Male-killing-associated bacteriophage WO identified from comparisons of *Wolbachia* endosymbionts of *Homona magnanima*

Hiroshi Arai[1,2#*], Hisashi Anbutsu[3,4,5#], Yohei Nishikawa[3,5 #], Masato Kogawa[5], Kazuo Ishii[1], Masahito Hosokawa[3,5,6,7], Shiou-Ruei Lin[8], Masatoshi Ueda[1], Madoka Nakai[1], Yasuhisa Kunimi[1], Toshiyuki Harumoto[9,10], Daisuke Kageyama[2], Haruko Takeyama[3,5,6,7*], Maki N. Inoue[1*]

[1] United Graduate School of Agricultural Science, Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology, 3-5-8 Saiwai, Fuchu, Tokyo 183-8509, Japan

[2] National Agriculture and Food Research Organization (NARO), 1-2 Owashi, Tsukuba, Ibaraki, 305-0851, Japan

[3] Computational Bio Big-Data Open Innovation Laboratory (CBBD-OIL), National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), 3-4-1 Okubo, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, 169-8555, Japan

[4] Bioproduction Research Institute, AIST, 1-1-1 Higashi, Tsukuba, Ibaraki, 305-8566, Japan

[5] Research Organization for Nano and Life Innovation, Waseda University, 513 Wasedatsurumaki-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, 162-0041, Japan

[6] Institute for Advanced Research of Biosystem Dynamics, Waseda Research Institute for Science and Engineering, Graduate School of Advanced Science and Engineering, Waseda University, 3-4-1 Okubo, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, 169-8555, Japan

[7] Department of Life Science and Medical Bioscience, Graduate School of Advanced Science and Engineering, Waseda University, 2-2 Wakamatsucho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, 162-8480, Japan

[8] Tea Research and Extension Station, 326011 Chung-Hsing RD., Yangmei, Taoyuan, Taiwan, R.O.C.

[9] Hakubi Center for Advanced Research, Kyoto University. Yoshida-honmachi, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto 606-8501 JAPAN

[10] Graduate School of Biostudies, Kyoto University, Yoshida-Konoe-cho, Sakyo-ku,

Kyoto 606-8501, Japan

# The authors contributed equally to this work

* Co-correspondence:

Hiroshi Arai

United Graduate School of Agricultural Science, Tokyo University of Agriculture and

Technology, 3-5-8 Saiwai, Fuchu, Tokyo 183-8509, Japan

Email: dazai39papilio@gmail.com

Haruko Takeyama

Research Organization for Nano and Life Innovation, Waseda University, 513

Wasedatsurumaki-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, 162-0041, Japan

Email: haruko-takeyama@waseda.jp

Maki Inoue

United Graduate School of Agricultural Science, Tokyo University of Agriculture and

Technology, 3-5-8 Saiwai, Fuchu, Tokyo 183-8509, Japan

Email: makimaki@cc.tuat.ac.jp

Abstract

The origin and mechanism of male-killing, an advantageous strategy employed by maternally transmitted symbionts such as *Wolbachia*, remain unclear. We compared genomes of four *Wolbachia* strains derived from *Homona magnanima*, a male-killing strain *w*Hm-t (1.5 Mb), and three non-male-killing strains, *w*Hm-a (1.1 Mb), *w*Hm-b (1.3 Mb), and *w*Hm-c (1.4 Mb). A *w*Hm-t-specific 76-kbp prophage region harboured two tandemly arrayed WO-mediated killing (*wmk*) gene homologs (*wmk-1*/*wmk-2* and *wmk-3*/*wmk-4*). Of these, *wmk-1* or *wmk-3* killed almost all *Drosophila melanogaster* individuals when transgenically overexpressed. Dual expression of *wmk-3* and *wmk-4* killed all males and rescued females. We propose a novel hypothesis wherein horizontally transmitted proto-*Wolbachia* with a single *wmk* killed both sexes, and tandem duplication of *wmk* allowed an evolutionary transition to a vertically transmitted symbiont, causing male-killing. Our study highlights the bacteriophage as a critical driver of the evolution of male-killing and argues for a conserved male-killing mechanism in diverse insects.

Introduction

Insects harbour various endosymbiotic microbes, which occasionally interact with their hosts in mutualistic or parasitic manner (1-3). Male-killing (MK), the death of male offspring of infected female (4), is a reproductive manipulation caused by a diverse array of intracellular bacteria (5), microsporidia (6), and certain RNA viruses (7-8). MK is considered to have substantial ecological and evolutionary impact on insects as well as microbes, and the molecular mechanisms underlying MK have attracted extensive attention for decades (4, 9-12).

One of the best-studied MK endosymbionts is an alpha-proteobacterium *Wolbachia*, infecting approximately 40–60% of insects (13) and nematodes (14). MK *Wolbachia* strains have been identified from a variety of insect taxa which are not always phylogenetically closely related (15-16). Moreover, even closely related *Wolbachia* strains exhibit distinct phenotypes (17-20). *Wolbachia* is considered to have gained the ability to manipulate host reproduction multiple times by acquiring the bacteriophage WO (21-23). Indeed, the WO phage encodes cytoplasmic incompatibility (CI)-inducing factors (CifA and CifB), which result in the inability of sperm and eggs to form viable offspring (21-22, **Table 1**). Besides, the WO-mediated killing (*wmk*) gene, a putative transcriptional regulator located in the WO phage, is considered a candidate gene for MK because it induces a weak male lethality when transgenically overexpressed in *Drosophila melanogaster* (23). However, the *wmk* gene was derived from a non-MK *Wolbachia* (*w*Mel) naturally harboured by *D. melanogaster*, and the reason behind MK is not well understood. Moreover, two *wmk* homologs (i.e., one derived from *w*Suz, non-MK *Wolbachia* of *Drosophila suzukii*, and the other derived from *w*Rec, which does not induce MK in the native host *Drosophila recens* but causes MK when transferred into *Drosophila subquinaria* (24)) killed all males and females when transgenically overexpressed in *D. melanogaster* (25). These results suggested multiple host-dependent functions of *wmk*. Interestingly, female killing is mal-adaptive for maternally transmitted symbionts, and its evolutionary significance is not well understood. The WO phages frequently exhibit horizontal transfers among *Wolbachia* strains and are integrated into bacterial genomes as a temperate phage (prophage). Therefore, the WO phage may have been a critical driver

of the evolution of *Wolbachia*-induced reproductive manipulations such as MK and CI.

