

1 **Title:** Tissue-specific transcriptome for *Poeciliopsis prolifica* reveals evidence for genetic
2 adaptation related to the evolution of a placental fish.

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12 **Data deposition:**

13 All read data was deposited in the NCBI SRA database under the following accession numbers:
14 SRR1639275, SRR1640127, SRR1640137, SRR1640160, SRR1640171, SRR1640200,
15 SRR1640209, SRR1640216, and SRR1640219 under the BioProject PRJNA266248. This
16 Transcriptome Shotgun Assembly project has been deposited at DDBJ/EMBL/GenBank under
17 the accession GBYX00000000.1 and the same BioProject.

18 **Running Title:** Transcriptomics of Placental Fish

19 **Key words:** Transcriptome, Positive Selection, Gene Expression, Placenta, Fish

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23

ABSTRACT

24 The evolution of the placenta is an excellent model to examine the evolutionary processes
25 underlying adaptive complexity due to the recent, independent derivation of placentation in
26 divergent animal lineages. In fishes, the family Poeciliidae offers the opportunity to study
27 placental evolution with respect to variation in degree of post-fertilization maternal provisioning
28 among closely related sister species. In this study, we present a detailed examination of a new
29 reference transcriptome sequence for the live-bearing, matrotrophic fish, *Poeciliopsis prolifica*,
30 from multiple-tissue RNA-seq data. We describe the genetic components active in liver, brain,
31 late-stage embryo, and the maternal placental/ovarian complex, as well as associated patterns of
32 positive selection in a suite of orthologous genes found in fishes. Results indicate the expression
33 of many signaling transcripts, “non-coding” sequences and repetitive elements in the maternal
34 placental/ovarian complex. Moreover, patterns of positive selection in protein sequence
35 evolution were found associated with live-bearing fishes, generally, and the placental *P.*
36 *prolifca*, specifically, that appear independent of the general live-bearer lifestyle. Much of the
37 observed patterns of gene expression and positive selection are congruent with the evolution of
38 placentation in fish functionally converging with mammalian placental evolution and with the
39 patterns of rapid evolution facilitated by the teleost-specific whole genome duplication event.

40

INTRODUCTION

41 The study of the placenta provides insight into the evolutionary relationships of
42 biological phenomena such as complexity, live-birth and genetic conflict. A great deal of
43 research has focused on the function and development of mammalian placentas, uncovering the
44 unique regulatory, genetic, and evolutionary nature of this structure. Studies of gene regulation in
45 the mammalian placenta show a suite of unique features including genomic imprinting (Bressan
46 *et al.* 2009), non-coding RNAs (Koerner *et al.* 2009), and DNA methylation and histone-
47 modification mediated transcription (Maltepe *et al.* 2010). The placenta also has been shown to
48 be a tissue that utilizes genes derived from the co-option of retroelements for unique functional
49 purposes (Lavialle *et al.* 2013). Additionally, the placenta has been used as a model for
50 examining the evolution of tissue-specific novelties, such as newly derived cell-types (Lynch *et*
51 *al.* 2011), placental variation among eutherian mammals (Carter and Mess 2007), and genomic
52 imprinting related to viviparity (Renfree *et al.* 2013).

53 Placentation is typically studied in mammals, but fish present a compelling study system
54 for examining contributing factors to the evolution of this complex organ. The Neotropical fish
55 family Poeciliidae is comprised of approximately 200 species, all of which, with one exception,
56 give live birth. The majority of these poeciliids are lecithotrophic (i.e. yolk-feeding), wherein
57 eggs provide all necessary nutrients to support the embryo through development to birth.
58 However, placenta-like structures that permit post-fertilization maternal provisioning have
59 evolved independently in multiple poeciliid lineages, specifically within certain groups such as
60 species in the genus *Poeciliopsis*, within the last 750,000 years (Reznick *et al.* 2002). Unlike
61 comparisons between eutherian and marsupial mammals, who last shared an ancestor with their
62 non-placental monotreme counterparts (i.e. the egg-laying platypus and echidnas) ~200 million
63 years ago (Meredith *et al.* 2011), species within *Poeciliopsis* offer the opportunity to investigate
64 more “recent” changes leading to viviparity and placentation. The relatively recent adaptation of
65 placentation has resulted in wide variation among *Poeciliopsis* species with respect to the extent
66 of maternal provisioning. The extent of maternal investment across species ranges from highly
67 matrotrophic (i.e. placentotrophic) to lecithotrophic, including intermediate, or “partial”,
68 placental species. These transitional states and independent evolutionary events make this system
69 particularly powerful for examining factors contributing to the evolution of placentation (see
70 Pollux *et al.* 2009 for review).

71 Although fish placentas exhibit functional convergence, they are diverse in structure,
72 with poeciliid placentas bearing features distinct from mammalian placentas. In poeciliids, the
73 maternal portion of the placenta is derived from the ovarian follicle. Fertilization occurs within
74 the ovarian follicle wherein the embryo will subsequently develop. Within placental *Poeciliopsis*
75 species, nutrient exchange occurs across an enlarged pericardial sac that contributes to a large,
76 highly vascularized belly sac (Turner 1940). In the closely related poeciliid species *Heterandria*
77 *formosa*, functionally convergent placental structures are notably divergent in structure; the
78 aforementioned sac structure covers regions more anterior on the developing embryo (Turner
79 1940). While specializations to the follicular epithelium, such as a thick, vascularized follicle
80 wall with dense microvilli and specialized cytoplasmic organelles are common features in the
81 maternal poeciliid placenta, much remains unknown about the ontogeny of the poeciliid
82 follicular placenta (Turner 1940; Grove and Wourms 1991).

83 To define the genetic components contributing to placental function and examine the
84 selective forces influencing the evolution of this unique poeciliid fish lineage, we constructed a
85 new reference transcriptome for the placental fish *Poeciliopsis prolifica*, the blackstripe
86 livebearer. A placental tissue-specific transcriptome profile was generated by comparison to non-
87 placental tissues from *P. prolifica*, while patterns of protein evolution were compared with other
88 closely and distantly related fish species. *P. prolifica* is a highly matrotrophic poeciliid fish that
89 shares a hypothesized lecithotrophic common ancestor with recently diverged lecithotrophic
90 sister taxa (Reznick *et al.* 2002), thus presenting a model system for examining evolutionary
91 genetic changes proximal to the emergence of the placenta. Notably, we find evidence indicating
92 genetic parallelism, both in function and evolution, of the fish placenta and the mammalian
93 placenta.

94 METHODS AND MATERIALS

95 Samples

96 Tissue samples were harvested according to an IACUC approved protocol from captive
97 populations of *Poeciliopsis prolifica* raised at the University of Connecticut. Original stocks
98 were obtained from stock populations at the University of California-Riverside under care of Dr.
99 David Reznick and from Ron Davis, a live-bearer hobbyist in Florida. Both populations
100 originated from the same sample population from the Rio El Padillo in Mexico. Tissues were
101 isolated from fish dissected on ice, immediately snap frozen with liquid nitrogen, and stored at -
102 80° C. For this study, four sample types were isolated: female brain, liver, whole embryo, and
103 the maternal placental/ovarian tissue complex (MPC). Whole female brain was dissected from
104 the skull and is inclusive of the olfactory bulb, cerebrum, optic lobe, cerebellum and medulla
105 oblongata (to the tip of the spinal cord). Due to its delicate nature, maternal placental tissue was
106 isolated by dissecting whole ovary from pregnant females, excising any fertilized and observable
107 unfertilized eggs, tearing open ovarian follicles, removing developing embryos from those
108 follicles, and reserving the remaining maternal placental/ovarian tissue complex (MPC) that
109 included both ovarian follicles and some remaining ovarian tissue (Figure S1). Late-stage (i.e.
110 nearly full-term) whole embryos, identified by full pigmentation, large size, an ability to persist
111 after being excised from ovarian follicle, and being "late-eyed" (Stage 5 as described by
112 (Reznick 1981)) were sampled and stored with belly sacs intact.

113

114 **Sequencing**

115 Two types of sequencing platforms, Roche 454 and ABI SOLiD, were implemented in
116 this study. For 454 sequencing, RNA was isolated from 20 different individuals by
117 homogenizing and disrupting selected tissue samples with syringes in a Trizol solution. Due to
118 individual isolation yields, required template inputs for library construction, and to compensate
119 for among-individual variation, each RNA sample was then pooled by tissue type and mRNA
120 was isolated from 5-10 μ g of total RNA using the Poly(A) Purist kit (Ambion). All RNA
121 samples were assessed for quality on a Bio-Rad Experion both pre- and post-Poly(A) extraction.
122 Sequencing libraries were made following standard RNA-Seq library construction protocol for
123 454 sequencing and sequenced on a Roche 454 Sequencer. To generate SOLiD sequencing data,
124 tissues for three individual MPCs and an embryo from one of these same females were first
125 stored in RNALater and then at -80° C. RNA was isolated by disruption and homogenization of
126 tissues using a Polytron and the RNAeasy mini kit (Qiagen). DNA was removed from each
127 sample by TurboDNase (Ambion) and validated for sample integrity using an Agilent
128 Bioanalyzer. ERCC spike-in controls (Life Technologies) were then added to each sample and
129 ribosomal RNA (rRNA) was removed using the Ribozero kit (Epicenter). Final RNA-Seq
130 libraries were constructed from the resultant mRNA sample using standard SOLiD transcriptome
131 library construction protocols. Libraries were sequenced on an ABI SOLiD 5500xl.

