "leave

one out" strategy where, starting with the shortest scaffold, one scaffold was left out and mapped

back to the remaining scaffolds with minimap2[92]. Scaffolds were sorted by size from largest to

smallest using funannotate's 'sort' function. Outside of funannotate, repetitive element analysis

was conducted with RepeatModeler v1.0.11 and RepeatMasker v4.0.9-p2

(http://www.repeatmasker.org). RepeatModeler was used to create a custom repeat database for

P. amilis and further classification of unknown repeats was done with TEclass v2.1.3[93]. The

custom repeats were then passed to RepeatMasker, where complex repeats were soft masked. An

additional round of masking was done using the Viridiplantae repeat database from RepBase

(RepBaseRepeatMaskerEdition - 26 October 2018)[94] and transposable element data from Dfam

v3.0[95]. All repetitive elements were then cleaned using the RepeatMasker utility script

'ProcessRepeats'.

Prior to *ab initio* gene prediction, we used funannotate's 'train' function to create a

preliminary set of high-quality gene models for training prediction software using the soft

masked scaffolds and RNAseq reads from the CAM-induction experiment. Paired-end raw

RNAseq reads were filtered by quality (phred < 25) and trimmed to remove adapters, poly-A/T

tails longer than 12 bp, and low-quality tails (phred < 20) using PRINSEQ v0.20.4[96]. To capture

the greatest diversity of transcripts and provide sufficient depth to call rare isoforms, we pooled

all RNAseq reads from the six biological replicates across four time points and two conditions

(well-watered and drought), totaling ~1.58 billion reads from mature leaf tissue. RNAseq reads

were then normalized using the 'insilico_read_normalization.pl' utility script within Trinity

v2.8.5[97]. Funannotate's 'train' function first builds a coordinate-sorted BAM file and associated

index file using HISAT2 v2.1.0[98] for an initial genome-guided transcriptome assembly with

Trinity. The resulting initial transcripts then were fed through the PASA pipeline v2.3.3[99] to

generate gene models and predicted coding sequences using TransDecoder v5.5.0

(https://transdecoder.github.io). Kallisto v0.45.1[100] was then used to quantify abundance data,

and PASA gene models with abundance at least 10% of the most abundant gene model at each

respective locus were retained for training the *ab initio* predictors Augustus v3.2.3[101], SNAP

v2013_11_29[102], glimmerHMM v3.0.4[103], and GeneMark-ET[104].

Funannotate's 'predict' function was then used to produce an initial set of gene models

from the scaffolds using high abundance PASA models, *ab initio* prediction software, and

evidence from transcripts and predicted proteins. First, transcript alignment information from the

coordinate-sorted BAM file and protein alignments from Diamond v0.9.24[105] and Exonerate

v2.4.0[106] were used to generate a 'hints' file for Augustus and GeneMark-ET. Augustus models

with at least 90% exon overlap with protein alignments were selected as high-quality models

(HiQ). Gene models from the above predictors, HiQ models, transcripts, and predicted proteins

were then used as sources of evidence to create consensus models in EVidenceModeler v1.1.1[107]

with weights Augustus:1, HiQ:1, GeneMark-ET:1, PASA:10, SNAP:1, glimmerHMM:1,

proteins:1, transcripts:1.The resulting consensus gene models were filtered to remove any

proteins less than 50 amino acids, models that began or ended in assembly gaps, and

transposable elements. Next, tRNA gene models were identified with tRNAscan-SE v2.0[108].

Final consensus gene models were constructed by funannotate's 'update' function which added

and updated UTRs and refined exon boundaries of alternatively spliced models.

To assemble the *de novo* transcriptome for *P. oleracea*, we again filtered all paired-end

raw RNAseq reads by quality (phred < 25) and trimmed to remove adapters, poly-A/T tails

longer than 12 bp, and low-quality tails (phred < 20) using PRINSEQ v0.20.4. As with *P. amilis*,

we pooled all *P. oleracea* RNAseq reads across time points, conditions, and replicates. Pooled

reads were input into Trinity v2.11.0 and assembled *de novo*. We reduced the redundancy of the

resulting contigs using CD-HIT v4.8.1[109] by collapsing contigs with at least 98% similarity (-c

98) and open reading frames were identified with TransDecoder. Orthology between *P. amilis*

and *P. oleracea* peptide sequences was established using OrthoFinder[110] v2.5.2 and the primary

peptide sequences from genomes of *Ananas comosus*, *Amaranthus hypochondriacus*,

Arabidopsis thaliana, *Brachypodium distachyon*, *Helianthus annuus*, *Kalanchoë fedtschenkoi*,

Phalaenopsis equistris, *Sedum album*, *Sorghum bicolor*, *Vitis vinifera*, and *Zea mays*.