How microbes have acquired the ability to cause MK (origin) and how they exert

the MK phenotype (mechanism) are key questions that remain unanswered (23-28). The

bacterium *Spiroplasma poulsonii* (Mollicutes) causes MK by expressing a toxin-encoding

spaid gene in *Drosophila melanogaster*. Nonetheless, *spaid* homologs have not been

identified from other known male-killers, including *Wolbachia* (26). Besides, the

expression of *Wolbachia*-induced MK depends on host species and *Wolbachia* genotypes

(24, 29-31). For instance, the transinfection of the MK strain *w*Inn in *Drosophila innubila*

does not cause MK in *D. melanogaster* and *D. simulans* (29). In contrast, a CI-inducing

*w*CauA strain in *Ephestia* (=*Cadra*) *cautella* exhibits MK in *Ephestia kuehniella* (30).

Since identical *Wolbachia* strains can cause different phenotypes depending on the host

genetic background, comparative analysis of *Wolbachia* strains showing distinct

phenotypes in a fixed host is an important approach to identifying MK gene(s).

Here, we focused on four *Wolbachia* strains, *w*Hm-t, *w*Hm-a, *w*Hm-b, and *w*Hm-

c, harboured by a tea pest tortrix moth *Homona magnanima* (Tortricidae, Lepidoptera)

(20, 32). *w*Hm-t (belonging to supergroup B) causes MK and is phylogenetically close to

*w*Hm-c, which does not cause MK. On the other hand, *w*Hm-a and *w*Hm-b (both

belonging to supergroup A) do not cause MK. Collectively, we explored the genetic

characteristics of male-killers and the evolutionary processes in the acquisition of the MK

phenotype.

Results

Comparative genomics of *Wolbachia* strains in *H. magnanima*

The MK-inducing *w*Hm-t was purified from the matriline W^{T12} by ultracentrifugation.

Both PacBio RSII data (1.11 Gb, 110,635 reads, average read length: 7,603 bp) and

Illumina data (1.44 Gb, 4,798,918 reads, paired-end 150 bp) were used to generate a

polished 1,542,158 bp complete genome (**Table 2**). To construct genomes of *w*Hm-a,

*w*Hm-b, and *w*Hm-c, an isofemale line derived from Yakushima Island (normal sex ratio

for at least 30 generations, female ratio = 0.52, n = 1542) was subjected to single-cell

analysis. Random sequencing of 384 libraries using single cells purified from males of

the Yakushima matriline generated 6, 17, and 40 Illumina datasets for *w*Hm-a, *w*Hm-b, and *w*Hm-c, respectively. Following the quality assessment, GridION generated data of 138 Mb for *w*Hm-a (44,000 reads, average read length: 3,144 bp), 158 Mb for *w*Hm-b (48,000 reads, average read length: 3,281 bp), and 338 Mb for *w*Hm-c (128,000 reads, average read length: 2,637 bp) by using six single-cell amplicons for each strain. Genome assembling and polishing generated a complete genome of *w*Hm-c (1,447,668 bp) as well as draft genomes of *w*Hm-a (1,174,342 bp, 20 contigs) and *w*Hm-b (1,302,323 bp, 9 contigs) (**Table 2**).

        High level of genome rearrangements were observed between *w*Hm-t, *w*Hm-a, and *w*Hm-b (< 50% homologies) (**Fig. 1A-B**). On the other hand, phylogenetically closely related *w*Hm-t and *w*Hm-c showed a high level of syntenic conservation (> 92% homology) in most parts of the genomes and were almost perfectly colinear with several inversions (**Fig. 1C**). *w*Hm-t and *w*Hm-c shared identical genes (84.9%, n = 1210) and homologs (> 90% identity, 94.9%, n = 1353) (**Extended Data Table 1**). Exclusively present in *w*Hm-t but not in *w*Hm-a, *w*Hm-b, and *w*Hm-c were six protein clusters constituting 14 proteins (**Extended Data Fig. 1**), which were, however, not possessed by MK *Wolbachia* found in other insects such as *Hypolimnas bolina* and *Drosophila* (i.e., *w*Bol1b (18), *w*Bor (23), and *w*Rec (23, 24)). On the other hand, two protein clusters that were absent in *w*Hm-t but present in *w*Hm-a, *w*Hm-b, and *w*Hm-c were hypothetical proteins and mobile elements. None of the putative proteins encoded by the MK Partiti-like virus in *H. magnanima* (7) or the MK protein Spaid encoded by the MK *Spiroplasma* in *Drosophila* (25) were homologous to any region of the *w*Hm-t genome.

Identification of a *w*Hm-t-specific prophage region WO*w*Hm-t76

Notably, a 76-kb insertion (hereafter referred to as WO*w*Hm-t76), highly homologous to the *Wolbachia* phage WO (**Extended Data Figs. 2, 3**), was present in the *w*Hm-t genome (**Fig. 1D**) but not in *w*Hm-a, *w*Hm-b, and *w*Hm-c. Although several other prophage WO regions were identified on the *w*Hm-t and *w*Hm-c genomes (**Extended Data Figs. 2, 3**), further resequencing analysis confirmed that the WO*w*Hm-t76 region was conserved in *w*Hm-t (n = 15; Taiwan) but not in *w*Hm-c (n = 9; Japan). Other than the WO*w*Hm-t76

region, deleted or inserted loci in the *w*Hm-c were IS5 family transposases (**Fig. 1E**). To

further confirm whether WO*w*Hm-t76 exists consistently in *w*Hm-t, the field-collected *H.*

magnanima that were either infected with *w*Hm-c or *w*Hm-t were subjected to PCR that

detected a sequence of the *cifB*-like gene (wHmt_13140) located in the WO*w*Hm-t76

region (**Fig. 1F**). All the Japanese *H. magnanima* derived from 18 populations

consistently infected with the non-MK *w*Hm-c were negative (116 females and 129

males) for the *cifB*-like gene. On the other hand, all the 32 MK matrilines established

from a single population of Taiwan were positive, and all the 13 non-MK matrilines

established from the same population were negative for the *cifB*-like gene. In addition,

*w*Hm-t typically showed higher titres than non-MK *w*Hm-c in *H. magnanima* (P = 0.003

by Steel–Dwass test; **Extended Data Fig. 4**), but *w*Hm-c did not cause MK even when

its density was incidentally comparable to or higher than that of *w*Hm-t.

