

1 **Climate biogeography of *Arabidopsis thaliana*: linking distribution models and individual**
2 **variation**

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26 **Biosketch**

27 The research team is interested in understanding how individual-level processes influence
28 evolutionary and ecological dynamics at continental scales.

29
30 **Author contributions**

31 All authors contributed to study design. CY, ESB, VLD, DG, and JRL conducted analyses. CY
32 and JRL led the writing with contributions from all authors.

33 **Abstract**

34 AIM

35 The role of environmental conditions in limiting species distributions is often hypothesized in
36 biogeography, but it is challenging to gather large-scale data to demonstrate environmental
37 impacts on individual performance. The past and present biogeography of model organisms is
38 key context to understanding how environment shapes species' genetic and phenotypic
39 diversity.

40

41 LOCATION

42 Global

43

44 TAXON

45 *Arabidopsis thaliana* ("Arabidopsis")

46

47 METHODS

48 We fit occurrence records to climate data, and then projected the distribution of *Arabidopsis*
49 under last glacial maximum, current, and future climates. We confronted model predictions with
50 individual performance measured on 2,194 herbarium specimens, and we asked whether
51 predicted suitability was associated with life-history and genomic variation measured on 898
52 natural accessions.

53

54 RESULTS

55 The most important climate variables constraining the *Arabidopsis* distribution were winter cold
56 in northern and high elevation regions and summer heat in southern regions. Herbarium
57 specimens from regions with lower habitat suitability in both northern and southern regions were
58 smaller, supporting the hypothesis that the distribution of *Arabidopsis* is constrained by climate-
59 associated factors. Climate anomalies partly explained interannual variation in herbarium
60 specimen size, but these did not closely correspond to local limiting factors identified in the
61 distribution model. Late-flowering genotypes were absent from the lowest suitability regions,
62 suggesting slower life histories are only viable closer to the center of the realized niche. We
63 identified glacial refugia farther north than previously recognized, as well as refugia concordant
64 with previous population genetic findings. Lower latitude populations, known to be genetically
65 distinct, are most threatened by future climate change. The recently colonized range of
66 *Arabidopsis* was well-predicted by our native-range model applied to certain regions but not
67 others, suggesting it has colonized novel climates.

68

69 MAIN CONCLUSIONS

70 Integration of distribution models with performance data from vast natural history collections is a
71 route forward for testing biogeographical hypotheses about species distributions and their
72 relationship with evolutionary fitness across large scales.

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74

75

76 Introduction

77

78 A major goal in biology and biogeography is to understand how environmental conditions limit
79 the performance of individuals and species distributions. First, the environment-distribution
80 relationship can help project species distributions under past climates to understand their
81 ecological and evolutionary history (Forester et al., 2013). Second, the environment-distribution
82 relationship can identify regions with currently suitable habitat but that are unoccupied for a
83 variety of reasons (e.g. dispersal limitation) (Elith et al., 2010). Third, the environment-
84 distribution relationship can predict how distributions will shift under future environments
85 (Thomas et al., 2004), which is an urgent task due to rapid anthropogenic climate change.

86 One avenue to advance these goals in future biogeographic studies is through greater
87 integration of biogeography with organismal biology to test hypotheses about the organismal
88 and population mechanisms controlling distributions. For example, it is becoming possible to
89 collect molecular genetic and phenotypic data on large numbers of organisms across a species
90 range. These approaches are particularly accessible (and valuable) in studies on model
91 organisms like *Arabidopsis thaliana*. With model systems researchers can link detailed
92 information on genetics and organismal biology with population and community processes
93 (Rudman et al., 2019; Takou et al., 2019) to contribute ecological context and advance
94 integrative biology. At the same time, advances in the organization and digitization of museum
95 specimens are rapidly expanding the available data on range-wide variation among individuals
96 from nature. In this spirit we focus here on *Arabidopsis thaliana*, a small annual plant (hereafter
97 referred to as “Arabidopsis”) (Koornneef & Meinke, 2010). Arabidopsis has been key to
98 understanding how molecular biology and physiology are linked to ecology, but past
99 biogeographic studies did not use newer distribution modeling tools (Hoffmann, 2002) or
100 overlooked large parts of its range (Banta et al., 2012; Zou et al., 2017).

101 Environment-distribution relationships fundamentally arise from processes acting on
102 individuals (Clark, 2010). In general, transplant experiments show that individual performance
103 tends to decline outside species’ natural geographic range (Hargreaves et al., 2014) and efforts
104 to integrate information at the individual level into distribution models are emerging (Buckley et
105 al., 2011; Elith et al., 2010; Lasky et al., 2020; Merow et al., 2014; Samis & Eckert, 2007).
106 Where populations inhabit harsh environments (e.g. at range margins), local adaptations can
107 emerge, such as life history changes to tolerate or escape harsh periods (Bontrager et al.,
108 2021). In Arabidopsis, there is evidence that local adaptation to environment involves genetic
109 changes in life history (e.g. flowering time) (Lovell et al., 2013; Martínez-Berdeja et al., 2020).
110 However, it is challenging to determine how environment shapes individual performance and life
111 history variation across the ranges of broadly distributed species, as well as the consequences
112 for distributions.

113 A vast resource of individual-level information can be found in natural history collections
114 (Heberling, 2021; Lopez et al., 2019). For example, Bontrager & Angert (2015) showed with
115 herbarium specimens of *Clarkia* that fecundity decreased with drier summers, and toward the
116 western species range margin both summer precipitation and individual fecundity declined,
117 suggesting a mechanism limiting its distribution. In Arabidopsis, DeLeo et al. (2020) found
118 decadal shifts in traits of herbarium specimens. For many species, seed banks house great
119 diversity from across their ranges that can also be used to study their biogeography (Estarague

120 et al., 2021; Scholl et al., 2000). Here we estimate performance and life history variation from
121 museum and seed bank accessions to interrogate predictions from distribution models.

122 *Arabidopsis* is native across Eurasia and Africa and with human assistance has
123 colonized the Americas and Australia. Other species in the genus *Arabidopsis* are more
124 restricted to cool temperate climates, with *Arabidopsis* having expanded to a broader range, e.g.
125 Mediterranean habitats (Hoffmann, 2005). *Arabidopsis* can behave as a spring annual with a
126 rapid life cycle, germinating in the spring and flowering in the late spring and summer. However,
127 many individuals are longer-lived winter annuals, germinating in the fall and flowering in early
128 spring (Wilczek et al., 2009). Studies of large-scale environmental response in *Arabidopsis* have
129 focused on the role of local adaptation in genetic diversity in the species (e.g. Hancock et al.,
130 2011; Lasky et al., 2018; Martínez-Berdeja et al., 2020; Toledo et al., 2020), but less is known
131 about the determinants of the species' distribution. The last overview of the climate
132 biogeography of *Arabidopsis* was Hoffmann (2002), who considered *Arabidopsis* native to
133 western and central Eurasia, but non-native in China and sub-Saharan Africa. However, studies
134 show these latter populations are likely native, being genetically diverse, and with many unique
135 genetic variants (Durvasula et al., 2017; Zou et al., 2017). Advances in distribution modeling
136 (Elith et al., 2010; Muscarella et al., 2014) and updates to climate and occurrence datasets
137 highlight the need to update to our understanding of *Arabidopsis* biogeography.