RNAseq differential abundance analysis

We used sleuth[111] v0.30.0 in R v3.6.1 to assess differential abundance of RNAseq reads

quantified by Kallisto for each species independently. For *P. amilis*, we mapped reads to the

predicted mRNA transcripts from the genome annotation, and for *P. oleracea* we used the

redundancy reduced *de novo* transcriptome. All analyses were conducted at the gene level by

providing a transcript-to-gene map to sleuth generated from the final set of gene models and

setting 'gene_mode' = TRUE. Abundance data were quantified in transcripts per million (TPM)

and differential abundance was assessed using a likelihood ratio test between the reduced design

matrix, where abundance was purely a function of sampling time ('y ~ time_point'), and the full

design matrix that included time and water treatment ('y ~ time_point + treatment'). *P*-values for

unique transcripts were aggregated for each gene model and transformed into *q*-values by

adjusting for false discovery rate (Benjamini Hochberg correction).

Co-expression network analysis

We used Weighted Gene Correlation Network Analysis (WGCNA)[112] v1.69 in R v3.6.1 to

construct co-expression networks and identify modules, and NetworkX[113] v2.5 in Python v3.7.3

to visualize and measure network features. WGCNA was run separately for each species and

condition, resulting in four networks. Using the normalized abundance data for all biological

replicates from sleuth, we first divided samples into well-watered and drought conditions for

separate network construction (hereafter referred to as the well-watered and drought datasets,

networks, modules, etc). We then removed genes from each dataset with maximum expression

less than 5 TPM. Remaining genes with excessive missing data or too low variance were

removed with the WGCNA function 'goodSampleGenes'. Outlier samples were detected using

hierarchical clustering with 'hclust' (stats v3.6.2; R-core team), and removed from each dataset.

We determined the soft threshold powers for each network separately using 'pickSoftThreshold';

the soft threshold power was 8 for both well-watered and drought *P. amilis* networks, and 14 and

7 for *P. oleracea* well-watered and drought networks, respectively. We constructed networks and

identified modules using 'blockwiseModules' with corType="bicor", maxPOutliers=0.05,

TOMType="signed", deepSplit=2, and mergeCutHeight=0.25 for all networks. With

corType="bicor", we allowed modules to contain both correlated and anti-correlated expression

633 time profiles. We set minModuleSize=30 for *P. amilis* networks and minModuleSize=100 for *P.*

634 *oleracea* networks.

635   After filtering and outlier detection within WGCNA, the final *P. amilis* and *P. oleracea*

636 co-expression datasets contained 26,760 genes for 24 samples and 26,337 genes for 22 samples,

637 respectively. Simultaneous network construction and module detection partitioned genes into 41

638 well-watered and 21 drought *P. amilis* modules and 29 well-watered and 20 drought *P. oleracea*

639 modules (Supplementary Fig. 1a, b), where modules are mutually exclusive clusters of highly

640 correlated genes. In order to extract photosynthetic gene networks (PGNs), we subsetted the

641 resulting adjacency matrices from WGCNA using over 500 (*P. amilis*) and over 600 (*P.*

642 *oleracea*) manually curated genes with functions broadly related to photosynthesis and removed

643 edges with adjacency < 0.25. This resulted in networks containing 368-466 genes

644 (Supplementary Table 1). We binned these genes into functional categories reflecting major

645 metabolic pathways (e.g., Calvin-Benson cycle, photorespiration, and starch degradation) and

646 enzymatic reactions or functions (e.g., aminotransferase and PEPC regulation). As many

647 enzymes catalyze reversible reactions or function in multiple pathways, these categorizations are

648 intended to reflect the primary role each protein plays and we recognize that alternative

649 categorizations are possible. For example, RuBisCO is the central protein in both the Calvin-

650 Benson cycle and photorespiration, and MDH functions in both the initial carboxylation pathway

651 that generates malate from CO_2 and in the decarboxylation pathway that liberates CO_2 from

652 malate in NAD-type C_4 biochemistry, albeit to a lesser extent.

654 *Motif identification and enrichment*

655 Putative *cis*-regulatory motif identification and enrichment was done using the MEME Suite[114]

656 v5.0.2. First, 5'- and 3'UTRs, introns, and 2kb upstream regions were extracted from all *P.*

657   *amilis* gene models. The MEME tool[115] was used to identify *de novo* motifs for each co-

658   expression module and region using an e-value threshold of 0.05 and a minimum motif size of

659   6bp. We downloaded the JASPAR CORE 2018 motif database[116], supplemented it with the *de*

660   *novo* motifs identified in Wai et al.[117] related to CAM, and finally added *de novo P. amilis* motifs

661   after checking for redundancy with Tomtom[118]. We then used AME (--scoring avg --method

662   fisher --hit-lo-fraction 0.25 --evalue-report-threshold 10.0)[119] with random sets of control

663   sequences to measure motif enrichment in every module-region combination, as well as the

664   preserved genes of the *PPC-1E1c* and C$_4$ modules.

