

1 **Optimal markers for the identification of *Colletotrichum* species**

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21

22 **ABSTRACT**

23

24 *Colletotrichum* is among the most important genera of fungal plant pathogens.

25 Molecular phylogenetic studies over the last decade have resulted in a much better

26 understanding of the evolutionary relationships and species boundaries within the

27 genus. There are now approximately 200 species accepted, most of which are

28 distributed among 13 species complexes. Given their prominence on agricultural

29 crops around the world, rapid identification of a large collection of *Colletotrichum*

30 isolates is routinely needed by plant pathologists, regulatory officials, and fungal

31 biologists. However, there is no agreement on the best molecular markers to

32 discriminate species in each species complex. Here we calculate the barcode gap

33 distance and intra/inter-specific distance overlap to evaluate each of the most

34 commonly applied molecular markers for their utility as a barcode for species

35 identification. Glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (GAPDH), histone-3

36 (HIS3), DNA lyase (APN2), intergenic spacer between DNA lyase and the mating-

37 type locus *MAT1-2-1* (APN2/MAT-IGS), and intergenic spacer between GAPDH and

38 a hypothetical protein (GAP2-IGS) have the properties of good barcodes, whereas

39 sequences of actin (ACT), chitin synthase (CHS-1) and nuclear rDNA internal

40 transcribed spacers (nrITS) are not able to distinguish most species. Finally, we

41 assessed the utility of these markers for phylogenetic studies using phylogenetic

42 informativeness profiling, the genealogical sorting index (GSI), and Bayesian

43 concordance analyses (BCA). Although GAPDH, HIS3 and  $\beta$ -tubulin (TUB2) were

44 frequently among the best markers, there was not a single set of markers that were

45 best for all species complexes. Eliminating markers with low phylogenetic signal

46 tends to decrease uncertainty in the topology, regardless of species complex, and

47 leads to a larger proportion of markers that support each lineage in the Bayesian  
48 concordance analyses. Finally, we reconstruct the phylogeny of each species  
49 complex using a minimal set of phylogenetic markers with the strongest phylogenetic  
50 signal and find the majority of species are strongly supported as monophyletic.

51

## 52 **KEYWORDS**

53 Accuracy

54 Anthracnose

55 Barcoding

56 Phylogenetic informativeness

57 Standardization

58

59

## 60 **1. INTRODUCTION**

61 *Colletotrichum* is among the largest groups of phytopathogenic fungi and  
62 includes the causal agents of anthracnose and other diseases on seeds, stems,  
63 leaves and fruits of important temperate and tropical crops (Cai et al., 2009, Cannon  
64 et al., 2012). It is also among the most common genera of endophytic fungi, fungi  
65 that live within plant organs without producing any symptoms of disease (Cannon et  
66 al., 2012). Due to its economic and scientific importance, *Colletotrichum* was ranked  
67 as the eighth most important phytopathogenic fungus in the world by plant  
68 pathologists (Dean et al., 2012).

69 Species identification is necessary to understand disease epidemiology and  
70 develop strategies to control the disease successfully (Cai et al., 2009). However,  
71 *Colletotrichum* taxonomy and systematics has been a challenge since the genus was

72 introduced by Corda (1831). *Colletotrichum* species were historically circumscribed  
73 on the basis of phenotypic features and a strong emphasis on the host species from  
74 which the specimens were isolated under the assumption of host specificity, which  
75 led to more than 900 species being recognized until revisionary work more than a  
76 century after its introduction (von Arx, 1957; Sutton, 1980). *Colletotrichum*  
77 identification based on morphological characters is problematic due to plasticity and  
78 variation induced by experimental conditions (Vieira et al. 2017), and all life stages  
79 are not frequently produced in culture (Samarakoon et al., 2018). The absence of  
80 stable phenotypic characters has limited our understanding of phylogenetic  
81 relationships within *Colletotrichum* and made the recognition of species boundaries  
82 unreliable and confusing (Cai et al., 2009). To address this problem, Cai et al. (2009)  
83 proposed a guideline for *Colletotrichum* species recognition based on a polyphasic  
84 approach, which comprises the use of cultural, morphological, physiological and  
85 pathogenicity characters in combination with phylogenetic analysis of nucleic acid  
86 sequences.

87         The earliest phylogenetic studies of *Colletotrichum* using DNA sequences  
88 were published by Mills et al. (1992) and Sreenivasaprasad et al. (1992).  
89 Polymorphisms in the ITS1 region of the nrDNA were used to distinguish  
90 *Colletotrichum* species. However, while the nrITS region is the most widely  
91 sequenced region and has been chosen as the barcode locus for the Fungi, the utility  
92 of this region is limited for systematic studies in *Colletotrichum*. Species diversity is  
93 usually underestimated when based on nrITS sequences alone (Crouch et al.,  
94 2009a) and it has been demonstrated to have little phylogenetic utility (Doyle et al.  
95 2013; Vieira et al. 2017). However, several additional markers have been applied for  
96 multilocus phylogenetic inference to resolve the boundaries of cryptic species in the



97 genus (Cai et al. 2009; Damm et al. 2009; Doyle et al., 2013; Hyde et al., 2009; Lima  
98 et al., 2013; Liu et al., 2016; Samarakoon et al., 2018; Veloso et al., 2018; Vieira et  
99 al., 2014, 2017).

100 According to the most recent synopsis of the genus published in 2017, 188  
101 *Colletotrichum* species have been described and incorporated into molecular  
102 phylogenies. Among these species, 164 were distributed among 11 species  
103 complexes and an additional 24 species had not been assigned to a species complex  
104 (Marin-Felix et al., 2017). Additional species were recently described and three  
105 additional clades were declared to represent new species complexes (Cao et al.,  
106 2018; Damm et al., 2019; Samarakoon et al., 2018). Due to its global distribution and  
107 ecological and economic importance, research groups around the world are working  
108 concomitantly to address regional diversity. However, the set of phylogenetic  
109 markers used to discriminate species is variable by species complex and no standard  
110 set of markers has been adopted based on objective criteria (Marin-Felix et al.,  
111 2017), making it difficult to combine data from disparate research groups and reliably  
112 infer phylogenies and delimit species boundaries. Currently, thirteen different  
113 molecular markers are commonly sequenced among the various *Colletotrichum*  
114 species complexes: actin (ACT), DNA lyase (APN2), intergenic spacer between DNA  
115 lyase and the mating-type locus *MAT1-2-1* (APN2/MAT-IGS), calmodulin (CAL),  
116 chitin synthase (CHS-1), glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (GAPDH),  
117 intergenic spacer between GAPDH and a hypothetical protein (GAP2-IGS),  
118 glutamine synthetase (GS), histone 3 (HIS3), nuclear rDNA internal transcribed  
119 spacers (nrITS), mating type gene (*MAT1-2-1*), manganese-superoxide dismutase  
120 (SOD2), and  $\beta$ -tubulin (TUB2).

121 It is known that the efficiency of PCR amplification and the distribution of  
122 phylogenetic informativeness of a given marker varies among species complexes  
123 (Hyde et al., 2013). Most studies on the utility and reliability of individual markers  
124 come from the *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides* complex (Cai et al., 2009; Liu et al.,  
125 2015; Sharma et al. 2013, Silva et al., 2012;2015; Vieira et al. 2017), and while the  
126 *C. gloeosporioides* complex has been exhaustively studied in recent years,  
127 recommendations on marker choice seem to be largely ignored. A classic case is the  
128 utility of APN2/MAT-IGS, the most powerful marker to discriminate species within the  
129 *C. gloeosporioides* complex: several recent studies described novel species within *C.*  
130 *gloeosporioides* complex while excluding data from APN2/MAT-IGS (Costa et al.,  
131 2018; Diao et al. 2017; Fu et al., 2019; Jayawardena et al., 2016; Oliveira et al.,  
132 2018; Sharma et al., 2017; Silva et al., 2017; Sousa et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2019).  
133 As mentioned above, this limits our ability to combine data from regional studies to  
134 develop an accurate understanding of global diversity and phylogenetic relationships  
135 within the genus.

136 While robust phylogenetic inference and reliable species delimitation relies on  
137 the use of quality markers, studies on the performance of different molecular markers  
138 for phylogenetic inference are missing for the majority of *Colletotrichum* species  
139 complexes. In addition to the challenges discussed above, this also presents  
140 practical problems for plant pathologists and ecologists who are looking to reliably  
141 identify a large collection of isolates using molecular data. It is impractical for  
142 researchers to sequence several loci, many of which may be of little phylogenetic  
143 utility, across several hundred isolates simply for species identification. The aim of  
144 the present study was to evaluate the phylogenetic informativeness of different  
145 molecular markers used in *Colletotrichum* systematics and determine the optimal set

146 of markers for each species complex. From this, we hope to establish a consensus  
147 on the minimal set of markers that can be used for *Colletotrichum* species  
148 identification and delimitation and provide a practical reference for the large  
149 community of researchers working on developing a better understanding of global  
150 diversity, life history, and ecology of the genus.

151

## 152 **2. MATERIAL AND METHODS**

### 153 **2.1 Datasets**

154 We compiled several datasets to analyze the barcoding utility, phylogenetic  
155 signal, and genealogical concordance of ACT, APN2, APN2/MAT-IGS, CAL, CHS-1,  
156 GAPDH, GAP2-IGS, GS, HIS3, nrITS, and TUB2 for all *Colletotrichum* species  
157 complexes described to date except for the *C. caudatum* complex, which was  
158 excluded because nrITS was the only marker available for all species. These  
159 datasets were compiled from published sequences retrieved from GenBank  
160 (Supplementary File S1). Since testing the accuracy of prior species delimitations  
161 were not the main focus of this study, we assumed that species boundaries  
162 established in previous studies were accurate.

163 Thirteen species complexes were investigated in our study: *Colletotrichum*  
164 *acutatum*, *C. boninense*, *C. dematium*, *C. destructivum*, *C. dracaenophilum*, *C.*  
165 *gigasporum*, *C. gloeosporioides*, *C. graminicola*, *C. magnum*, *C. orbiculare*, *C.*  
166 *orchidearum*, *C. spaethianum* and *C. truncatum*. Some species within each complex  
167 were not included in the alignments due to the absence of sequences for several  
168 markers since some of the analyses employed in the present work do not allow  
169 missing data. Some markers were not analyzed due to a small number of species or  
170 isolates with sequences available. The inclusion of these markers will drastically

171 reduce the number of species that can be included in each set of analyses (e.g.  
172 GAPDH, HIS3, APN2 and APN2/MAT-IGS in the *C. graminicola* species complex).  
173

## 174 **2.2 Multiple sequence alignment**

175 Multiple sequence alignments (MSA) of each locus were estimated individually  
176 for each species complex. Sequences were compiled using the GenBank tool  
177 implemented in MEGA 7 (Kumar et al., 2016). MSAs were estimated with the online  
178 version of MAFFT 7 (Kato et al., 2002; Kato & Standley, 2013) using the G-INS-i  
179 iterative refinement method and the 200PAM / k=2 nucleotide scoring matrix.  
180 External gaps were trimmed in MEGA 7 before uploading MSAs to the GUIDANCE2  
181 server (<http://guidance.tau.ac.il/ver2/>) (Sela et al., 2015) to access the alignment  
182 confidence scores under the following parameters: MAFFT as the MSA algorithm;  
183 max-iterate=0; pairwise alignment method=6mer; 100 bootstrap replicates. Unreliable  
184 alignment regions were filtered by masking residues with scores below the lowest  
185 cutoff, as proposed by Vieira et al. (2017). MSAs were converted to nexus format,  
186 concatenated, and partitioned into a multilocus matrix using SequenceMatrix 1.8  
187 (Vaidya et al., 2011). The number of invariable (I), variable (V), singletons (S) and  
188 parsimony informative (PI) characters of the single locus alignments were calculated  
189 using DnaSP 5.10 (Librado and Rozas,2009).