138 Studies suggest that multiple climatic factors limit performance and distribution of
139 *Arabidopsis*. Experiments have shown that winter cold is a major factor limiting performance
140 (Ågren & Schemske, 2012; Korves et al., 2007). Additionally, *Arabidopsis* lacks physiological
141 traits for dealing with severe water deficit so it is likely individual performance in nature is limited
142 by drought (Clauw et al., 2015). Based on occurrence data, Hoffmann (2002) concluded that
143 spring and fall cold limited *Arabidopsis* in northern Europe, winter temperatures in Russia, heat
144 and drought toward the southern range margins, and a lack of snow in central Asia. However,
145 these conclusions were based on visual inspection of climate isotherms and range margins, not
146 statistical inference. Distribution models fit to occurrence data allow an explicit quantitative
147 statement of environment-distribution relationships and the potential to infer the environmental
148 factors limiting distributions (Elith et al., 2010; G. Li et al., 2015).

149 Distributions are dynamic through time due to environmental change, dispersal, and
150 demographic stochasticity. Studies have used genetic data to infer *Arabidopsis* refugia during
151 the last glacial maximum (LGM), where subpopulations (sometimes referred to as "relicts")
152 persisted locally before subsequent admixture with an expanding, now widely distributed "non-
153 relict" lineage (Lee et al., 2017). Whether these refugia corresponded to suitable climates is less
154 clear. Future climate change projected impacts on *Arabidopsis* have focused on *relative* climate
155 impacts on different genotypes (Exposito-Alonso et al., 2018; Fournier-Level et al., 2016), rather
156 than distribution dynamics. Additionally, many species, have colonized new regions due to
157 human introduction, sometimes exhibiting traits that appear distinct from native range
158 populations, potentially due to plastic or genetic responses to new environments (Turner et al.,
159 2015). *Arabidopsis* has colonized many regions, but it is unclear to what degree these places
160 represent novel environments.

161 Here we sought to demonstrate an approach to integrate distribution modeling with
162 organismal biology and intraspecific variation, and to revise our understanding of *Arabidopsis*'s
163 biogeography. To do so, we combined occurrences (including many outside Europe poorly

164 represented in previous work) with climate data to build distribution models, and then test how
165 model predictions correspond to performance estimated from herbarium specimens and genetic
166 variation in natural accessions. We ask the following questions:

- 167 1. What climate factors constrain the distribution of *Arabidopsis*? We hypothesize that
168 winter cold and summer drought are the most important constraints, depending on
169 region.
- 170 2. Are individual performance and genetic variation associated with model-estimated
171 habitat suitability? We hypothesize that individuals reach larger sizes in regions with
172 greater suitability and that populations adapt along gradients in suitability through
173 changes in traits such as flowering time, a key component of life history.
- 174 3. Are occurrences outside the native range predicted by a native range model, suggesting
175 stable realized niches following colonization? Or is there evidence *Arabidopsis* has
176 colonized novel environments?
- 177 4. Where did *Arabidopsis* persist during the Last Glacial Maximum (LGM)? And where will
178 *Arabidopsis* move in future climates?

179

180 **Methods**

181 *Occurrence data*

182 We developed a set of high-quality occurrence data (*i.e.* species ID verified and location
183 checked, N=4,024) from published research (Durvasula et al., 2017; Hsu et al., 2019;
184 Mandáková et al., 2017; Zeng et al., 2017; Zou et al., 2017), publicly available herbarium and
185 germplasm accessions with known collection locations (Alonso-Blanco et al., 2016; DeLeo et
186 al., 2020), and some of our recent field collections in East Africa (Gamba et al., 2022). These
187 span a period of 1794 - 2018. The herbarium specimens and new collections include little-
188 studied populations in Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Uganda,
189 Sudan, and Nepal. Duplicate occurrence points were eliminated (samples are often split and
190 sent to different herbaria). For model fitting, we excluded occurrences from putative non-native
191 regions (the Americas, New Zealand, Japan).

192 We also used occurrence data (with coordinates and without flagged problems
193 N=115,226) from the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) to test model predictions in
194 regions outside of the native range of *Arabidopsis* (downloaded 30 Dec 2020, Gbif.Org, 2020).
195 We deem these occurrences as lower quality given that many have not had the species identity
196 and location checked (DeLeo et al., 2020).

197

198 *Environmental data*

199 Climate data were extracted from CHELSA (Climatologies at High resolution for the Earth's
200 Land Surface Areas) v1.2 at 30 arc second spatial resolution (Karger et al., 2017). Current
201 conditions are the average of 1979-2013 estimates. We selected the following climate variables
202 based on hypothesized importance (Gienapp et al., 2017; Hancock et al., 2011; Lasky et al.,
203 2014, 2018) and relatively low inter-correlation (Pearson correlation coefficients among
204 variables at occurrences < 0.75): isothermality (Bio3), minimum temperature of coldest month
205 (Bio6), temperature annual range (Bio7), mean temperature of wettest quarter (Bio8), mean
206 temperature of the warmest quarter (Bio10), precipitation seasonality (Bio15), precipitation of

207 wettest quarter (Bio16), and precipitation of driest quarter (Bio17). We also included altitude
208 from Hijmans et al. (2005).

209 For projecting past distributions, we obtained climate estimates from the last glacial
210 maximum (LGM) at 21k yrs before present from CHELSA PMIP3 (Karger et al., 2017). We used
211 the global altitude and bathymetry map with 15 arc second resolution from Tozer et al. (2019)
212 with a sea level 134 m lower than present (Lambeck et al., 2014) to project potential suitable
213 habitat at the LGM on land in areas currently submerged. For projecting future distributions, we
214 used climate projections five divergent global climate models for 2050 from CHELSA v1.2 using
215 the RCP 4.5 emissions scenario (Karger et al., 2017). We also show RCP 6.0 in the supplement
216 for context (Figure S13), though it is highly similar to 4.5 in the target time period.

217 To characterize temporal variation in climate (climate anomalies), we used the Climate
218 Research Unit (CRU) TS 4.01 dataset, providing a global time series of monthly temperature
219 and precipitation for the period 1900-2010 at a 0.5° resolution (Harris et al., 2014). From the
220 CRU data we calculated the same bioclimatic parameters that we used from CHELSA, but in
221 the CRU data these bioclimatic variables were specific to each herbarium specimen in the time
222 period it was collected (Supplemental Methods). We then calculated local anomalies for each of
223 these variables by taking the observed value, subtracting mean across the entire time series,
224 and dividing by the standard deviation (DeLeo et al., 2020).

225

226 *Performance estimates from herbarium specimens*

227 We estimated fecundity on a subset of herbarium specimens using two traits. First, we
228 measured the length of the longest inflorescence, reasoning that longer inflorescences would
229 have more fruits and seeds. Second, we measured maximum rosette leaf length, reasoning that
230 larger rosettes would support later reproductive investment if these collected plants were
231 allowed to continue growth *in situ* (see Supplement for a validation). We used ImageJ on 2,194
232 specimen images to estimate the tallest point of each inflorescence (N=2,188) and the
233 maximum rosette leaf length (N=1,264; see Supplement).

234

235 *Range-wide genetic variation in life history*

236 Many late-flowering *Arabidopsis* genotypes require cold cues (vernalization) to flower and also
237 show slower growth and more stress tolerance, delineating a life history axis (Lovell et al., 2013;
238 Vasseur et al., 2018). To assess life history variation, we used published experimental data on
239 flowering time for 898 whole-genome resequenced accessions from the native range with
240 reliable geographic coordinates grown at 10 and 16°C (The 1001 Genomes Consortium 2016).
241 To estimate vernalization sensitivity, we calculated the difference between flowering time at 10
242 and 16°C.

243

244 *Species Distribution Modeling*

245 We thinned the original 4,024 high quality occurrence points to one sample per 1 km grid cell to
246 reduce sampling bias (N=662) using the 'sp' package (Bivand et al., 2008). To characterize
247 potentially inhabited sites, we generated pseudoabsence background points using the 'dismo'
248 package (Hijmans & Elith, 2013) by sampling 10,000 random points within a 500 km buffer
249 around occurrence points.