WO*w*Hm-t76 harboured and expressed virulence-associated genes

The WO*w*Hm-t76 region was annotated to harbour 83 genes (wHmt_12340 to 13160),

which contained *Wolbachia* titre/virulence-associated gene homologs such as ankyrin

repeat-containing genes (n = 6, such as the *w*Hm-t-specific pk2 homolog wHmt_12420,

Extended Data Fig. 1), virulence associated Octomom genes (n = 7), the *cifB*-like gene

containing ankyrin repeats and papain-like peptidase domains (n = 1), and *wmk* homologs

containing helix-turn-helix domains (n = 4) (**Fig. 2A**). RNA-seq and PCR assays

confirmed that 51 genes in the WO*w*Hm-t76 region, including *cifB-like* and *wmk* genes,

were expressed during embryogenesis and in the ovary of *H. magnanima* (**Extended**

Data Fig. 5). Interestingly, the two tandemly arrayed *wmk* pairs in the WO*w*Hmt76 region

(**Fig. 2B-C**) were conserved (100% nucleotide identity for each gene) and expressed in

the MK *w*Bol1b (**Extended Data Fig. 5**). Besides, six *wmk* genes found in other *w*Hm-t

genomic loci were identical to those of non-MK *w*Hm-c (100% nucleotide identity for

each gene, **Fig. 2B**). Although *cifB* and *cifA* genes were tandemly arrayed in both CI-

inducing *w*Mel and *w*Pip strains (21), only *cifB*-like gene (wHmt_13140, **Fig. 2D**) was

found in the WO*w*Hm-t76 region. The Type IV *cifA* gene was conserved on their common

region of the *w*Hm-c (wHmc_11930) and *w*Hm-t (wHmt_13170) strains. The CI-inducing

*w*Hm-b encoded two tandemly arrayed Type I and Type II *cifA* and *cifB* gene pairs.

Unexpectedly, *w*Hm-a, which does not induce CI, also possessed a tandemly arrayed Type

I *cifA* and *cifB* gene pair.

Expression of some *wmk* genes singly killed both males and females in *Drosophila*

To assess whether the four *wmk* genes and a *cifB*-like gene on the WO*w*Hm-t-76 region

affect insect viability, we used the *GAL4/UAS* system in *D. melanogaster*, as described

by Harumoto and Lemaitre (26) and Perlmutter et al. (23), to zygotically overexpress each

of the codon-optimised synthetic *wmk*-1 (561 bp), *wmk*-2 (361 bp), *wmk*-3 (897 bp), *wmk*-

4 (1006 bp), and *cifB-like* (3558 bp) genes (**Fig. 3A**). When *wmk*-1 was overexpressed,

only a small number of adult females (n = 52) and no males emerged in contrast to the

control (982 females and 1014 males). When *wmk*-3 was overexpressed, almost no adults

emerged (one female only) in comparison to the control (793 females and 888 males).

Overexpression of *wmk*-2, *wmk*-4, and *cifB*-like genes did not affect survival or sex ratio

compared to that in the controls (P = 0.89, 0.99, and 0.46 by Steel–Dwass test).

Dual expression of *wmk* resulted in male-killing *in Drosophila*

To assess whether the dual expression of tandemly arrayed *wmk* pairs has additive or

different effects on host lethality, we simultaneously overexpressed each pair of the *wmk*

genes (i.e., *wmk*-1 and *wmk*-2 or *wmk*-3 and *wmk*-4) in *Drosophila*. Dual expression of

wmk-1 and *wmk-2* did not affect the viability and generated a normal sex ratio (male:

47.4%, female: 52.6%). Moreover, dual expression of tandemly arrayed *wmk*-3 and *wmk*-

4 increased the viability of female flies but led to low male ratios (male: 12.5%, female:

87.5%, **Fig. 3, Extended Data Fig. 6**).

Discussion

In order to explore the origin and mechanism of MK in maternally transmitted symbionts,

in this study, we compared the genomes of four *Wolbachia* strains derived from *H.*

magnanima (a male-killing strain and three non-male-killing strains). We identified a 76-

kb prophage region WO*w*Hm-t76, which is consistently present in the MK *Wolbachia* of

H. magnanima but not in other *Wolbachia* strains that do not cause MK in a fixed host *H.*

magnanima. Strikingly, a tandemly arrayed *wmk* gene pair encoded by WO*w*Hm-t76

caused strong MK when they were transgenically co-expressed in *Drosophila* flies.

The expression of MK is hypothesised to be mediated by factors, such as tropism

or the expression level of genes present in MK *Wolbachia* (18). In *H. magnanima*, *w*Hm-

t causes MK when infecting the host at a high density (20). In the current study, *w*Hm-t

typically showed higher titres than non-MK *w*Hm-c in *H. magnanima*, but *w*Hm-c did not

cause MK even when its density was incidentally comparable to or higher than that of

*w*Hm-t. These results suggest that a high bacterial dose is not sufficient to induce MK in

H. magnanima. *Octomom* genes, which enhance *Wolbachia* virulence and proliferation in

Drosophila (33), on the *w*Hm-t-specific WO*w*Hm-t76 region may play a role in

upregulating *w*Hm-t titre in *H. magnanima* to secure stable expression of MK. The WO

phage possesses both a lytic and lysogenic nature and transfers genes laterally among

Wolbachia strains (34-39); in the current study, the WO*w*Hm-t76 sequences were found

in WO virions that were purified from the *w*Hm-t-infected host (**Extended Data Fig. 3**).

We speculate that after the divergence of Japanese and Taiwanese *H. magnanima*

populations, ancestral *w*Hm-c type *Wolbachia* in Taiwanese *H. magnanima* acquired the

WO*w*Hm-t76 region through integration of a certain WO phage, which gave rise to the

MK-inducing *w*Hm-t.