190

## 191 **2.3 DNA barcoding**

192 The effectiveness of markers to discriminate species within each species  
193 complex was assessed by the barcode gap distance and intra/inter-specific distance  
194 overlap (Hebert et al. 2003). Intra- and inter-specific distances were calculated for  
195 each single locus alignment in MEGA 7. Single isolate species were removed from

196 alignments. Distances were calculated under the Kimura-2-parameter model,  
197 allowing for substitution rates to differ among transitions and transversions, uniform  
198 rates among sites, and gaps treated as pairwise deletions. Distance values were  
199 sorted in Microsoft Excel Professional Plus 2016 and summary statistics were  
200 calculated (maximum, minimum and mean distance). The barcode gap was  
201 represented by the difference between the mean interspecific and intraspecific  
202 distances (Hebert et al. 2003). The distance overlap percentage represents how  
203 much the intraspecific distance overlaps with the interspecific distance and was  
204 calculated as follows:  $\text{max intraspecific distance} \div \text{max interspecific distance} \times 100$ .  
205 Markers useful as barcodes will have a large barcode gap and a small intra/inter-  
206 specific distance overlap.

207

## 208 **2.4 Assessment of phylogenetic informativeness**

209 The phylogenetic informativeness of markers commonly employed in  
210 *Colletotrichum* systematics was estimated using the application PHYDESIGN  
211 (Lopez-Giraldez and Townsend, 2011). Maximum likelihood (ML) trees were inferred  
212 for each species complex using the concatenated alignments reduced to a single  
213 representative isolate per species. Phylogenies were estimated in RAxML - HPC2  
214 (Stawatakis, 2014) implemented on CIPRES Science Gateway portal  
215 (<https://www.phylo.org/portal2/home.action>). ML tree searches were done assuming  
216 the GTRGAMMA model and bootstrap support calculated with 1000 pseudoreplicates  
217 (-m GTRGAMMA -p 12345 -k -f a -N 1000 -x 12345). ML trees were converted to  
218 rooted ultrametric trees using the 'chronos' function in the ape package (Paradis et  
219 al., 2004) using R Studio 1.1.442 (R Core Team, 2017). Trees were calibrated with  
220 an arbitrary time scale with time=0 at the tips and time=1 at the root. The ultrametric

221 trees and the corresponding partitioned alignment were used as input files in  
222 PHYDESIGN and the substitution rates were calculated using the program HyPhy  
223 (Pond et al., 2005). The substitution rates estimated by the maximum likelihood  
224 algorithm used by HyPhy are nonsensical for some sites in the alignment resulting in  
225 very recent ‘phantom’ peaks that have no biological meaning. These peaks are likely  
226 the result of indels or ambiguous sites in the alignment, therefore these alignment  
227 positions with poorly estimated substitution rates were excluded from some genes  
228 prior to phylogenetic informativeness profiling at the recommendation of the authors  
229 of PhyDesign (<http://phydesign.townsend.yale.edu/faq.html>). Since the markers  
230 included in this study and in most systematic studies of *Colletotrichum* do not require  
231 more than two sequencing reads to sequence the full length of the locus  
232 (representing the same sequencing effort and cost), the phylogenetic informativeness  
233 values (PIV) were calculated on a net basis. The variable PImax represents the time  
234 in which a given marker reaches the maximum PIV and was used to determine the  
235 divergence time in which the marker is most informative (Fong and Fujita, 2011). We  
236 ranked the markers according to the PIV values and the usefulness of markers was  
237 assessed through the profile shape: low and flat curves represent the least  
238 informative markers; high and sharp peaks represent the most informative markers.

239       The percentage of markers that resolve a given species was estimated using a  
240 Bayesian Concordance Analysis – BCA (Ané et al., 2007; Larget et al., 2010).  
241 Although BCA is a coalescent-based method to estimate species trees (Ané et al.,  
242 2007; Baum, 2007; Larget et al., 2010), this methodology can also be used to  
243 quantify the proportion of markers that support a given clade, which is represented by  
244 the concordance factor (CF). Individual locus trees were inferred in MrBayes 3.2.6  
245 (Ronquist et al., 2012) implemented on the CIPRES cluster with four runs, each run

246 with four Markov chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) chains run for 10,000,000 generations,  
247 sampled every 5,000 generations, totaling 2,001 trees per run. The frequency of  
248 distinct topologies in the posterior distribution were summarized using mbsum  
249 distributed with BUCKy 1.4.4 (Ané et al., 2007; Larget et al., 2010) skipping the first  
250 25% of the trees as burn-in (-n 501). Primary concordance trees were estimated  
251 using bucky and tree summary files output by mbsum were used as input files.  
252 Concordance analyses were performed with a discordance factor ( $\alpha$ ) set at 1, four  
253 MCMC chains, 1,000,000 generations, and the first 25% generations were discarded  
254 as burn-in (-a 1 -k 4 -n 1000000 -c 4 -s1 23546 -s2 4564).

255 The Genealogical Sorting Index (GSI) was employed to identify the markers  
256 that recover each species as monophyletic. GSI is an objective method that infers the  
257 proportion of input trees for which a clade (species as applied here) are found to be  
258 monophyletic and if the observed monophyly is greater than would be observed by  
259 chance given the size of the data matrix (GSI=1 indicates monophyly) (Cummings et  
260 al., 2008; Sakalidis et al., 2011), and can also be used to compare individual markers  
261 according to their ability to discriminate species (Doyle et al., 2013). This  
262 methodology can be applied to phylogenies inferred from a single locus as well as  
263 multilocus analysis (Sakalidis et al., 2011). ML analyses were performed using the  
264 single and multi-locus concatenated alignments. Species with a single isolate were  
265 removed from the alignments. Analyses were carried out in RAxML as described  
266 above with the number of pseudoreplicates reduced to 100 and outgroup isolates  
267 specified prior to analysis. Rooted bootstrap trees were used as input files and each  
268 tip was assigned to a species. GSIs were calculated using the GSI.py script and *P*-  
269 value estimated from 100 permutations of each dataset (Cummings et al., 2008). The

270 GSI values were converted to heatmaps in the Heatmapper web server  
271 (<http://www.heatmapper.ca>) to aid in visualization (Babicki et al., 2016).

272

## 273 **2.5 Selection of best minimal sets of markers**

274 The selection of a minimal set of optimal markers for robust phylogenetic  
275 inference within each *Colletotrichum* species complex was based on results from the  
276 phylogenetic informativeness profiling and GSIs. The markers were selected  
277 according to the following criteria:

- 278 1) A minimum of three markers per complex based on ranking according to  
279 PIV were selected. Three independent markers allow for the application of  
280 the genealogical concordance phylogenetic species recognition criteria –  
281 GCPSR (Dettman et al., 2003, Taylor et al. 2000), a commonly applied set  
282 of criteria for phylogenetic species recognition in fungal systematics.
- 283 2) All species must be recognized as monophyletic by at least one of the  
284 selected markers. GSIs were checked to confirm if each species in the  
285 complex is recovered as monophyletic (GSI = 1) by at least one of the  
286 selected markers.
- 287 3) ML trees were inferred from concatenated alignments of the three best  
288 markers; if some species clade was poorly supported and/or all species  
289 were not recovered as in the multilocus analyses with all markers  
290 (unresolved relationships/polytomy), other markers were progressively  
291 concatenated in decreasing order of phylogenetic informativeness until all  
292 species were well resolved.

293



294           Once the best markers were chosen, the GSI was calculated for this  
295 phylogeny to determine the level of species monophyly when only the best markers  
296 are concatenated. The BCAs were also performed with this dataset to elucidate if the  
297 species could be recognized by the majority of the selected markers.

298

### 299 **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### 300 **3.1 Alignment statistics**

301           GAPDH, HIS3, and TUB2 were the most variable markers in the majority of  
302 *Colletotrichum* species complexes, with PI characters ranging from 10—109, 11—82,  
303 and 12—114, respectively (Table 1). PI characters for GS ranged from 63 to 93 and it  
304 was the most variable marker within the *C. gigasporum* and *C. orbiculare* species  
305 complexes. The APN2/MAT-IGS and GAP2-IGS, which are employed only in the *C.*  
306 *gloeosporioides* species complex, had 192 and 115 PI characters, respectively, and  
307 were the most variable markers within this complex. In contrast, nrITS presented the  
308 fewest PI characters for most species complexes (0—36), followed by CHS-1 (3—45)  
309 and ACT (3—63).

310           Most markers employed for *Colletotrichum* systematics comprise partial  
311 sequences of orthologous protein-coding genes. These markers are composed of  
312 introns flanked by long exons that are highly conserved. The GAPDH, GS, HIS3 and  
313 TUB2 markers contain long intronic regions and APN2/MAT-IGS and GAP2-IGS  
314 present long intergenic regions. This may explain why these markers are more  
315 variable than the protein-coding loci. While protein-coding loci may be useful for  
316 providing support along the backbone of the phylogeny within a species complex or  
317 across the genus, markers with variable introns and intergenic sequences are  
318 preferable for application at lower taxonomic levels (Schmitt et al., 2009).

319

### 320 **3.2 DNA barcoding feasibility**

321 GAPDH had the largest barcode gap distance in seven of the 11 species  
322 complexes evaluated. The percentage overlap between intra- and interspecific  
323 distances was less than 20%, with the exception of the *C. gigasporum* and the *C.*  
324 *gloeosporioides* species complexes (28.6% and 29.2%, respectively). GS has the  
325 highest barcode distance with the lowest overlap for the *C. gigasporum* (0.12 and  
326 12.1%) and *C. orbiculare* (0.08 and 2.7%) complexes. APN2/MAT-IGS had the  
327 largest barcode gap distance (0.15) and the smallest overlap percentage (3.26%)  
328 within the *C. gloeosporioides* species complex, making it the best candidate barcode  
329 locus for the complex HIS3 had the largest barcode gap (0.026) within the *C.*  
330 *orchidearum* complex with a relatively low overlap (16.9%), although CHS-1 had a  
331 comparable barcode gap (0.025) with only a slightly higher overlap (21.6%). While  
332 other markers, such as HIS3 and TUB2, are good candidate secondary barcode  
333 markers in several complexes, nrITS was universally the poorest barcode candidate  
334 with the lowest barcode gap distance within all species complexes.

335 Our results demonstrate that selecting a universal barcode marker for all  
336 *Colletotrichum* species complexes among the markers currently being used is not  
337 possible. An illustration of this is GAPDH. This marker is the best candidate barcode  
338 marker for the majority of complexes, however it is among the worst barcode  
339 candidates for the *C. gloeosporioides* species complex. While our results are not in  
340 agreement with Cai et al. (2009), which carried out the first study evaluating the  
341 markers to discriminate species within *C. gloeosporioides* species complex, only five  
342 species were included in their analyses and the Musae and Kahawae clades (*sensu*  
343 Weir et al. (2012)) were treated as single species. Moreover, while GAPDH was

344 chosen as the best marker relative to EF1 $\alpha$ , ACT, CHS-1 and nrITS, the latter three  
345 markers perform very poorly for species delimitation in the *C. gloeosporioides*  
346 complex (Vieira et al., 2017) and, therefore, we did not include them in any of our  
347 analyses. While GAPDH, with its large barcode gap and small overlap along with the  
348 ease with which it can be amplified and sequenced, makes it among the best  
349 barcode candidates across *Colletotrichum* as a whole, the selection of the best  
350 barcode markers is dependent on the species complex.

351 The search for a universal barcode locus for the genus will require a  
352 comparative analysis across the genomes of several species in all species  
353 complexes. Intergenic sequences in syntenic regions of the genome are good  
354 candidates if APN2/MAT-IGS and GAP-IGS are any indication. Intergenic sequences  
355 may provide fast-evolving phylogenetic markers to be used for population genetic  
356 and phylogenetic studies on fungal species complexes (Magain et al., 2017).