132 **Assembly**

133 Post-sequencing, all 454 reads were trimmed using 454 Newbler software to remove bar
134 codes and the program CUTADAPT v1.2.1 (Martin 2011) to remove adapter sequences and trim
135 low quality regions of reads. Seqclean was then used to remove poly-A tails. CUTADAPT was
136 also used for trimming out all barcode and adapter sequences as well as quality trimming for
137 SOLiD libraries. All SOLiD libraries were then screened against an in-house database of rRNA
138 sequences to remove any rRNA sequences that may have not been removed in the rRNA-
139 depletion step. All remaining SOLiD reads were normalized using the Trinity-associated *in silico*
140 k-mer normalization protocols. All trimmed 454 reads and normalized SOLiD reads from all
141 tissues were then input into the Trinity transcriptome assembler (release 7/17/2014) (Grabherr *et*

142 *al.* 2011). Following the Trinotate pipeline (release 4/30/2015) for annotating predicted
143 transcripts (Haas *et al.* 2013), open-reading frames (ORFs) were predicted using Transdecoder
144 (release 1/27/2015). All transcripts and predicted proteins were then annotated via homology
145 against the SwissProt/Uniprot database and assigned any associated Gene Ontology (GO) terms
146 and eggNOG orthologs group membership. Predicted proteins were also searched for PFAM
147 protein domain and identification as a signaling protein using SignalP (v4.1) (Nielsen 2017),
148 transmembrane protein using TMHMM (v2.0) (Krogh *et al.* 2001), or ribosomal RNA using
149 RNAmmer (v1.2) (Lagesen *et al.* 2007). All transcripts were examined for any additional
150 homologies against the NCBI *nr* database using BLASTX and annotated using BLAST2GO
151 (v2.5.0) (Conesa *et al.* 2005). Any transcript without an *nr* BLASTX-hit was also searched
152 against the NCBI *nt* database with BLASTN. Finally, all transcripts were assessed with
153 BLASTN for homology with known non-coding RNAs (ncRNAs) identified in zebrafish (*Danio*
154 *rerio*) (Ulitsky *et al.* 2011). Databases versions for all homology searches were all updated on
155 7/1/15 before this analysis was completed.

156 Tissue-specific gene expression patterns were surveyed by mapping reads to the Trinity
157 assembled transcriptome sequence, quantifying read coverage among transcripts, and testing for
158 differences among comparison groups. Mapping was performed using BWA (v0.7.7)(SW
159 algorithm) (Li and Durbin 2010) for all 454 data, and Bowtie2 (v4.1.2) (Langmead and Salzberg
160 2012) for all SOLiD data. Gene expression and read counts were estimated for all transcripts
161 using the program eXpress v1.5.1 (Roberts and Pachter 2013). Count data from 454 mapping
162 was passed through R-based DESeq2 analysis (Love *et al.* 2014) to assess significant differences
163 in pairwise comparisons of gene expression patterns among tissue samples, while correcting p-
164 values for False Discovery Rates (FDR) due to multiple comparison tests. Since sequencing
165 libraries were generated from pooled samples, they were assumed to represent an “average”
166 perspective. Due to the lack of replicates of pooled samples, best practices outlined in the
167 DESeq2 manual were used to generate dispersion estimates by comparing counts among tissue
168 types as opposed to between replicates. This process should be conservative with respect to false
169 positives since it errs on the side of using larger than necessary dispersion values. FPKM
170 (fragments per kilobase per millions reads) values were then used in BioLayout Express3D
171 (v3.2) (Theocharidis *et al.* 2009), along with the MCL (v12-068) clustering algorithm (van
172 Dongen and Abreu-Goodger 2012), to generate a preliminary 3-D gene atlas of co-expressed

173 genes clusters. Due to modest read coverage of 454 sequencing libraries, only “highly”
174 expressed genes (an FPKM value > 50 in at least one tissue) were included in clustering
175 analyses.

176 **Evolutionary Rates**

177 Evidence of positive selection in the evolutionary rates of poeciliid genes was tested
178 using the branch-sites models implemented in the program PAML v4.7 (Yang 2007). cDNA
179 resources for six other species of fish whose genome and gene models have already been
180 described were downloaded from ENSEMBL and compared to our sequences for *P. prolifica*.
181 These species included the following: *Danio rerio*, *Gadus morhua*, *Takifugu rubripes*,
182 *Oreochromis niloticus*, *Gasterosteus aculeatus*, and *Xiphophorus maculatus* (Figure S2). Of
183 these six species, *X. maculatus* is the most closely-related species to *P. prolifica*; both are in the
184 family Poeciliidae. However, *X. maculatus* differs significantly from *P. prolifica* in reproductive-
185 style since it is a lecithotrophic (yolk-feeding) live-bearer with no evidence of post-fertilization
186 maternal provisioning. *P. prolifica* is highly matrotrophic, with sufficient post-fertilization
187 maternal provisioning to sustain an eight fold increase in dry mass between the fertilization of
188 the egg and birth (Pires *et al.* 2007). Predicted coding sequence regions for *P. prolifica* were
189 compared to cDNA reference sequences for each species using reciprocal best BLAST hit
190 approaches (TBLASTX in this case) to identify orthologous genes between species. Once
191 orthologs were identified, all orthologous gene clusters that lacked a predicted ortholog for any
192 species (i.e. no reciprocal best BLAST hit found) or, when examining high-scoring segment pair
193 (HSP) alignment regions, that yielded a multiple sequence alignments less than <200 bp long
194 were discarded. Using in-house Python scripts, the remaining orthologs were passed through a
195 series of analysis steps. Groups of orthologs were first reconstructed in the same strand and
196 aligned using the codon-guided multiple sequence alignment (MSA) algorithm MACSE v 0.9b1
197 (Ranwez *et al.* 2011). MSAs were cleaned using trimAl (Capella-Gutiérrez *et al.* 2009) to
198 remove all gaps both from within, and at the ends of, the aligned sequences. MACSE includes
199 the convenient feature of assessing frameshift and stop codon issues associated with multiple
200 sequence alignment. Thus, in order to avoid confounding alignment problems related to poor
201 data quality, low scoring MSAs and true pseudogenized gene sequences, all of which would
202 contribute to false positives in subsequent PAML analyses, this feature was leveraged to identify

203 and remove any MSA with either a frameshift ambiguity or base ambiguity from further
204 analysis.

205 The remaining MSAs were then analyzed in PAML with three different phylogenetic
206 “foregrounds” to test for positive selection in rapid codon evolutionary rates: *P. prolifica* only, *X.*
207 *maculatus* only, and all poeciliids. These three levels of examination provided a proxy test of the
208 evolutionary changes possibly associated with three reproductive-styles, respectively:
209 matrotrophic viviparity, lecithotrophic viviparity, and viviparity (generally). Classification of sites
210 having significant evidence for being under positive selection required a significantly better fit of
211 the branch-sites alternative model of positive selection over the null model (implemented as
212 described in the PAML manual – Model 2A vs. Model 1A – with a χ^2 test using p-value < 0.05 as
213 the threshold for identifying significant improvements in maximum likelihood model fit) and
214 identification using the Bayes empirical Bayes (BEB) method (p-value >0.95). All sites and
215 predicted proteins were compared among different “foreground” analyses to classify protein
216 evolution associated with the aforementioned reproductive-style that these species represent.

217 A distance-based gene family tree for the *RAB11 family-interacting protein* gene family
218 (*RAB11FIP*) was constructed using neighbor-joining tree methods to describe the general
219 patterns of gene duplication and evolution in fishes. Jukes-Cantor distances among protein
220 sequences were used to generate tree topology. All sequences included in this gene family tree
221 were gathered by identifying any *P. prolifica* predicted protein sequence with homology to
222 *RAB11FIPs* in *Danio rerio* using BLASTP (e-value < 1e-5) and using those predicted proteins to
223 identify any other existing protein sequences for *RAB11FIP* genes in fishes using BLASTP (e-
224 value <1e-5; taxonomically restricted search to “bony fishes” – taxid: 7898). MUSCLE v3.8.31
225 (Edgar 2004) was used to generate a multiple sequence alignment for all sequences and CLC
226 Genomics Workbench v7.5 was used to generate a tree with 100 bootstraps. To focus analysis on
227 *RAB11FIP* genes only, all clusters of genes identified as the protein *UNC-13* (a homologous
228 gene to *RAB11FIPs*) were trimmed from final tree.

229 **Data Availability:**

230 All read data was deposited in the NCBI SRA database under the following accession numbers:
231 SRR1639275, SRR1640127, SRR1640137, SRR1640160, SRR1640171, SRR1640200,

232 SRR1640209, SRR1640216, and SRR1640219 under the BioProject PRJNA266248. All custom
233 scripts are available here:

234 https://github.com/juefish/Jue_et_al_G3_P_prolifica_transcriptome.git.

235 RESULTS

236 Assembly Statistics

237 *De novo* assembly of 3,696,154 Roche 454 and 159,802,508 SOLiD reads (post-
238 trimming, see Table S1 for library details) yielded a transcriptome of 331,767,677 Mb (43.74%
239 GC) with 478,065 predicted transcripts (TSA Reference ID: GBYX00000000.1). Average contig
240 length was 639 bp and N50 was 885 bp. These contigs were grouped into 319,532 components,
241 which are analogous to estimated “genes” or groups of isoforms (Table 1). While some of these
242 predicted transcripts could be spurious or fragmented results from the assembler, 236,360
243 (49.4%) of these predicted transcripts were well-supported with read depth of coverage >10x,
244 representing a very diverse transcriptome (Table 1).

245 Within this assembled transcriptome, 113,240 transcripts (23.6% of total) were predicted
246 to have a protein open-reading frame (ORF) (Figure 1), with over 80% of these predicted
247 proteins (both total transcripts and genes) carrying homology with a protein in the
248 UniProtKB/Swiss-Prot database, and >75% of those showing associations with known Pfam
249 domains (Figure 1). Functional Gene Ontology (GO) annotations were identified for the majority
250 of these sequences with homology to *nr* database reference sequences, representing a multitude
251 of functional elements, spanning a range of categories in the Gene Ontology (Figure 2). Another
252 41,851 transcripts with no BLAST result at all (8.7%) showed similarity to REPBASE repetitive
253 element sequences, including 1,747 transcripts from 1,043 predicted genes that incorporated
254 repetitive element genes (Table S3). These transcripts span a wide-range of repetitive element
255 origins, including elements known to have specific placental function in mammals such as
256 *retrotransposon-derived protein PEG10-like*. Another 286 transcripts carry regions identified by
257 homology with non-coding RNAs from *D. rerio*. These transcripts represent a variety of non-
258 coding RNAs that may be involved in gene regulation (Table S4). For instance, one identified
259 transcript shows homology with *cyrano*, a lncRNA demonstrated to be necessary for proper
260 embryonic development and interacting with a known miRNA miR-7 (Ulitsky *et al.* 2011). A

261 small number (24) of these transcripts showed evidence for bidirectional transcription and, thus,
262 candidates for active functioning in gene regulation through complementary base-pairing with
263 coding transcripts.