The *Wolbachia*-induced MK mechanism has remained unclear so far; however,

we found that tandemly arrayed *wmk* genes caused strong male lethality with recovered

female viabilities. The *Spiroplasma* endosymbiont in *D. melanogaster* recapitulates MK

via the Spaid toxin that damages the male's X chromosome using male-specific dosage

compensation machinery, which normalises the expression of genes on the X

chromosome between males (XY) and females (XX) (26). In contrast, *wmk*-1 and *wmk*-3

on the WO*w*Hm-t76 induced male as well as female lethality with different intensities in

Drosophila; this is in line with the finding by Arai et al. (20) that *w*Hm-t also killed

females when its titre was high in *H. magnanima*. The *wmk* gene (WD0626) derived from

non-MK *w*Mel is reported to induce a weak MK in *Drosophila* (approximately 30% of

males (23)). Moreover, *wmk* homologs of *w*Rec (MK in *D. subquinaria*) and *w*Suz (non-

MK in *D. suzukii*), which only have several substitutions with WD0626, caused complete

death (25). We speculate that the *wmk*-induced MK phenotype is represented by a

different tolerance level between the sexes against *wmk* genes (**Fig. 4A**). Like the CI

machinery of *Wolbachia*, the tandemly arrayed *wmk* genes might have combined effects,

wherein one *wmk* shows toxicity toward both sexes and the other *wmk* acts as its

suppressor. MK is considered to trigger diversification of the host sex determination

pathways (10-11, 40-41). These systems in insects are diverse; for instance, the female-

heterogametic system of Lepidoptera (including *H. magnanima*) and the male-

heterogametic system of Diptera (including *D. melanogaster*) do not share any sex-

determining genes known to date, except for the widely conserved *doublesex* gene. MK

Wolbachia targets the dosage compensation system to damage male X chromosomes in

Drosophila (42), whilst targeting the sex-determining gene cascade in *Ostrinia* and *H.*

magnanima, thereby inducing improper dosage compensation in males (43-46). *Wmk,*

assigned as a transcriptional regulator, may induce transcriptional effects leading to

defects in host development, such as embryonic lethality (46) in Lepidoptera (*H.*

magnanima) and Diptera (*Drosophila*) by a common but yet-unknown mechanism. The

multiplication of *wmk* genes in *Wolbachia* genomes may have contributed to the

diversification of sex-determining systems of arthropods.

Why does maternally transmitted *Wolbachia* possess female lethal gene, which

should bring about its own ruin? We propose a new hypothesis that a virulent *wmk* gene

(e.g., *wmk-1* or *wmk-3*) was passed on by a horizontally transmitted pathogenic bacterium

(i.e., ancestral *Wolbachia*) of insects. Rescue of females by the other *wmk* gene (e.g., *wmk-*

2 or *wmk-4*) should have allowed female offspring of the infected individuals to survive.

This alteration *per se* can be regarded as the evolutionary transition of a horizontally

transmitted pathogen to a vertically transmitted endosymbiont, which led to the prominent

success of *Wolbachia,* as demonstrated by its current ubiquity. In general, virulent genes

often exert duplications and substitutions through strong selective pressures (47-48). For

the best-known reproductive phenotype CI, causative tandemly arrayed *cifB* and *cifA*

genes are conserved among CI-inducing *Wolbachia* (21, 39). Strikingly, the present study

demonstrated that non-CI-inducing *w*Hm-a strain also carried tandemly arrayed intact *cif*

genes in its genome. These data suggest that the presence of *cif* genes cannot be an

indicator of CI expression, despite the commonly held view that both *cifB* and *cifA* are

necessary and sufficient to induce CI (21-22, 39). Likewise, the host-killing function of

wmk genes may be widely conserved among diverse *Wolbachia* strains, including MK

and non-MK strains. Indeed, MK *w*Hm-t and MK *w*Bol1b shared identical tandemly

arrayed *wmk* gene pairs, whereas other MK (described in Perlmutter et al. (23)) and non-

MK *Wolbachia* (e.g., *w*Hm-a, *w*Hm-b, and *w*Hm-c) strains generally possess multiple

wmk gene cassettes regardless of their phenotype. It is tempting to speculate about an

intense evolutionary arms race between *Wolbachia* and its host, which might have

occurred in the past. An excessive female-biased sex ratio acts as a strong selection

pressure to evolve host suppressors against MK in various insects (40). If MK were

suppressed quantitatively, the production of a higher amount of MK toxins achieved by

duplicating *wmk* gene cassettes would cancel the MK suppression (**Fig. 4B**).

Subsequently, the development of host suppressors (10-11, 41) would trigger an

evolutionary arms race between *Wolbachia* and hosts, which would increase the number

of *wmk* genes in the *Wolbachia* genome. WO phages (such as WO*w*Hm-t76), vectoring

wmk genes, may have contributed to the evolutionary arms race.

In summary, our study highlights the bacteriophage as a critical driver of the

evolution of MK *Wolbachia*. Considering that *Wolbachia* has moved between different

insect species and WO phages have moved between different *Wolbachia* strains (34-39),

we speculate that the *wmk* genes in WO*w*Hm-t76 may induce MK in Lepidoptera (*H.*

magnanima) as well as Diptera (*Drosophila*). However, we should be aware of the

possibility that some other genes in WO*w*Hm-t76 do cause MK in *H. magnanima*. Further

functional validations of these genes will contribute to an integrated understanding of the

MK mechanisms induced by *Wolbachia* in diverse insects. Our discoveries offer insights

into the molecular machinery of reproductive manipulations as well as evolutionary

associations of MK *Wolbachia*, WO phages, and their host insects.

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318 Data Accessibility and Benefit-Sharing

Data Accessibility: The sequence read data were deposited in DDBJ under accession

numbers PRJDB13119 (BioProject) and SAMD00445397 to SAMD00445400

(BioSample). *Wolbachia* genomes (contigs) are available on the DDBJ database under the

following accession numbers: *w*Hm-a (BQXF01000001 - BQXF01000020), *w*Hm-b

(BQXG01000001 - BQXG01000009), *w*Hm-c (AP025639), and *w*Hm-t (AP025638).

Homologs of *wmk*, *cif*, and Octomom genes (*w*Hm-a, *w*Hm-b, *w*Hm-c, and *w*Hm-t) and

synthetic construct of *wmk* and *cif* genes were deposited in DDBJ under accession

numbers LC701647 to LC701694.

