A consensus phylogenomic approach highlights paleopolyploid and rapid radiation in the

history of Ericales

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Running Head: A consensus approach to resolving the history of Ericales

ABSTRACT

Premise of study: Large genomic datasets offer the promise of resolving historically recalcitrant

species relationships. However, different methodologies can yield conflicting results, especially

when clades have experienced ancient, rapid diversification. Here, we analyzed the ancient

radiation of Ericales and explored sources of uncertainty related to species tree inference,

conflicting gene tree signal, and the inferred placement of gene and genome duplications.

Methods: We used a hierarchical clustering approach, with tree-based homology and orthology

detection, to generate six filtered phylogenomic matrices consisting of data from 97

transcriptomes and genomes. Support for species relationships was inferred from multiple lines

of evidence including shared gene duplications, gene tree conflict, gene-wise edge-based

analyses, concatenation, and coalescent-based methods and is summarized in a consensus

framework.

Key Results: Our consensus approach supported a topology largely concordant with previous

studies, but suggests that the data are not capable of resolving several ancient relationships due to

lack of informative characters, sensitivity to methodology, and extensive gene tree conflict

correlated with paleopolyploidy. We found evidence of a whole genome duplication before the

radiation of all or most ericalean families and demonstrate that tree topology and heterogeneous

evolutionary rates impact the inferred placement of genome duplications.

*Conclusions***:** Our approach provides a novel hypothesis regarding the history of Ericales and

confidently resolves most nodes. We demonstrate that a series of ancient divergences are

unresolvable with these data. Whether paleopolyploidy is a major source of the observed

phylogenetic conflict warrants further investigation.

Keywords: consensus topology; Ericales; gene duplication; gene tree conflict; multifurcation;

phylogenetic uncertainty; phylogenomics; polytomy; rapid radiation; whole genome duplication

INTRODUCTION

The flowering plant clade Ericales contains several ecologically important lineages that shape the structure and function of ecosystems including tropical rainforests (e.g. Lecythidaceae, Sapotaceae, Ebenaceae), heathlands (e.g. Ericaceae), and open habitats (e.g. Primulaceae, Polemoniaceae) around the globe (ter Steege et al., 2006; Hedwall et al., 2013; He et al., 2014; Memiaghe et al., 2016; Moquet et al., 2017). With 22 families comprising ca. 12,000 species (Chase et al., 2016; Stevens, 2001 onward), Ericales are a diverse and disparate clade with an array of economically and culturally important plants. These include agricultural crops such as blueberries (Ericaceae), kiwifruits (Actinidiaceae), sapotas (Sapotaceae), Brazil nuts (Lecythidaceae), and tea (Theaceae) as well as ornamental plants such as cyclamens and primroses (Primulaceae), rhododendrons (Ericaceae), and phloxes (Polemoniaceae). Parasitism has arisen multiple times in Ericales (Monotropoidiae:Ericaceae, Mitrastemonaceae), as has carnivory in the American pitcher plants (Sarraceniaceae). Although Ericales have been a well-recognized clade throughout the literature (Chase et al., 1993; Anderberg et al., 2002; Schönenberger et al., 2005; Rose et al., 2018, Leebens-Mack et al. 2019), the evolutionary relationships among major clades within Ericales remain contentious.

One of the first molecular studies investigating these deep relationships used three plastid and two mitochondrial loci; the authors concluded that the dataset was unable to resolve several interfamilial relationships (Anderber et al., 2002). These relationships were revisited by Schönenberger et al. (2005) with 11 loci (two nuclear, two mitochondrial, and seven chloroplast), who found that maximum parsimony and Bayesian analyses provided support for the resolution of some early diverging lineages. Rose et al. (2018) utilized three nuclear, nine mitochondrial, and 13 chloroplast loci in a concatenated supermatrix consisting of 49,435

aligned sites and including 4,531 ericalean species but with 87.6% missing data. Despite the

extensive taxon sampling utilized in Rose et al. (2018), several relationships were only poorly

supported, including several deep divergences that the authors show to be the result of an

ancient, rapid radiation. The 1KP initiative (Leebens-Mack et al. 2019) analyzed trascriptomes

from across green plants, including 25 species of Ericales; their results suggest that whole

genome duplications (WGDs) have occurred several times within Ericales, but the equivocal

support they recover at several deep ericalean nodes highlights the need for a more throughout

investigation for conflicting interfamilial relationships within the group and the biological and

methodological sources of phylogenetic incongruence (Anderber et al., 2002; Bremer et al.,

2002; Schönenberger et al., 2005; Rose et al., 2018; Leebens-Mack et al., 2019).

Despite the increasing availability of genome-scale datasets, many relationships across

the Tree of Life remain controversial, as research groups recover different answers to the same

evolutionary questions, often with seemingly strong support (e.g. Shen et al., 2017). One benefit

of genome-scale data for phylogenetics (i.e. phylogenomics) is the ability to examine conflicting

signal within and among datasets, which can be used to help understand conflicting species tree

results and conduct increasingly comprehensive investigations as to why some relationships

remain elusive. A key finding in the phylogenomics literature has been the high prevalence of

conflicting phylogenetic signal among genes at contentious nodes (e.g. Brown et al. 2017b;

Reddy et al., 2017; Vargas et al., 2017; Walker et al., 2018a). Such conflict may be the result of

biological processes (e.g., introgression, incomplete lineage sorting, horizontal gene transfer),

but can also occur due to lack of phylogenetic information or other methodological artifacts

(Richards et al., 2018; Gonçalves et al., 2019; Walker et al., 2019). By identifying regions of

high conflict, it becomes possible to determine areas of the phylogeny where additional analyses

are warranted and future sampling efforts might prove useful. Transcriptomes provide

information from hundreds to thousands of coding sequences per sample and have elucidated

many of the most contentious relationships in the green plant phylogeny (e.g. Simon et al., 2012;

Wickett et al., 2014; Walker et al., 2017; Leebens-Mack et al., 2019). Transcriptomes also

provide information about gene and genome duplications not provided by most other common

sequencing protocols for non-model organisms. Gene duplications are often associated with

important molecular evolutionary events in taxa, but duplicated genes are also inherited through

descent and should therefore contain evidence for how clades are related. By leveraging the

multiple lines of phylogenetic evidence and the large amount of data available from

transcriptomes, several phylogenetic hypotheses can be generated and tested to gain a holistic

understanding of contentious nodes in the Tree of Life.

In this study, we sought to understand the evolutionary history of Ericales by analyzing

coding sequences from thousands of homolog clusters to investigate support for contentious

interfamilial relationships, ancient gene and genome duplications, heterogeneous rates of

evolution, and conflicting signal among genes. We examined the deep relationships of Ericales

to determine whether the data strongly support any resolution. We include the possibility of there

not being enough data to resolve these relationships (e.g., a hard or soft polytomy) despite

previous resolutions and thousands of transcriptomic sequences. While future developments in

methods and sampling will likely continue to elucidate many contentious relationships across the

plant phylogeny, we consider whether a polytomy may represent a more justifiable

representation of the evolutionary history of a clade than any single fully bifurcating species tree

given our current resources.