264 **Tissue Specific Gene Expression**

265 Using MCL clustering of gene expression estimates, we generated a preliminary gene
266 atlas for *P. prolifica* to identify clusters of co-expressed transcripts among four different sample
267 types: MPC, female brain, liver, and late-stage developing embryo, hereafter referred to as
268 "tissues". Before clustering, pairwise tests for significant differences (p-value <0.05 after
269 correction for FDR) in gene expression using DESeq2 were conducted across all transcripts in all
270 tissues and revealed 45, 108, 18, and 24 transcripts were specifically expressed in MPC, whole
271 embryo, brain and liver, respectively. For MCL clustering analysis and gene atlas construction, a
272 subsample of the 6,839 most highly expressed transcripts (FPKM values >50 in at least one of
273 the four tissues) were included in the analysis. This subset further reduced the number of
274 identifiable (via pairwise comparisons) tissue-specific transcripts included in the atlas that were
275 significant for tissue-specific expression to 24, 36, 4, and 5 for MPC, embryo, brain and liver,
276 respectively. Using the tissue-specific gene expression patterns of these transcripts (Figure S3)
277 and the MCL clustering algorithm, nine co-expressed gene clusters were identified (Figure 3).
278 Cluster 1 was the largest cluster and generally associated with transcripts that have high
279 expression in the brain, but showing some co-expression with other tissues, particularly MPC
280 and embryo. Cluster 2 was generally associated with transcripts highly expressed in embryo,
281 cluster 3 was associated with transcripts highly expressed in MPC, and cluster 4 was associated
282 with transcripts highly expressed in liver. Clusters 5 to 9 (which represented only 2.2% of the
283 transcripts in the atlas) were defined by expression across multiple tissue types, displaying gene
284 expression profiles indicative of "house-keeping"-like genes (Figure S3). Transcripts with
285 significant evidence for tissue-specific expression largely supported these cluster classifications
286 with 32 of the 36 aforementioned "embryo"-specific genes in cluster 2 and all 24 of the MPC
287 genes in cluster 3. Brain and liver clusters were less clearly supported with none of the four
288 "brain" genes in cluster 1 and only one of the five "liver" genes in cluster 4; however, the
289 number of transcripts in these clusters was so low that detectability may have been limited.
290 Transcripts involved in progesterone signaling pathways were observed as highly expressed in

291 placental tissues. Overall, 242 transcripts with ORFs were identified as having GO-associations
292 with progesterone regulatory pathways, including *Protein DEPP* (*decidual protein induced by*
293 *progesterone*), suggesting that similar developmental patterns in cell differentiation and
294 specialization maybe be occurring in fish as it does in mammals during pregnancy (Watanabe, et
295 al. 2005).

296 **Repetitive Element Transcripts**

297 Repetitive element gene expression was observed across various tissue samples and a
298 subset of the gene atlas clusters. Of the clustered 454 expression data, the MPC cluster (#3) had
299 the highest number of repetitive element transcripts, with a total of 9 transcripts; the “brain”
300 cluster (#1) had the second highest repetitive element transcript count at five transcripts. Cluster
301 2 (embryo), cluster 4 (liver), and cluster 5 (multiple tissues) had 2, 1, and 1 transcript(s),
302 respectively. Only one transcript of these 18 transcripts found in the gene atlas clusters
303 (identified as a *transposable element tc1 transposase*) showed no expression in placenta; all 17
304 other transcripts were expressed (>50 FPKM) in MPC (eight of these transcripts were also
305 identified as homologs to *transposable element tc1 transposases*). One transcript (a *reverse*
306 *transcriptase*) was also identified using the aforementioned pairwise significance testing
307 (DEseq2, p-value < 0.05) as more expressed in MPC as opposed to other tissues (FPKM_{MPC} =
308 155.7 vs. FPKM_{average_other_tissues} = 5.07). The three MPC SOLiD libraries also indicated high
309 levels of MPC gene expression of repetitive element-derived transcripts. From the SOLiD RNA-
310 Seq data, 98% of the 1,747 transcripts from the broader transcriptome reference sequence and
311 originating from repetitive elements were expressed in either MPC or embryonic tissues, with
312 227 predicted transcripts from 199 predicted genes expressed either only in the MPC or >5 fold
313 greater expression in MPC over embryonic tissues (Table S3). Approximately an equal number,
314 213 predicted transcripts and 199 predicted genes were found associated with embryonic tissues
315 using the same criteria (Table S3). Eight transcripts had an FPKM value of >50 across and were
316 identified as four gene families that included an envelope protein, a partial pol protein, a tc1
317 transposase and a tc3 element. In addition to the gene classes mentioned above, other repetitive-
318 element transcripts were identified as *retrotransposon-derived protein PEG10-like, 120.7 kDa*
319 *protein in NOF-FB transposable element, retroviral polyprotein, and transposable element tcb1*
320 *transposases*. These transcripts appeared unique to the poeciliid lineage, showing between 50%

321 and 70% similarity to other repetitive element reference sequences from other species, with only
322 *retrotransposon-derived protein PEG10-like* showing high similarity (88%) with reference
323 sequences from the NCBI *nr* database.

324 **Transcripts with Unknown Function**

325 The majority of these clusters of highly expressed genes consisted of transcripts with no
326 known annotation. Of the highly expressed transcripts described in these clusters, 79.4%
327 (n=6260) were not identifiable via BLAST searches of SwissProt/UniProt, *nr* and *nt* databases
328 (e-value < 1 x 10⁻⁵). A large number (786, or 12.6%, of the total unknowns) of these predicted
329 transcripts had evidence for some type of repeat in their sequence, with 761 of the repeats
330 identified as either a simple repeat or low complexity sequence, indicating that the sequence may
331 be part of a non-coding region (Wren *et al.* 2000; Morgante *et al.* 2002; Liu *et al.* 2012). Many
332 of these sequences are likely either species-specific 5' or 3' UTRs or previously undescribed
333 non-coding RNAs. For example, another four of these transcripts in this cluster were associated
334 with known non-coding RNA sequence from *D. rerio* (3 with miRNAs and 1 with a lncRNA);
335 however, given that all of these sequences were much longer than miRNA size (312-982 bp) and
336 not readily identifiable as miRNA precursors (Liu *et al.* 2015), they are more likely to be binding
337 sites for such targets than host transcripts. Another 49 transcripts had predicted ORFs associated
338 with them, but no BLAST annotation and thus appear to be novel protein sequences. Of these 49
339 predicted proteins, two were identified as prospective signaling peptides, one of which was a
340 member of the MPC gene cluster. The other “signaling” peptide and two other predicted proteins
341 were identified as transmembrane proteins. The signaling/transmembrane protein was a member
342 of the “house-keeping gene” cluster (but most highly expressed in liver), while the other two
343 transmembrane proteins were associated with either the “brain” cluster or the “embryo” cluster.
344 Notably, the “embryo” cluster member was also highly expressed in MPC (FPKM_{embryo}=53.5;
345 FPKM_{placenta}=39.5). Given exhaustive attempts to annotate these sequences and the fact that they
346 are highly expressed transcripts, these sequences appear to be novel to this species.

347 **Protein Evolutionary Rates**

348 Reciprocal best BLAST hits of the cDNA coding sequence against the predicted and
349 known cDNAs for six fish species with sequenced genomes revealed predicted *P. prolifica*

350 transcripts to have 12,631 orthologs with *Danio rerio*, 14,761 orthologs with *Xiphophorus*
351 *maculatus*, 12,899 orthologs with *Takifugu rubripes*, 12,316 orthologs with *Gadus morhua*,
352 13,388 orthologs with *Gasterosteus aculeatus*, and 13,282 orthologs with *Oreochromis niloticus*.
353 Out of all of these orthologs, only 5,398 were shared orthologs for all seven species (including *P.*
354 *prolififica*). Within this shared ortholog set, 963 ortholog alignments showed evidence of open-
355 reading frame indels in at least one species' orthologous sequence, resulting in a frame-shift in
356 predicted codon sequences (Table S5). These frame-shifts could be the result of errors in a given
357 fish reference sequence or bona fide mutations in a specific species. While all species showed
358 evidence for frame-shifts, transcript sequences from *D. rerio*, *P. prolififica*, and *X. maculatus* had
359 a higher proportion of orthologs with an identified frame-shift than the remaining species (Table
360 S5). Additionally, 978 ortholog groups were discarded from the PAML analysis due to
361 ambiguous bases ("N") in the reference sequences; this was a disproportionately acute issue with
362 *G. morhua* sequences (912 orthologs).

363 Within the final set of 3,457 orthologs employed in our PAML analyses, 2,298 sites
364 across 404 predicted proteins were identified as undergoing positive selection. Of these sites,
365 917, 1104, and 247 were associated with *P. prolififica*, *X. maculatus*, and both poeciliids,
366 respectively (Figure 4, Table S6-S13). The predicted proteins carrying these sites covered a
367 wide-range of biological functions (Figure S4) with no overall significant enrichment for any
368 specific functional GO terms relative to the overall transcriptome annotation. Comparisons
369 between the matrotrophic *P. prolififica* and lecithotrophic *X. maculatus* orthologs with sites under
370 positive selection showed genes under positive selection in *P. prolififica* to be significantly
371 enriched for a variety of GO terms over those found in *X. maculatus* (Figure 5, FDR p-value <
372 0.05). The terms were generally associated with Biological Processes related to biosynthesis and
373 regulatory processes, Molecular Functions terms related to nucleic acid binding, and Cellular
374 Components terms related to the nucleus. Of these sites, 1,376 occurred in regions of these open-
375 reading frames that carried no discernable, previously known protein domain defined by Pfam
376 database searches. Thus, these sites indicate possible novel functional domains for these proteins
377 in *P. prolififica*.