250 We used Maxent version 3.4.0 to generate a species distribution model (Phillips et al.,
251 2006). MaxEnt was implemented with the R package 'ENMeval' v2, and parameters were
252 optimized using the 'checkerboard2' method for cross validation (Muscarella et al., 2014).
253 Among the tested settings (ENMeval defaults), we chose the model with lowest AICc value and
254 used this to project habitat suitability under recent conditions across the globe. For all models
255 we used the logistic output of MaxEnt that scales suitability from zero to unity.

256 We used permutation importances to determine which climatic factors drove predictions
257 in the distribution model. We also used the 'limiting' function in the R package 'rmaxent' to
258 determine the most limiting climatic factors in each location, defined as the environmental
259 covariate that has the largest decrease in suitability at a given location relative to the suitability
260 achieved if the covariate had its value equal to the global mean (Baumgartner et al., 2017; Elith
261 et al., 2010). State another way, the local limiting factor is the environmental condition most
262 limiting suitability, compared to an alternative scenario where that condition takes its global
263 mean.

264 In non-native regions, we evaluated whether *Arabidopsis* is limited from further
265 expansion at range edges by climate, *i.e.* whether there were no more unoccupied suitable
266 environments near existing populations. To do so, we calculated suitability in a zone 50-100 km
267 from existing GBIF occurrences and compared occupancy in these buffers in the native range to
268 invaded regions.

269 We also projected the MaxEnt model using past (LGM) and future climate conditions.
270 For future conditions, we calculated the mean and standard deviation of habitat suitability
271 projected for the five climate models. To assess whether model predictions were extrapolating
272 into poorly characterized or novel climates, we compared the present-day model training
273 climates to each predicted climate conditions, calculating multivariate environmental similarity
274 surfaces (MESS) following Elith et al. (2010). Higher values on a MESS map indicate conditions
275 in a location (or point in time) are similar to the reference environmental conditions used to fit
276 the model. Negative values indicate that at least some variables are outside the range of
277 environments used to fit the model, signifying extrapolation into novel environments (Elith et al.,
278 2010).

279

280 *Performance and habitat suitability*

281 We asked whether suitability corresponded to plant size. We first tested these relationships with
282 Pearson's and Spearman's correlations. We also fit Generalized Additive Models (GAMs) where
283 herbarium specimen sizes were the response variable. The model included covariates for
284 suitability at the collection location (square-root transformed to reduce the lower-tail influence)
285 and (as a nuisance variable) the year of collection (scaled to mean zero and unit variance) to
286 account for potential changes in size over time. We used GAMs to allow smooth spatial
287 variation in parameters, allowing us to capture any regional variation. The model can be
288 represented as:

289

$$290 \text{Phenotype}_{i,\text{year}} = \beta_0 + \beta_{i,\text{year}} \text{Year} + \beta_{i,\text{HS}} \text{Habitat Suitability}_i + \epsilon_{i,\text{year}}$$

291

292 where *i* represents the specimen location. Errors were modeled as normally distributed.

293 Spatially-varying parameters were constrained to smooth spatial variation using the 'mgcv'

294 package for R, which we used with REML to fit all GAMs (Wood, 2011). We considered
295 covariates to be significant at a given location if their 95% confidence interval (CI) excluded 0,
296 and the Moran's I (Cooper, 2021) for model residuals did not indicate spatial autocorrelation.

297 We also asked whether local limiting factors corresponded to climate variables with
298 significant effects on plant performance. We hypothesized that for a given region, temporal
299 fluctuations in local limiting factors would be associated with temporal variation in plant size in
300 herbarium specimens. To address this hypothesis, we tested if specimen sizes were correlated
301 with anomalies in climate conditions corresponding to the climate variables used in the MaxEnt
302 model. We used the yearly climate anomalies we calculated from CRU in GAMs with spatially
303 varying coefficients, where for a phenotype measured at location i :

304

$$\text{Phenotype}_{i,\text{year}} = \beta_{i,0} + \beta_{i,\text{year}}\text{Year} + \beta_{i,\text{climate}}\text{BioClim Variable Anomaly} + \epsilon_{i,\text{year}}$$

306

307 We then qualitatively assessed whether local limiting factors inferred by MaxEnt had anomalies
308 that were correlated with plant size (local $\beta_{i,\text{climate}}$ coefficients in the GAMs).

309

310 *Genetic variation and habitat suitability*

311 We used two strategies to test how genetic variation in *Arabidopsis* varies with suitability. First,
312 we focused on genetic variation in a key life history trait, flowering time. We estimated linear
313 models relating suitability and flowering time. To account for population structure and neutral
314 processes that can affect spatial variation in flowering time, we also tested whether suitability
315 was associated with flowering time after using random effects for genome-wide similarity among
316 accessions. A significant suitability-flowering time association in this model would suggest
317 selection linked to suitability acts on flowering time. This test is akin to $Q_{ST}-F_{ST}$ contrasts
318 (Whitlock & Guillaume, 2009), except that an explicit environmental gradient is tested
319 (suitability). We implemented this mixed model the function 'lmeKin' from the R package 'coxme'
320 (Therneau & Therneau, 2015), along with 'kinship2' (Sinnwell et al., 2014). The kinship matrix
321 was obtained from 2,027,463 published whole genome resequencing SNPs (Alonso-Blanco et
322 al., 2016). Additionally, to test for geographic variation in suitability-flowering time relationships,
323 we fitted GAMs of flowering time with spatially varying coefficients:

324

$$\text{FloweringTime}_{i,\text{year}} = \beta_0 + \beta_{i,HS}\text{Habitat Suitability} + \epsilon_i$$

326

327 Our second strategy was to scan the *Arabidopsis* genome for genes where different
328 alleles were found in high versus low suitability locations. Such a change in allele frequency
329 across gradients in suitability would suggest that this genetic variation was involved in local
330 adaptation to low versus high suitability environments. We used univariate linear mixed-effects
331 models in GEMMA (v 0.98.3) (Zhou & Stephens, 2012) to perform genome wide association
332 studies (GWAS) in a set of 2,053,939 SNPs filtered for MAF=0.05 from 1003 native-range
333 ecotypes part of the 1001 genomes panel.

334

335

336 **Results**

337

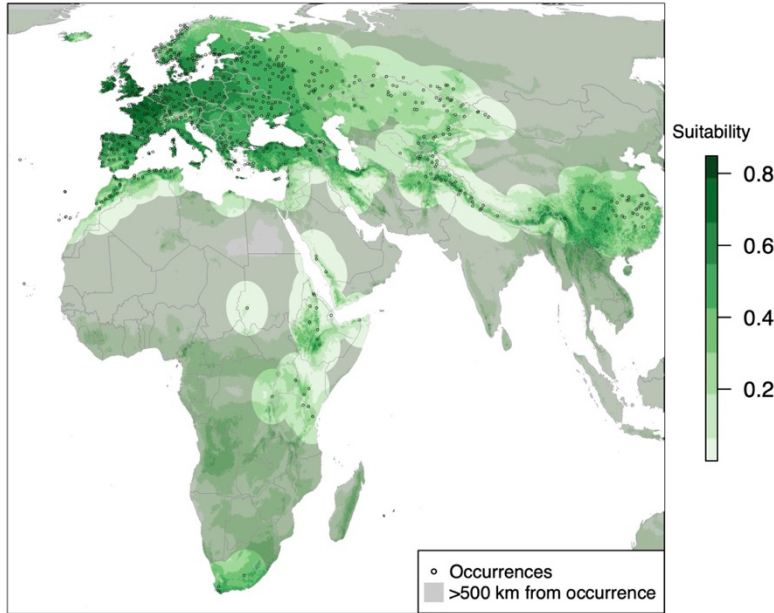
338 *Q1. Climate constraints on the distribution of Arabidopsis*

339 Our optimization of MaxEnt models (with AICc) resulted in a selection of a model with linear and
340 quadratic effects, with the regularization multiplier of 0.5. The training AUC value was 0.78 and
341 the average test AUC with checkerboard2 cross validation was 0.78. The omission rate of the
342 10th percentile of suitability for training points was 0.10, suggesting our models were not overfit
343 as they were able to predict low probability occurrences as well as expected (Fielding & Bell,
344 1997; Peterson et al., 2011). The areas of high suitability overall correspond well to the
345 documented Arabidopsis distribution, with one notable exception being tropical lowland sites
346 (Congo basin) in sub-Saharan Africa (Figure 1A). This region was near zero multivariate
347 environmental similarity to training data, indicating the model may have been poorly constrained
348 there, while most of the regions of high predicted suitability where Arabidopsis is documented
349 have positive similarity (MESS, Figure S2).