In applying a phylogenetic consensus approach that considers several methodological

alternatives we examined disagreement among methods. We explore this approach as a means of

providing valuable information about whether the available data may be insufficient to

confidently resolve a single, bifurcating species tree, even if a given methodology may suggest a

resolved topology with strong support. Our investigation of the evolution of Ericales may be

particularly well-suited to initiate a discussion about the impact of topological uncertainty on our

ability to confidently resolve the placement of rare evolutionary events (e.g. whole genome

duplication, major morphological innovation), the prevalence of biological polytomies across the

Tree of Life, and when polytomies may be considered useful representations of evolutionary

relationships in the postgenomic era.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Taxon sampling and de novo assembly procedures—We assembled a dataset consisting of

coding sequence data from 97 transcriptomes and genomes, the most extensive exome dataset for

Ericales to date (Appendix S1; see Supplemental Data with this article). Samples assembled from

raw reads were done so with Trinity version 2.5.1 using default parameters and the "--

trimmomatic" option (Kodama et al., 2011; Grabherr et al., 2011; Matasci et al., 2014).

Assembled reads were translated using TransDecoder v5.0.2 (Haas et al., 2013) with the option

to retain BLAST hits to a custom protein database consisting of *Beta vulgaris*, *Arabidopsis*

thaliana, and *Daucus carota* obtained from Ensembl plants (https://plants.ensembl.org/). The

translated amino acid sequences from each assembly were reduced by clustering with CD-HIT

version 4.6 with settings -c 0.995 -n 5 (Fu et al., 2012). As a quality control step, nucleotide

sequences for the chloroplast genes *rbcL* and *matK* were extracted from each assembly using a

custom script (see Data Accessibility Statement) and then queried using BLAST against the

NCBI online database (Altschul et al., 1990). In cases where the top hits were to a species not

closely related to that of the query, additional sequences were investigated and if contamination,

misidentification, or other issues seemed likely, the transcriptome was not included in further

analyses. The final transcriptome sampling included 86 ingroup taxa spanning 17 of the 22

families within Ericales as recognized in APG VI (Appendix S1; Chase et al., 2016).

Homology inference—We used the hierarchical clustering procedure from Walker et al. (2018b)

for homology identification. In short, the method involves performing an all-by-all BLAST

procedure on user-defined clades; homolog clusters identified within each clade are then

combined recursively with clusters of a sister clade based on sequence similarity until clusters

from all clades have been combined. To assign taxa to groups for clustering, we identified

coding sequences from the genes *rpoC2*, *rbcL*, *nhdF*, and *matK* using the same script as for the

quality control step. Sequences from each gene were then aligned with MAFFT v7.271 (Katoh et

al., 2002; Katoh and Standley, 2013). The alignments were concatenated using the command

pxcat in phyx (Brown et al., 2017a) and the supermatrix was used to estimate a species tree with

RAxML v8.2.12 (Stamatakis, 2014). The resulting tree was used to manually assign taxa to one

of eight clades for initial homolog clustering (Appendix S2). Homolog clustering within each

group was performed following the methods of Yang and Smith (2014).

Nucleotide sequences for the inferred homologs within each group were aligned with

MAFFT v7.271 and columns with less than 10% occupancy were removed with the pxclsq

command in phyx. Homolog trees were estimated with RAxML, unless the homolog had >500

tips, in which case FastTree v2.1.8 was used (Price et al., 2010). Tips with branch lengths longer

than 1.5 substitutions/site were trimmed because the presence of highly divergent sequences in

homolog clusters is often the result of misidentified homology (Yang and Smith, 2014). When a

clade is formed of sequences from a single taxon, it likely represents either in-paralogs or

alternative splice sites and since neither of these provide phylogenetic information, we retained

only the tip with the longest sequence, excluding gaps introduced by alignment. This procedure

was repeated with refined clusters twice using the same settings. Homologs among each of the

eight groups were then recursively combined (https://github.com/jfwalker/Clustering) and

homolog trees were again estimated and refined with the same settings except that internal

branches longer than 1.5 substitutions/site were also cut—again to reduce potentially

misidentified homology. Homolog trees were again re-estimated and refined by cutting terminal

branches longer than 0.8 substitutions/site and internal branches longer than 1.0

substitutions/site. The final homolog set contained 9469 clusters.

Initial ortholog identification and species tree estimation—Orthologs were extracted from

homolog trees using the rooted tree (RT) method, which allows for robust orthology detection

even after genome duplications (Yang and Smith, 2014). For the RT procedure, seven cornalean

taxa as well as *Arabidopsis thaliana* and *Beta vulgaris* were used as outgroups (Appendix S1).

Previous work has suggested that Ericales is sister to the euasterids with Cornales sister to

Ericales+euasterids (Stevens, 2001 onwards), therefore we treated *Helianthus annuus* and

Solanum lycopersicum as ingroup taxa for the purposes of the RT procedure so that orthologs

were able to be rooted on a non-ericalean taxon after ortholog identification. Orthologs were not

extracted from homolog groups with more than 5000 tips because of the uncertainty in

reconstructing very large homolog trees (Walker et al., 2018b). Orthologs with sequences from

fewer than 50 ingroup taxa were discarded to reduce the amount of missing data in downstream

analyses. Because our interest is in addressing phylogenetic questions, rather than those of gene

functionality, here we use the term ortholog to describe clusters of sequences that have been

inferred to be monophyletic based on their position within inferred homolog trees after

accounting for gene duplication. The tree-aware ortholog identification employed here should

provide the best available safeguard against misidentified orthology that could mislead

phylogenetic analyses (Eisen, 1998; Gabaldón, 2008; Yang and Smith, 2014; Brown and

Thomson, 2016).

The resulting ortholog trees were then filtered to require at least one euasterid taxon,

Helianthus annuus or *Solanum lycopersicum*, for use as an outgroup for rooting within each

ortholog. If both outgroups were present in an ortholog tree but no bipartition existed with only

those taxa (i.e. the tree could not be rooted on both), the ortholog was discarded because the

monophyly of the euasterids is well-established. Terminal branches longer than 0.8 were again

trimmed, resulting in a refined dataset containing 387 orthologs. Final nucleotide alignments

were estimated with PRANK v.150803 (Löytynoja, 2014) and cleaned for a minimum of 30%

column occupancy using the pxclsq function in phyx. Alignments for the 387 orthologs were

concatenated using pxcat in phyx and a maximum likelihood (ML) species tree and rapid

bootstrap support (200 replicates) with was inferred using RAxML v8.2.4 with the command

raxmlHPC-PTHREADS, the option -f a, and a separate GTRCAT model of evolution estimated

for each ortholog; this resulted in a topology we refer to as the maximum likelihood topology

(MLT). In order to more fully characterize the likelihood space for these data, 200 regular (i.e.

non-rapid) bootstraps with and without the MLT as a starting tree were conducted in RAxML

using the -b option in separate runs. Trees for each individual ortholog were also estimated

individually using RAxML, with the GTRCAT model of evolution and 200 rapid bootstraps

using the option -f a. A coalescent-based maximum quartet support species tree (MQSST) was

estimated using ASTRAL v5.6.2 (Zhang et al., 2018) with the resulting 387 ortholog trees. In

order to investigate the possible effect of ML tree search algorithm on phylogenetic inference for

the 387 ortholog supermatrix, an additional ML tree was estimated using RAxML v8.2.11 and

the command raxmlHPC-PTHREADS-AVX and with IQ-TREE v1.6.1 with -m GTR+Γ -n 0 and

model partitions for each ortholog specified with the -q option (Nguyen et al., 2015). Likelihood

scores of the best scoring tree for each of these tree search algorithms were compared to

determine whether the MLT was the topology with the best likelihood score.