Benefits Generated: *H. magnanima* was collected from Tea Research and Extension

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334 Author Contributions

H. Arai conducted field surveys, genome sequencing, and data analysis; designed fly

experiments; and wrote the original manuscript. H. Anbutsu coordinated the single-cell

analysis and contributed to the entire discussion. Y. Nishikawa conducted the single-cell

genome sequencing. M. Kogawa conducted the single-cell genome construction. K. Ishii

helped with the genome construction. M. Hosokawa supported the entire single-cell

analysis. SR. Lin organized the collection of insects in Taiwan and contributed to the

discussion. M. Ueda collected Japanese *H. magnanima*. M. Nakai supported the entire

experiments. Y. Kunimi sampled insects and contributed to the entire discussion. T.

Harumoto designed and supported the fly experiments. D. Kageyama supported the fly

experiments and revised the original manuscript. Lastly, H. Arai, H. Takeyama, and M.N.

Inoue took responsibility for the decision to submit the manuscript for publication and

managed the experiments and discussion.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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Materials and Methods

Sampling of *H. magnanima*

To construct *Wolbachia* genomes, we used two *H. magnanima* lines: a MK line (W^{T12}),
infected with *w*Hm-t, and a normal line (Yakushima), triply infected with *w*Hm-a, *w*Hm-
b, and *w*Hm-c. For resequencing of *Wolbachia*, we used field-collected Japanese and
Taiwanese *H. magnanima* (**Extended Data Table 2**).

Genome construction of *Wolbachia*

For sequencing of the *w*Hm-t genome, *Wolbachia* cells purified from the W^{T12} line were
used for DNA extraction following Duplouy et al. (18) and Iturbe-Ormaetxe et al. (49).
Extracted DNA was whole-genome-amplified (WGA) with the REPLI-g Mini Kit
(Qiagen) following the manufacturer's protocol and was sequenced using PacBio RSII

and Illumina (150 bp paired-end) platforms. PacBio RSII data were assembled using

Canu (50), and subsequent polishing using Illumina data with minimap2 (51) and Pilon

(52) generated the complete genome of *w*Hm-t. For genome sequencing of *w*Hm-a, *w*Hm-

b, and *w*Hm-c, *Wolbachia* cells purified from the Yakushima line were subjected to single-

cell analysis using MiSeq (75 bp paired-end) and GridION, as described by Chijiiwa et

al. (53) and Nishikawa et al. (54). The sequence data from GridION were assembled by

Canu (50) and were polished via Pilon (52) using MiSeq data. *Wolbachia* genomes were

annotated via DFAST (55). Phage WO infections were annotated with Phaster (56).

Wolbachia wmk, *cifA,* and *cifB* genes were annotated using BLAST searches and utilized

to construct phylogenetic trees using MEGA7 (57) by using maximum likelihood with

bootstrap re-sampling of 1,000 replicates. Homology between the *spaid* (26) versus

*w*Hm-t genes or genes of the Partiti-like viruses, OGV (7), versus *w*Hm-t genes were

analysed by BLAST searches.

Resequencing analysis and detection of the WO*w*Hm-t76 region

DNA extracted from *H. magnanima* harbouring *w*Hm-t (n = 15, Taiwan) and *w*Hm-c (n

= 9, Japan) was subjected to resequencing on an Illumina platform (150 bp paired-end).

Resequenced data, mapped to the *w*Hm-t genome (W^{T12}) using minimap2 (51), were

converted to consensus genomes using SAMtools (58), followed by synteny analysis

using GView (https://server.gview.ca). Homologies of the WO*w*Hm-t76 region and other

WO phages were visualized using Easyfig (59) and Mauve (60). The presence or absence

of the WO*w*Hm-t76 region in field-collected *H. magnanima* was assessed by PCR

amplifying a *cifB*-like gene (**Extended Data Table 3**) in the WO*w*Hm-t76 region with

the Emerald Amp Max Master mix (TaKaRa) at 94°C for 3 min, 35 cycles of 94°C for 30

sec, 62°C for 30 sec, 72°C for 3 min, and final extension at 72°C for 7 min.

WO purification, observation, and phylogenetic analysis

WO virions were purified as described by Fujita et al. (7). The recovered virions were

dialyzed using PBS and were loaded on membrane-coated transmission electron

microscopy grids (Nissin EM) and stained with 2% uranyl acetate solution (pH 7.0). The

samples were observed using a JEM1400 Plus (Joel). DNA extracted from purified

virions was subjected to PCR detection for genes of WO (*cifB*-like and minor capsid

protein [ORF7]), *Wolbachia* (*wsp*), and *Homona* (*β-actin*). Phylogenetic trees of WO

minor capsid protein genes of *Wolbachia* strains were estimated using MEGA7 (57) by

using maximum likelihood with bootstrap re-sampling of 1,000 replicates.

Gene expression of *w*Hm-t

Gene expression dynamics of *w*Hm-t in *H. magnanima* were assessed by RNA-seq and

RT-PCR using RNA extracted from W^{T12} adults or egg masses of 12, 36, 60, 84, and 108

hours post oviposition, as described by Arai et al. (61). Gene expression levels were

assessed using minimap2 (51) and iDep9 (http://bioinformatics.sdstate.edu/idep/).

Specific primers for *wmk* (*wmk-1*, *wmk-2*, *wmk-3*, and *wmk-4*) and *CifB* genes (**Extended**

Data Table 3) were used for RT-PCR. Expression levels of the *wmk* genes were further

tested using a female *Hypolimnas bolina* (collected from Ishigaki Is., Okinawa)

harbouring *w*Bol1b.

Fly stocks and expression experiments

The *wmk* and *cifB*-like genes in the WO*w*Hm-t76 region were synthesised with codon

optimisation for *D. melanogaster.* To express two tandemly arrayed *wmk* pairs, either (i)

wmk-1 and *wmk*-2 or (ii) *wmk*-3 and *wmk*-4 were conjugated using a T2A peptide as

described by Beckmann et al. (22). Transgenic fly lines were established using the

standard microinjection method for phiC31 integrase transformation into the third

chromosome at BestGene Inc. (Chino Hills, CA, UAS) using the synthetic constructs of

these genes in the pUASZ 1.1 plasmid. To transgenically overexpress the *wmk* and *cifB*-

like genes, *D. melanogaster* line *actin5C–GAL4* [*actin–GAL4*; BDSC 4414], cultured in

a tetracycline-containing medium (0.05% [w/v]) for one generation to eliminate native

Wolbachia, were crossed to homozygous *UAS* transgenic flies harbouring *wmk* or *cifB*-

like genes. The numbers of offspring expressing transgenic genes (*actin-GAL4/UAS*) and

non-expressing genes (*Cyo/UAS*) were all counted and were compared using Steel–Dwass

test in R software v4.0 (https://www.r-project.org/).