378 While the majority of proteins undergoing positive selection (67%) had less than five
379 sites identified as under positive selection, many of the genes under positive selection exhibited

380 evidence for extensive rapid evolution (Table S7). For instance, the *GRAM domain-containing*
381 *protein 4, GRAMD4*, carries 94 sites identified as evolving rapidly in *X. maculatus*. These sites
382 account for 16% of the entire protein sequence for this gene. None of these sites overlap with the
383 known GRAM protein domain, indicating that this region may be an important novel functional
384 domain. *GRAMD4* is a membrane protein known to be a tumor suppressor in apoptotic pathways
385 associated with mitochondria (John *et al.* 2011). *Insulin-like growth factor 1a receptor (IGF1RA)*
386 is another gene that has a large number of sites under positive selection in *X. maculatus*. Overall,
387 96 sites within *IGF1RA* were shown to be under positive selection, with eight sites showing
388 changes in both poeciliids, while the remaining 88 were restricted to *X. maculatus* (Figure 6).
389 Protein lengths for *IGF1RA* vary among species. In our *P. prolifica* assembly, we have predicted
390 only 711 residues for this protein, but our sequence may be incomplete as it lacks a 3' UTR
391 region. Within *X. maculatus* where there is a complete predicted gene sequence (1,332 aa), these
392 96 sites account for ~7% of the gene sequence. Of the 96 sites, 48 are located within the Furin-
393 like domain of the protein, 36 are in one of the Receptor L-domains, one is in the Fibronectin
394 type III domain, and 11 are found outside of any known protein domain.

395 *P. prolifica* generally showed different genes under positive selection than *X. maculatus*
396 (Figure 4; only 17.1% of the 404 orthologs under positive selection showed positive selection in
397 both species). For example, *RAB11 family-interacting protein 4-like (RAB11FIP4)*, one of the six
398 types of *RAB11 family-interacting proteins* found in fishes (Figure S5), has 16 sites under
399 positive selection in *P. prolifica*, but none in *X. maculatus*, while another member of that same
400 gene family, *RAB11 family-interacting protein 1-like (RAB11FIP1)*, has 5 sites under positive
401 selection in *X. maculatus* and 1 in both *X. maculatus* and *P. prolifica* (the 2 species have
402 different residues at that site). These sites may be associated with novel functional domains
403 because each of these sites were identified as being extracellular for both *RAB11FIP1* and
404 *RAB11FIP4* using the transmembrane identification algorithm TMHMM; however, none of these
405 sites are located within any “known” functional domain (Figure 6). Patterns of gene evolution
406 across fish species show that the rapid gene evolution may be likely facilitated by multiple
407 incidences of gene duplication. Along with *IGF1RA*, *RAB11FIP* gene family members showed
408 family-wide evidence for gene duplication events and both *RAB11FIP* genes that were shown to
409 be under positive selection had expressed paralogs in the reference transcriptome sequence
410 (Figure S5). These duplications likely occurred after the whole genome duplication event

411 experienced by all fishes (Jaillon *et al.* 2004) since there is only one copy of each family member
412 found in the gar, *Lepisosteus oculatus*, (Figure S5) which has not undergone the teleost fish
413 whole genome duplication event.

414 DISCUSSION

415 We have developed the most thorough transcriptome reference for a placental fish to
416 date, providing a significant extension to earlier work in a sister taxa (Panhuis *et al.* 2011), in
417 order to better understand the genetics and evolution of placentation in fish. Our sequence
418 assembly has been extensively annotated for functional content and provides a solid foundation
419 for establishing genomic resources for this genus. Identified transcripts cover diverse functions
420 and, given the sampling of both poly-A selected and ribo-depleted RNAs across multiple
421 tissues, provide a comprehensive assessment of both protein-coding and non-coding RNA genes
422 organism-wide. In addition to its general descriptive characteristics, this transcriptome reference
423 has also provided us with important insights into the genetics of this placental species.

424 There appears to be parallels in placental evolution in eutherian mammals and *P.*
425 *prolifera*, highlighted by the extensive presence of expressed repetitive elements in fish MPC
426 tissues. Eutherian mammals often utilize repetitive element components as functional
427 contributions to placental and embryonic development, including endogenous retroviral envelope
428 proteins (Mi *et al.* 2000), DNA transposon regulatory machinery (Lynch *et al.* 2011), and/or *gag*
429 and *pol* domains of LTRs (Ono *et al.* 2001). A total of 98% of the transcripts associated with
430 retroelements exhibited high expression to either placental or embryonic tissues. These
431 transcripts included a variety of orthologous genes associated with placental function in
432 mammals, such as *PEG10*, an imprinted gene expressed in the placenta of mammals. The
433 extensive presence of progesterone signaling-related genes also parallels mammalian placental
434 function, particularly functions associated with the corpus luteum (Gemmell 1995) and decidual
435 cells (observed expression of *Protein DEPP* in fish MPC parallels that also described in
436 mammalian placental and embryonic tissues (Watanabe *et al.* 2005)). Alternatively, expressed
437 repetitive element transposases may be co-opted genes involved in more general gene regulation
438 as transcription factors or DNA-binding proteins with centromeric functional roles (Feschotte
439 2008). The identification of seemingly convergent gene expression of genetic elements of similar
440 type, but different lineage and an apparent implication in the function of the independently

441 derived placental tissues of fish and mammals leads to a hypothesis that similar molecular and
442 cellular adaptations are functioning in both systems.

443 There was also extensive evidence for placental tissue usage of novel genes and
444 transcripts as functional components specific to this family of fishes and, possibly, restricted to
445 this species. Tissue-specific patterns of high gene expression implicate many novel components
446 to be active in the MPC. Most of these novel, predicted transcripts lacked homology to genes in
447 any existing genetic resource, strengthening support for their designation as “novel”. In total,
448 17.6% of the predicted protein sequences in the reference transcriptome could not be associated
449 with any existing reference sequence via exhaustive comparison to known protein and coding
450 sequence databases. Mis-assembly and/or chimeric reads could only explain a minority of these
451 “unknowns” as the depth of coverage was generally high for these genes and, as evidenced by
452 the clustering analysis, many of these transcripts are highly expressed. Many “unknowns” (~9%)
453 were found to contain repetitive elements or have sequence homology with non-coding RNAs,
454 implicating the co-option of rapidly evolving elements in the origins of this novel transcriptional
455 diversity. As our pairwise ortholog identification shows, the closer the phylogenetic species
456 comparison is, the greater the proportion of the transcriptome we could identify and annotate
457 (e.g. 14,761 orthologs were found in *X. maculatus* vs. 12,631 orthologs in *D. rerio* for a 16.9%
458 increase in the number of identified orthologs). Overall, novel transcripts would appear to be
459 significant contributors to placental function in *Poeciliopsis*. This prediction is also congruent
460 with mammalian placental systems, wherein many of the transcripts observed associated with
461 placental development and function are derived from lineage-specific co-option and
462 domestication of typically inactive retroelements (Emera and Wagner 2012).

463 **Role of Protein Evolution/Positive Selection**

464 Using our reference sequence, we identified genes under positive selection in both
465 matrotrophic (*P. prolifica*) and lecithotrophic (*X. maculatus*) species of livebearing poeciliid
466 fishes. Overall, genes identified as under positive selection did not disproportionately represent
467 any specific functional group, indicating that any genetic signal of adaptation identified in this
468 analysis covered a wide-array of functional components in the Poeciliidae. However, the
469 statistically significant differences in functional groups among the lecithotrophic *X. maculatus*,
470 and the matrotrophic *P. prolifica* undergoing positive selection indicate that there may be

471 selective bias in the types of genes contributing to the rapid evolution of placentation in this
472 group. The identification of genes related to biosynthesis and gene regulation, especially those
473 associated with DNA-binding in nuclear regions, are significantly over-represented in genes
474 under positive selection in our placental species. That these functional categories would be under
475 strong selective pressure is consistent with the inherent requirement for placental tissues to
476 develop quickly to support embryonic growth as well as the potential for parent-offspring
477 intragenomic conflict. The unexpectedly extensive protein-coding sequence evolution is highly
478 relevant to continued interest in the relative contribution of either changes at the protein-coding
479 level or those in gene regulation contributing to evolutionary patterns (Hoekstra and Coyne
480 2007; Lynch and Wagner 2008; Stern and Orgogozo 2008).

481 While the majority of genes under positive selection contain only a few sites that are
482 rapidly evolving, some genes exhibit evidence of surprisingly large regions of their coding
483 sequence under Darwinian selection. Evidence of gene duplication would appear to facilitate the
484 potential for positive selection. For example, while the insulin-like growth factor signaling axis
485 is a key regulator of embryogenesis and fetal growth in all vertebrates (Schlueter *et al.* 2007),
486 there is considerable redundancy in many of its components in fishes due to the ancient WGD
487 (Jaillon *et al.* 2004). Specifically, there are multiple copies of *insulin growth factor receptor 1*
488 (paralogs A and B). It has been established for the genus *Poeciliopsis* that *IGF2* has evolved
489 under positive selection that is hypothesized to be driven by parent-offspring conflict (O'Neill *et*
490 *al.* 2007). While *IGF2* is excluded in our analysis due to stringency filters (it has a large indel
491 region in *P. prolifica* and the HSP alignment region was too short for inclusion), *IGF1RA* (also
492 known to be expressed in fish gonadal tissues (Mei *et al.* 2014)) was shown to have extensive
493 evidence for rapid evolution in this group with eight sites evolving rapidly in all Poeciliidae and
494 84 sites under positive selection in just *X. maculatus*. These 92 sites cover both conserved
495 protein domains and unannotated regions of the protein. The signal for positive selection on both
496 *IGF2* and *IGF1RA* in poeciliids may reflect the opposing parent-specific expression (imprinting)
497 of *IGF2* and its antagonistic receptor *IGF2R* in mammals. However, if conflict is driving this
498 pattern, then it seems to be pushed to extremes in the non-placental *X. maculatus*, where *IGF2*
499 has also been shown to be under positive selection (Schartl *et al.* 2013). This would appear to
500 contradict assumptions of the hypothesis that parent-offspring conflict would be more extensive
501 in placental species (Zeh and Zeh 2008); alternatively, this observation may indicate that conflict

502 manifests itself differently in the absence of material exchange between mother and fetus. For
503 instance, selection may be acting on the duration of ovoviviparous development in *X. maculatus*,
504 where different paternal genomes compete for gestational space within the mother, while the
505 maternal genome dictates the length of her pregnancy and maximum occupancy of gestational
506 spaces.