Gene-wise log-likelihood comparisons—A comparison of gene-wise likelihood support for the

MLT against a conflicting backbone topology recovered in all 200 rapid bootstrap replicates (i.e.

the rapid bootstrap topology, RBT) was conducted using a two-topology analysis (Shen et al.,

2017; Walker et al., 2018a). We chose to investigate the RBT topology because even though the

MLT received the best likelihood score recovered by any of the tree search algorithms, the MLT

was never recovered by RAxML rapid bootstrap replicates, suggesting that the MLT was not

broadly supported in likelihood space. A three-topology comparison was also conducted by

calculating the gene-wise log-likelihoods of a third topology where the MLT was modified such

that the interfamilial backbone relationships were those recovered in the ASTRAL topology

(AT); this constructed tree was used in lieu of the actual ASTRAL topology to minimize the

effect of intrafamilial topological differences on likelihood calculations. In both tests, the ML

score for each gene is calculated while constraining the topology under multiple alternatives.

Branch lengths were optimized for each input topology and GTR+Γ was optimized for each

supermatrix partition (i.e. each ortholog) for each topology (Shen et al., 2017; Walker et al.,

2018a). Results from both comparisons were visualized using a custom R script (R Core Team,

2019).

An edge-based analysis was performed to compare the likelihoods of competing

topologies while allowing gene tree conflict to exist outside the relationship of interest (Walker

et al., 2018a). Our protocol was similar to that of Walker et al. (2018a), except that instead of a

defined "TREE SET", we used constraint trees with clades defining key bipartitions

corresponding to each of three competing topologies using the program EdgeTest.py (Walker et

al., 2019). The likelihood for each gene was calculated using RAxML-ng with the GTR+Γ model

of evolution, using the brlopt nr_safe option and an epsilon value of 1×10^{-6} while a given

relationship was constrained (Kozlov et al., 2019). The log-likelihood of each gene was then

summed to give a likelihood score for that relationship. An additional edge-based analysis was

conducted to investigate the placement of Ebenaceae using the program Phyckle (Smith et al.,

2018), which uses a supermatrix and a set of constraint trees specifying conflicting relationships

and reports, for each gene, the ML as well as the difference between the best and second-best

topology. This allows quantification of gene-wise support at a single edge as well as how

strongly the relationship is supported in terms of likelihood.

Gene duplication comparative analysis—Homolog clusters were filtered such that sequences

shorter than half the median length of their cluster and clusters with more than 4000 sequences

were removed in order to minimize artifacts due to uncertainty in homolog tree estimation.

Homolog trees were then re-estimated with IQ-TREE with the GTR+Γ model and SH-aLRT

support followed by cutting of internal branches longer than 1.0 and terminal branches longer

than 0.8 inferred substitutions per base pair. Rooted ingroup clades were extracted with the

procedure from Yang et al. (2015) with all non-ericalean taxa as outgroups. Gene duplications

were inferred with the program phyparts, requiring at least 50% SH-aLRT support in order to

avoid the inclusion of very poorly supported would-be duplications (Smith et al., 2015). By

mapping gene duplications in this way to competing topological hypotheses (i.e. the MLT, RBT,

and AT), as well as several hypothetical topologies employed in order to reveal the number of

gene duplications uniquely shared between clades that were never recovered as sister in the

species trees, we determined the number of duplications uniquely shared among several ericalean

clades.

When using tree-based methods to infer the placement of gene duplications, the location

to which duplications are mapped depends on the topology of the phylogeny. Therefore, a gene

duplication can appear along a branch in the species tree other than that for which the homolog

tree actually contains evidence because duplications are mapped to the bipartition in the species

tree that contains *all* the taxa that share a given duplication in the homolog tree. For example, if

in a homolog tree, taxon A and taxon B share a gene duplication, but in the species tree taxon C

is sister to taxon A, and taxon B sister to those, then the duplication will be mapped to the branch

that includes all three taxa, because the duplication is mapped to the smallest clade that includes

both taxon A and taxon B. However, if the duplication is instead mapped to a species tree where

A and B are sister, the relevant duplication would instead be mapped to the correct, more

exclusive branch that specifies the clade for which there is evidence of that duplication in the

homolog tree (i.e. only taxa A and B). Once it has been determined how many duplications are

actually supported by the homolog trees, comparisons between competing species relationships

can be made. It is important to note that incomplete taxon sampling and other biases should be

considered when applying such a comparative test of gene duplication number. Assuming there

are duplicated genes present in the taxa of interest, clades with a greater number of sampled taxa

or more complete transcriptomes will likely share more duplications simply due to the fact that

more genes will have been sampled in the dataset. Furthermore, the location to which a

duplication is mapped will depend on which assemblies contain transcripts from duplicated

genes, whether or not those duplicated genes are present in the genome of any particular

organism. Therefore, we investigate the use of gene duplications shared amongst clades as an

additional, relative metric of topological support capable of corroborating other results (i.e. that

if clades share many gene duplications unique to them, they are more likely to be closely

related), while recognizing that the absolute number of duplications shared by various clades are

impacted by imperfect sampling.

Synthesizing support for competing topologies—We reviewed support for each of the three

main topological hypotheses (i.e. MLT, RBT and AT) and determined the most commonly

supported interfamilial backbone. Because the comparative gene duplication analysis and

constraint tree analyses both supported the RBT over other candidates, and the MLT was found

to occupy a narrow peak in likelihood space based on bootstrapping and a two-topology test, the

RBT was the most commonly supported backbone and was further explored with additional

measures of support. Quartet support was assessed on the RBT using the program Quartet

Sampling with 1000 replicates (Pease et al., 2018). We used this procedure to measure quartet

concordance (QC), quartet differential (QD), quartet informativeness (QI), and quartet fidelity

(QF). Briefly, QC measures how often the concordant relationship is recovered with respect to

other possible relationships, QD helps identify if a relationship has a dominant alternative, and

QI correspond to the ability of the data to resolve a relationship of interest, where a quartet that is

at least 2.0 log-likelihood (LL) better than the alternatives is considered informative. Finally, QF

aids in identifying rogue taxa (Pease et al., 2018). Gene conflict with the corroborated topology

was assessed using the bipartition method as implemented in phyparts using gene trees for the

387 orthologs, which were first rooted on the outgroups *Helianthus annuus* and *Solanum*

lycopersicum using a ranked approach with the phyx command pxrr. Gene conflict was assessed

both requiring node support (BS≥70) and without any support requirement; the support

requirement should help reduce noise in the analysis, but we also ran the analysis without a

support requirement to ensure that potentially credible (but only partially-supported) bipartitions

were not overlooked. Results for both were visualized using the program phypartspiecharts

(https://github.com/mossmatters/phyloscripts/).

Expanded ortholog datasets—In order to explore the impact of dataset construction, orthologs

were inferred from the homolog trees as for the 387 ortholog set but with modifications to taxon

requirements and refinement procedures described below. For each dataset, sequences were

aligned separately with both MAFFT and PRANK and cleaned for 30% occupancy. A

supermatrix was constructed with each and an ML tree was estimated with IQ-TREE with and

without a separate GTR+Γ model partition for each ortholog in order to test the effect of model

on phylogenetic inference. Individual ortholog trees were estimated with RAxML and used to

construct an MQSST with ASTRAL.

2045 ortholog set—Orthologs were filtered such that there was no minimum number of taxa and

at least two tips from each of the following five groups: 1) Primulaceae; 2) Polemoniaceae and

Fouquieriaceae; 3) Lecythidaceae; 4) outgroups including *Solanum* and *Helianthus* as well as

Marcgraviaceae and Balsaminaceae (i.e. the earliest diverging ericalean clade in all previous

analyses); and 5) all other taxa. This filtering resulted in a dataset with 2045 orthologs. Ortholog

tree support for conflicting placements of Ebenaceae was assessed for the PRANK-aligned

orthologs using Phyckle.

4682 ortholog set—Orthologs were not filtered for any taxon requirements. Sequences were

aligned with MAFFT, ortholog trees were estimated with RAxML and terminal branches longer

than 0.8 were trimmed. Sequences were then realigned separately with MAFFT and PRANK and

cleaned as before.