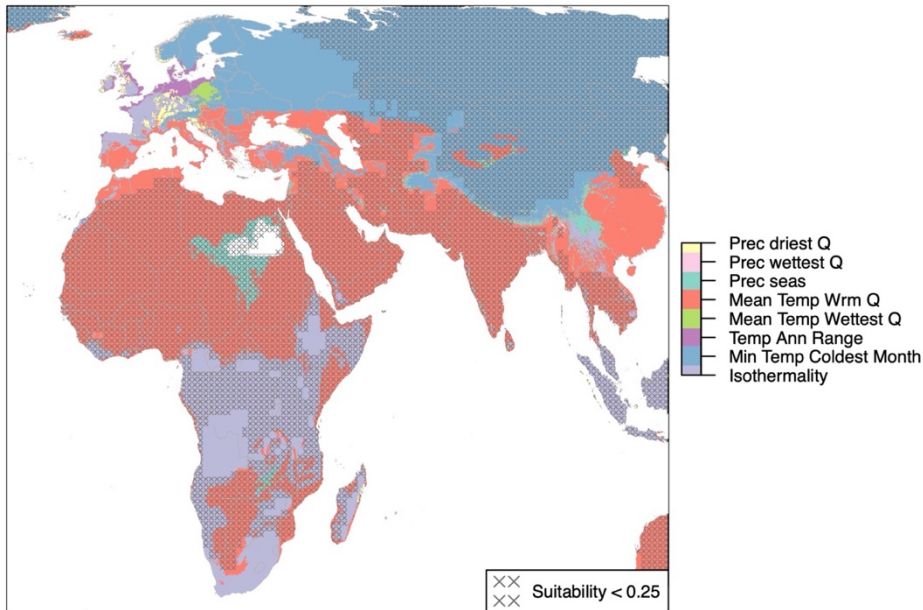
350

351

352 **Figure 1. (A)** Habitat suitability (green) under current climate conditions with thinned
353 occurrences (n = 662) used in fitting shown as black circles and (B) limiting factors from the
354 MaxEnt model fit to current climates. Regions far (>500 km) from known occurrence have a gray
355 mask in (A). Regions of low suitability (less than 0.25) in (B) are marked with gray 'x' symbols.
356 Equal Earth projection was used. Abbreviations in (B) as follows: precipitation of the driest
357 quarter "Prec driest Q", precipitation of the wettest quarter "Prec wettest Q", precipitation
358 seasonality "Prec seas", mean temperature of the warmest quarter "Mean temp wrm Q", mean
359 temperature of the wettest quarter "Mean temp wettest Q", temperature annual range "Temp
360 ann range", minimum temperature of the coldest month "min temp coldest month".
361 **A.**



380 **B.**



386 The permutation importance of the model covariates across the entire native range revealed
387 that the minimum temperature of the coldest month (PI = 40%) and the mean temperature of the
388 warmest quarter (PI = 32%) were the two most important variables, suggesting winter cold
389 stress and summer heat stress are most important in constraining *Arabidopsis*'s distribution
390 (Table S1). The next most important variable was isothermality (PI = 14%), as *Arabidopsis* tends
391 to be found in regions with low isothermality (e.g. most temperate zones).

392 To identify spatial variation in climate constraints, we also identified local limiting factors
393 (Figure 1B). Across northern Eurasia, minimum temperature of the coldest month limited habitat
394 suitability. Across the Mediterranean and tropical/subtropical regions, the temperature of the
395 warmest quarter was limiting. Across Eastern Europe and Central Asia, winter cold was limiting
396 adjacent to other regions where summer heat was limiting, highlighting the multiple stressors in
397 this region.

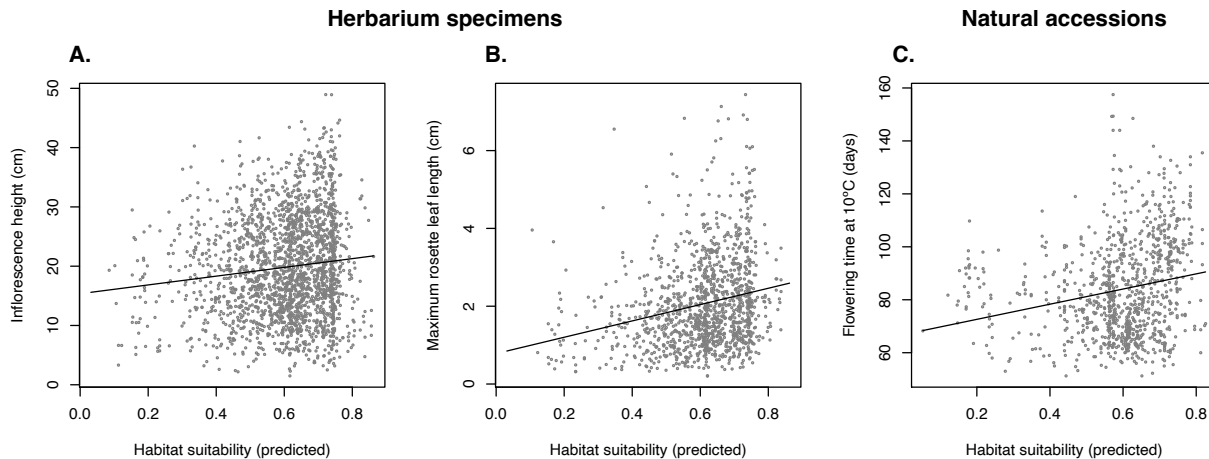
398 We hypothesized that for a given region, temporal fluctuations in local limiting factors
399 would be associated with temporal variation in plant size in herbarium specimens. We found
400 that years with warmer minimum winter temperatures were associated with significantly taller
401 inflorescences from Turkey to central Asia (Figure S3). Concordantly, in much of this region the
402 Maxent model indicated that minimum temperature of the coldest of the month was the most
403 limiting factor (namely in the Caucasus and from Kazakhstan to northern India, Figure 1B). We
404 also found that years with greater seasonality of precipitation were associated with shorter
405 inflorescences in central Asia, but taller inflorescences in central Europe (Figure S3). Partly
406 consistent, in the southern part of this central Asian region the MaxEnt model indicated
407 precipitation seasonality was limiting (Figure 1B). Years with higher isothermality were positively
408 associated with inflorescence height in Eastern Europe but this was not a limiting factor in this
409 region (Figure S3). Other climate anomalies were not significantly associated with temporal
410 variation in plant size.