507 While, speculatively, *IGFIRA* may exhibit evidence for selective pressure due to genetic
508 conflict in the lecithotrophic *X. maculatus*, it is possible that other biological processes specific
509 to viviparous reproduction are also under selection in *P. prolifica*. For example, the *RAB11FIP*
510 genes show lineage-specific patterns of protein evolution, indicating different selection pressures
511 in *P. prolifica* and *X. maculatus*. *RAB11FIP*-associated proteins are typically identified by the
512 presence of a C-terminal Rab-binding domain and are involved in vesicle transport and recycling
513 (Lindsay 2004), protein trafficking and sorting (Peden *et al.* 2004) and recycling of membranes
514 in cytokinesis (Wallace *et al.* 2002). It is unclear precisely why these genes are under positive
515 selection in these fish, but given their defined functions they may be responding to lineage-
516 specific selection pressure involving cellular transport related to the evolution of live-bearing.
517 Gene duplication is likely providing a considerable contribution to the potential for these genes
518 to undergo changes due to positive selection (e.g. Steinke *et al.* 2006). Just as in the *IGFIR*
519 genes, each of these two *RAB11FIP* genes has a closely related paralogous copy that showed no
520 evidence for positive selection (Figure S5).

521 Overall, our study demonstrates patterns of both sequence and functional convergence of
522 the poeciliid placenta with the therian mammalian placenta. In contrast to predictions that genetic
523 components would be distinct to the poeciliid lineage given the relatively recent convergent
524 derivation of the fish placenta from the pericardial sac and its highly dissimilar structural form,
525 many of the genetic components that contribute to mammalian placental development and
526 function are also involved in the fish placenta. While it could be predicted that at least some of
527 the types of genes involved in placentation in both lineages would be similar with respect to
528 cellular function and functional requirements of any placenta in maternal-fetal exchange, it is
529 notable that we find parallel evolutionary mechanisms, beyond such cohorts of genes, evident in
530 the co-option of retroelements and gene duplication as key contributors to the evolution of this
531 complex organ.

532

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539

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681

682 **Figure Legends:**

683 **Figure 1.** Distributions of various transcriptome annotations for *Poeciliopsis prolifica* reference
684 transcriptome predicted transcripts (blue) and alternatively-spliced variant groups, representing
685 “genes” (red). 140,709 transcripts (29.4% of total) exhibited identifiable homology (e-value < 1
686 x 10⁻⁵) with protein reference sequences in the NCBI *nr* database and another 29,199 (6.1%)
687 transcripts showed similarity (e-value < 1 x 10⁻⁵) with nucleotide reference sequence in the NCBI
688 *nt* database. 16,277 (11.6%) and 6,772 (4.8%) transcripts are associated with transmembrane
689 (TMHMM) and signaling (SignalP) proteins. 8,181 showed greater than 70% coverage of known
690 UniProtKB/Swiss-Prot orthologs; 3,785 transcripts were identified as containing the complete
691 ORFs of conserved orthologs in UniProtKB/Swiss-Prot database (Table S2).

692 **Figure 2.** Level 2 gene ontology term distributions for reference transcriptome of *Poeciliopsis*
693 *proliflica*.

694 **Figure 3.** Three-dimensional gene atlas derived from gene expression data for maternal
695 placental/ovarian complex (MPC), late-stage embryonic, brain, and liver tissue. Proximity in
696 space indicates similarity in gene expression profile across tissues. Clusters were defined using
697 MCL clustering algorithm on highly expressed genes (>50 FPKM in at least on tissue type) from
698 Roche 454 RNA-seq. Clusters 1-4 are mostly, though not exclusively, made up of transcripts that
699 are tissue-specifically expressed, while clusters 5-9 consist of transcripts that are highly
700 expressed across multiple tissues. Each of these clusters (1-9), had 2,940, 1,734, 1,638, 373, 65,
701 30, 28, 25, and 5 members, respectively.

702 **Figure 4.** Venn diagrams showing patterns of shared and unshared proteins and sites within
703 protein under positive selection among the three foreground taxon groupings tested with PAML.

704 **Figure 5.** Distribution of GO Terms that were differentially represented in genes identified to be
705 under positive selection in the matrotrophic/placental(PL) *Poeciliopsis prolifica* and
706 lecithotrophic(LC) *Xiphophorus maculatus*. GO terms include categories from all three main
707 ontologies (Biological Processes; Molecular Functions; Cellular Components).

708 **Figure 6.** Diagrams of *insulin growth factor-1 receptor-A (IGF1RA)* from *Xiphophorus*
709 *maculatus*, and *RAB11 family-interacting protein 1-like and 4-like (RAB11FIP1 and*
710 *RAB11FIP4*, respectively) from *Poeciliopsis prolifica* showing known protein domains, indel
711 regions among species (identified using regions of multiple sequence alignment), and sites
712 identified as being under positive selection from PAML analysis in live-bearing poeciliids, the
713 lecithotrophic *Xiphophorus maculatus*, or the matrotrophic *Poeciliopsis prolifica*.

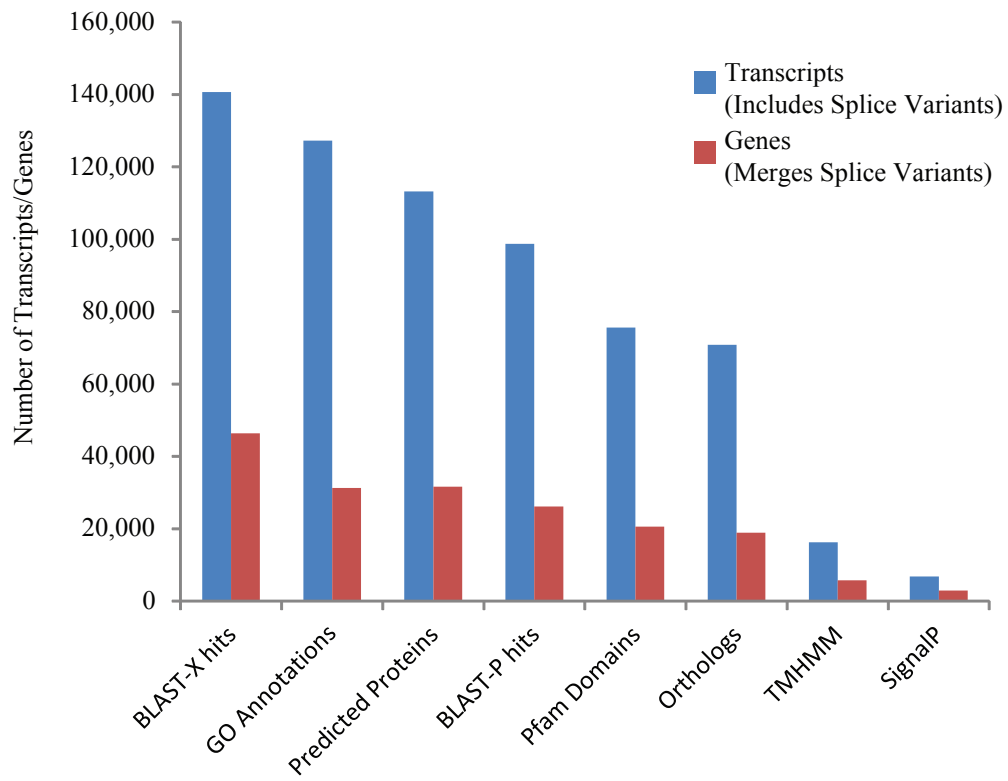


Figure 1.