1899, 661, and 449 ortholog sets—To assess the effect of requiring *Helianthus* and *Solanum*

outgroups in the 387 ortholog set and to further explore the effect of taxon requirements on the

inferred topology, each homolog tree that produced an ortholog in that dataset was re-estimated

in IQ-TREE with SH-aLRT support. Calculating this support allowed visual assessment of

whether uncertain homolog tree construction was affecting the ortholog identification process.

This did not appear to be a major issue as orthologs (i.e. clades of ingroup tips subtended by

outgroup tips) within homolog trees typically received strong support as monophyletic.

Following homolog tree re-estimation, orthologs were identified as described above with no

minimum taxa requirement. Sequences were aligned with MAFFT and any taxon with >75%

missing data for a given ortholog was removed. Filtered alignments were then realigned

separately with both MAFFT and PRANK, and cleaned for 30% column occupancy. This

resulted in a dataset with 1899 orthologs. To investigate the influence of taxon requirements, two

subsets of this 1899 ortholog set were generated by requiring a minimum of 30 and 50 taxa,

resulting in 661 and 449 orthologs respectively. Gene tree conflict was assessed for the 449

MAFFT-aligned dataset by rooting all ortholog trees on all taxa in Balsaminaceae and

Marcgraviaceae (i.e. the balsaminoid Ericales) since all previous analyses showed this clade to

be sister to the rest of Ericales; phyparts was then used to map ortholog tree bipartitions to the

ML tree for this dataset and the results were visualized with phypartspiecharts.

Estimating substitutions supporting contentious clades—In order to gain additional insight into

the magnitude of signal present in ortholog alignments informing various relationships, we

developed a procedure that identifies clades of interest within an ortholog tree and uses the

estimated branch length leading to that clade, multiplied by the length of the corresponding

sequence alignment, to estimate the number of substitutions implied by that branch. Applying

this approach to the trees from the 449 ortholog MAFFT-aligned dataset with appropriate taxon

sampling to allow rooting on a member of the balsaminoid Ericales, we calculated the

approximate number of substitutions that implied by the branch leading to the most recent

common ancestor (MRCA) of two or more of the following clades: Primulaceae,

Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae, Lecythidaceae, Ebenaceae, and Sapotaceae. In addition, we

assessed substitution support for several non-controversial relationships, namely that each of the

following was monophyletic: Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae, Lecythidaceae, and the non-

balsaminoid Ericales. Mean and median values for substitution support were calculated and a

distribution of these values was plotted using custom R scripts.

Synthesis of uncertainty, consensus topology, and genome duplication inference—We took

into consideration all previous results, including those of the expanded datasets, gene tree

conflict, and substitution support, to determine which relationships were generally well-

supported by the results of this study, and which were not. In cases where an interfamilial or

intrafamilial relationship remained irresolvable when considering the preponderance of the

evidence (i.e. was not supported by plurality of methods employed after accounting for nested,

conflicting relationships), that relationship was not included in the consensus topology. Gene

duplications were mapped to the consensus topology using the methods of the comparative

duplication analysis described above. Internodes on inferred species trees with notably high

numbers of gene duplications were used as one line of evidence for assessing putative WGDs.

Further investigation into possible genome duplications was conducted by plotting the number of

synonymous substitutions (K_s) between paralogs according to the methods of Yang et al. (2015)

after removing sequences shorter than half the median length of their cluster. Multispecies K_s

values (i.e. ortholog divergence K_s values) for selected combinations of taxa were generated

according to the methods of Wang et al. (2018). The effect of evolutionary rate-heterogeneity

among ericalean species was investigated by conducting a multispecies K_s analysis of each non-

balsaminoid ericalean taxon against *Impatiens balsamifera*, since all evidence suggests each of

these species pairs have the same MCRA (i.e. the deepest node in the Ericales phylogeny).

Because each pair has the same MRCA, the resulting ortholog peak in each case, represents the

same speciation event and differences in the location of this peak among K_s plots are the result of

differences in evolutionary rate among species. In rare cases were the location of the ortholog

peak was ambiguous (i.e. these were two or more local maxima near the global maximum) the

plot was not considered in the rate-heterogeneity analysis. All single and multispecies K_s plots

were generated using custom R scripts.

RESULTS

Initial 387 ortholog dataset—The concatenated supermatrix for the 387 ortholog dataset

contained 441,819 aligned sites with 76.1% ortholog occupancy and 57.8% matrix occupancy.

The MLT recovered by RAxML v8.2.4 is shown in Figure 1. The 200 rapid bootstrap trees all

contained the same backbone topology (i.e. the RBT) that differed from that of the MLT by one

relationship. However, regardless of which tree search algorithm was used, the likelihood score

for the MLT was better than for any other topology recovered for this dataset. This indicates that

while the MLT is only supported by a narrow peak in likelihood space, it was indeed the

topology with the best likelihood based on the methods employed for the 387 ortholog dataset.

The MLT contained the clade Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae as sister to a clade consisting of

Ebenaceae, Sapotaceae, and what is referred to here as the "Core" Ericales: the clade that

includes Actinidiaceae, Diapensiaceae, Ericaceae, Pentaphylacaceae, Roridulaceae,

Sarraceniaceae, Styracaceae, Symplocaceae, and Theaceae. The RBT instead placed

Lecythidaceae sister to Ebenaceae, Sapotaceae, and the Core (a hypothetical clade herein

referred to as ESC), which was recovered by 100% of rapid bootstrap replicates (Fig. 1). A gene-

wise log-likelihood analysis comparing these two topologies is shown in Appendix S3. The

cumulative log-likelihood difference between the MLT and RBT was approximately 3.57 in

favor of the MLT; there were 27 orthologs that supported the MLT over the RBT by a score

larger than this and the exclusion of any of these from the supermatrix could cause the RBT to

become the topology with the best likelihood. Both of these topologies were considered as

candidates in a search for a corroborated interfamilial backbone. Regular (i.e. non-rapid)

bootstrapping in RAxML resulted in 6.5% support for Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae sister to

ESC (i.e. the MLT) unless the MLT was given as a starting tree, under which conditions the

MLT topology received 100% bootstrap support. Unguided, regular bootstrapping instead

suggested strong support (90%) for a clade consisting of Lecythidaceae and ESC (Appendix S4).

Interfamilial relationships recovered in the ASTRAL topology (AT) were congruent with those

of the MLT except that Primulaceae was recovered as sister to Lecythidaceae+ESC, but with

only 54% local posterior probability (Appendix S5). A total of seven intrafamilial relationships

differed between the AT and MLT. The AT was considered as a third candidate for an

interfamilial backbone.

There was an effect of the ML tree search algorithm that may be important to note for

future phylogenomic studies (Zhou et al., 2017). Re-conducting an ML tree search for the 387

ortholog supermatrix with RAxML v8.2.11 using PTHREADS-AVX architecture and -m

GTRCAT or with IQ-TREE and GTR+Γ resulted in a species tree with a different topology than

under any other conditions for the 387 ortholog dataset. The final log-likelihood of the original

ML tree was -5948732.774. Using the PTHREADS-AVX architecture returned a final likelihood

of -5948752.263, while the best log-likelihood reported by IQ-TREE was -5949077.382 (19.489

and 344.607 log-likelihood points worse than the RAxML v8.2.4 results, respectively).

Gene-wise log-likelihood comparative analysis across three candidate topologies—The results

from the gene-wise comparisons of likelihood contributions showed that there were 155

orthologs in the dataset that most strongly supported the MLT, 90 supported the RBT, and 142

supported the AT (Appendix S6). The AT had a cumulative log-likelihood score that was >300

points worse, even though more individual genes support the AT over the RBT (Appendix S6).