Methods-only References

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Figure legends

Fig. 1 Genomic comparisons of *Wolbachia* strains in *H. magnanima*.

Contigs of *w*Hm-a (A), *w*Hm-b (B), and *w*Hm-c (C) were compared and sorted based on the complete genome of *w*Hm-t. (D) An insertion, the WO*w*Hm-t76 region, in the *w*Hm-t genome. The wHmc_11920 of the *w*Hm-c encodes the IS110 family of transposase and has identical sequences of wHmt_12330 of the *w*Hm-t. wHmc_11930 of *w*Hm-c, encoding cytoplasmic incompatibility factor A (CifA), is identical to wHmt_13170 of *w*Hm-t. (E) Genomic loci, absent from *w*Hm-c genomes (n = 9) but conserved in *w*Hm-t genomes (n = 15), are highlighted in red on the *w*Hm-t genome (1,542,158 bp). Homologous genes or loci between *w*Hm-c and *w*Hm-t, such as the WO*w*Hm-t76 region, are not highlighted in red. (F) Detection of the WO*w*Hm-t76 region from *Wolbachia* infecting Japanese and Taiwanese *H. magnanima*. F: female individuals, M; male individuals.

Fig. 2 Phenotype-associated genes in the WO*w*Hm-t76 region.

(A) Functions of genes in the WO*w*Hm-t76 region. (B) Phylogenetic trees of *wmk*. The *wmk* genes present in *w*Hm-t but absent in the *w*Hm-a, -b, and -c are highlighted with white diamonds (*wmk-1*, *wmk-2*, *wmk-3*, and *wmk-4*). Black diamonds indicate homologs of *wmk-1*, *wmk-2*, *wmk-3*, and *wmk-4* in the *w*Bol1b genome. (C) The domain structures of *wmk* annotated by InterPro. HTH: helix-turn-helix. (D) Phylogenetic trees of CifB homologs. Both *wmk* and *cifB* genes of *Wolbachia* strains were quoted from the NCBI database, and those of *w*Hm-a, -b, -c, and -t strains were manually annotated by local BLASTn and BLASTp in this study (Bit-score >100).

Fig. 3 Expression of *wmk* genes caused lethality in *Drosophila melanogaster*

The male ratio of adult progeny obtained from crosses between the *actin–GAL4* line and seven *UAS* transgenic lines (*wmk*-1, *wmk*-2, *wmk*-3, *wmk*-4, *cifB*-like, *wmk*-1 and *wmk*-2, and *wmk*-3 and *wmk*-4; n = 12-32 independent crosses for each transgene). We counted the number of resultant offspring (females, orange; males, blue) having both *actin–GAL4*

and *UAS* (+) and siblings having *UAS* and *Cyo (CyO)* as internal controls (−). The total number of adult counts for each genotype and sex are shown at the bottom. Different letters indicate statistically significant differences (Steel–Dwass test, P < 0.05). Dot plots show all data points individually. Exp.: expression; (-): non expressed; (+): expressed. Fem.: female progeny; Mal.: male progeny.

Fig. 4 Models for *wmk*-induced lethality and evolutionary arms race between insects and *Wolbachia*

(A) A model of *wmk* inducing lethality. The *wmk*-1 and *wmk*-3 cause MK and female-killing (FK) during development. Males and females show differences in tolerance to virulent *wmk* genes such as *wmk*-1 and *wmk*-3, leading to differences in MK or FK start points. High expression of virulent *wmk* genes leads to nearly complete death (all killing, AK). The co-expression of tandemly arrayed virulent *wmk* (such as *wmk*-1 and *wmk*-3) and non-killing (NK) *wmk* (such as *wmk*-2 and *wmk*-4) leads to low virulence towards their hosts. The thresholds of killing phenotypes exerted by *wmk* genes could also be different due to host genotype or species. (B) Evolutionary arms race between insects and *Wolbachia* triggered by *wmk*-induced pathogenicity. Our current view of the *wmk*-induced pathogenicity system can be represented by a 'zigzag' model. In phase 1, *Wolbachia* deploys the virulent *wmk* gene (*wmk-V*) to induce *wmk*-triggered virulence (WTV) that contributes to an all-killing phenotype (AK). In phase 2, natural selection (NS) drives *Wolbachia* to reduce virulence toward females by shedding the *wmk-V* gene through acquiring an additional *wmk* gene (*wmk-S*) that suppresses a given *wmk-V* function, which leads to the MK phenotype of *Wolbachia*. In phase 3, insects develop suppressor (Sup.) towards the MK phenotype either by direct disablement of *wmk* functions or develop the host's machinery to escape MK. In phase 4, duplications of *wmk* genes (*wmk-S2* and *wmk-V2*) result in MK, followed by the host's new resistance to MK. In phase 5, the WO phage transmits *wmk* gene cassettes from a *Wolbachia* to a new strain, which leads to MK in a new host insect.

Extended Data Fig. 1 Genetic comparisons of four *Wolbachia* strains in *H. magnanima*

Venn diagram of protein clusters of the *w*Hm-a, *w*Hm-b, *w*Hm-c, and *w*Hm-t strains. Numbers indicate gene clusters. Descriptions of *w*Hm-t-specific protein clusters (n = 6) and protein clusters specifically absent in the *w*Hm-t genome (n = 2) are highlighted in the table shown below the diagram.

Extended Data Fig. 2 Comparisons of WO in *w*Hm-t and *w*Hm-c.

(A) WO prophage regions were highlighted on both *w*Hm-t and *w*Hm-c genomes by PHASTER and manual BLASTn searches. (B) Homologies of WO regions on the *w*Hm-c and *w*Hm-t genomes. Blocks shown in the same colours indicate homologous genomic loci. The arrows indicate the WO region. Homologies are indicated with broken lines.