411
412 *Q2. Declining fitness and stress escape life history in regions of low predicted habitat suitability*

413 As habitat suitability increased, so did the inflorescence height of individual plants in herbarium
414 specimens (Pearson's $r = 0.11$, $p < 10^{-7}$; Spearman's $\rho = 0.09$, $p < 10^{-5}$; $n = 2053$). The
415 relationship with suitability was even stronger for maximum rosette leaf length ($r = 0.23$, $p < 10^{-16}$;
416 $\rho = 0.24$, $p < 10^{-16}$; $n = 1179$, Figure 2), which was also more correlated with total fruit +
417 flower number (Supplement), suggesting fecundity was greater in regions of high predicted
418 suitability. We tested size-suitability relationships using GAMs with spatially varying suitability
419 coefficients (but not including climate anomalies – distinct from the previous section Q1). We
420 found a consistently positive relationship between suitability and size that was significant for
421 rosette leaf length in western Europe and for inflorescence height across most of Eurasia (Figs
422 S5 and S6). Unexpectedly, in these models where year of collection was considered primarily
423 as a nuisance variable, plant size significantly declined over time in northwest Europe (Figs S5
424 and S6; e.g. in Scandinavia, maximum rosette leaf length vs year, Spearman's $\rho = -0.17$).

425
426 **Figure 2.** Predicted current habitat suitability compared with individual plant size (A & B) and
427 genetic variation in a measure of life history (C). Size measures include inflorescence height (A,
428 relationship with suitability: Pearson's $r = 0.11$, Spearman's $\rho = 0.09$) and maximum rosette
429 leaf length (B, $r = 0.23$, $\rho = 0.24$) from herbarium specimens. Flowering time of natural

430 accessions (C, $r = 0.21$) was taken from published data on a growth chamber experiment at
431 10°C (Alonso-Blanco et al., 2016). Linear model fits are shown. N = 2053 for inflorescence
432 height, N = 1179 for maximum rosette leaf length, and N=953 for flowering time.
433



434 We compared habitat suitability with published data on genetic variation in flowering
435 time. We found that flowering time at 10°C and flowering time plasticity were significantly
436 positively associated with suitability ($r=0.21$, $p<10^{-11}$ and $r=0.10$, $p=0.0021$, respectively), and
437 also for days to flower at 16 °C ($r=0.08$, $p=0.0166$, Figures 2 & S7). In GAMs with spatially-
438 varying suitability coefficients, the suitability-flowering time pattern were largely consistent
439 across Eurasia (Figure S8). The suitability-flowering time association was significant even when
440 accounting for genomic similarity among accessions, suggesting selection associated with
441 suitability could maintain geographic clines in flowering time. Specifically, linear mixed-effects
442 models found a positive association for flowering time at 10°C ($p<10^{-6}$, $n=953$), and also at
443 16°C, the latter of which may have been obscured by population structure that was unaccounted
444 for in the simple linear regression model ($p<10^{-5}$, $n=920$). The suitability association was not
445 significant for plasticity in flowering time when accounting for genomic similarity ($p=0.38$, $n=920$)
446 (Tables S1-S3). Consistent with this potential obscuring of population genetic structure, we
447 found that 10 ADMIXTURE genetic clusters in Arabidopsis (Alonso-Blanco et al., 2016) were
448 significantly different in their habitat suitability ($F(9,993)=201.6$, $p<10^{-16}$, Table S5, Figure S9).

450 We scanned the genome for genes that showed allele frequency correlations with
451 suitability. The most strongly associated SNP was in the putative promoter region (878 bp from
452 the start) of ERF53 (AT2G20880), a transcription factor that regulates response to drought, salt,
453 and heat (Figure S11) (Cheng et al., 2012; B. Li et al., 2019). This SNP showed a strong allele
454 frequency cline from Europe to Asia, where the alternate allele was nearly fixed in accessions
455 east of the Ural Mountains, which is a region of low estimated suitability (Fig S10). Furthermore,
456 we found that this alternate SNP allele was associated with higher expression of ERF53 (Wilcox
457 test, $p = 0.0071$) in published transcriptome data (Kawakatsu et al., 2016), suggesting a *cis*-
458 regulatory variant is locally adapted to low suitability parts of Asia.

459

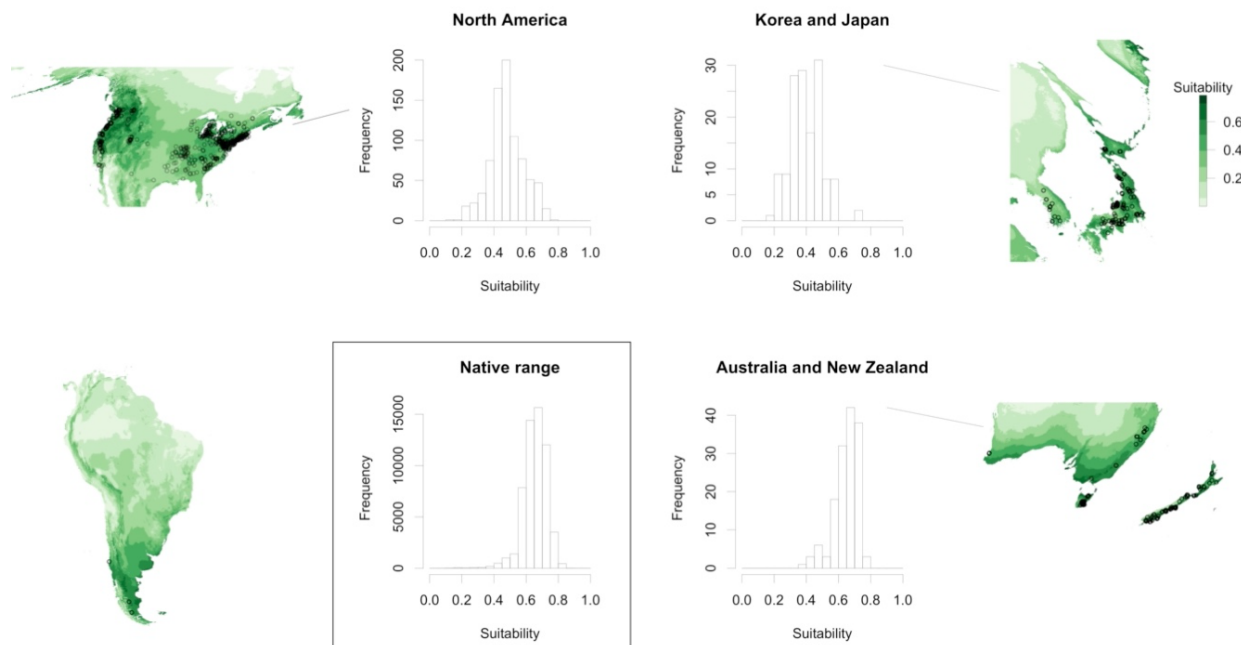
460

461 Q3. Using the native range model to predict outside the native range

462 Australia and New Zealand occurrences were largely in areas predicted to be highly suitable
463 (Figure 3). By contrast, North America includes occurrences in highly suitable areas (Pacific
464 Northwest) but many in low suitability areas (interior east, where summer heat was predicted
465 limiting, Figure S12). The eastern US also has near zero similarity on the MESS map,
466 suggesting a novel set of conditions compared to the native range (Figure S2). Similarly, the
467 regions where *Arabidopsis* occurred in Korea and Japan were of lower suitability than in the
468 native range, also with summer heat as the predicted limiting factor (Figure S12), suggesting
469 *Arabidopsis* in eastern North America and East Asia inhabits climates with distinctly warm
470 summers.

471

472 **Figure 3.** Distribution of predicted habitat suitability (based on our native-range MaxEnt model,
473 underlying map surfaces in green) for GBIF occurrences in various regions (black circles). We
474 do not include a histogram for South America because there are too few occurrences. Equal
475 Earth projection was used.