Edge-based comparative analyses across three candidate topologies—Of the three candidate

topologies investigated by constraining key edges, Lecythidaceae sister to ESC received the best

score, while Primulaceae sister to ESC received the worst (Appendix S7). Similarly, the clade

Lecythidaceae+Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae+ESC received a better likelihood score than the

clade Lecythidaceae+Primulaceae+ESC. Regarding the placement of Ebenaceae for this dataset,

Ebenaceae+Sapotaceae was supported by the highest number of orthologs whether or not two

log-likelihood support difference was required (Appendix S8). However, a number of orthologs

support each of the investigated placements for Ebenaceae and less than half of genes supported

any placement over the next best alternative by at least two log-likelihood points.

Gene duplication comparative analysis—Gene duplications mapped to each candidate backbone

topology and the five additional hypothetical topologies revealed differing numbers of shared

duplications that can be used as a metric of support among candidate topologies (Fig. 2).

Regarding which clade is better supported as sister to ESC, Lecythidaceae uniquely shared 433

duplications with ESC, more than twice as many as either alternative.

Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae shared 1300 unique duplications with Lecythidaceae+ESC, more

than Primulaceae which shared 626 unique duplications (Fig. 2).

A corroborated topology for the 387 ortholog set—The above comparative analyses supported

one topology among the three candidates identified for the 387 ortholog dataset, namely the RBT

(Fig. 2; Appendix S7-9). In this tree, all taxonomic families are recovered as monophyletic.

Marcgraviaceae and Balsaminaceae (i.e. the balsaminoid Ericales) are sister, and form a clade

that is sister to the rest of Ericales (i.e. the non-balsaminoid Ericales). Ebenaceae and Sapotaceae

form a clade that is sister to the Core. The monogeneric Fouquieriaceae is sister to

Polemoniaceae. A clade containing Symplocaceae, Diapensiaceae, and Styracaceae is sister to

Theaceae. Roridulaceae is sister to Actinidiaceae and these together form a clade that is sister to

Ericaceae. A grade containing Primulaceae, Polemoniaceae and Fouquieriaceae, and

Lecythidaceae leading to ESC is supported by the rapid bootstrapping, comparative duplication,

and constraint-tree analyses.

Quartet sampling—In our results and discussion we consider a QC score of (≥0.5) to be strong

support as this signifies strong concordance among quartets (Pease et al., 2018). We found

varying levels of support for several key relationships in the RBT (Appendix S9). The

monophyly for all families received strong support (QC ≥ 0.90). There was strong support

(QC=0.54) for the node placing Lecythidaceae sister to ESC, while equivocal support

(QC=0.035) for Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae sister to Lecythidaceae and ESC. Within ESC,

there was moderate support (QC=0.28) for Ebenaceae sister to Sapotaceae, but poor (QC=-0.13)

support for this clade as sister to the Core. There was strong support (QC=0.85) for the clade

including Symplocaceae, Diapensiaceae, and Styracaceae and moderate support (QC=0.26) for

this clade as sister to Theaceae. Roridulaceae was very strongly supported (QC=0.99) as sister to

Actinidiaceae but there was no support for this clade as sister to Ericaceae (QC=-0.23).

However, the monophyly of the clade that includes Roridulaceae, Actinidiaceae, Ericaceae, and

Sarraceniaceae received very strong support (QC=0.90).

The QD scores for several contentious relationships indicate that discordant quartets

tended to be highly skewed towards one conflicting topology as indicated by scores below 0.3

(Pease et al., 2018). However, the QD score for the relationship placing Lecythidaceae sister to

ESC in the RBT was 0.53, indicating relative equality in occurrence frequency of discordant

topologies. Similarly, the relationship placing Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae sister to

Lecythidaceae+ESC received a QD score of 0.83, indicating that among alternative topologies

(e.g. Primulaceae sister to the clade Lecythidaceae+ESC), there was no clear alternative to the

RBT recovered through quartet sampling for this dataset. The QI scores for all nodes defining

interfamilial relationships were above 0.9, indicating that in the vast majority of sampled quartets

there was a tree that was at least two log-likelihoods better than the alternatives. The QF scores

for all but one taxon were above 0.70 and the majority were above 0.85, which shows that rogue

individual taxa were not a major issue (Pease et al., 2018).

Conflict analyses—Assessing ortholog tree concordance and conflict for the 387 ortholog set

mapped to the RBT showed that backbone nodes that differed between candidate topologies

were poorly supported with the majority of orthologs failing to achieve ≥70% bootstrap support

(Appendix S10). Among informative orthologs, the majority of trees conflict with any candidate

topology at these nodes and there is no dominant alternative to the RBT. There were 77 ortholog

trees with appropriate taxon sampling that placed Primulaceae sister to the rest of the non-

balsaminoid Ericales and 37 did so with at least 70% bootstrap support. The clade

Lecythidaceae+Primulaceae+ESC was recovered in 47 ortholog trees, and in 17 with at least

70% bootstrap support. Of the 33 ortholog trees that contained the clade

Primulaceae+Ebenaceae, nine did so with at least 70% bootstrap support.

Expanded ortholog sets—Seven combinations of relationships along the backbone were

recovered in analyses of the expanded ortholog sets which we term E-I though E-VII for

reference (Fig. 3). Among these, the ML tree estimated from the 2045-ortholog PRANK-aligned,

partitioned supermatrix placed Lecythidaceae and Ebenaceae in a clade sister to Sapotaceae and

the Core (E-II), with the other interfamilial relationships recapitulating those of the RBT; the

topology recovered by ASTRAL for these orthologs (E-VII) placed Ebenaceae, Lecythidaceae ,

Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae, and Primulaceae as successively sister to Sapotaceae and the

Core. In regard to the placement of Ebenaceae for the 2045 PRANK-aligned set, the edge-based

Phyckle analysis showed that 432 of orthologs in this dataset with appropriate taxon sampling

supported Ebenaceae sister to Primulaceae, while 202 did so by at least two log-likelihood over

any alternative (Appendix S11). However, 416 orthologs supported Ebenaceae sister to

Sapotaceae (158 with $\geq$2LL), and 316 supported Ebenaceae sister to Lecythidaceae (140 with

$\geq$2LL). When the 2045 ortholog set was aligned with MAFFT to produce a supermatrix, the

resulting ML topology (E-I) was such that the clade Primulaceae+Ebenaceae were sister to

Sapotaceae, with that clade sister to the Core and Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae sister to all of

those. When ASTRAL was run with the 2045 MAFFT-aligned orthologs, the topology recovered

(E-III) placed Polemoniaceae+Fouqieriaceae sister to the Core, with the clade

Ebenaceae+Primulaceae and Lecythidaceae sucessively sister to those.

505   The backbone topology resulting from the 4682 ortholog PRANK-aligned, partitioned

supermatix was the same as that recovered with the 2045 ortholog and the same methods (E-II).