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673   **Data availability**

674   Genomic scaffolds, peptide and coding sequences, assembled transcriptome, and annotations

675   (including repeats) for *Portulaca amilis* are available through the Phytozome web portal

676   (https://phytozome-next.jgi.doe.gov). Raw RNAseq data for *P. amilis* and *P. oleracea* are

677   available through the NCBI's SRA within BioProject PRJNA732408.

679   **Code availability**

Walkthroughs of genome annotation and RNAseq analyses (including differential abundance and

co-expression network analyses) and all custom code are available on GitHub at

https://github.com/isgilman/Portulaca-amilis-genome and https://github.com/isgilman/Portulaca-

coexpression, respectively.

Tables

Table 1. Motifs enriched in the 5'UTR of genes preserved in the *paPPC-1E1c* module

Motif name	JASPAR matrix ID	Consensus sequence*	Associated TF	*Arabidopsis* ortholog
RVE7L	MA1191.1	HHHVA**AAATATCT**WA	REVEILLE 7-like (RVE7L)	AT3G10113
RVE1	MA1184.1	HHVW**AAATATCT**WH	REVEILLE 1 (RVE1)	AT5G17300
RVE8	MA1182.1	**AGATAT**TTTWDD	LHY-CCA1-like 5 (LCL5)/REVEILLE 8 (RVE8)	AT3G09600
RVE4	MA1187.1	**AGATAT**TTTT	LHY-CCA-like 1 (LCL1)/REVEILLE 4 (RVE4)	AT5G02840
RVE6	MA1183.1	**AGATAT**TTTTD	REVEILLE 6 (RVE6)	AT5G52660
RVE5	MA1190.1	**AGATAT**TTTTD	REVEILLE 5 (RVE5)	AT4G01280
LHY1	MA1185.1	**AGATAT**TTTN	LATE ELONGATED HYPOCOTYL 1 (LHY1)	AT1G01060
EPR1	MA1401.1	R**AAAATATCT**WA	Early-phytochrome-responsive (EPR1)/REVEILLE 7 (RVE7)	AT1G18330

CCA1	MA0972.1	**AAAATATCT**	CIRCADIAN CLOCK ASSOCIATED 1 (CCA1)	AT2G46830
bHLH74	MA1360.1	**AGATAT**	ACTIVATOR FOR CELL ELONGATION 2 (ACE2)/Basi helix-loop-helix protein 74 (bHLH74)	AT1G10120

*Bold text indicates EE (AAAATATCT) or GATA (HGATAR) motifs

Figure 1. Simplified C_4 (a) and CAM (b) pathways showing shared carboxylation and

decarboxylation pathways. ASP, aspartate aminotransferase; BCA, beta carbonic anhydrase;

CBC, Calvin-Benson cycle; MDH, malate dehydrogenase; ME, malic enzyme; PEPC, PEP

carboxylase. Cartoon dendrogram of the Portullugo (Portulacineae + Molluginaceae),

highlighting major *Portulaca* clades (c), which are colored by primary C_4 biochemical pathway.

Mean age estimates for focal *Portulaca* clades are from Ocampo and Columbus[56]. Night-day

differences in titratable acidity of experimental *P. amilis* (orange) and *P. oleracea* plants (purple)

(d). WW, well-watered; D, drought. Asterisks connecting lines indicate significant differences

between well-watered and drought treatments (independent *t*-test; "***", $p < 0.001$; "NS", $p =$

0.121). Images of *P. amilis* when well-watered and after 8 days without water (e).

Figure 2. Idiogram of the nine primary scaffolds of the *P. amilis* genome with key C$_4$ and CAM genes highlighted (a). Breakdown of repetitive elements of the *P. amilis* genome (b); the horizontal bar chart shows the fractions of major classes of repetitive elements and the repeat landscape (histogram) shows the relative abundances of repetitive elements versus the Kimura substitution level from the consensus. Scatterplot of number of gene models versus the log10-transformed genome size for 107 angiosperm genomes (c) with notable benchmarking and CCM genomes highlighted; data is from Zhao and Schranz[120]. Line in (c) shows results of ordinary least squares regression; one sample $t_{slope}(106) > 0$, $p_{slope} = 0.0017$.

Figure 3. Photosynthetic gene networks (PGNs). Well-watered and drought PGNs of *P. amilis*

(a-b), and *P. oleracea* (e-f) colored by WGCNA co-expression module identity. Each node in the

graph represents one gene and node sizes represent their degrees. Each module's size and

functional composition is shown in the histogram, and the *z*-score normalized expression of each

module's constituent genes is shown along the horizontal axis. An example of the *z*-score

normalized expression for module paWW1 is enlarged in (a) to show individual gene expression

with the median highlighted in bold. Transcripts per million (TPM) normalized expression

profiles of two focal *PPC* transcripts (*paPPC-1E1a'* and *paPPC-1E1c*) are shown in (c) and (d),

respectively; points show median of size biological replicates and whiskers show interquartile

range; black and red lines represent well-watered and drought samples, respectively.