Extended Data Fig. 3 Phylogeny and morphology of WO.

(A) Phylogeny of *Wolbachia* phage WO, based on the minor capsid protein (ORF7). A maximum-likelihood tree (1,000 bootstraps) inferred from amino acid sites of *Wolbachia* strains is shown. Sequence accession numbers are indicated in the figure. I, II, and III represent the ORF7 clusters identified by Bordenstein and Wernegreen (37). (B) Purified WO phage particles visualized using a transmission electron microscope (TEM) with uranyl acetate staining. WO genes (ORF-7 and *cifB*-like) were detected from DNA extracted from purified WO particles (Pur) and *H. magnanima* harboring *w*Hm-t (W^{T12}). Both *Wolbachia* (*wsp*) and host (*b-actin*) were negative for the fraction. (C) Homologies of WO*w*Hmt-t76 and two *Wolbachia* phage WOs. The WOs identified from *w*Kue (AB036666) and *w*CauB (AB478515) were compared by BLASTn.

Extended Data Fig. 4 Titres of *Wolbachia* in Taiwanese *w*Hm-t-infected and Japanese *w*Hm-c-infected host individuals.

Wolbachia copies (*wsp*) in *w*Hm-t-infected females of Taiwanese host lines (collected by Arai et al., 2021) and *w*Hm-c-infected Japanese populations surveyed in this study were compared. The centreline within the box represents the median. The upper and lower

boundaries of the box indicate the upper quartile and lower quartile, respectively. The sample size (number of individuals) in each data point is displayed below the plots. Different letters indicate significant differences between groups (Steel-Dwass test, $p <$ 0.05). MK: male-killing, NMK: non-male-killing, F: female. M: male.

Extended Data Fig. 5 Expression of genes in the WO*w*Hmt-t76 region.

(A) RT-PCR detection for the *wmk* and *cifB*-like genes. 12, 36, 60, 84, and 108 indicate hours post oviposition of *H. magnanima* egg masses. Ov+: female ovary of *H. magnanima*; Ov-: non-reverse-transcribed samples (RT minus, control) using RNA extracted from the female ovary of *H. magnanima*; Hb: female ovary of *Hypolimnas bolina*; P: DNA extracted from a W^{T12} adult female (positive control); N: negative control (water). (b) Expression of genes on the WO*w*Hmt-t76 region throughout embryogenesis. Mapping counts of each gene obtained by RNA-seq data (*H. magnanima* egg masses 12–84 hours post oviposition and 108-hour male or female embryos) were analysed. Expression levels are highlighted in blue (low) and red (high). F: female; M: male.

Extended Data Fig. 6 Number of female and male progenies in *D. melanogaster* expressing genes and their correlation

The number of adult progenies obtained from crosses between the *actin–GAL4* line and seven UAS transgenic lines: *wmk*-1 (A), *wmk*-2 (B), *wmk*-3 (C), *wmk*-4 (D), *cifB*-like (E), *wmk*-1 and *wmk*-2(F), and *wmk*-3 and *wmk*-4 (G) (n = 12-32 independent crosses for each transgene). We counted the number of resultant offspring (females, orange; males, blue) having both *actin–GAL4* and *UAS* (+) and siblings having *UAS* and *Cyo* as internal controls (−). The total number of adult counts for each genotype and sex are shown at the bottom. Exp.: expression; (-): non expressed; (+): expressed. (H) Dot plots of male and female viabilities in each independent cross for *wmk*-3 and *wmk*-4 dual expression.

Table 1 Reproductive phenotype-associated genes in *Wolbachia* and other male-killers

Species and strain	Host insects	*Wolbachia* phenotypes	Genes	Gene functions in transgenetically overexpressed *Drosophila*	References
Wolbachia pipientis wPip	*Culex pipiens*	CI[2]	*cifA* and *cifB*	Recapitulated CI phenotype.	Beckmann et al. (21)
Wolbachia pipientis wMel	*Drosophila melanogaster*	CI[2]	*cifA* and *cifB*	Recapitulated CI phenotype.	LePage et al. (22)
			wmk	Weak MK-like phenomenon (30% male death).	Perlmutter et al. (23)
Wolbachia pipientis wRec	*Drosophila recens* *Drosophila subquinaria*[1]	CI[2] MK[3]	*wmk*	All death	Jaenike (24) and Perlmutter et al. (25)
Wolbachia pipientis wSuz	*Drosophila suzukii*	CI[2]	*wmk*	All death	Perlmutter et al. (25)
Spiroplasma poulsonii (MSRO strain)	*Drosophila melanogaster*	MK[3]	*spaid*	Recapitulated MK phenotype.	Harumoto and Lemaitre (26)

*1 wRec induces MK in the offspring of *D. recens* and *D. subquinaria*. Susceptibility to MK is recessive.

*2 CI phenotype causes lethality in the offspring of *Wolbachia*-infected males and non-infected females.

*3 MK phenotype causes lethality in males and leads to a female-biased sex ratio.

Table 2 General characteristics of *Wolbachia* genomes

Strain	*w*Hm-a	*w*Hm-b	*w*Hm-c	*w*Hm-t
Supergroup	A	A	B	B
Phenotype	Not detected[1]	CI[1]	Shorten development time Increase pupal weight[1]	Male-killing[2]
Contigs	20	9	1	1
Genome length (nt)	1,174,342	1,302,323	1,447,668	1,542,158
GC Content (%)	35.28	35.12	34.01	34.06
CDS	1121	1,201	1,302	1,426
Repeat region	Not identified	200	128	177
tRNA	29	34	33	34
rRNA	3	3	3	3
Completeness (%)	85.3	98.0	99.7	100
Contamination (%)	3.1	2.7	0.3	0.3

[1] Based on Arai et al. (2019).

[2] Based on Arai et al. (2020).

Extended Data Table 1. Homologies of total 1,426 *w*Hm-t genes versus genes of other non-MK strains in *H. magnanima*

Homologies *[1]	*w*Hm-a	*w*Hm-b	*w*Hm-c
Genes with 100% identity	11	0	1,210
Genes with ≥ 95% identity	64	39	1,328
Genes with ≥ 90% identity	253	214	1,353
Genes with ≥ 80% identity	835	794	1,377
Genes with ≥ 70% identity	858	820	1,379
Genes with no homologies*[2]	568 (387)	606 (298)	47 (12)

*[1] The identity of genes was analysed by using BLASTn.