The ASTRAL topology for the 4682 ortholog PRANK-aligned dataset (E-VI) placed

Lecythidaceae sister to Sapotaceae and the Core, with Primulaceae+Ebenaceae and

Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae successively sister to those. When the 449, 661, or 1899

ortholog set were aligned with MAFFT to produce a supermatrix, the resulting ML backbone

topology was the same as that of the MAFFT-aligned 2045 and 4682 ortholog sets (E-I), except

when the 449 ortholog supermatrix was run without partitioning (E-II). When ortholog

alignments were produced with PRANK, the ML backbone recovered from the 449 and ortholog

set was the same as that of the 2045 PRANK-aligned ML tree (E-II). The backbone of the ML

trees produced from the 1899 and 661 PRANK-aligned ortholog sets were the same as that of the

2045 ortholog MAFFT-aligned ASTRAL tree (E-III). The 440, 661, and 1899 PRANK-aligned

ortholog sets all produced the same backbone topology in ASTRAL (E-V). The backbone

topologies recovered by ASTRAL for the 449, 661, and 1899 MAFFT-aligned ortholog sets also

agree with one another (E-VI), but conflict with all other species trees recovered in this study.

Synthesis of uncertainty and determination of an overall consensus—In the species trees

generated with the 387, 449, 661, 1899, 2045, and 4682 ortholog datasets, the relationships

among several taxonomic families were in conflict with one another (Fig. 3). Many of these

relationships also conflict with the thoroughly investigated RBT, which was shown to be very

well-supported by the 387 ortholog set. Nine of ten ML trees generated with MAFFT-aligned

supermatrices in the expanded datasets recovered Primulaceae and Ebenaceae sister to one

another and forming a clade with Sapotaceae (E-I), however this pattern was not recovered under

any other circumstances (Fig. 3). In all, Primulaceae was recovered as sister to Ebenaceae in 17

of the 33 species trees generated in this study (51.5%), but these families were sister in only

eight of the 24 trees (33.3%) where they did not form a clade with Sapotaceae. Sapotaceae was

recovered as sister to the Core in 21 of the 33 species trees (63.6%). Thus, there is no majority

consensus that reconciles these conflicting relationships; Primulaceae is only sister to Ebenaceae

in a majority of trees if those that also contain the clade Sapotaceae+Ebenaceae+Primulaceae are

considered and that topology is in direct conflict with Sapotaceae+Core, a relationship that is

recovered in a majority of trees. In addition, edge-wise support for a sister relationship between

Primulaceae and Ebenaceae was dataset dependent and showed equivocal gene-wise support.

The positions of Lecythidaceae or the clade containing Polemoniaceae and Fouquieriaceae that is

not agreed by a majority of species trees. Given this, the relationships among Primulaceae,

Polemoniaceae and Fouqieriaceae, Lecythidaceae, Ebenaceae, and Sapotaceae are not resolved

in the consensus topology. All other interfamilial relationships were unanimously supported by

all species trees except for the relationships between the clade Symplocaceae, Diapensiaceae,

and Styracaceae sister to Theaceae, which was recovered in 29 of the 33 species trees (87.9%).

Gene and genome duplication inference—Gene duplications mapped to the consensus topology

shows that the largest number of duplications occurs on the branch leading the non-Balsaminoid

Ericales (Fig. 4). Notable numbers of gene duplications also appear along branches leading to

Actinidia (Actinidiaceae), *Camellia* (Theaceae), several members of Primulaceae, *Rhododendron*

(Ericaceae), *Impatiens* (Balsaminaceae), and Polemoniaceae (i.e. *Phlox* and *Saltugilia* in this

study). If gene duplications are mapped to the single most-commonly recovered species tree in

this study (E-1), 3485 duplications occur along the branch leading to the non-balsaminoid

Ericales (Appendix S12). The K_s plots show peaks for several of the recent duplications,

evidenced by peaks between 0.1 and 0.5 (Appendix S13). The K_s plots for most, but not all, taxa

also contain a peak that appears between 0.8 and 1.5. The multispecies K_s plots for some

ericalean taxa paired with a member of Cornales show an ortholog peak with a higher K_s value

(i.e. farther to the right) than the paralog peaks near 1.0, suggesting two separate duplication

events that each occurred after the divergence of the two orders. Some other combinations of

ingroup and outgroup taxa resulted in an ortholog peak to the left of the paralogs peaks

(Appendix S14). When comparing the position of unambiguous ortholog peaks of all non-

balsaminoid ericalean taxa to *Impatiens balsamifera*, the K_s value of the peak varied between

values of 1.01 to 1.57 for *Schima superba* (Theaceae) and *Primula poissonii* (Primulaceae)

respectively, indicating substantial rate heterogeneity in the accumulation of synonymous

substitutions among ericalean taxa and implying that in the most extreme cases, some species

have accumulated synonymous substitutions 55% faster than others (Appendix S15).

Estimating substitutions supporting contentious clades—The estimated number of substitutions

informing clades containing at least two families whose backbone placement is contentious

tended to be much less than for relationships that garnered widespread support. These

contentious clades had a median value of 8.65 estimated substitutions informing them, compared

to 30.08, 75.09, and 144.00 informing the monophyly of Polemoniaceae and Fouqieriaceae,

Lecythidaceae, and the non-Balsaminoid Ericales, respectively, in the MAFFT-aligned ortholog

trees (Fig. 5). In trees for the same orthologs with alignments generated instead with PRANK,

the corresponding median values were 8.96, 30.73, 74.16 and 145.98 respectively.

DISCUSSION

Our focal dataset, consisting of 387 orthologs, supports an evolutionary history of

Ericales that is largely consistent with previous work on the clade for many, but not all,

relationships (Appendix S9). The balsaminoid clade, which includes the families Balsaminaceae,

Tetrameristaceae (not sampled in this study), and Marcgraviaceae was confidently recovered as

sister to the rest of the order as has been shown previously (e.g. Geuten et al., 2004; Rose et al.,

2018; Gitzendanner et al., 2018). Similarly, the monogeneric family Fouquieriaceae is sister to

Polemoniaceae, the para-carnivorous Roridulaceae are sister to Actinidiaceae and the

circumscription of Primulaceae sensu lato is monophyletic (Rose et al., 2018). The majority of

analyses for the 387 ortholog dataset recovered a sister relationship between Sapotaceae and

Ebenaceae, with that clade sister to the Core Ericales and Lecythidaceae sister to those. Notably,

the topology supported suggests that Primulaceae diverged earlier than has been recovered in

most previous phylogenetic studies and does not form a clade with Sapotaceae and Ebenaceae as

has been suggested by others, including Rose et al. (2018). The topology recovered by

Gitzendanner et al. (2018) using coding sequences from the chloroplast placed Primulaceae sister

to Ebenaceae, with those as sister to the rest of the non-basaminoid Ericales, though that study

did not include sampling from Lecythidaceae. In addition to the traditional phylogenetic

reconstruction methods, by applying the available data on gene duplications as a metric of

support and leveraging methods that make use of additional phylogenetic information present in

the supermatrix, we were able to more holistically summarize the evidence present in a 387

ortholog dataset in an effort to resolve the Ericales phylogeny (Figs. 1-2; Appendix S3-S10).

It has been shown repeatedly that large phylogenetic datasets have a tendency to resolve

relationships with strong support, even if the inferred topology is incorrect (Seo, 2008).

However, some of our results suggest extreme sensitivity to tree-building methods. For example,

the initial ML analysis resulted in an ML topology (MLT) with zero rapid bootstrap support for

the placement of Lecythidaceae (Fig. 1). The rapid bootstrap consensus instead unanimously

supported Lecythidaceae sister to a clade including Ebenaceae, Sapotaceae and the Core Ericales

(i.e. the RBT). Gene-wise investigation of likelihood contribution confirmed that these two

topologies have very similar likelihoods but did not identify outlier genes that seemed to have an

outsized effect on ML calculation (Appendix S3). Instead, the cumulative likelihood influence of

the 387 genes in the supermatrix provides nearly equal support for the two topologies, while

ASTRAL resulted in a third, and regular bootstrapping recovered an even more diverse set of

topologies (Appendix S4). These results suggest that there are several topologies with similar

likelihood scores for this dataset. Despite the fact that the additional comparative analyses

applied to the 387 ortholog dataset supported a single alternative among those investigated (i.e.

the RBT), the recovery of multiple topologies by various tree-building and bootstrapping

methods suggested that the criteria used to generate and filter orthologs could have marked

potential to influence the outcome of our efforts to resolve relationships amongst the families of

Ericales.