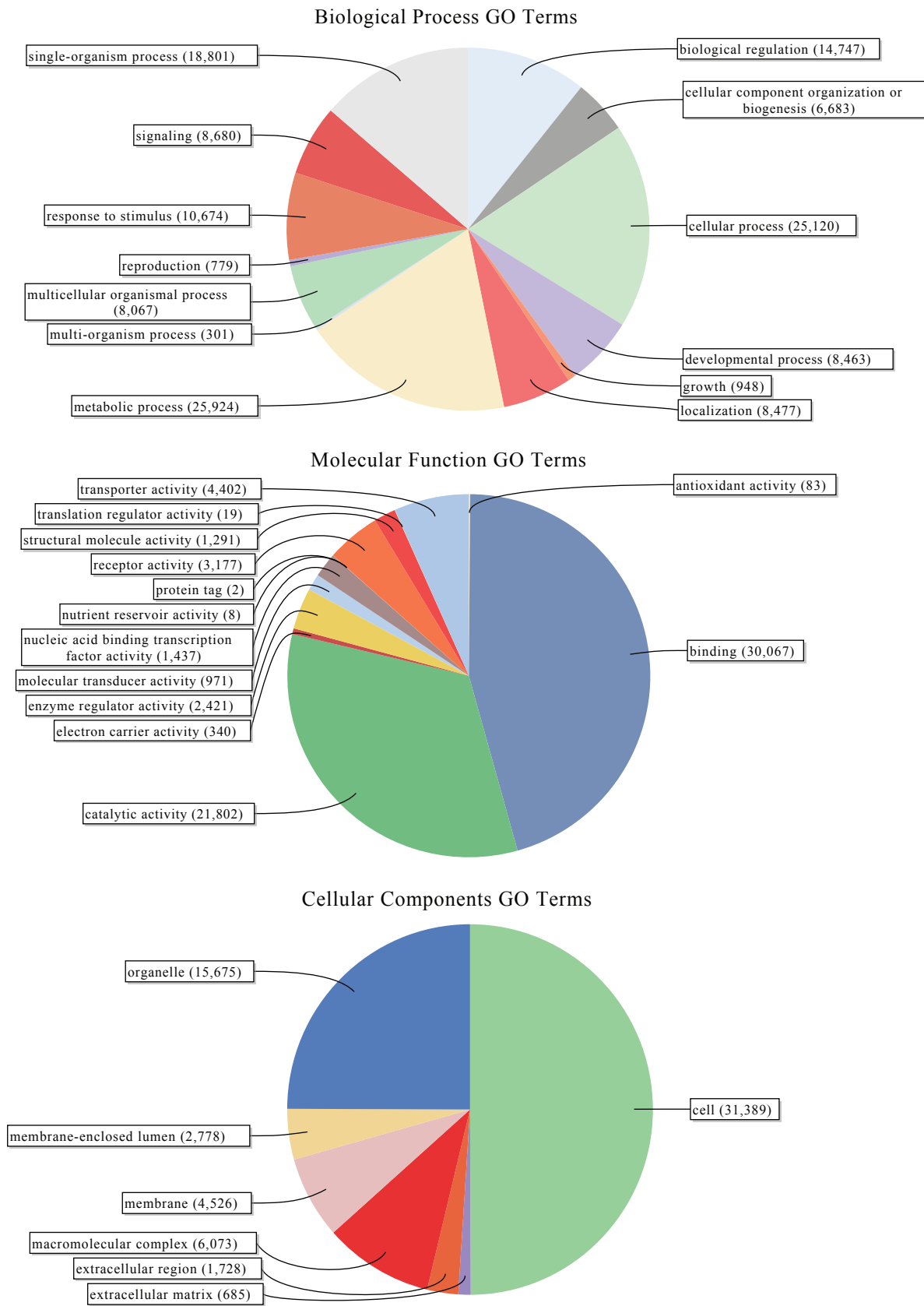
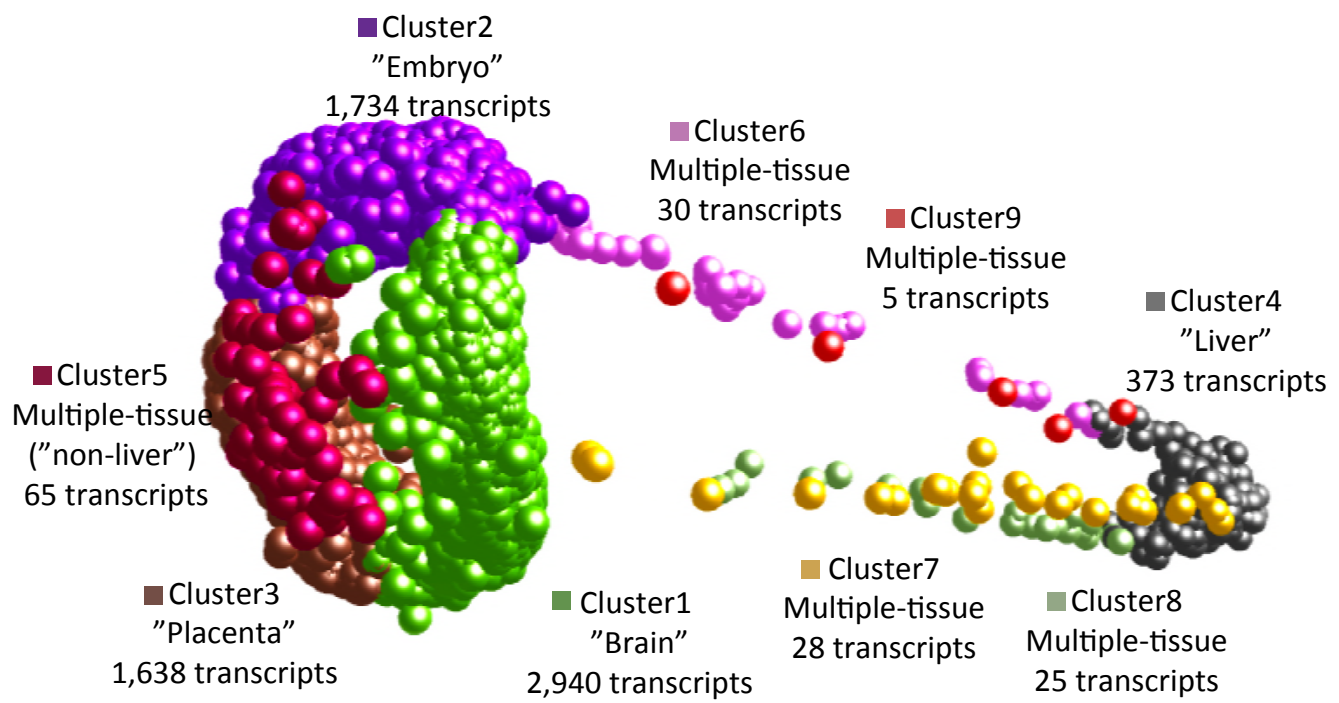


Figure 2.



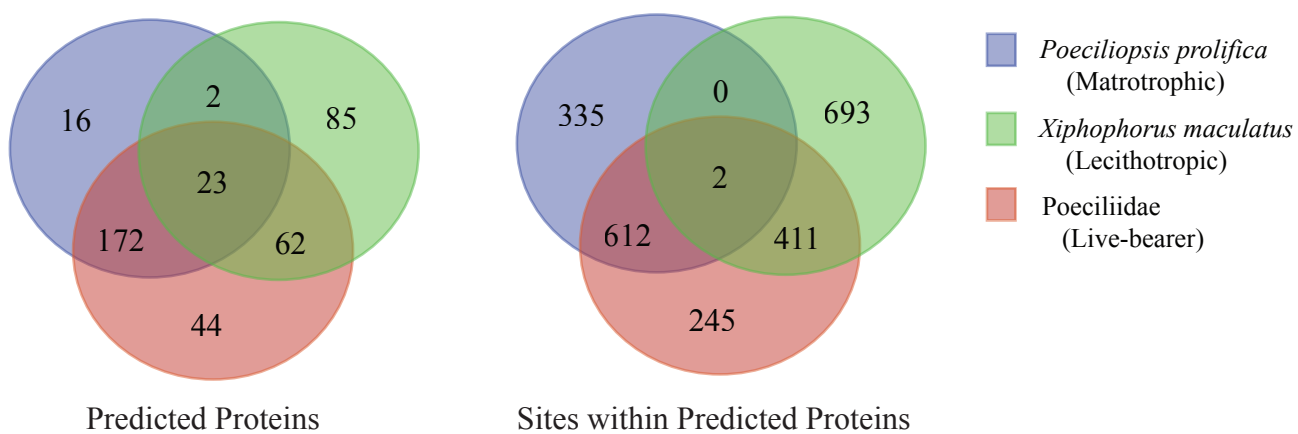


Figure 4.

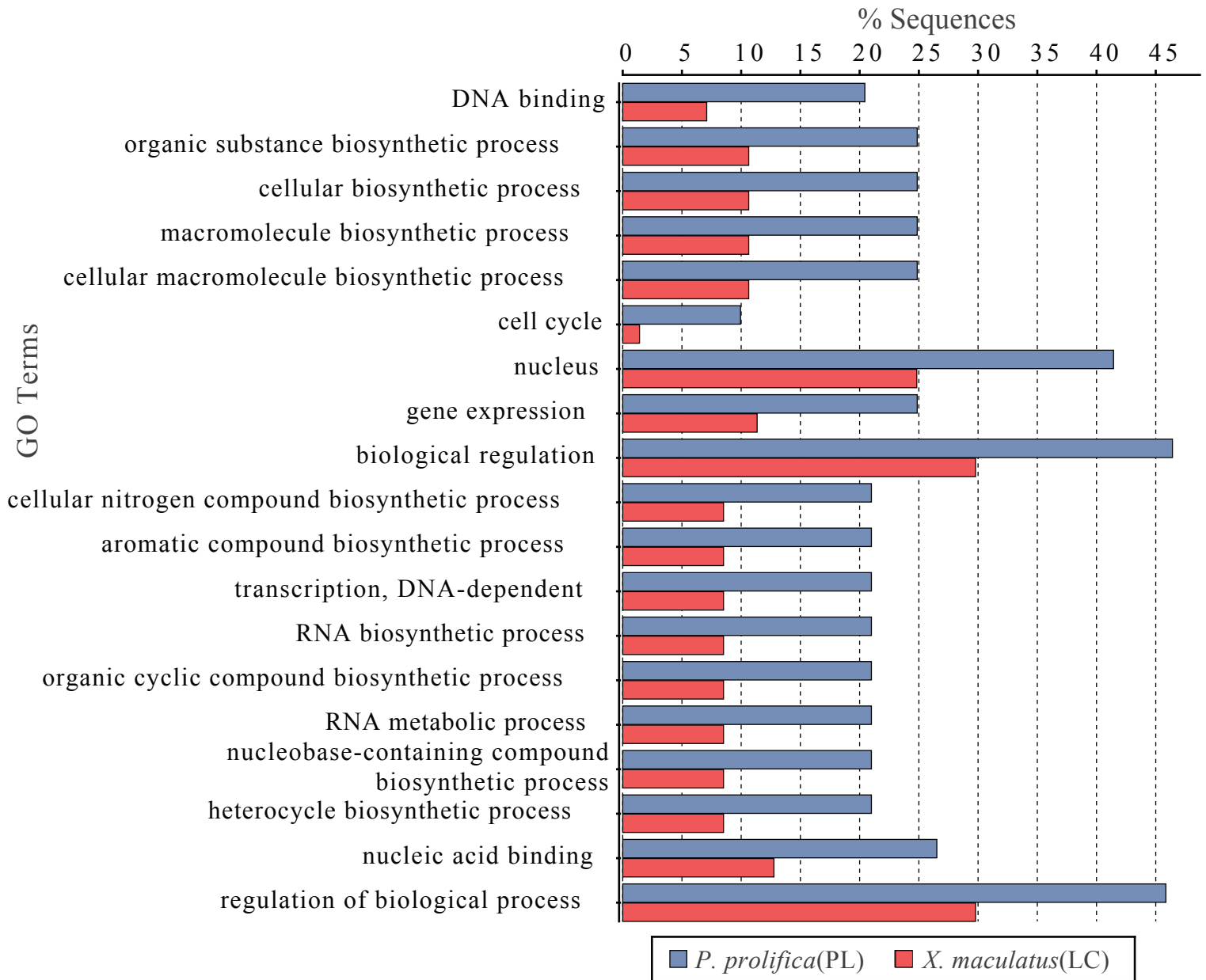


Figure 5.