*[2] Numbers to the left of the parentheses indicate genes specific for *w*Hm-t, and numbers shown in parentheses indicate the genes specific for the compared non-MK strain.

Extended Data Table 2. Sampling information of Taiwanese and Japanese *H. magnanima*

Country	Location	Male	Female	Month and Year	Remarks
Taiwan	Taoyuan, TRES	0	45	Oct. 2017	Arai et al., 2020, sequenced
Japan	Murakami, Niigata	12	12	Nov. 2019	This study
	Oku-kuji, Ibaraki	12	12	Nov. 2019	This study, sequenced
	Asahi, Toyama	12	12	May. 2019	This study, sequenced
	Fuchu, Tokyo	12	0	Jul. 2020	This study, sequenced
	Setagaya, Tokyo	7	0	May. 2020	This study, sequenced
	Mt. Takao, Tokyo	12	0	May. 2020	This study, sequenced
	Nirasaki, Yamanashi	2	0	Jul. 2020	This study, sequenced
	Shimada, Shizuoka	23	41	Sep. 2019	Takamatsu et al., 2021, sequenced
	Shimane, Shimane	3	0	Sep. 2021	This study
	Tsushima-Is., Nagasaki	0	1	Jun. 2018	This study
	Mimata, Miyazaki	0	8	Feb. 2010	This study
	Makurazaki, Kagoshima	0	8	Feb. 2010	This study
	Mizobe, Kagoshima	0	8	Feb. 2010	This study
	Chiran, Kagoshima	0	2	Feb. 2010	This study

Yakushima Is., Kagoshima	12	12	Mar. 2018	This study, sequenced
Tanegashima-Is., Kagoshima	4	0	Aug. 2019	This study, sequenced
Amami-Oshima Is., Kagoshima	13	0	Jun. 2020	This study, sequenced
Okinawa-honto Is., Okinawa	5	0	Nov. 2000	Morimoto et al., 2000

Extended Data Table 3. Primers for PCR detection.

Target organisms	Gene	Primer sequences (5'-3')	Product size, bp	Annealing temperature, °C
Wolbachia	*Wsp*	wspF81：TGGTCCAATAAGTGATGAAGAAAC wspR691：TGGAGTAGCGTTTAATTTTT	611	60
Wolbachia (*w*Hm-a)	*Wsp*	wHm-a F321：CCTAAACAAAAATAATGTTACAG wHm-a R565：TTTGATCATTCACAGCGT	244	50
Wolbachia (*w*Hm-b)	*Wsp*	wHm-b F176：GGTGCTAAAAAGAAGACTGCGG wHm-b R667：CCCCCTTGTCTTTGCTTGC	491	60
Wolbachia (*w*Hm-c, -t)	*Wsp*	wHm-c F188：CATATAAATCAGGTAAGGACAAC wHm-c R603 ：CACCAGCTTTTGCTTGATA	415	55
Wolbachia (*w*Hm-a, b, -c, and -t)	*Wsp*	wHm-uni_qpcrF: TGGTGTTGGTGCAGCGTAT wHm-uni_qpcrR: AACTAACACCAGCTTTTGCTTGA	120	60
Wolbachia (*w*Hm-t)	WO*w*Hm-t76_CifB	WHMT_00358_f: ATGATTGAAGATAGAAATGTTCCTTTATCC WHMT_00358_r: CTACCTACCGCCTTTACCTTTGCTA	3545	62

	wmk-1	wmk1F: ATGGCAAATATCTCTATAAGGT	561	55
		wmk1R: TCACGTGTTGTACTCATTTTTT		
	wmk-2	wmk2F: ATGAGTACAACACGTGATGAAAT	360	55
		wmk2R: TAAATTTGTTGAATTTCGTCTAAAG		
	wmk-3	wmk3F: GTGGAAAGAAGTTTAGACTATGAAGTAGGG	1005	55
		wmk3R: TCCAATTTGATCAGCAGATAAATCAAC		
	wmk-4	wmk4F: ATGTTTGTTTCTGTAAGAGATGTTAGT	1089	55
		wmk4R: TCAATTTTCACACTCACCCAACTCACCA		
WO phage	Minor capsid protein	orf7f: GAAATGCTTGTTCAGCTAATAGC	358	50
		orf7r: ATAAATTCTCCTATTTTTTCTGG		
H. magnanima	*b-actin*	297f：AACTGGGATGACATGGAGAAGATCTGGC	838	55
		1139r: GAGATCCACATCTGCTGGAAGGTGGACAG		
	Lepidoptera COI	LepF: ATTCAACCAATCATAAAGATATTGG	650	55
		LepR: TAAACTTCTGGATGTCCAAAAAATCA		

Protein cluster	Annotation	Gene 1	Gene 2	Gene 3	Gene 4
wHm-t specific Clus.1	Ankyrin repeat containing protein/pk7 homolog	wLim_09660	wLim_17470		
wHm-t specific Clus.2	Mobile element proteins	wLim_01700	wLim_16090	wLim_17140	wLim_13310
wHm-b specific Clus.1	Phage tail proteins	wLim_11740	wLim_12590		
wHm-b specific Clus.2	Hypothetical protein	wLim_11730	wLim_11430		
wHm-a specific Clus.1	Hypothetical protein	wLim_16410	wLim_08670		
wHm-a specific Clus.2	Reduced tRNA polymerase run	wLim_20990	wLim_16490		
wHm-c specific Clus.1	Reduced tRNA polymerase run	wLim_13980	wLim_02620		
wHm-t,a,b,c Clus.1	Hypothetical protein	wLim_18040	wLim_08340		
wHm-t,a,b,c Clus.2	Mobile element proteins	wLim_09860	wLim_08470	wLim_07590	wLim_10090

Figure showing male ratio (Male / Total individuals) across strains *wmk-1*, *wmk-2*, *wmk-3*, *wmk-4*, *cifB-like*, *wmk-1-2*, and *wmk-3-4*, with statistical grouping letters (a, b, c) above each condition (IPTG − and +), and Fem. and Mal. counts below.