In addition to sensitivities associated with tree building methods, we investigated

additional datasets constructed with a variety of methods and filtering parameters to shed further

light on the nature of the problem of resolving the ericalean phylogeny. While it is clear from

investigation of gene tree topologies for the 387 ortholog dataset that phylogenetic conflict is the

rule rather than the exception, the expanded datasets show that this is true for a variety of

approaches to dataset construction and not simply an artifact of one approach. While the

monophyly of most major clades and the relationships discussed above were recovered across

these datasets, we also demonstrate that many combinations of contentious backbone

relationships can be recovered depending on the methods used in dataset construction, alignment,

and analysis (Fig 3).

An unresolved consensus topology—Based on the data available, we suggest that while the

relationships recovered in the Core Ericales and within most families are robust across

methodological alternatives, there is insufficient evidence to resolve several early-diverging

relationships along the ericalean backbone. We, therefore, suggest that the appropriate

representation, until further data collection efforts and analyses show otherwise, is as a polytomy

(Fig. 4). Whether this is biological or the result of data limitations remains to be determined. A

biological polytomy (i.e. hard polytomy) can be the result of three or more populations diverging

rapidly without sufficient time for the accumulation of nucleotide substitutions or other genomic

events to reconstruct the patterns of lineage divergence. Most of the inferred orthologs contain

little information useful for inferring relationships along the backbone of the phylogeny; we

investigated this explicitly by estimating the number of nucleotide substitutions that inform these

backbone relationships and find that branches that would resolve the polytomy were based on a

small fraction of the number of substitutions that informed better-supported clades (Fig. 5). The

phylogenetic signal presented in this study results in extensive gene tree conflict, albeit mostly

with low support (Appendix S11). The major clades of Ericales may or may not have diverged

simultaneously; however, if divergence occurred rapidly enough as to preclude the evolution of

genomic synapomorphies, then a polytomy may be a reasonable representation of such historical

events rather than signifying a shortcoming in methodology or taxon sampling.

The high levels of gene tree conflict and lack of a clear consensus among datasets for a

resolved topology is likely to have multiple causes. Among these is the fact that this series of

divergence events seems to have happened relatively rapidly over the course of around 10

million years (Rose et al., 2018). We also find evidence that a WGD is likely to have occurred

before or during this ancient radiation (Fig. 4; Appendix S12). If this is the case, differential gene

loss and retention during the process of diploidization is likely to complicate our ability to

resolve the order of lineage divergences. In addition, we cannot exclude the possibility of

hybridization and introgression between these ancient lineages at some point in the past, as

hybridization has been documented between plants that have been diverged for tens of millions

of years (e.g. Arias et al., 2014; Rothfels et al., 2015). It is even possible that some of the

lineages involved in such introgression have gone extinct in the intervening 100 million years

and that introgression from such now-extinct "ghost lineages" could represent a potentially

insurmountable obstacle to fully understanding the events that lead to the diversity of forms we

now find in Ericales. We chose not to test explicitly for evidence of hybridization here, due to

the seeming equivocal phylogenetic signal present in most gene trees for these contentious

relationships. We suggest that interpreting the generally weak signal present in most conflicting

gene trees as anything other than a lack of reliable information, runs a high risk of

overinterpreting these data since network analyses and tests for introgression generally treat gene

tree topologies as fixed states known without error. However, future studies could potentially

find such an approach to be appropriate for explaining the high levels of conflict among

orthologs, but should carefully consider alternative explanations for gene tree discordance.

Gene and genome duplications in Ericales—Results from gene duplication analyses showed

evidence for several whole genome duplications in Ericales, including at least two, in *Camellia*

and *Actinidia*, that have been verified using sequenced genomes (Fig. 6; Huang et al., 2013; Xia

et al., 2017; Shi et al., 2010). Our results strongly support the conclusion drawn by Wei et al.,

(2018) that the most recent WGD in *Camellia* is distinct from the *Ad*-α WGD that occurred in

Actinidiaceae after that clades diverged from other Ericales. We propose the name *Cm*-α for this

WGD, which is shared by all *Camellia* in our study and may or may not also be shared by

Schimia, the only other genus in Theaceae that we sampled. Future studies with broader taxon

sampling should be able determine whether the *Cm*-α WGD is shared by other genera in

Theaceae or if it is exclusive to *Camellia*.

Our inferred genome duplications are concordant with several, but not all, of the

conclusions drawn by Leebens-Mack et al. (2019), whose transcriptome assemblies comprised

24 of the 86 ingroup samples for this study. We find evidence for their ACCHα (i.e. *Ad*-α; Shi et

al., 2010) and IMPAα WGDs in Actinidiaceae and Balsaminaceae respectively, though our

broader taxon sampling additionally reveals that both of these WGDs are shared by multiple

species of their respective genera (Fig. 4; Appendix S12). Our results do not support their

placement of ACCHβ, which would appear as a WGD shared exclusively by the Core Ericales in

this study (Fig. 4; Appendix S12), nor do our results support the existence of DIOSα, which

Leebens-Mack et al. (2019) infer to have occurred along a branch leading to a clade consisting of

Polemoniaceae, Fouquieriaceae, Primulaceae, Sapotaceae, and Ebenaceae: a clade never

recovered in this study, and recovered in only one of the three species tree methods employed by

Leebens-Mack et al. (2019). We do not find evidence for MOUNα in Monotropoidiae and the in-

paralog trimming procedure we employed precludes us from addressing the putative SOURα

WGD because our sampling includes only one taxon from Marcgraviaceae (Leebens-Mack et al.,

2019).

Our results suggest that a WGD occurred along the backbone of Ericales, either before or

after the divergence of the balsaminoid clade, but after Ericales diverged with Cornales (Fig. 4;

Appendix S12). Given the extent of the topological uncertainty recovered along the backbone of

Ericales in this and other studies (e.g. Fig. 3; Gitzendanner et al., 2018; Rose et al., 2018;

Leebens-Mack et al., 2019;) and the fact that our single most-commonly recovered backbone

(i.e. Topology E-I, Fig. 3; Appendix S12) would imply that most gene duplications occurred

along the branch leading to the non-balsaminoid Ericales, we suggest that a single, shared WGD

is the most justifiable explanation for the observed data, rather than a more complex series of

nested WGD or near-simultaneous WGDs in sister lineages. We also infer notably high numbers

of gene duplications along the branches within Ericaceae, Primulaceae, and Polemoniaceae,

which suggests that these clades should be further investigated for evidence of novel, lineage-

specific whole genome or other major chromosomal duplications (Fig. 4; Fig. 6).

The K_s plots for our most ingroup species appear to share two peaks, in addition to peaks

corresponding to several lineage specific WGDs (Appendix S13-15). One shared peak occurs

between 2.0-2.5 in most taxa, which is often interpreted as to corresponding to the genome

duplication shared by all angiosperms (Jiao et al., 2012, Leebens-Mack et al., 2019). Our results

show that this peak between 2.0 and 2.5 also includes to the "γ" palaeopolyploidization shared

by the core Eudicots (Appendix S13; Jiao et al., 2011). We are able to infer this by evaluating K_s

plots for *Helianthus*, *Solanum*, and *Beta* (Appendix S13). Because in-paralogs were trimmed in

our homolog trees for all taxa, any WGDs in *Helianthus*, *Solanum*, or *Beta* not shared by another

taxon in our study (i.e. Ericales and Cornales) will not appear in the K_s plot for that species.