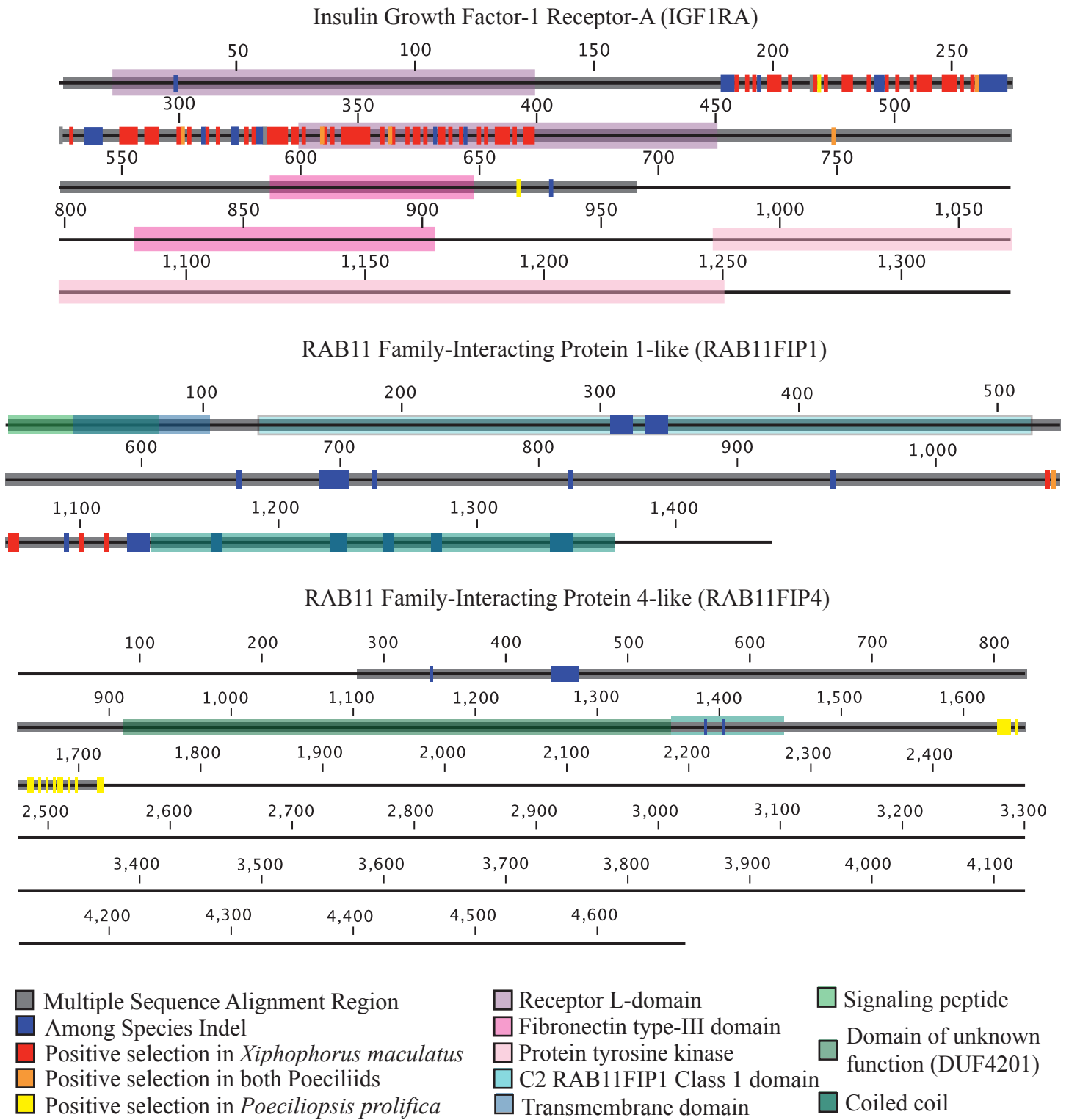


Figure 6.

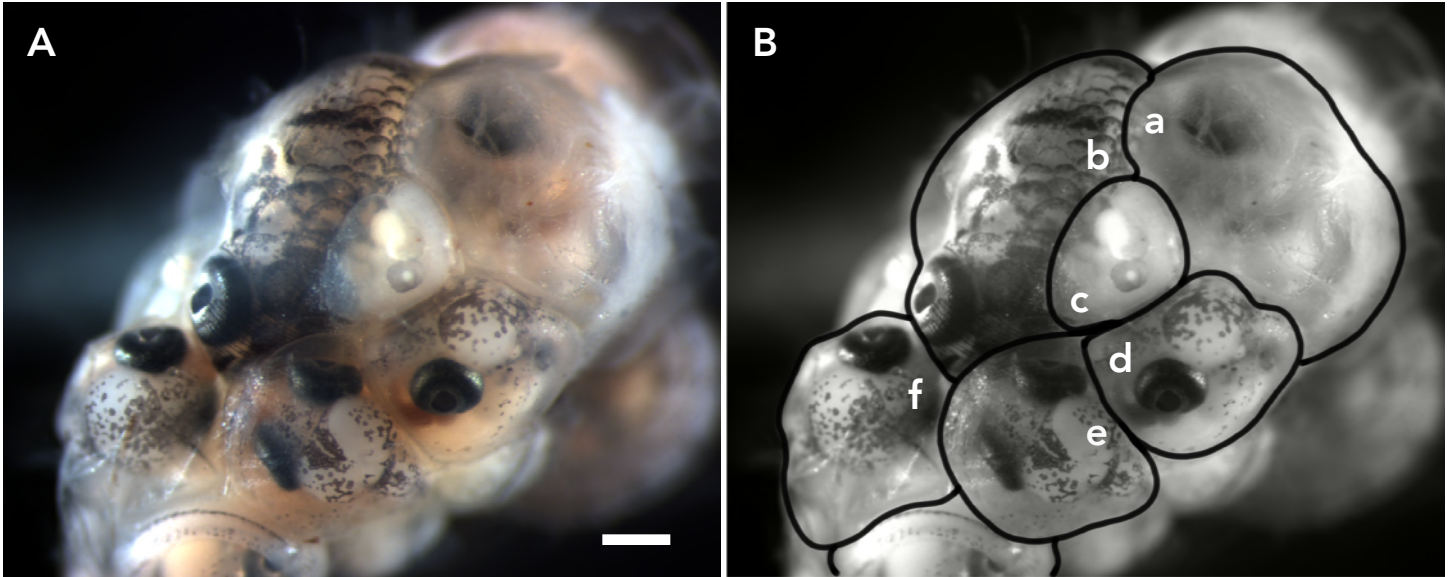


Figure S1. **A and B.** Intact ovary removed from gravid female. Scale bar = 0.5mm. **B.** Outlines of the different embryos within the ovary shown in **A.** **a.** maternal/placental ovarian tissue complex (MPC) with late stage embryo removed, **b.** Very Late-eyed stage embryo (i.e. nearly full term, Stage 6), **c.** Early-eyed stage embryo (Stage 3), **d.-f.** Late-eyed stage embryo (Stage 5).

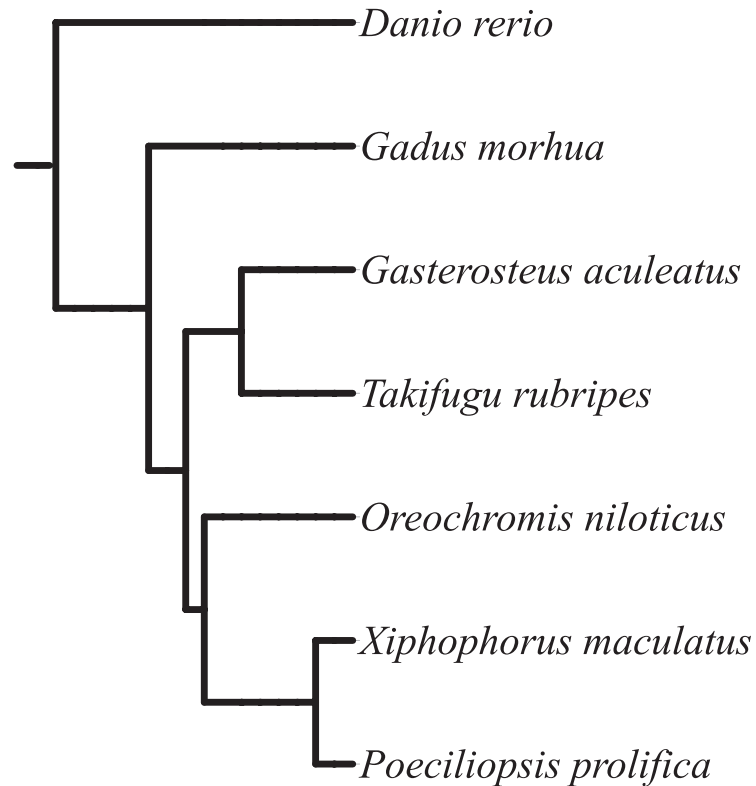


Figure S2. Species tree used in PAML. Tested foregrounds of live-bearing Poeciliids generally, lecithotrophic live-bearers, and matrotrophic live-bearers using the clade of Poeciliids, the *Xiphophorus maculatus* lineage, and the *Poeciliopsis prolifica* lineage, respectively for each case.