357

### 358 **3.3 Optimal markers for phylogenetic inference**

359 The most informative markers differ among the species complexes within  
360 *Colletotrichum*. Net phylogenetic informativeness profiles and their respective  
361 ultrametric trees are presented in Fig. 2. PIV and PImax values are summarized in  
362 Table 1. The GSI analyses illustrate the ability of a given marker to recover species  
363 as monophyletic is dependent on the species complex (Fig. 3, GSI values presented  
364 in Supplementary File S2). Most species that were monophyletic in the multilocus  
365 tree with all markers (GSI near to 1) were also recovered as monophyletic when only  
366 the most informative markers were concatenated. In parallel, the BCAs revealed that  
367 the proportion of markers supporting individual species-level clades (expressed as

368 concordance factors) increase when the less informative markers are removed from  
369 the analyses.

370 Since the suite of markers differ by species complex and the performance of a  
371 given marker differs among the species complexes, the results of the phylogenetic  
372 informativeness profiling, GSI, Bayesian concordance analyses and selection of the  
373 minimum set of markers for robust phylogenetic inference are summarized below for  
374 each species complex.

375

### 376 **3.3.1 *Colletotrichum acutatum s. l.***

377 HIS3, GAPDH and TUB2 are the most phylogenetically informative markers  
378 within the *C. acutatum* species complex, with P<sub>lmax</sub> at 0.67, 0.78 and 0.99,  
379 respectively (Fig. 2). All markers currently used for systematics of the *C. acutatum*  
380 complex have an optimum inferential timescale varying from 0.67 to 0.99, which is  
381 useful to resolve deeper relationships. However, the absence of markers with lower  
382 P<sub>lmax</sub> negatively impacts the our ability to infer relationships among recently  
383 diverged species. This is evident by the low internal node support within Clade 1 and  
384 Clade 2 *sensu* Damm et al. (2012a), which are the most recently diverged lineages  
385 within the complex (Supplementary File S3). Species are strongly supported in the  
386 concatenated multilocus analysis (ML support  $\geq 70\%$ , Supplementary File S3),  
387 whereas the relationship among them are poorly resolved even when only the best  
388 markers were used to build the tree. In contrast, nodes throughout Clade 5 are  
389 strongly supported. The inclusion of a marker with P<sub>lmax</sub> near to 0.2 could improve  
390 the support on the deeper nodes of the Clades 1 and 2.

391 Most species in *C. acutatum s. l.* could be resolved by the majority of the  
392 markers only when the optimal markers are combined (Fig. 4B). Seven (*C. austral*, *C.*

393 *chrysanthemii*, *C. fiorinae*, *C. johnstonii*, *C. lupini*, *C. nymphaeae* and *C. tamarillo*)  
394 among the 17 multiple-isolate species were supported by the majority of individual  
395 genes ( $CF \geq 0.66$ ) in the BCA when all six loci were used in the analysis (Fig. 4A),  
396 which means that four out of six markers support the monophyly of these species.  
397 The CF increases when the analyses included only HIS3, GAPDH and TUB2, and  
398 only four (*C. cosmi*, *C. costaricense*, *C. paranaense* and *C. phormii*) out of 17  
399 multiple-isolate species presented  $CF < 0.66$  (Fig. 4B). The GSI (Fig. 3) indicates that  
400 *C. melonis* is recovered by GAPDH and *C. phormii* by HIS3. The GSI for  
401 *Colletotrichum costaricense* was nearly 1 for both GAPDH and TUB2 (0.95 and 0.99,  
402 respectively) and less than 0.5 for all other markers. This is consistent with a CF of  
403 0.63, indicating that nearly 2 of the 3 loci included in the analysis support the  
404 monophyly of the species. *Colletotrichum paranaense* had a low GSI for most  
405 markers and  $CF = 0.22$ , which means that no individual marker fully supports this  
406 species as monophyletic. However, *C. paranaense* is strongly supported in the  
407 multilocus concatenated analysis and has a high GSI when analyses included all or  
408 the best markers. These results clearly show that the multilocus trees masks the  
409 incongruences among the individual gene trees or the use of markers with low  
410 phylogenetic signal.

411 *Colletotrichum paranaense* was described by Bragança et al. (2016) as a  
412 species closely related to *C. limetiicola* and *C. melonis* (Damm et al., 2012a).  
413 Phylogenetic species recognition was not employed in the delimitation of *C.*  
414 *paranaense*. The species was recognized based on the topology of the multilocus  
415 tree and differed from *C. limetiicola* and *C. melonis* by percentage identity according  
416 to blastn searches. Our results suggest that the relationship among these species  
417 and the delimitation of *C. paranaense* needs to be revisited.

418

### 419 **3.3.2 *Colletotrichum boninense s. l.***

420 CAL, TUB2 and GAPDH were the most informative markers to resolve species  
421 within *C. boninense s. l.* (Fig. 2). All three markers are comparable in levels of  
422 phylogenetic informativeness, with PIV ranging from 47 to 53. However, these  
423 markers differ with respect to the optimal timescale at which they are informative.  
424 CAL and TUB2 peaked at 0.58 and 0.63, respectively, providing more signal towards  
425 the root of the phylogeny. In contrast, GAPDH reached maximum informativeness at  
426 0.24, which is more useful for resolving species in this complex, since the divergence  
427 epoch for most species is near 0.2.

428 Most species can be resolved by most of the markers according to the  
429 concordance analyses that include all markers and only the best markers (CF>0.57  
430 and >0.66, respectively) (Fig. 5B). GAPDH supports most species as monophyletic  
431 (GSI 0.98—1) (Fig. 2), with the exception of three species (*C. catinaense*, *C.*  
432 *constrictum* and *C. limonicola*). According to Damm et al. (2012b), all the species  
433 within the *C. boninense* species complex can be identified by sequencing GAPDH. In  
434 contrast, our results show that *C. catinaense*, *C. constrictum* and *C. limonicola* are  
435 weakly supported as monophyletic by GAPDH (GSI = 0.51, 0.69 and 0.59,  
436 respectively) and could only be recovered as monophyletic in analyses of TUB2, HIS  
437 or ACT. *Colletotrichum cymbidiicola* and *C. novae-zelandiae* were recovered as  
438 monophyletic with GAPDH and *C. limonicola* by ACT and TUB2 (Fig. 3). Thus,  
439 concordance factors for these species remained low even when the best markers  
440 were used in the BCA. Additionally, *C. novae-zelandiae* was the only species for  
441 which GSI<1 in both multilocus analyses (Fig. 3). *Colletotrichum catinaense* could be  
442 resolved by two of the best markers (CAL and TUB) and by ACT, which led the CF to

443 shift from 0.56 in the BCA with all markers to 0.73 when only the best markers were  
444 included (Fig. 5). The use of CAL, TUB2 and GAPDH leads to a slight increase in  
445 support across the multilocus ML tree when compared with the tree reconstructed  
446 with the whole dataset (Supplementary File S4), with the exception of *Colletotrichum*  
447 *novae-zelandiae*, which remained poorly supported.

448

### 449 **3.3.3 *Colletotrichum dematium* s. l.**

450 GAPDH, HIS3 and TUB2 presented high and sharp profiles (Fig. 2), with  
451  $PI_{max}$  0.05—0.06 and were the most useful markers to discriminate species within  
452 the *C. dematium* species complex. HIS3 was the only marker able to discriminate all  
453 species in the complex. nrITS, CHS-1 and ACT presented low and flat curves and  
454 were the least informative markers (Fig. 2). *Colletotrichum anthrisci* and *C. circinans*  
455 could be resolved by all markers ( $CF=1$ , Fig. 6), while *Colletotrichum spinaceae* was  
456 resolved as monophyletic by all markers except nrITS. The exclusion of nrITS in the  
457 BCA increased the CF from 0.86 to 1. The relationship between *Colletotrichum*  
458 *dematium* and *C. lineola* was not clearly resolved in the multilocus analyses.  
459 Although *C. dematium* isolates were well supported as monophyletic in the tree  
460 inferred from all markers, *C. lineola* isolates remained paraphyletic (Supplementary  
461 File S5). When only GAPDH, HIS3 and TUB2 were considered, the isolates of *C.*  
462 *dematium* and *C. lineola* were placed together in a poorly supported clade.  
463 *Colletotrichum lineola* was recovered as monophyletic only by HIS3 ( $GSI=1$ ). Both  
464 ACT and GAPDH could also resolve this species, albeit with low GSI (0.83 and 0.73  
465 respectively). In contrast, these three markers recover *C. dematium* with high level of  
466 monophyly ( $GSI$  0.97—1). *Colletotrichum lineola* presented low monophyly level in all



467 multilocus GSI analysis and *C. dematium* was not monophyletic when only the best  
468 markers were considered.

469 In the Damm et al. (2009) study, the isolates of *C. dematium* and *C. lineola* are  
470 separated into two short-branch clades. They chose to retain both taxa, but raised  
471 the hypothesis that *C. dematium* and *C. lineola* are different populations within the  
472 same species. We performed the GSI analyses with the multilocus trees combining  
473 *C. dematium* and *C. lineola* in the same group (data not shown). The group was  
474 recovered as monophyletic when all markers and only the best markers are  
475 concatenated (GSI=1 and 0.99 respectively), which support the hypothesis that *C.*  
476 *dematium* and *C. lineola* are the same species. *Colletotrichum eryngiicola*, *C.*  
477 *hemerocallidis*, *C. insertae*, *C. quiquefoliae* and *C. sonchicola* were placed together  
478 with *C. dematium* and *C. lineola* in a polytomous clade in Samarakoon et al. (2018)  
479 study, which indicates that those species may also be members of the group *C.*  
480 *dematium/ C. lineola*. These species were not included in our analyses due to  
481 absence of HIS3 and TUB2 sequences. In the future, species boundaries within this  
482 lineage need to be revisited.

483

#### 484 **3.3.4 *Colletotrichum destructivum* s. l.**

485 HIS3, TUB2 and GAPDH were the most informative markers to resolve  
486 species within *C. destructivum* complex (Fig. 2). GAPDH and HIS3 possess the  
487 phylogenetic signal to resolve shallow clades (PI<sub>max</sub>=0.28 and 0.37 respectively),  
488 whereas TUB2 performs better in the deep branches (PI<sub>max</sub>=0.73). HIS3 was the  
489 most informative marker and was able to six (*C. destructivum*, *C. lentis*, *C. lini*, *C.*  
490 *tabacum*, *C. utrechtense* and *C. vignae*) out of the nine species analyzed as  
491 monophyletic (GSI 0.98—1) (Fig. 3). Although GAPDH is one of the best markers,



492 only four species (*C. fuscum*, *C. lentis*, *C. tabacum* and *C. vignae*) were highly  
493 monophyletic in the topologies provided by this locus (GSI 0.9—1) (Fig. 3).  
494 *Colletotrichum americae-borealis* was not monophyletic in the topology of any single  
495 or multi-locus trees (GSI 0.34—0.89). Four (*C. destructivum*, *C. lentis*, *C. tabacum*,  
496 *C. utrechtense*) out of nine multiple-isolates species could be recovered by most of  
497 the genes in the concordance tree (CF $\geq$ 0.66) inferred from all markers (Fig. 7A).  
498 These same four species plus *C. vignae* were recovered by most of the genes  
499 (CF $\geq$ 0.66) when only the optimal markers were considered. Moreover, the CF and  
500 the bootstrap supports of the internal nodes increased when only the best markers  
501 were combined (Fig. 7 and Supplementary File S6).

502 The clade comprised by *C. americae-borealis* and *C. lini* forms a polytomy  
503 when only the three best markers were used (Supplementary File S6). We also  
504 tested the inclusion of ACT or nrITS in the concatenated dataset. However, this clade  
505 remains a polytomy and can only be resolved when all markers are concatenated.  
506 The overall GSI values also reduced when ACT or nrITS was included in the  
507 multilocus analysis (data not shown). Thus, it is not reasonable to include ACT and  
508 nrITS in the analysis due to their low phylogenetic informativeness. Other markers  
509 with greater phylogenetic signal need to be tested for this complex in order to resolve  
510 the relationships among the unresolved clades and clarify the species identities.