476

477 We investigated whether non-native *Arabidopsis* occupy all available habitat in their
478 regions or whether suitable habitat remains unoccupied. We found that locales 50-100 km from
479 occurrences included many areas of high suitability in North America, suggesting suitable sites
480 remain unoccupied (11.8% of grid cells in these 50-100 km regions had suitability > 0.6). In
481 comparison there were fewer such sites in the native range (5.1% of these 50-100 km regions
482 had suitability > 0.6). There were extensive areas of high suitability along the Pacific coast of
483 North America to around 60°N, but no occurrences north of 50°, which we confirmed with an
484 expert botanist (pers comm. Matthew Carlson). The timing of the invasion is likely not a factor
485 given that occurrences from near Vancouver date at least to 1939. This region has near zero
486 similarity on the MESS map, potentially indicating that the native range model is not well
487 constrained there (Figure S2). Similarly, the southern coast of Australia is highly suitable but
488 *Arabidopsis* is apparently absent (31.9% of these 50-100 km regions with suitability > 0.8).

489 Records are restricted to the southeast and southwest (confirmed by botanists, Shelley James,
490 Tim Entwistle, Neville Walsh pers. comm.), even though records date at least to 1959 in SE
491 Australia. In South America there are a few *Arabidopsis* records from the Southern Cone, and it
492 appears to be rare in the region (pers. comm. Diego Salariato), while apparently suitable
493 environments occur throughout Patagonia and high elevation Andean sites that are apparently
494 unoccupied (pers comm. Gwendolyn Peyre, Santiago Madriñán). Large areas of southern
495 Australia and South America show positive similarity on the MESS map suggesting the model is
496 well constrained in those regions. By contrast in Korea and Japan there are very few sites
497 expected to be highly suitable that are not already occupied by *Arabidopsis* (4.9% of these 50-
498 100 km regions with suitability > 0.6).

499

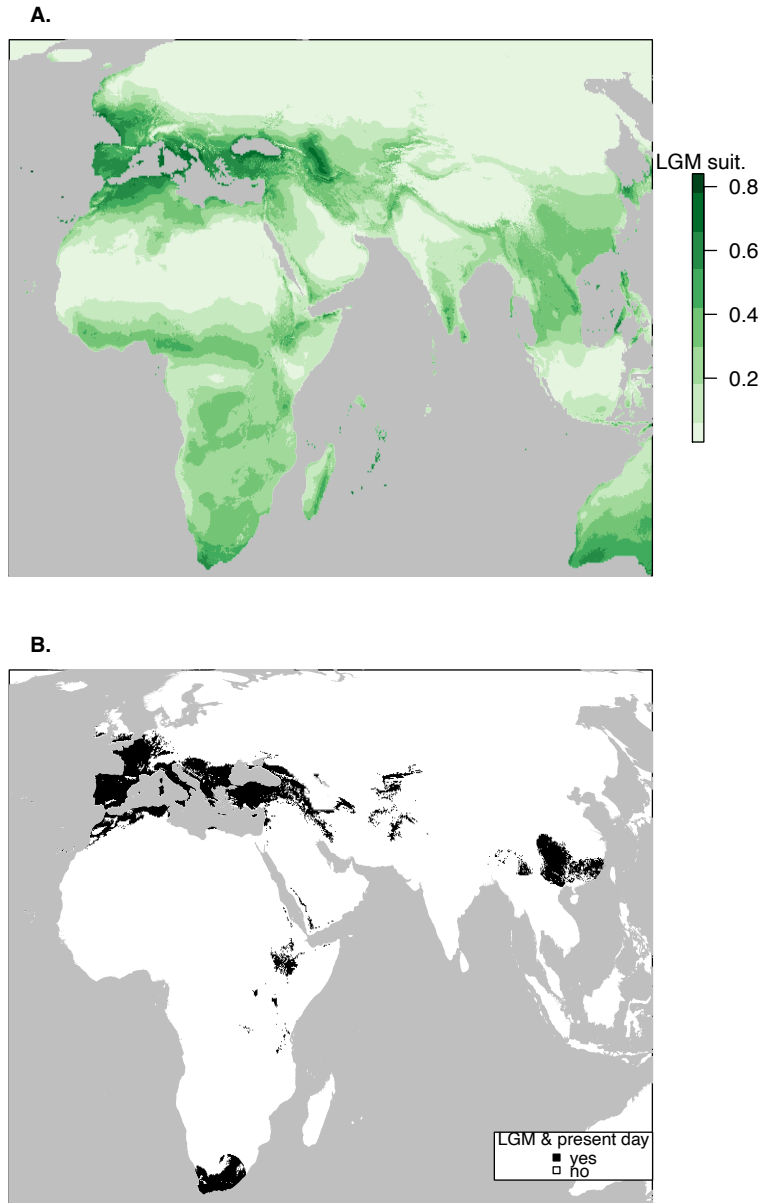
500 *Q4. The distribution of Arabidopsis during the Last Glacial Maximum and in the future*

501 We projected suitability onto the climate at the LGM and found several putative refugia, where
502 past environmental conditions could have supported *Arabidopsis* persistence. In particular, the
503 Mediterranean/Caucuses/south Caspian Sea, much of sub-Saharan Africa > 1000 m (current)
504 asl, and China and SE Asia appear as refugia (Figure 4). North Africa, the Atlantic European
505 coast, and the islands of Sicily, Corsica, and Sardinia also appear as highly suitable potential
506 refugia.

507

508

509 **Figure 4.** (A) Predicted distribution during the Last Glacial Maximum and (B) areas in black with
510 suitability > 0.3 during both the LGM and current conditions as well as within 500 km of known
511 current occurrences. Because of their greater level at the LGM, in (A) we masked the LGM
512 Caspian and Aral Seas (including regions of high putative suitability) from the map (Prentice et
513 al., 1993). Lake Victoria was left unmasked as it was likely very low during the LGM (Johnson et
514 al., 1996). Equal Earth projection was used.