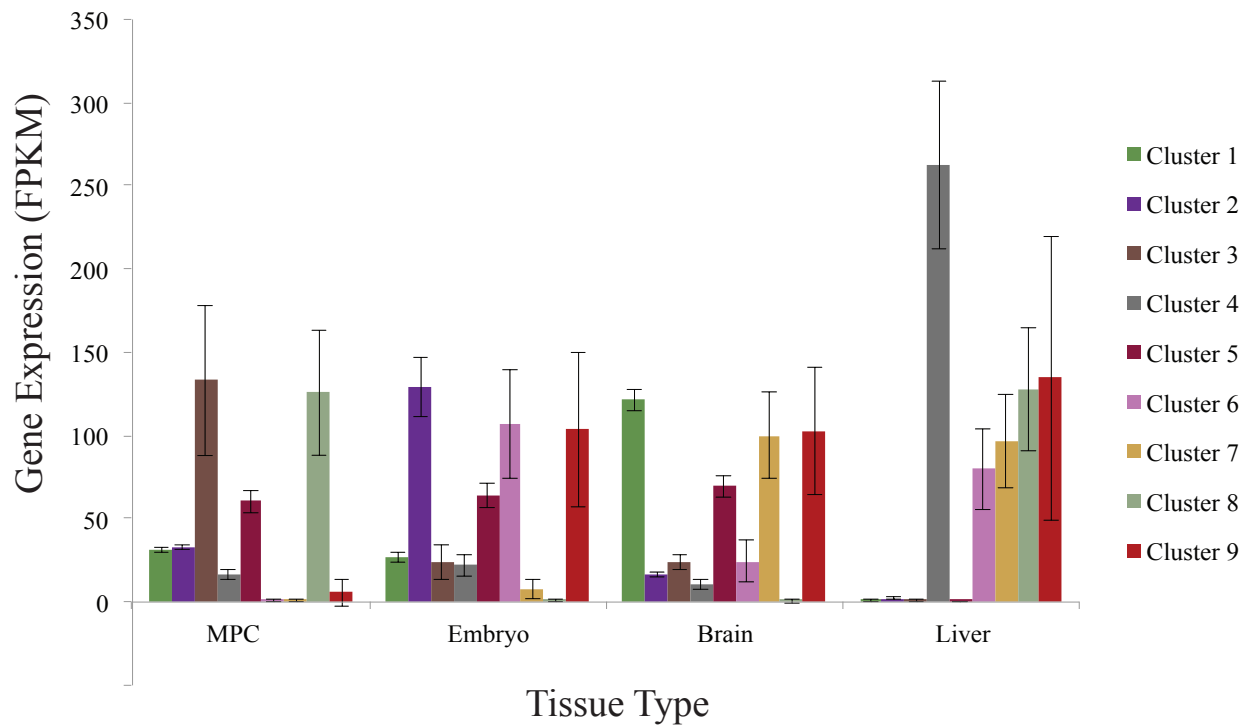


Figure S3. Average expression in fragments per kilobase per million base pairs (FPKM) in each tissue grouped by cluster genes indicating which clusters are associated with which tissues. Standard error bars shown. MPC indicates maternal placental/ovarian complex tissue sample.

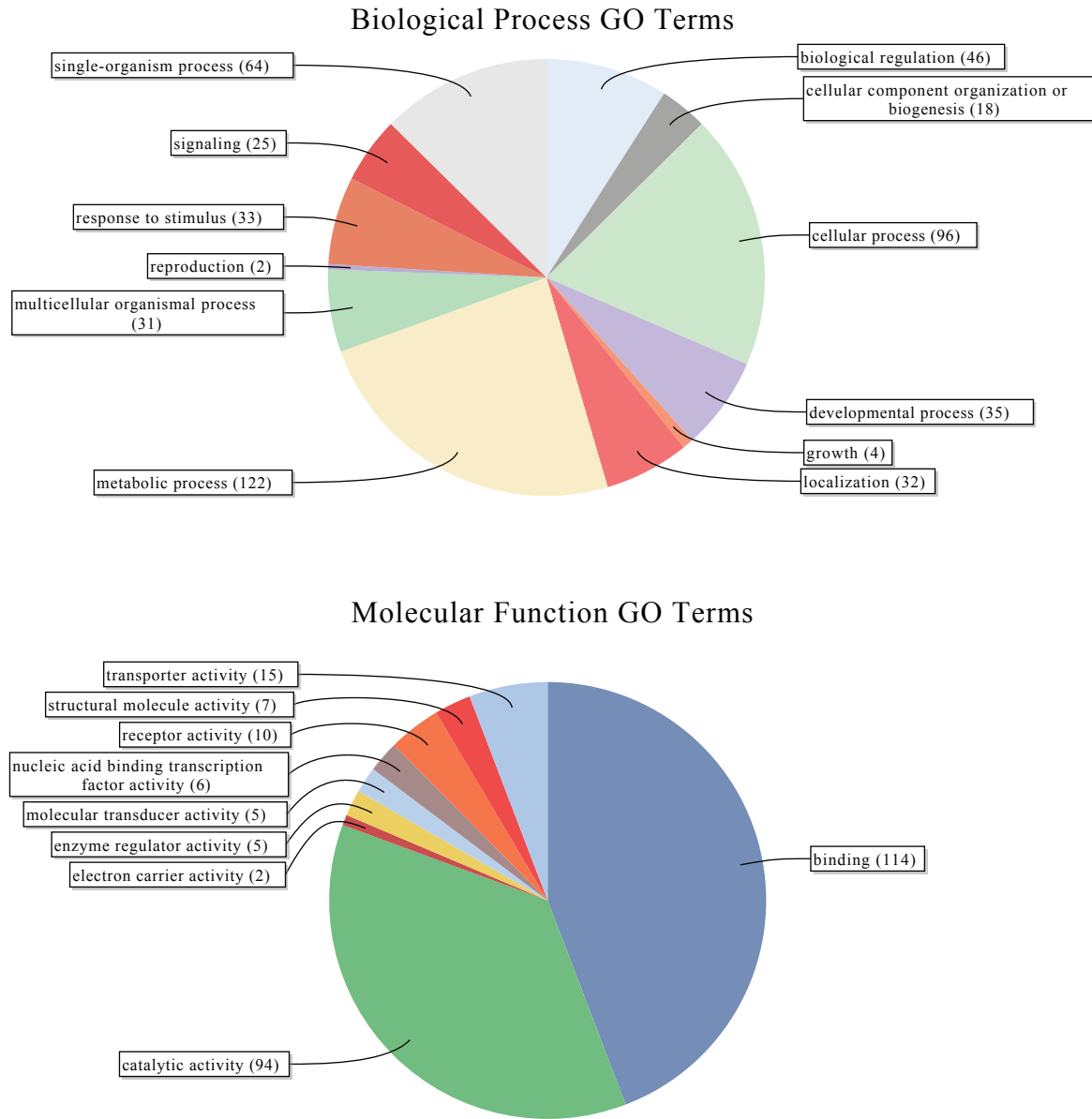


Figure S4. Level 2 Biological Process and Molecular Function Gene Ontology terms associated with gene identified as having sites under positive selection in poeciliids.

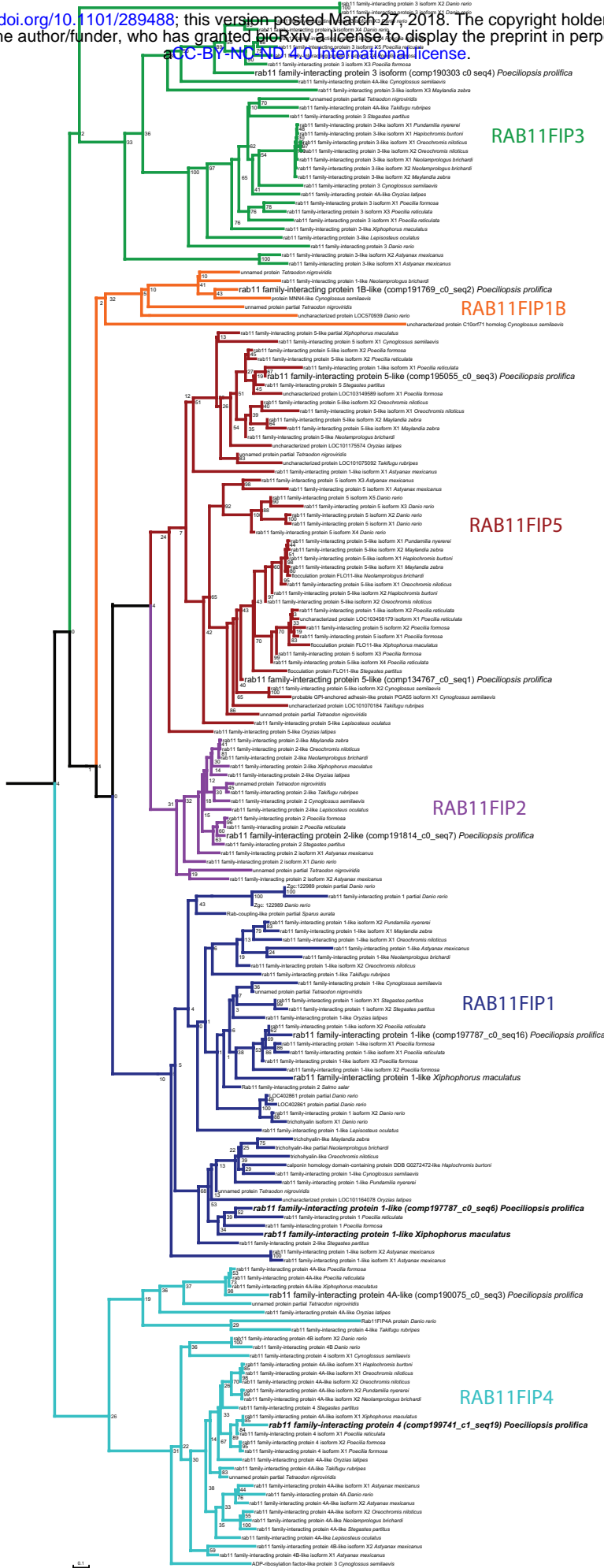


Figure S5. Phylogenetic distance-based gene-family tree for *RAB11* family-interacting proteins (RAB11FIPs) in fishes. Each color represents different gene family member protein group. RAB11FIPs found in *Poeciliopsis prolifica* are enlarged fonts. Proteins with sites found to be under positive selection in PAML analysis is bold italics; specifically, RAB11FIP1 in *P. prolifica* and *X. maculatus* and RAB11FIP4 in *P. prolifica* only.