511

### 512 **3.3.5 *Colletotrichum dracaenophilum* s. l.**

513 TUB2, GAPDH and HIS3 presented the highest PIV (58, 52 and 36  
514 respectively) and were the most informative markers to distinguish species within the  
515 *C. dracaenophilum* complex (Fig. 2). All the markers peaked around the same  
516 timescale (PI<sub>max</sub> 0.39—0.46) and provide robust support for relationships in both

517 deep and shallow nodes. Although TUB2, GAPDH and HIS3 were the most  
518 informative markers, all the markers are informative enough to discriminate species  
519 in *C. dracaenophilum* s. l. (GSI 0.99—1) (Fig. 3). This is corroborated by the high  
520 concordance factors (CF=1) in BCAs (Fig. 8) and 100% support in multilocus  
521 analyses (Supplementary File S7) when all or the best markers were combined.

522

### 523 **3.3.6 *Colletotrichum gigasporum* s. l.**

524 GS, CAL and GAPDH were the most powerful markers to discriminate species  
525 within *C. gigasporum* s. l. (Fig. 2), with P<sub>I</sub>max at 0.1, 0.44 and 0.28 respectively.  
526 Although GS, CAL and GAPDH were the most informative markers, all the markers  
527 and the concatenated datasets were able to discriminate all species within the *C.*  
528 *gigasporum* complex (GSI 0.99—1) (Fig. 3), as reported by Liu et al. (2014). All  
529 species presented maximum CF (Fig. 9) and ML support (Supplmentary File S8)  
530 independently of which set of markers was included in these analyses.

531

### 532 **3.3.7 *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides* s. l.**

533 APN2/MAT-IGS, GAP2-IGS and APN2 were the most informative markers to  
534 separate species within the *C. gloeosporioides* species complex (Fig. 2). The  
535 informativeness profiles indicate APN2/MAT-IGS and APN2 are of peak  
536 informativeness at 0.19 and 0.17, respectively, and are informative for shallow  
537 divergences, whereas GAP2-IGS has an optimal timescale at 0.42 and provides  
538 more signal for resolving deep nodes. This range in values for peak informativeness  
539 led to high support at both deep and shallow nodes when only the most informative  
540 markers were used for phylogenetic inference (Supplementaray File S9). APN2/MAT-  
541 IGS could separate all the species included in the analyses, although only *C.*

542 *fragariae*, *C. queenslandicum*, *C. siamense* and *C. tropicale* reached a GSI of 1 (Fig.  
543 3). Moreover, all species were recovered as monophyletic in all multilocus analyses.  
544 *Colletotrichum siamense* was the only species that could not be recovered by most of  
545 the markers, and its CF reduced from 0.59 in all-markers analysis to 0.38 in the best-  
546 markers analysis (Fig. 10B). The CF reduced due to removing CAL and TUB2, which  
547 also recover *C. siamense* as monophyletic (GSI=0.99).

548 ACT, CHS-1 and nrITS were not included in our analyses because these  
549 markers were previously reported as the worst markers to distinguish species in *C.*  
550 *gloeosporioides* complex (Vieira et al., 2017). In the present study, rather than  
551 restating the results of Vieira et al. (2017), we evaluated if the seven markers  
552 proposed by those authors are needed for diversity studies and species assignment.  
553 We determined sequences of APN2/MAT-IGS, GAP2-IGS and APN2 are sufficient to  
554 resolve the species in *C. gloeosporioides s. l.* However, sequences of GAP2-IGS  
555 and APN2 are not available for all species within *C. gloeosporioides s.l.* These data  
556 should be generated for all species within the species complex.

557 *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides s. l.* is the most studied species complex in the  
558 genus. More than 10 different markers have been used for systematics and  
559 taxonomy of the *C. gloeosporioides* complex over the last 10 years. However, there  
560 is no agreement about which markers should be used for species recognition. The  
561 first attempt to determine the best markers was done by Cai et al. (2009), in which  
562 GAPDH was the best marker to discriminate species in *C. gloeosporioides s. l.*, and  
563 the set composed by ACT, GAPDH, nrITS and TUB2 was recommended for  
564 multilocus analysis. Weir et al. (2012) highlighted that although GAPDH is one of the  
565 most effective markers to distinguish species within *C. gloeosporioides* complex, the  
566 combination with GS is necessary to distinguish some species. Our study shows that

567 GAPDH was the least informative marker among the ones included in this study for  
568 *C. gloeosporioides* s. l.. This marker was the least variable (Table 1), and had the  
569 smallest barcode gap and the largest overlap distance (Fig. 1). *Colletotrichum*  
570 *fragariae* was the only species recovered as monophyletic (GSI=1) by this marker  
571 (Fig 2). Based on this, GAPDH is considered one of the worst barcode candidates for  
572 the *C. gloeosporioides* complex among the markers tested in the present study.

573 More recently, several studies demonstrate the singular ability of APN2/MAT-  
574 IGS to discriminate species in the *C. gloeosporioides* complex (Sharma et al., 2013,  
575 2015; Vieira et al., 2014), although others previously demonstrated the utility of this  
576 marker (Du et al., 2005; Rojas et al., 2012; Silva et al., 2012). The main issue in  
577 using APN2/MAT-IGS was the splitting out of *C. siamense* in a species complex, in  
578 which several monophyletic lineages could be revealed by the phylogeny inferred by  
579 this marker (Sharma et al., 2013). Although the multilocus analysis had been done,  
580 the lineages identity was confirmed only based on the APN2/MAT-IGS, since this  
581 marker performs good as well as the multilocus matrix. Other studies use the same  
582 criteria to discriminate species and several species within *C. siamense* s. l. were  
583 described (Sharma et al., 2015; Vieira et al., 2014). Later, Liu et al. (2016) use  
584 coalescent methods for phylogenetic species delimitation and synonymize all those  
585 species in the complex into *C. siamense*. It was revealed incongruences among the  
586 APN2/MAT-IGS tree and other individual gene trees. The study clarifies how  
587 multilocus analyses can mask discordances among individual gene trees and lead to  
588 species misidentification.

589 The combination of APN2/MAT-IGS and GS were proposed as the barcode to  
590 delimit species within *C. gloeosporioides* complex (Liu et al., 2015). These two  
591 markers were collectively powerful enough to discriminate the 22 species included in

592 the study and produced the same topology as that inferred from a 6 marker  
593 multilocus dataset (ACT, CAL, GAPDH, GS, nrITS and TUB2). We tested the  
594 combination of APN2/MAT-IGS with each remaining marker individually and all  
595 resulting trees were similar in topology (data not shown). Some species, such as *C.*  
596 *siamense*, are polyphyletic in our GAPDH and GS trees, which belies the  
597 incongruence with the multilocus and the other individual gene trees as presented by  
598 Silva et al. (2012) and Vieira et al. (2017). Mating-type associated markers, such as  
599 APN2/MAT-IGS and MAT1-2, had fast evolutionary rates and high variability, and  
600 may dominate the topology of multilocus trees (Liu et al., 2016). Since the  
601 combination of APN2/MAT-IGS with any other marker produces similar topologies,  
602 the combination with any other marker besides GAPDH and GS is preferable in order  
603 to avoid inconsistencies in species delimitation within the *C. gloeosporioides*  
604 complex. While we find that APN2 is another informative marker that should be  
605 incorporated into diversity studies of the *C. gloeosporioides* complex, the proximity of  
606 this marker to the APN2/MAT-IGS region suggests it is part of the same linkage  
607 group and thus may not represent an independent sample of an organisms  
608 evolutionary history. If this is the case, linking substitution models and inferred trees  
609 across these two loci would be required and the addition of another locus may be  
610 necessary to fulfill the expectations under GCPSR.

611         Although the majority of *Colletotrichum* species belong to the *C.*  
612 *gloeosporioides* complex, identification and description of taxa within this complex is  
613 the most problematic. Sequences of the best markers, mainly APN2 and GAP2-IGS,  
614 have not been sequenced for the majority of species, which prohibits the detection of  
615 these species using these markers. A priority should be to generate sequences of the  
616 best markers for all species to avoid further misidentification and the introduction of

617 dubious taxa. Until this happens, the description of new species within the *C.*  
618 *gloeosporioides* complex will likely require sequencing multiple additional markers to  
619 be certain of their novelty.

620

### 621 **3.3.8 *Colletotrichum graminicola* s. l.**

622 TUB2 was the most informative marker, followed by nrITS and ACT (Fig. 2). In  
623 contrast, CHS-1 was ranked as the worst marker for the *C. graminicola* species  
624 complex. GSI and BCA analyses could not be performed for this complex because  
625 only one isolate per species could be included in the analyses. Other markers such  
626 as APN2, APN2/MAT-IGS, GAPDH, HIS3, MAT1-2 and SOD2 were also used to  
627 identify species within *C. graminicola* complex (Cannon et al., 2012; Crouch et al.  
628 2009b, c; Crouch and Tomaso-Peterson, 2012; Du et al., 2005; Moriwaki and  
629 Tsukiboshi, 2009; O'Connell et al., 2012; Tao et al., 2013). However, sequences for  
630 these markers are missing for several species. According to our results for other  
631 complexes, APN2, APN2/MAT-IGS, GAPDH and HIS3 are likely to be more powerful  
632 markers than those that we could include in the analyses for the *C. graminicola*  
633 complex. Sequences for these markers need to be generated for isolates of several  
634 species in order to establish a better set of optimal markers for phylogenetic  
635 inference and species discrimination in the *C. graminicola* complex.

636

### 637 **3.3.9 *Colletotrichum magnum* s. l.**

638 HIS3, TUB2 and GAPDH were the most informative markers to discriminate  
639 species within the *C. magnum* complex (Fig. 2). Although HIS3 presented the highest  
640 PIV (26), TUB2 presented a higher P<sub>lmax</sub> (0.52 versus 0.44) and is able to separate  
641 more species than HIS3. Only *C. brevisporum* and *C. magnum* were accounted for

642 by more than one isolate and could be analyzed in the BCA and GSI analyses (Fig.  
643 3). *Colletotrichum brevisporum* reach high levels of monophyly only in analyses of  
644 the concatenated dataset (GSI 0.98—1, Fig. 3) and only one gene can fully resolve  
645 this clade (CF=0.4, Fig 11). In contrast, *C. magnum* is recovered as monophyletic by  
646 the multilocus dataset and by the best markers. However, the CF reached 1 only  
647 when the best markers were concatenated (Fig 11). *Colletotrichum magnum*  
648 remained highly supported when only the best markers were used to reconstruct the  
649 phylogeny of the *C. magnum* complex (Supplementary File S10B) with only a slight  
650 decrease in support at some internal nodes. The species *C. liaoningense* was not  
651 included in the analyses due to sequence deposition errors detected by Damm et al.  
652 (2019) from the study were *C. liaoningense* was described (Diao et al., 2017). Damm  
653 et al. (2019) concluded that *C. liaoningense* needs to be revisited.

654

### 655 **3.3.10 *Colletotrichum orbiculare* s. l.**

656 GS stood out from all markers as the most informative (PIV=69) in the *C.*  
657 *orbiculare* complex, followed by HIS3 and GAPDH (PIV=37 and 32 respectively) (Fig.  
658 2). GS peaks at 0.53 and can discriminate the majority of species and provide robust  
659 support for the relationships among them, since the divergence time for most species  
660 is about 0.3. On the other hand, HIS3 and GAPDH are useful to discriminate some  
661 recently diverged species (PI<sub>max</sub>=0.13 and 0.17 respectively) such as *C. orbiculare*  
662 × *C. sidae* and *C. trifolii* × *C. malvarum*. GS was the marker that recovered more  
663 species as monophyletic (GSI=1), with the exception of *C. sidae* (GSI=0.89) (Fig. 3).  
664 *Colletotrichum lindemuthianum* was the only species that was not recovered as  
665 monophyletic when all or the best markers were concatenated (both GSI=0.78),  
666 which is likely due to the variability within this species as currently circumscribed.