Figure 4. *PPC-1E1c* PGN preservation and subnetworks of common genes. Stacked bar charts

showing the number and functional composition of genes that were exclusive to the well-watered

or drought *PPC-1E1c* PGNs, or preserved across treatments in *P. amilis* (a) and *P. oleracea* (b).

Subnetworks induced by genes common to both *P. amilis* (c) and *P. oleracea* (d) drought *PPC-*

1E1c PGNs; drought PGNs include preserved and drought exclusive genes. Orange edges

represent correlations among genes shared between species, while black edges are unique to each

respective species. Metabolic pathways of the shared *PPC-1E1c* subnetworks (e), showing

PEPC, sugar transport, and starch metabolism. Colors of bar plot units (a and b) and gene boxes

(c-e) indicate functional categories as in Fig. 3.

Figure 5. Hypothesized biochemical cycles of C₄+CAM in *P. amilis* when well-watered (a) and droughted (b). Red, blue, and purple lines indicate NAD-specific, NADP-specific, and shared reactions, respectively, and grey lines show novel, possible pathways for malate that are unique to C₄+CAM photosynthesis. Line thicknesses are indicative of relative fluxes through pathways. ALAAT, alanine aminotransferase; ASP, aspartate aminotransferase; BCA, beta carbonic anhydrase; CBC, Calvin-Benson cycle; NAD-MDH, NAD-dependent malate dehydrogenase; NADP-MDH, NADP-dependent malate dehydrogenase; NAD-ME, NAD-dependent malic enzyme; NADP-ME, NADP-dependent malic enzyme; PEP, phosphoenolpyruvate; PEPC, PEP carboxylase; PPDK, pyruvate, phosphate dikinase; OAA, oxaloacetate.

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a

BCA
PEPC   carboxylation
MDH/ASP

mesophyll   4-carbon
                             acid

bundle sheath

decarboxylation   (ASP + MDH)
                   ME

CBC

b

BCA   Night   Day

PEPC

MDH   carboxylation   stomata   stomata
                         open   closed

                                   CBC

malic acid   ME
                   decarboxylation

                                   mesophyll

c

Molluginaceae (C$_3$, C$_3$-C$_4$, C$_4$)
Montiaceae (C$_3$, C$_3$+CAM)
Halophytaceae (C$_3$+CAM)
Basellaceae (C$_3$+CAM)
Didiereaceae (C$_3$+CAM)
Talinaceae (C$_3$+CAM)
Cactaceae (CAM)
Anacampserotaceae (C$_3$+CAM, CAM)

18.6 Ma   OL clade
               Cryptopetala clade
23.0 Ma   13.6 Ma
               Oleracea clade
           6.2 Ma   (*P. oleracea*)
17.5 Ma
               Umbraticola clade
           2.2 Ma
15.2 Ma
               Pilosa clade
10.7 Ma   (*P. amilis*)

Portulaca

C$_4$ biochem.
NADP
NAD
NAD C$_3$-C$_4$

d

NS
***   ***

ΔH^+ (μeq / g FM)

WW   D   WW   D
P. amilis   *P. oleracea*

e

P. amilis

well-watered   8 day drought

a *Portulaca amilis* well-watered

b *Portulaca amilis* drought

Legend:
- NAD-specific (red)
- NADP-specific (blue)
- Shared (purple)
- mitochondrion (orange)
- chloroplast (green)
- vacuole (blue)

a *Portulaca amilis* well-watered

b *Portulaca amilis* drought

NAD-specific
NADP-specific
Shared

mitochondrion
chloroplast
vacuole

a *P. amilis*

b *P. oleracea*

Legend:
- Transitory starch pathway
- Starch/sugar transport
- Starch synthesis
- Starch degradation
- Proton transport
- Photorespiration
- PEPC regulation
- PEP generation
- Metabolite transport
- Decarboxylation
- Circadian/Light response
- Carboxylation
- Calvin cycle
- Aminotransferase

a *P. amilis* well-watered C$_4$ PGN

b *P. oleracea* well-watered C$_4$ PGN

Legend:

- Transitory starch pathway
- Starch/sugar transport
- Starch synthesis
- Starch degradation
- Proton transport
- Photorespiration
- PEPC regulation
- PEP generation
- Metabolite transport
- Decarboxylation
- Circadian/Light response
- Carboxylation
- Calvin cycle
- Aminotransferase

a *P. oleracea* well-watered

b *P. oleracea* drought

NAD-specific
NADP-specific
Shared

mitochondrion
chloroplast
vacuole