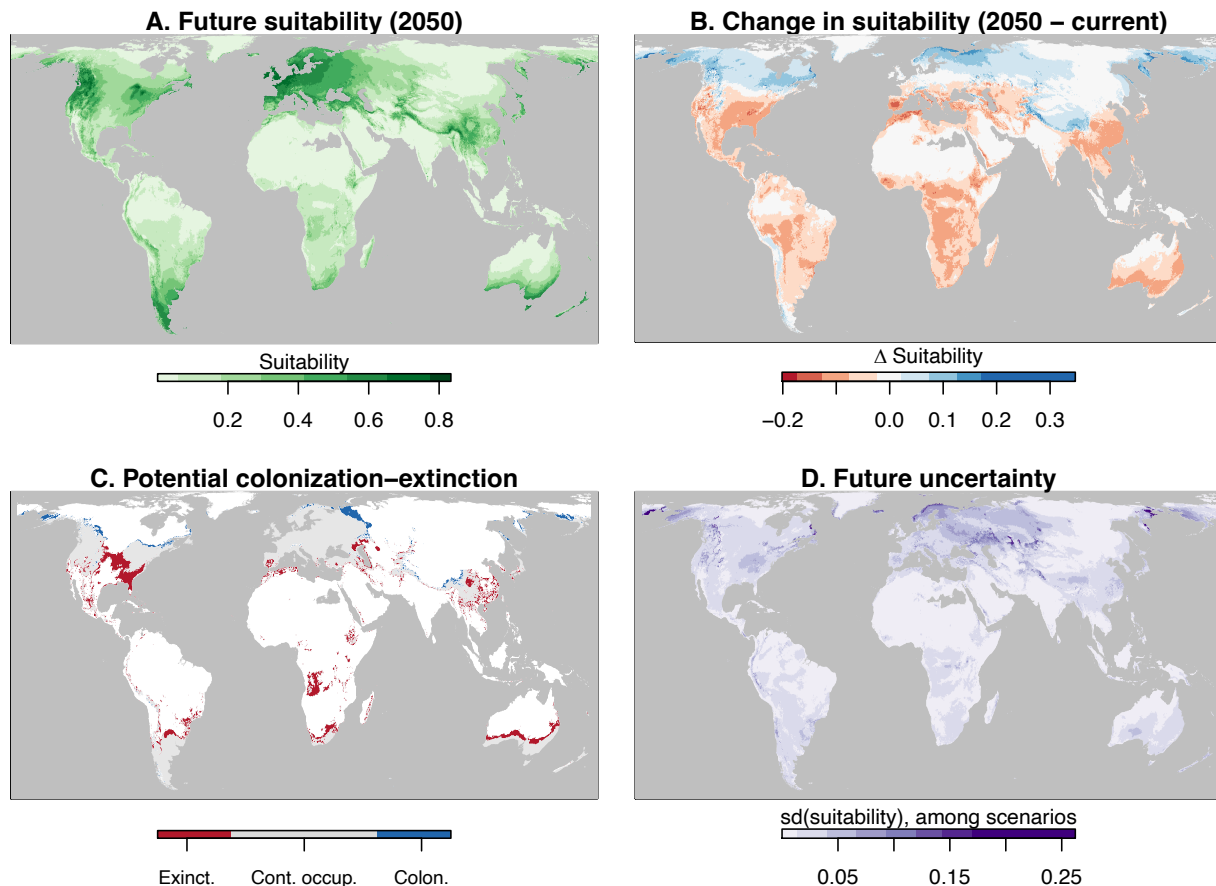
515
516

517 We projected climate suitability for Arabidopsis in the year 2050. Some current high suitability
518 regions will remain so, such as in Northern Europe. Nevertheless, we found poleward and up-
519 elevation shifts in regions of high suitability and retreats at lower latitudes and elevations. In the

520 native range, all African sites show declining suitability, as did most Mediterranean sites,
521 highlighting vulnerability of these populations. By contrast, Arctic Europe, and the mountains of
522 central Asia/Tibetan plateau show increased suitability, highlighting potential range expansions
523 (Figure 5).

524

525 **Figure 5.** Future predicted suitability for *Arabidopsis* (A), change in suitability from future
526 compared with present (blue indicates improving suitability and red decreasing, B), regions of
527 potential colonization (blue) continued occupancy (gray), and extinction (red) based on a
528 threshold suitability of 0.25 for occupancy (C), and the standard deviation in suitability among
529 the 5 tested climate models giving uncertainty (D). Equal Earth projection is used. RCP 4.5
530 emissions scenario is shown, see Fig S13 for highly similar patterns under RCP 6.0.



531

532

533

534

535 Discussion

536

537 We used the model plant *Arabidopsis* in a case study of integrative climate biogeography of a
538 species' past, present, and future distributions. This species is key to a large body of plant
539 biology research, and an in-depth study connecting its biogeography to genetic and phenotypic
540 variation provides important context for the biology of *Arabidopsis*. The size of individual plants

541 in herbarium specimens, as well as genetic variation in flowering time, suggested that regions
542 with lower predicted suitability harbored populations with reduced fitness and altered life history.
543 The consistency between model predictions and individual variation provides partial model
544 validation, bolstering our confidence in conclusions from model projections. Using these model
545 projections, we identified new glacial refugia, and looking to the future, we found that genetically
546 distinct lower latitude populations are most threatened by climate change.

547

548 *The current distribution of Arabidopsis and its limiting factors*

549 The fitted native-range model largely corresponded to occurrences and indicates Arabidopsis
550 broadly distributed across Europe, moister regions of central and eastern Asia, and mountains
551 across Africa. Our results advance beyond the most recent climate biogeographical study of
552 Arabidopsis by Hoffmann (2002), who used monthly climate data (but notably no synthetic
553 bioclimatic variables) from Leemans & Cramer (1991) mostly to qualitatively describe the
554 regions occupied by Arabidopsis. Our study included populations in sub-Saharan Africa and
555 Asia that were overlooked or considered non-native by Hoffmann (2002). We also included
556 occurrences from regions apparently missed by Hoffmann (2002). Zou et al. (2017) more
557 recently built models of Arabidopsis's distribution using Eurasian populations and default
558 MaxEnt settings, but did not include occurrences from Arabia, sub-Saharan Africa, and much of
559 the Himalayas, Russia, and central Asia, and did not subsample occurrence to reduce bias.
560 Likely as a result of these issues, the predictions of Zou et al. (2017) show a pronounced peak
561 in suitability in Germany, which was densely sampled in the genomics studies used for
562 occurrences by Zou et al. (2017), but predicted low suitability in much of the core European
563 range and near zero suitability in sub-Saharan Africa, Arabia, and most of the Russian part of
564 the species range.

565 The two dominant limiting factors in our model were winter cold (at lower latitudes and
566 elevations) and summer heat (at higher latitudes and elevations). Winter cold is recognized to
567 limit Arabidopsis performance, in particular winter cold appears to be a dominant force in local
568 adaptation of Arabidopsis (Ågren & Schemske, 2012; Gienapp et al., 2017; Monroe et al.,
569 2016). In southern Europe, where summer heat was inferred to be limiting, Arabidopsis flowers
570 in early spring (DeLeo et al., 2020) and thus summer heat is not usually directly experienced. In
571 spring in these regions, warm temperatures might not reach consistently stressful levels (e.g. to
572 induce fruit abortion) (Warner & Erwin, 2005) but it may be that moisture deficit driven by
573 evaporative demand is directly limiting in late spring. Where suitability was highest for
574 Arabidopsis, including the British Isles and a belt along the coast from France to Poland,
575 temperature annual range was identified as limiting. However, interpreting limiting factors in an
576 area of extremely high suitability (near one) is not meaningful given that suitability can scarcely
577 be increased.

578 Despite inference of winter cold and summer heat as primarily limiting, these were only
579 partly reflected by temporal fluctuations in individual plant performance from herbarium
580 specimens. Winter cold and precipitation variability anomalies were significantly associated with
581 specimen size in much of Asia, where these were also the MaxEnt modeled limiting factors from
582 Iran and Kazakhstan to Afghanistan and the Himalayas, suggesting these climate factors truly
583 limit Arabidopsis populations. However, there were discrepancies between individual
584 performance and limiting factors, likely for several reasons. First, the size of specimens is an

585 imperfect fitness proxy. Usually only reproductive individuals are collected in herbaria, and
586 individuals that would die before reproduction are excluded. Second, individuals are not
587 randomly sampled from populations (Daru et al., 2018). Third, MaxEnt models face limitations
588 due to misspecification, problems with occurrence data, or a mismatch between covariates and
589 the true ecological factors limiting populations. Nonetheless, the limiting factors we identified
590 here fit well with our knowledge of *Arabidopsis* ecophysiology and natural history.

591
592 *Habitat suitability, individual performance, and life history*

593 We found a decrease in plant size with decreasing habitat suitability across the range of
594 *Arabidopsis*, suggesting that our model suitability captured a substantial part of environmental
595 effects on individual fitness. Given the great variability in individual plant performance within
596 populations obvious to casual observers, it is unsurprising that suitability explains a minority of
597 total variation in individual size, leaving most variation unexplained (Figure 2). Furthermore,
598 fecundity and fecundity response to treatments often have low heritability in many species
599 (Price & Schluter, 1991), even in controlled experiments (Lasky et al., 2015).