667 Damm et al. (2013) split *C. lindemuthianum* into two different lineages (*C.*  
668 *lindemuthianum* 1 and 2), which are observed in the nrITS and GS trees. In our  
669 multilocus trees, the isolates CBS133.57 and CBS131.57 were moved to the clade  
670 *C. lindemuthianum* 1 and CBS150.28 to the clade *C. lindemuthianum* 2. This result is  
671 discordant with that in Damm et al. (2013) and we conclude that the terminal clades  
672 within *C. lindemuthianum* represent intraspecific variability. Thus, both *C.*  
673 *lindemuthianum* lineages were not considered separate species in our analysis. The  
674 CF of both deep and shallow nodes increases significantly when only the best  
675 markers were analyzed (Fig.12). Reducing the set of markers does not cause  
676 significant differences in the tree topology or clade support (Supplementary file S10).  
677

### 678 **3.3.11 *Colletotrichum orchidearum* s. l.**

679 TUB2 and HIS3 were the most powerful genes capable of discriminating  
680 species within the *C. orchidearum* complex (PIV=17 and 16 respectively), followed by  
681 CHS-1 (PIV=12) (Fig. 2). TUB2 and HIS3 are good markers to discriminate all  
682 species in the complex and support the relationships among them (PI<sub>max</sub>=0.8 and  
683 0.67 respectively), whereas CHS-1 can help to distinguish and support recently  
684 diverged species (PI<sub>max</sub>=0.47). All species were recovered with high levels of  
685 monophyly with TUB2 (GSI=0.99—1), and also by both multilocus analyses  
686 (GSI=0.97—1) (Fig. 3). *Colletotrichum musicola* was the only species that could be  
687 recovered by all markers evaluated (CF=1) (Fig. 13). The CFs increased when the  
688 less informative markers were removed from the analysis and most species were  
689 recovered by all markers (CF=1), with the exception of *C. cliviicola* and *C. plurivorum*  
690 (CF≥0.66). Damm et al. (2019) also reported that some clades were not supported by  
691 some of the individual gene analyses. All deep and shallow nodes retained high



692 support when only the best markers were combined in our analyses (Supplementary  
693 File S12B).

694

### 695 **3.3.12 *Colletotrichum spaethianum* s. l.**

696 GAPDH, TUB2 and ACT were the best markers to separate species within the  
697 *C. spaethianum* complex (Fig. 2). These markers peak at approximately 0.4 (PI<sub>max</sub>  
698 0.47—0.77), which is in the range of where most species in the complex diverge  
699 indicating they can separate the majority of species in this complex. However,  
700 GAPDH is the only marker that recovers all species as monophyletic (GSI 0.98—1)  
701 (Fig. 3). All species reached complete monophyly (GSI=1) in both multilocus trees.  
702 *Colletotrichum liriopes* and *C. spaethianum* could be recovered by most of the genes  
703 only when the best markers are considered in the BCA (CF=0.77 and 0.70,  
704 respectively) (Fig. 14B). All species remain strongly supported when only the best  
705 markers were concatenated (Supplementary Figure S13B).

706 HIS3 appears to be a good marker in several other *Colletotrichum* complexes  
707 according to the present study, and may be among the three best markers for *C.*  
708 *spaethianum* complex. However, sequences of HIS3 and other markers such as  
709 CHS-1 and CAL are available only for one isolate of several species and we cannot  
710 include them in our analyses. Sequences of these markers need to be generated for  
711 other isolates to determine if one of these markers could be used to substitute for  
712 ACT, which does not perform well for separating *Colletotrichum* species.

713

### 714 **3.3.13 *Colletotrichum truncatum* s. l.**

715 GAPDH was clearly the most informative marker (PIV=57), followed by TUB2  
716 and ACT (PIV=33 and 23 respectively) (Fig. 2). All markers peaked above 0.4 and

717 were able to discriminate most species. *Colletotrichum acidiae* and *C. curcumae* were  
718 monophyletic (GSI=1) in all single and multilocus datasets (Fig. 3) with CFs equal to  
719 1 in analyses of both all and best markers BCA (Fig. 15). These species were also  
720 supported by maximum bootstrap values in the multilocus trees (Supplementary File  
721 S14). *Colletotrichum corchorum-capsularis* and *C. truncatum* were not recovered as  
722 monophyletic by any dataset. Moreover, *C. truncatum* is paraphyletic or polyphyletic  
723 in the multilocus trees (Fig. 15, Supplementary File S14), which leads us to the  
724 conclusion that *C. corchorum-capsularis*, as circumscribed by Niu et al. (2016),  
725 cannot be recognized as a species distinct from *C. truncatum*. Our results strongly  
726 suggest that *C. corchorum-capsularis* and *C. truncatum* may be the same species  
727 and isolates of both species were placed together in a clade with high CF ( $\geq 0.96$ ) in  
728 the BCAs and maximum support in the multilocus analyses (Fig. 15, Supplementary  
729 File S14). Additional work is needed using the best markers for the *C. truncatum*  
730 complex and objective species recognition methods to determine the taxonomic  
731 status species boundaries of *C. corchorum-capsularis* and *C. truncatum*.

732

#### 733 **4. Conclusions**

734 We used phylogenetic informativeness profiling, maximum likelihood and  
735 coalescent-based phylogenetic analyses, measures of barcode utility, and  
736 genealogical sorting indices to assess the performance of the several molecular  
737 markers used in *Colletotrichum* systematics and taxonomy across all known species  
738 complexes. While HIS3, GAPDH, and TUB2 were among the best markers for most  
739 of the complexes, the optimal set of markers is not always the same across all  
740 complexes. ACT, CHS-1 and nrITS were the worst markers and, as previously  
741 proposed for the *C. gloeosporioides* complex (Vieira et al., 2017), they can be

742 discarded from the phylogenetic analysis of almost all species complexes. ACT was  
743 retained in the set of best markers for the *C. graminicola*, *C. spaethianum* and *C.*  
744 *truncatum* complexes to achieve a minimum of three markers as proposed in the  
745 methodology of the present study. However, few markers were included for these  
746 complexes due to missing data, therefore additional markers need to be sequenced  
747 and their performance evaluated. The analyses of *C. caudatum*, *C. dematium*, *C.*  
748 *graminicola* and *C. spaethianum* complexes were the most impacted by the  
749 excessive amount of missing data for the majority of the markers, which highlights  
750 the importance of selecting a standard set of markers to delimit species. Similarly,  
751 several isolates and/or species were not included in the marker analyses for *C.*  
752 *gloeosporioides s.l.* due to selective data acquisition by different research groups. It  
753 is not clear how the inclusion of sequences from these isolates might impact our  
754 results. Sequences need to be generated for these markers and/or species to  
755 provide more decisive results. We have also identified species complexes, which will  
756 need to be revisited in the future, in which it appears species have been misidentified  
757 (*C. acutatum*, *C. dematium* and *C. truncatum*).

758         Selecting the optimal markers to sequence for biodiversity studies on  
759 *Colletotrichum* will impact *Colletotrichum* studies in a few ways. First, species  
760 recognition will likely be more accurate and robust by avoiding the confounding effect  
761 of including markers with low phylogenetic signal in the analyses. Secondly,  
762 phylogenetic studies of *Colletotrichum* will become more economical, since  
763 sequencing markers with low informativeness represents a low return on investment.  
764 Finally, if research groups take guidance from this study, we are more likely to see a  
765 consensus developed on the data acquired for phylogenetic studies on *Colletotrichum*  
766 and we will be closer to a global assessment with combinable data.

767           Researchers around the world continue to have an interest in documenting the  
768 diversity of *Colletotrichum* species associated with economically important plant  
769 species. However, this work is labor intensive and expensive because several  
770 hundred isolates are typically screened and a paucity of distinctive morphological  
771 characters necessitates DNA sequencing. The expense has been unnecessarily  
772 compounded by the lack of an objective and comprehensive assessment of the utility  
773 of existing markers for phylogenetic inference and species identification/delimitation  
774 and the lack of a consensus on the markers to be used. We hope the results  
775 presented here will help to address this problem. While the optimal markers differ by  
776 species complex, our results provide some guidance on the most efficient path to  
777 document and describe diversity within *Colletotrichum*. Our results also show that for  
778 the accurate identification and delimitation of *Colletotrichum* species, a small set of  
779 markers with strong phylogenetic signal is more suitable than a large set including  
780 markers with both weak and strong phylogenetic signal. GAPDH is among the  
781 optimal set of markers for 10 of the 13 species complexes in *Colletotrichum*, followed  
782 by TUB2 (10 of 13), and HIS3 (7 of 13). Therefore, GAPDH is a good marker to  
783 sequence for initial diversity screening and assigning isolates to a species complex  
784 because data for this marker is available for the majority of species within the genus.  
785 However, selection of additional markers for phylogenetic inference and species  
786 delimitation will depend on the species complex.

787           Finally, while we recommend the optimal markers for species recognition  
788 within *Colletotrichum* in order to improve diversity studies in the genus, our  
789 understanding of evolutionary relationships among species remains poorly resolved.  
790 Improving our understanding of relationships among taxa within *Colletotrichum* will  
791 require more robust genomic sampling. Genome sequencing is underway for many

792 species of *Colletotrichum*, however a comprehensive phylogenomic study of the  
793 genus is needed.

794

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807

## 808 **Glossary**

809 **Appressorium**: specialized cell produced by some phytopathogenic fungi which is  
810 used to infect plant hosts.

811 **Conidium**: asexual spore of Ascomycota and Basidiomycota.

812 **Endophytic fungi**: fungi that grow inside the plant tissues without causing disease  
813 symptoms.

814 **Phytopathogenic fungi**: fungi that cause plant diseases.

815 **Sensu lato (s. l.)**: taxonomic terminology used to reference species complexes (*C.*  
816 *acutatum* species complex = *C. acutatum* s. l.).

817 **Sensu stricto (s. s.):** when is necessary to refer the species with the same name of  
818 the complex (*C. acutatum* s. s. is a species within *C. acutatum* s. l.).

819 **Species complex:** major clades strongly supported within *Colletotrichum* genus tree.  
820 These clades include phylogenetic species closely related which most are  
821 indistinguishable based on phenotypical characters (e.g. conidial and appressorial  
822 shape and size, growth rate, color of colonies). Species complexes get the same  
823 name of the species within them that is more known or that was firstly described.  
824 In some cases, members within a given species complex share peculiar conidial  
825 characteristics: *C. acutatum* – conidia with acute ends; *C. boninense* – presence of a  
826 prominent scar (hilum) at the base of the conidium; *C. caudatum* – conidia with a  
827 filiform appendage at the apex; *C. gigasporum* – longest and widest conidia within  
828 the genus.

829

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**Table 1.** Alignment and phylogenetic informativeness profile statistics for markers used in *Colletotrichum* by species complex.

**Table 1.**

<i>C. acutatum</i> s. l.	Length <sup>1</sup>	Invariable <sup>1</sup>	Variable <sup>1</sup>	Singletons <sup>1</sup>	Parsimony informative <sup>1</sup>	PIV (10 <sup>-6</sup> ) <sup>2</sup>	Pimax <sup>3</sup>
ACT	239	163	76	24	52	15.36	0.99
CHS-1	251	216	35	5	30	8.56	0.78
GAPDH	272	165	94	18	76	19.95	0.78
HIS3	386	298	88	18	70	24.96	0.67
nrITS	454	427	26	7	19	5.41	0.99
TUB2	481	386	95	24	71	19.7	0.99
<b><i>C. boninense</i> s. l.</b>							
ACT	277	199	78	15	63	29.07	0.49
CAL	438	293	142	16	126	52.86	0.58
CHS-1	277	228	49	4	45	22.39	0.48
GAPDH	247	163	83	9	74	47.6	0.24
HIS3	389	292	93	11	82	46.96	0.32
nrITS	537	490	47	11	36	18.41	0.39
TUB2	483	345	137	23	114	48.35	0.63
<b><i>C. dematium</i> s. l.</b>							
ACT	235	188	46	1	45	44.65	0.09
CHS-1	251	215	36	6	30	21.48	0.5
GAPDH	264	140	122	13	109	237.56	0.05
HIS3	371	301	70	7	63	183.1	0.05
nrITS	517	492	25	1	24	32.94	0.06
TUB2	497	389	105	10	95	118.42	0.06
<b><i>C. destructivum</i> s. l.</b>							
ACT	263	218	44	20	24	18	0.66
CHS-1	280	257	23	11	12	10.13	0.63
GAPDH	225	149	47	16	31	27.35	0.28
HIS3	389	318	71	18	53	38.75	0.37
nrITS	557	526	26	13	13	12.41	0.17
TUB2	514	432	77	33	44	32.49	0.73
<b><i>C. dracaenophilum</i> s. l.</b>							
ACT	254	205	49	6	43	31.72	0.44
CHS-1	282	257	25	5	20	18.53	0.46
GAPDH	273	192	81	14	67	52.08	0.41
HIS3	417	354	62	7	55	35.74	0.45
nrITS	541	504	37	13	24	28.58	0.39
TUB2	492	411	81	9	72	58.22	0.4
<b><i>C. gigasporum</i> s. l.</b>							
ACT	280	239	37	17	20	23.82	0.19
CAL	675	543	131	56	75	63.14	0.44
CHS-1	299	266	33	15	18	26.38	0.11
GAPDH	290	193	94	51	43	61.02	0.28
GS	702	521	176	92	84	105.17	0.10
HIS3	416	362	53	22	31	45.36	0.12
nrITS	545	500	39	15	24	34.85	0.11
TUB2	537	451	86	40	46	58.50	0.15

***C. gloeosporioides s. l.***

APN2	735	624	108	18	90	73.91	0.17
APN2/MAT-IGS	579	378	201	4	197	149.81	0.19
CAL	648	578	70	1	69	48.76	0.27
GAP2-IGS	708	569	135	14	121	79.71	0.42
GAPDH	767	734	33	2	31	24.51	0.33
GS	665	571	87	24	63	43.83	0.39
TUB2	1231	1116	115	10	105	67.23	0.49

***C. graminicola s. l.***

ACT	269	174	82	52	30	30.25	0.68
CHS-1	280	237	43	24	19	17.06	0.55
nrITS	454	375	70	37	33	30.38	0.23
TUB2	500	350	145	89	56	58.96	0.46

***C. magnum s. l.***

ACT	276	260	16	13	3	11.16	0.40
CHS-1	257	247	10	7	3	11.16	0.40
GAPDH	241	215	26	14	12	13.35	0.42
HIS3	399	360	39	28	11	26	0.44
nrITS	539	533	6	6	0	4.16	0.40
TUB2	536	500	36	24	12	23.15	0.52

***C. orbiculare s. l.***

ACT	226	202	21	5	16	18.37	0.36
CHS-1	280	268	12	2	10	6.16	0.65
GAPDH	243	203	40	8	32	32.01	0.17
GS	954	810	134	41	93	69.13	0.53
HIS3	386	334	50	10	40	36.51	0.13
nrITS	529	514	15	4	11	6.38	0.52
TUB2	467	431	36	9	27	19.75	0.55

***C. orchidearum s. l.***

ACT	276	244	29	17	12	7.06	0.52
CHS-1	265	243	22	6	16	11.46	0.47
GAPDH	242	195	47	37	10	7.99	0.77
HIS3	402	343	59	31	28	16.48	0.67
nrITS	539	521	18	10	8	5.81	0.57
TUB2	540	460	79	51	28	17.44	0.80

***C. spaethianum s. l.***

ACT	210	152	56	28	28	19.44	0.77
GAPDH	240	132	105	28	77	32.53	0.47
nrITS	482	470	10	4	6	8.66	0.73
TUB2	443	351	92	44	48	33.26	0.62

***C. truncatum s. l.***

ACT	215	179	36	6	30	22.89	0.41
GAPDH	276	186	90	6	84	56.86	0.46
nrITS	479	459	20	4	16	10.17	0.53
TUB2	434	353	76	9	67	33.14	0.53

1 - number of base pairs.

2 - PIV, phylogenetic informativeness values on a per net basis

3 - PImax, optimal divergence time. Values are expressed in arbitrary units.

1072 **FIGURE CAPTIONS**

1073 **Fig. 1.** Barcode gap and distance overlap between the intra- and inter-specific  
1074 distances. Values were calculated based on the intra- and inter-specific distances  
1075 frequencies distribution of each *Colletotrichum* species complex.

1076

1077 **Fig. 2.** Ultrametric trees and net phylogenetic informativeness profiles of markers  
1078 used for phylogenetic studies of 13 *Colletotrichum* species complexes. Values on the  
1079 X-axes correspond to the relative timescale (0—1) based on the root-to-tip distance.  
1080 Values on the Y-axes represent net phylogenetic informativeness values ( $10^{-6}$ ) in  
1081 arbitrary units.

1082

1083 **Fig. 3.** Heat map of the Genealogical Sorting Indices (GSI) by *Colletotrichum* species  
1084 complex. GSIs of 1000 bootstrap trees were calculated with 100 permutations. Rows  
1085 correspond to species, and columns correspond to individual markers and  
1086 concatenated datasets (all markers and best markers). Asterisks represent the best  
1087 markers for each complex.

1088

1089 **Fig. 4.** Primary concordance trees resulting from the Bayesian concordance analyses  
1090 including isolates from the *C. acutatum* complex. A. All markers (ACT, CHS-1,  
1091 GAPDH, HIS3, ITS and TUB2). B. Best markers (GAPDH, HIS3 and TUB2).  
1092 Concordance factors are shown above the branches that were resolved by at least  
1093 one marker ( $\geq 0.16$  for all markers and  $\geq 0.33$  for the best markers).

1094

1095 **Fig. 5.** Primary concordance trees resulting from the Bayesian concordance analyses  
1096 including isolates from *C. boninense* complex. A. All markers (ACT, CAL, CHS-1,  
1097 GAPDH, HIS3, ITS and TUB2). B. Best markers (CAL, GAPDH and TUB2).

1098 Concordance factors are shown above the branches that were resolved by at least  
1099 one marker ( $\geq 0.14$  for all markers and  $\geq 0.33$  for the best markers).

1100

1101 **Fig. 6.** Primary concordance trees resulting from the Bayesian concordance analyses  
1102 including isolates from the *C. dematium* complex. A. All markers (ACT, CHS-1,  
1103 GAPDH, HIS3, ITS and TUB2). B. Best markers (GAPDH, HIS3 and TUB2).

1104 Concordance factors are shown above the branches that were resolved by at least  
1105 one marker ( $\geq 0.16$  for all markers and  $\geq 0.33$  for the best markers).

1106

1107 **Fig. 7.** Primary concordance trees resulting from the Bayesian concordance analyses  
1108 including isolates from the *C. destructivum* complex. A. All markers (ACT, CHS-1,  
1109 GAPDH, HIS3, ITS and TUB2). B. Best markers (GAPDH, HIS3 and TUB2).

1110 Concordance factors are shown above the branches that were resolved by at least  
1111 one marker ( $\geq 0.16$  for all markers and  $\geq 0.33$  for the best markers).

1112

1113 **Fig. 8.** Primary concordance trees resulting from the Bayesian concordance analyses  
1114 including isolates from the *C. dracaenophilum* complex. A. All markers (ACT, CHS-1,  
1115 GAPDH, HIS3, ITS and TUB2). B. Best markers (GAPDH, HIS3 and TUB2).

1116 Concordance factors are shown above the branches that were resolved by at least  
1117 one marker ( $\geq 0.16$  for all markers and  $\geq 0.33$  for the best markers).

1118

1119 **Fig. 9.** Primary concordance trees resulting from the Bayesian concordance analyses  
1120 including isolates from the *C. gigasporum* complex. A. All markers (ACT, CAL, CHS-  
1121 1, GAPDH, GS, HIS3, ITS and TUB2). B. Best markers (CAL, GAPDH and GS).

1122 Concordance factors are shown above the branches that were resolved by at least  
1123 one marker ( $\geq 0.13$  for all markers and  $\geq 0.33$  for the best markers).

1124

1125 **Fig. 10.** Primary concordance trees resulting from the Bayesian concordance  
1126 analyses including isolates from the *C. gloeosporioides* complex. A. All markers  
1127 (APN2, APN2/MAT-IGS, CAL, GAPDH, GAP2-IGS, GS and TUB2). B. Best markers  
1128 (APN2, APN2/MAT-IGS and GAP2-IGS). Concordance factors are shown above the  
1129 branches that were resolved by at least one marker ( $\geq 0.14$  for all markers and  $\geq 0.33$   
1130 for the best markers).

1131

1132 **Fig. 11.** Primary concordance trees resulting from the Bayesian concordance  
1133 analyses including isolates from the *C. magnum* complex. A. All markers (ACT, CHS-  
1134 1, GAPDH, HIS3, ITS and TUB2). B. Best markers (GAPDH, HIS3 and TUB2).  
1135 Concordance factors are shown above the branches that were resolved by at least  
1136 one marker ( $\geq 0.16$  for all markers and  $\geq 0.33$  for the best markers).

1137

1138 **Fig. 12.** Primary concordance trees resulting from the Bayesian concordance  
1139 analyses including isolates from the *C. orbiculare* complex. A. All markers (ACT,  
1140 CHS-1, GAPDH, GS, HIS3, ITS and TUB2). B. Best markers (HIS3, GAPDH and  
1141 GS). Concordance factors are shown above the branches that were resolved by at  
1142 least one marker ( $\geq 0.14$  for all markers and  $\geq 0.33$  for the best markers).

1143

1144 **Fig. 13.** Primary concordance trees resulting from the Bayesian concordance  
1145 analyses including isolates from the *C. orchidearum* complex. A. All markers (ACT,  
1146 CHS-1, GAPDH, HIS3, ITS and TUB2). B. Best markers (CHS-1, HIS3 and TUB2).

1147 Concordance factors are shown above the branches that were resolved by at least  
1148 one marker ( $\geq 0.16$  for all markers and  $\geq 0.33$  for the best markers).

1149

1150 **Fig. 14.** Primary concordance trees resulting from the Bayesian concordance  
1151 analyses including isolates from the *C. spaethianum* complex. A. All markers (ACT,  
1152 GAPDH, ITS and TUB2). B. Best markers (ACT, GAPDH, and TUB2). Concordance  
1153 factors are shown above the branches that were resolved by at least one marker  
1154 ( $\geq 0.25$  for all markers and  $\geq 0.33$  for the best markers).

1155

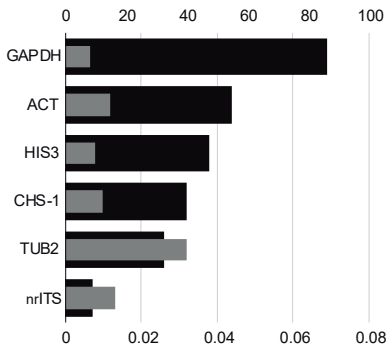
1156 **Fig. 15.** Primary concordance trees resulting from the Bayesian concordance  
1157 analyses including isolates from the *C. truncatum* complex. A. All markers (ACT,  
1158 GAPDH, ITS and TUB2). B. Best markers (ACT, GAPDH, and TUB2). Concordance  
1159 factors are shown above the branches that were resolved by at least one marker  
1160 ( $\geq 0.25$  for all markers and  $\geq 0.33$  for the best markers).