600 There have still been few studies of individual performance with the geographic scope
601 that allows inference across a species range (Angert & Schemske, 2005; Csergő et al., 2017;
602 Greiser et al., 2020; Samis & Eckert, 2007). In a synthesis of studies of 40 species, Lee-Yaw et
603 al. (2016) found that, on average, individual performance and distribution-model inferred
604 suitability decline beyond range margins. From 42 studies Lee-Yaw et al. (2021) found that 38%
605 identified some predictive ability of distribution models for individual performance. However,
606 many previous studies relied on intensive observations of a small number of populations, while
607 our estimates of performance from thousands of herbarium specimens allowed us to cover most
608 of the species range. The increased availability of digitized museum specimens with trait data
609 indicates an opportunity to estimate performance across distributions for many species
610 (Bontrager & Angert, 2015).

611 We found that low suitability regions had earlier flowering genotypes. This relationship
612 was noisy, with early flowering genotypes frequent in all levels of suitability, but later flowering
613 genotypes lacking from the least suitable regions. The suitability-flowering time associations
614 were significant when accounting for genome-wide similarity between accessions, suggesting
615 they reflect selection associated with suitability. We interpret the direction of the relationship as
616 indicating that when suitability is low, *Arabidopsis* employs stress escape strategies, *i.e.* a rapid
617 life cycle during favorable conditions (Ludlow, 1989). Nevertheless, our findings suggest that
618 low suitability central Asian populations have some stress tolerating mechanisms, as they
619 harbor distinct allele at a transcription factor (ERF53, AT2G20880) that regulates response to
620 abiotic stressors (Cheng et al., 2012; B. Li et al., 2019). The restriction of late flowering
621 genotypes to more suitable regions is counterintuitive given physiological work showing these
622 are more stress tolerant (Lovell et al., 2013). However, it may be true that more favorable
623 conditions make possible a slow growing, slow flowering, freezing-tolerant winter annual
624 strategy.

625
626 *The distribution of Arabidopsis outside its native range*

627 *Arabidopsis* has spread across the globe, largely to climates well-predicted by native range
628 models, but to some regions predicted to be less suitable. Populations in western North

629 America, Australia, and New Zealand occur in climates well-predicted by the native range,
630 suggesting stable realized niches following colonization. But in eastern North America, Korea,
631 and Japan, these climates tend to be of low predicted suitability. Whether these are truly of
632 lower suitability is unknown without performance data. It may be that *Arabidopsis* has colonized
633 novel environments in these regions, or that the low suitability is only a model artefact. Studies
634 often find limited transferability among native and introduced range models (Early & Sax, 2014;
635 Liu et al., 2020).

636 In southern Australia, the Southern Cone, and Alaska there are widespread seemingly
637 suitable habitats where *Arabidopsis* is absent. The lack of more populations may partly owe to
638 the strict quarantine on imports to Australia to avoid species invasions (Pheloung, 1999).
639 Additionally, a lack of human disturbance in some regions (e.g. Alaska) may limit the potential
640 for colonization given *Arabidopsis* often is found in disturbed sites.

641 *The distribution of Arabidopsis at the last glacial maximum*

642 Using population genetic patterns, Lee et al. (2017) hypothesized five glacial refugia for Eurasia
643 to be in Iberia, Sicily, Balkans, the Levant, and Turkmenistan. These are consistent with our
644 range reconstruction, although we do not find clear barriers of unsuitable climates that would
645 have isolated Italian, Balkan, and Levant LGM populations. Furthermore, we note that
646 Sardinia/Corsica appears as a refugium, and we note that narrow, highly suitable areas along
647 the southern and eastern Caspian Sea could be the location of the hypothesized Turkmenistan
648 refugium. Lee et al. (2017) further hypothesized that the bulk of current European genotypes
649 derive from an expansion originating on the northwest coast of the Black Sea, where we found a
650 strip of highly suitable conditions for *Arabidopsis* during the LGM. Additional genetic studies
651 hypothesized a long history of existence in sub-Saharan Africa (Durvasula et al., 2017) and
652 conditions during the LGM suggest the species could have been much more widespread than
653 currently. Concordantly, Chala et al., (2017) used models of the distribution of Afroalpine habitat
654 generally during the LGM to find expanded areas in East Africa compared to present day,
655 though some locations such as Jebel Marra, Sudan were still surrounded by landscapes of
656 unsuitable habitat even at the LGM.

657
658 We found that the North Atlantic European coast was highly suitable (including areas
659 currently inhabited) during the LGM, but current British Isle and French populations do not show
660 genetic signatures of refugia (Lee et al., 2017). In both cases, local, distinct genotypes that
661 survived the LGM may have gone extinct following expansion by the now dominant European
662 genetic cluster (“non-relicts”) (Fulgione & Hancock, 2018; Lee et al., 2017). The previous
663 *Arabidopsis* distribution modeling of the LGM (Zou et al., 2017) did not identify France and NE
664 Iberia as highly suitable during the LGM and did not mask the Caspian Sea (thus overinflating
665 that refugium). Zou et al. (2017) also did not identify the African refugia (except for a small
666 region in SE Africa) and potential refugia in mountains of SE Asia.

667 *The future distribution of Arabidopsis*

668 Over the next decades climate conditions are predicted to worsen for *Arabidopsis* across large
669 areas of its range. Central Spain and mountains in north and east Africa and Arabia may see
670 the most worsening. These climate change effects may already be emerging: our intensive field
671 search in the Dai Forest of Djibouti in 2018 failed to yield any *Arabidopsis*, despite the presence
672

673 of abundant (but likely more drought tolerant) annual mustards (Brassicaceae) *Erucastrum*
674 *arabicum* and *Sisymbrium erysimoides* in otherwise appropriate habitat for *Arabidopsis*.
675 *Arabidopsis* was collected in this juniper woodland in 1954 but recent decades have seen
676 increased drought and tree mortality (Witsen, 2012), and the potential extinction of this isolated
677 marginal *Arabidopsis* population. Given the unique genetic diversity of the model plant
678 *Arabidopsis* housed in its lower latitude populations (Durvasula et al., 2017; Hsu et al., 2019;
679 Lee et al., 2017; Zou et al., 2017) the conservation of these populations could benefit plant
680 biology research.

681 By contrast, conditions are expected to improve for the northernmost populations in
682 Europe, suggesting a potential current colonization front of *Arabidopsis*, in addition to higher
683 elevation locations in Tibet, the Caucasus, Ural, Alps, and Hengduan mountains adjacent to
684 currently inhabited regions. Similar currently unoccupied higher elevations are available in many
685 African mountains though these are usually small mountaintop areas and may be poorly
686 characterized by CHELSA climate data (Karger et al., 2017). Future distribution models would
687 benefit from improved environmental data for these high elevation tropical sites.

688

689 *Conclusion*

690 Species distribution models provide potentially powerful windows into past, present, and future
691 macroecology, but they are rarely confronted with individual performance data. Here we showed
692 that lower suitability habitats inferred from distribution models had smaller plants with distinct life
693 history, suggesting a stress escape strategy. While the relationships were noisy it may still be
694 remarkable that they emerge against the many microsite contributors to individual level variation
695 in a habitat generalist annual plant. *Arabidopsis* populations are distributed across diverse
696 climates, but genetically distinct populations in lower latitudes that are potentially valuable for
697 research are also highly threatened by anthropogenic climate change in the next few decades.
698 We believe that combining distribution models with individual data on traits and genotypes
699 across a species range can be a useful approach to validate distribution models and to dissect
700 the organismal mechanisms underlying distributions.

701

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711

712

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