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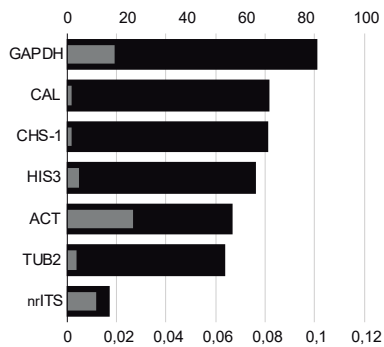
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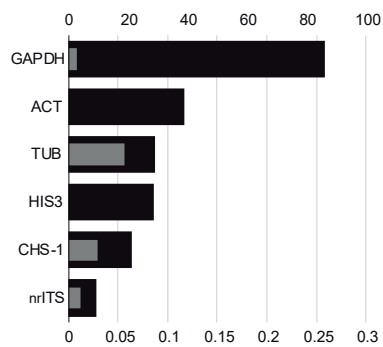
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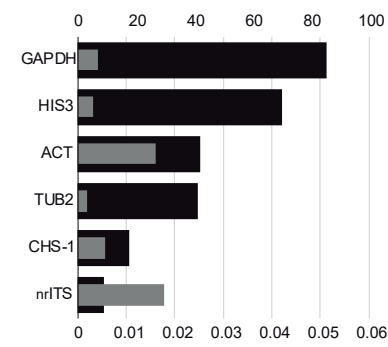
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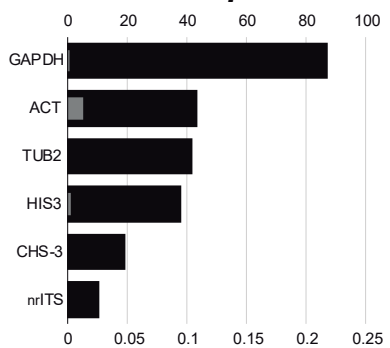
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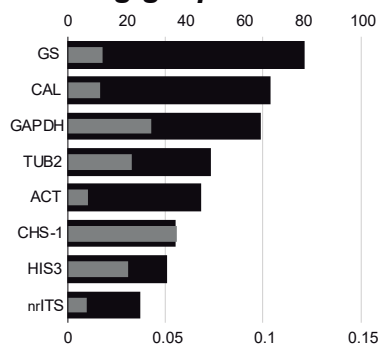
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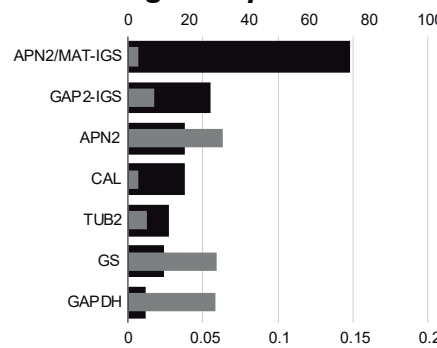
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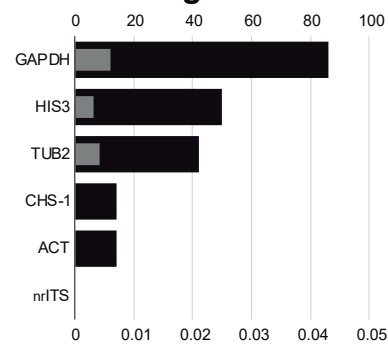
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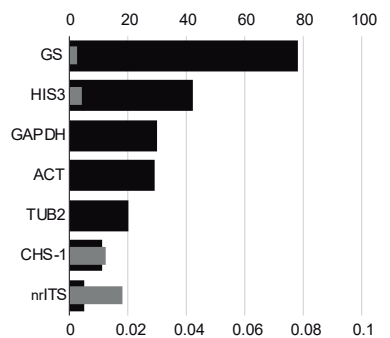
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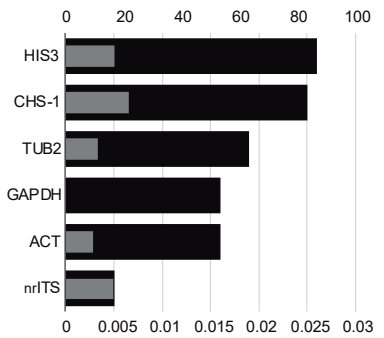
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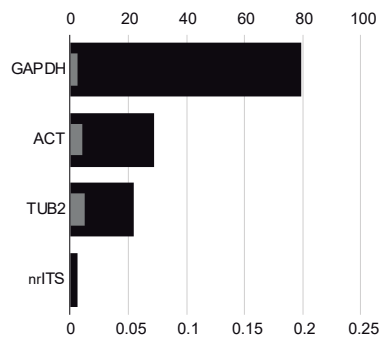
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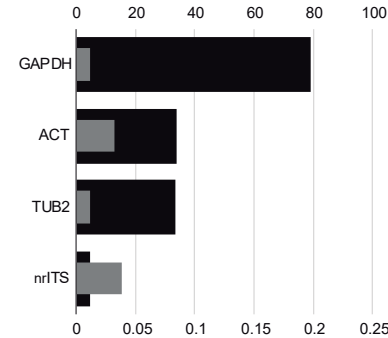
***C. orchidearum s. l.***



***C. spaethianum s. l.***

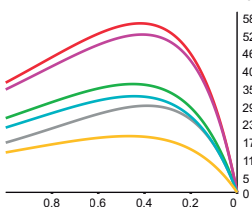
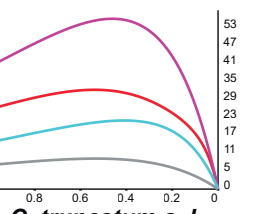
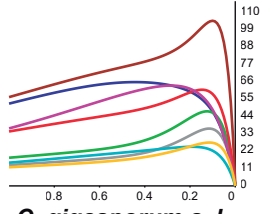
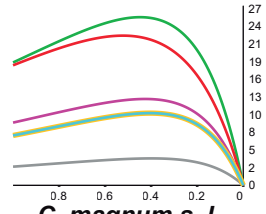
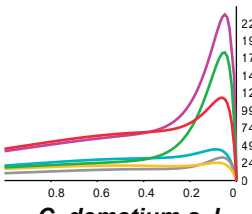
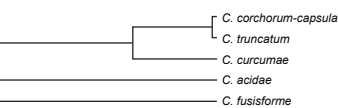
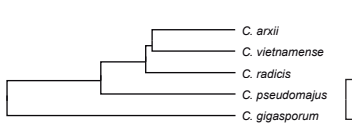
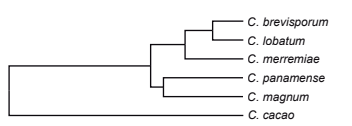
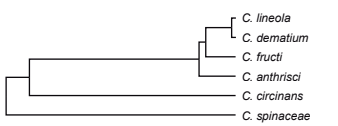
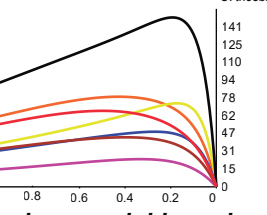
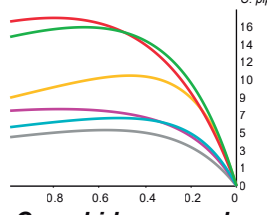
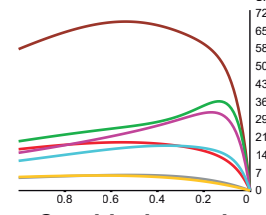
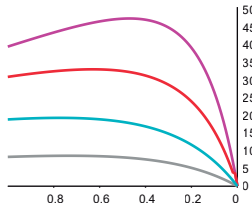
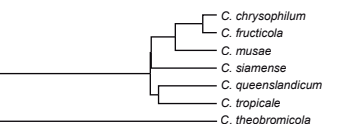
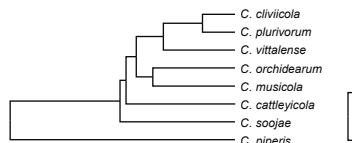
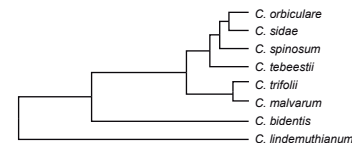
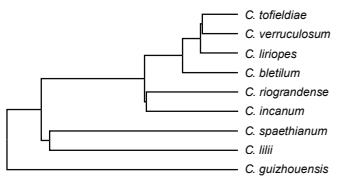
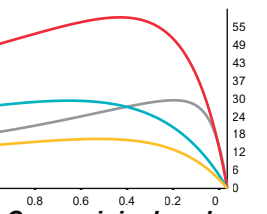
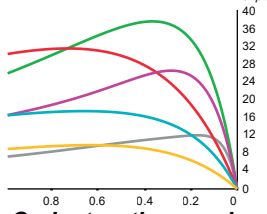
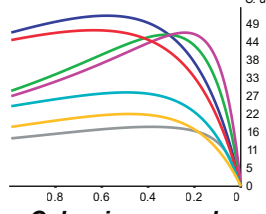
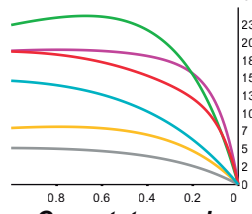
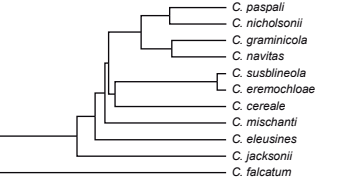
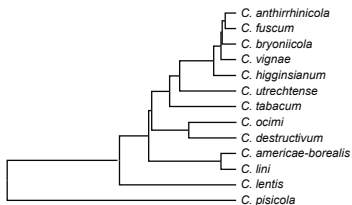
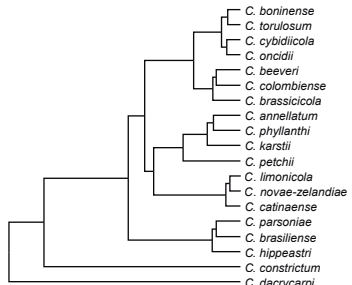
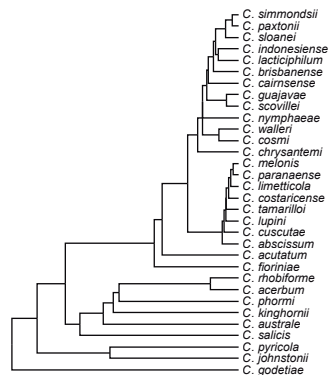


***C. truncatum s. l.***



Barcode gap

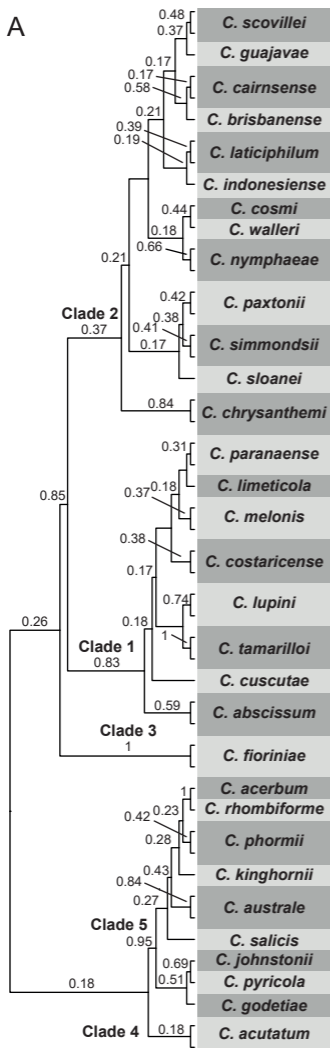
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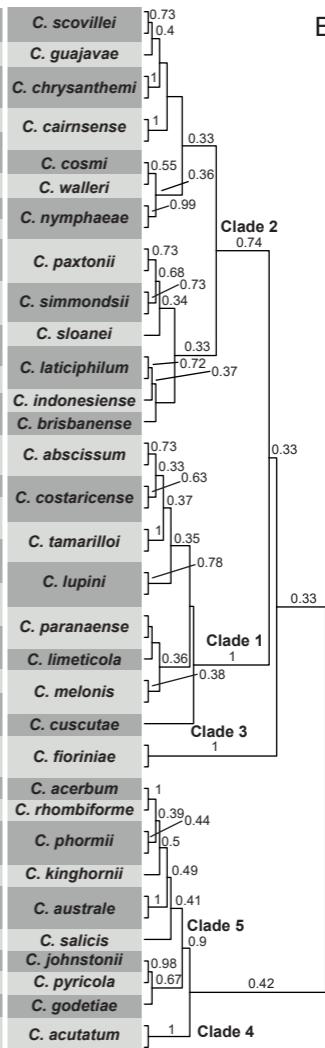




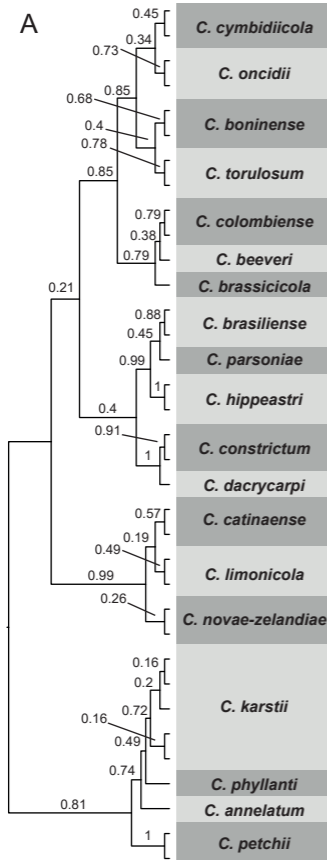
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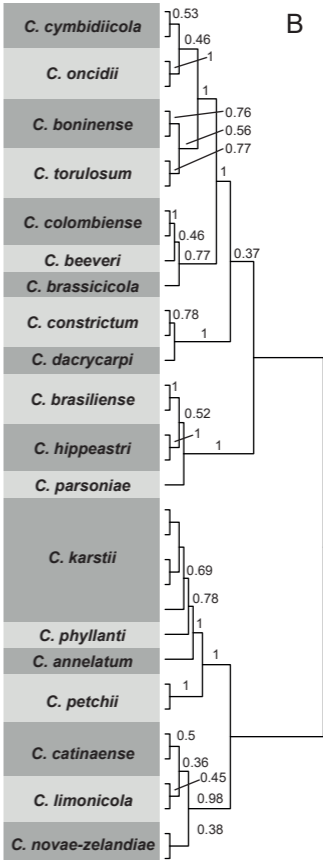
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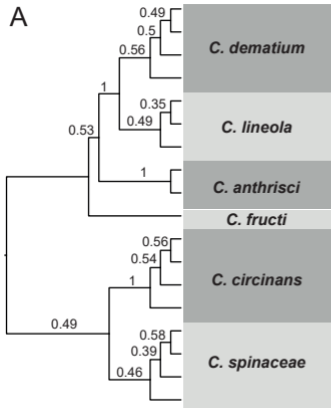
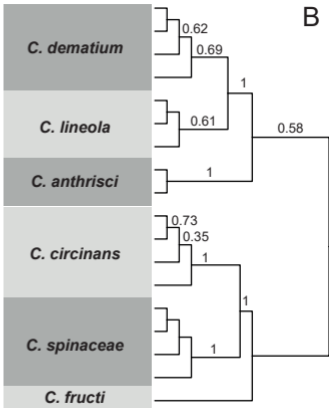


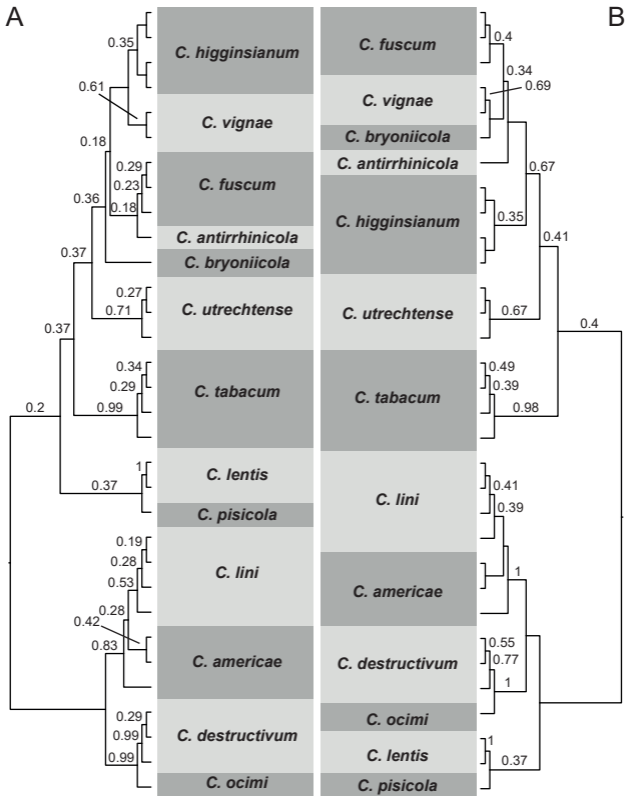
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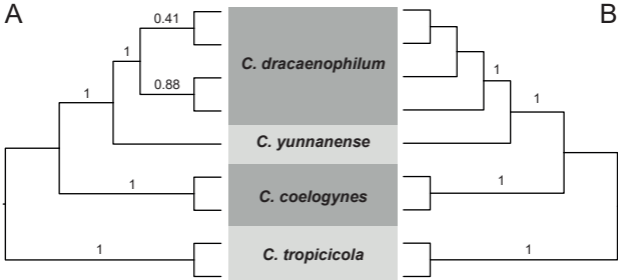


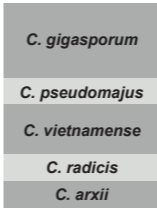
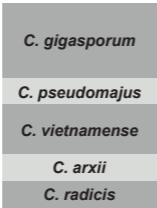
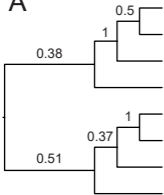
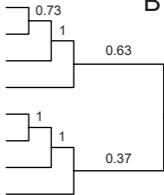
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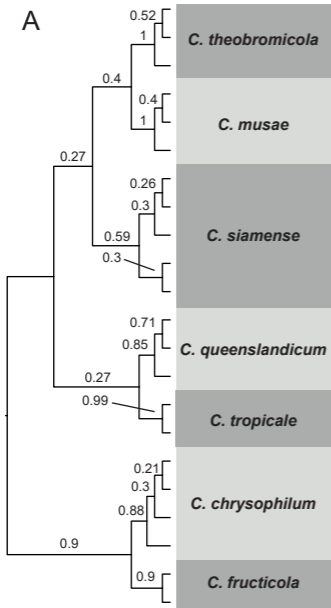
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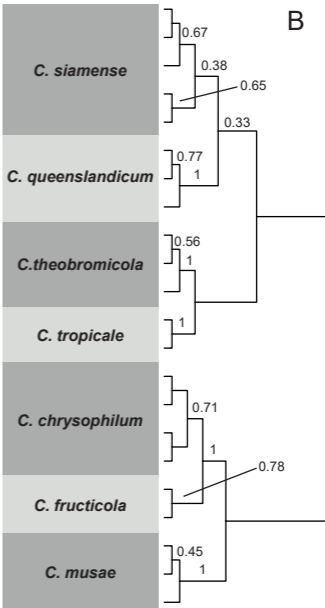


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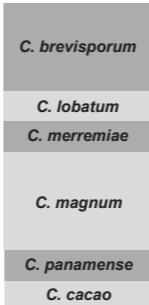
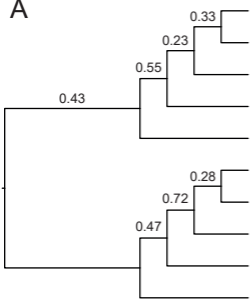
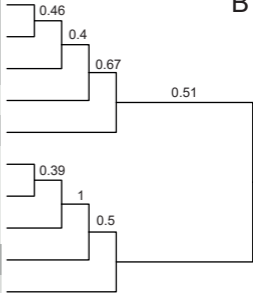
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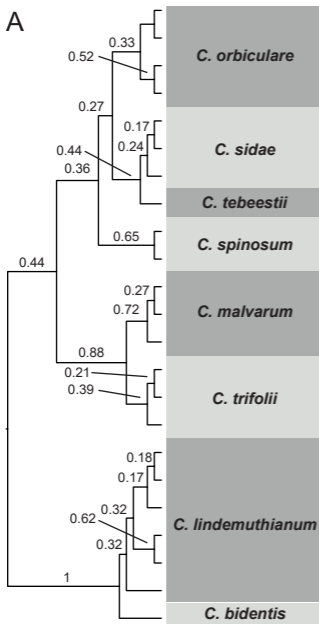
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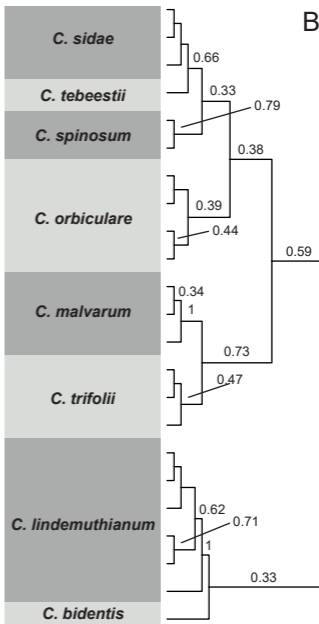


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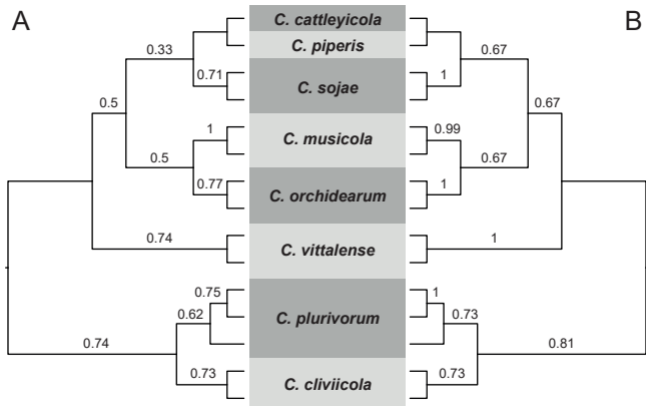
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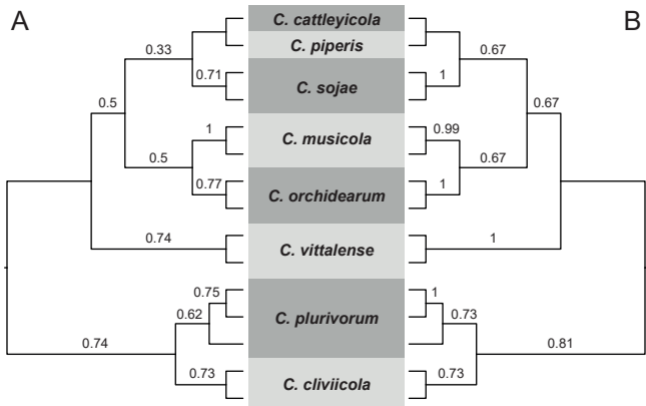
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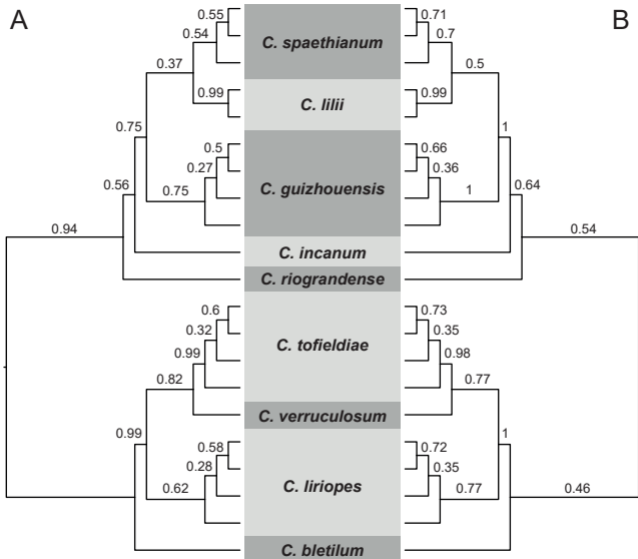
A



B



A



B