Therefore, the K_s plots for *Helianthus*, *Solanum*, and *Beta* will exclusively display evidence of

polyploidization events that occurred before the MRCA of Asterales and Solanales in the cases

of *Helianthus* and *Solanum*, or the MRCA of Asterales+Solanales and Caryophyllales in the case

of *Beta* (Appendix S13). Leebens-Mack et al. (2019) show that only polyploidizations at least as

old as γ should be shared by these taxa and since none have a K_s peak with a value less than 2.0,

that peak must include the γ event. Our characterization of the γ event is compatible with the

conclusions of Qiao et al. (2019), who analyzed 141 sequenced genomes and found that the γ

palaeopolyploidization corresponded to a K_s peak that ranged between 1.91 to 3.64 for 16

species that have not experienced a WGD since γ. Qiao et al. (2019) also fitted Ks distributions

for their taxa with Gaussian mixture models; for *Actinidia chinensis*, fitted Ks peaks occurred at

0.317, 1.016, and 2.415, which correspond respectively to the first (*Ad-α*), second (*Ad-β*), and

third (γ) most recent WGDs in *Actinidia*.

Many of our ingroup species share a K_s peak occurring between 0.8 and 1.5 (Appendix

S13-S14) that seems to correspond to a WGD shared by all non-balsaminoid Ericales (Fig. 4;

Appendix S12). We suggest this is the *Ad-β* WGD characterized by Shi et al. (2010) and

corroborated by Soza et al. (2019) and Qiao et al. (2019), the ACCHβ WGD recovered by

Leebens-Mack et al. (2019), and the genome duplication Wei et al. (2018) concluded was shared

between *Camellia* and *Actinidia*. Our study is the first with the necessary taxon sampling to show

that the *Ad-β* WGD likely occurred in the ancestor of all or nearly all ericalean taxa and is likely

shared by a clade that minimally includes Lecythidaceae, Polemoniaceae, Fouquieriaceae,

Primulaceae, Ebenaceae, Sapotaceae, and the Core Ericales. The tree-based methods employed

here precluded us from explicitly inferring the number of gene duplications that occurred directly

before the divergence of the balsaminoid Ericales, because we employed a procedure that treated

all non-ericalean taxa as outgroups for identifying duplicated ingroup clades in the homolog

trees. Studies with broader taxonomic foci should investigate whether the balsaminoid clade

share the *Ad-β* WGD with the rest of Ericales. Future sampling of transcriptomes and genomes

will likely lead to the discovery of additional, lineage-specific WGDs in Ericales and refine our

understanding of which taxa share these and other duplication events (Yang et al., 2018).

Our results strongly suggest that uncertainty should be considered when inferring

duplications with tree-based methods since the species tree topology can determine where gene

duplications appear to have occurred (Fig. 2; Appendix S12; Zwaenepoel and Van de Peer,

2019). The use of K_s plots as a second source of information may not completely ameliorate

issues caused by topological uncertainty, since K_s plots are generally interpreted in the context of

an accepted phylogeny (i.e. an error-free phylogeny where well-supported and contentious nodes

are treated the same). Furthermore, K_s plots are affected by heterogeneity in evolutionary rate,

with faster-evolving taxa accumulating synonymous substitutions at faster rates than more

slowly evolving lineages, adding an additional complicating factor when comparing K_s peaks

and synonymous ortholog divergence values across species (Appendix S15; Smith and

Donoghue, 2008, Qiao et al., 2019). Technical challenges such as missing data resulting from

incomplete transcriptome sequencing, failure to assemble all paralogs in all gene families, biases

in taxon sampling, as well as phylogenetic uncertainty in homolog trees, influences where many

individual gene duplications appear in this and other studies of non-model organisms and caution

should be taken to avoid overinterpreting noisy signal as biological information.

CONCLUSIONS

The first transcriptomic dataset broadly spanning Ericales and constructed from publicly

available data resolves many of the relationships within the clade and supports several

relationships that have been proposed previously. Our results confirm genome duplications in

Actinidiaceae and Theaceae and provide a more precise placement of a whole genome

duplication in an early ancestor of Ericales. We find evidence to suggest additional WGDs in

Balsaminaceae, Ericaceae, Polemoniaceae, and Primulaceae. While our results were largely

concordant within taxonomic families, the topological resolution of the deep divergences in

Ericales are less decisive. We demonstrate that, with the available data, there is not enough

information to strongly support any resolution, despite previous studies having considered these

relationships resolved. Additional data will be needed to investigate the early divergences of the

Ericales. Our analyses demonstrate that uncertainty needs to be thoroughly investigated in

phylotranscriptomic datasets, as strong support can be given by different methods for conflicting

topologies that can in turn impact the placement of WGDs on phylogenies. Even in a dataset

containing hundreds of genes and hundreds of thousands of characters, the criteria used in

dataset construction altered the inferred topology. Our results suggest that phylogenomic studies

should employ a range of methodologies and support metrics so that topological uncertainty can

be more fully explored and reported. The high prevalence of conflict among datasets and the lack

of clear consensus in regards to the relationships among several major ericalean clades led us to

conclude that a single, fully resolved tree is not supported by these transcriptome data, though

we acknowledge that future improvements in sampling might justify their resolution.

Data Accessibility Statement

Data, full output for analyses, and custom software used in this study will be available on Dryad:

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Author Contributions

The study was conceived by D.A.L. and S.A.S. Dataset construction was led by D.A.L. with

contributions by O.M.V. and input from J.F.W. Analyses were led by D.A.L. and J.F.W with

contributions and input by S.A.S. D.A.L. wrote the manuscript and produced the figures with

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FIGURE CAPTIONS

Figure 1. Maximum likelihood topology recovered for a 387 ortholog dataset using RAxML.

Nodes receiving less than 100% rapid BS support are labeled. Branch lengths are substitutions

per base pair. The node that determined the placement of Lecythidaceae received zero support

(i.e. the ML topology was never recovered by a rapid bootstrap replicate).

Figure 2. (A-H) Gene duplications with at least 50% SH-aRLT support in homolog trees

mapped to several topologies recovered from the 387 ortholog dataset including the maximum

likelihood topology (A) the rapid bootstrap topology (B) the ASTRAL topology (C) and several

hypothetical topologies that demonstrate evidence for shared duplications in clades not recovered

with species tree methods (D-H). Names of clades are abbreviated to four letters, ESC represents

the clade Ebenaceae+Sapotaceae+Core Ericales, and "Pole" represents the clade

Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae in all cases. I) Bar chart showing the number of uniquely shared

gene duplications between clades that can be considered a metric of support for distinguishing

among conflicting topological relationships.

Figure 3. Topologies recovered from several combinations of ortholog datasets and species tree

methods explored as alternatives to the focal 387 ortholog dataset. Each color corresponds to a

unique backbone topology recovered in these analyses. Names of clades are abbreviated to four

letters and "Pole" represents the clade Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae in all cases.

Figure 4. Gene duplications mapped to a cladogram of the consensus topology. Contentious

relationships not supported by a plurality of methods were collapsed to a polytomy. The diameter

of circles corresponds to the number of inferred duplications, and cases with at least 250 are

labelled along branches. The single largest number of duplications occurs on the branch leading

the non-Balsaminoid Ericales. Verified genome duplications in the Theaceae and the

Actinidiaceae appear as the second and third largest numbers of inferred gene duplications

respectively.

Figure 5. Estimated number of substitutions supporting clades using rooted orthologs from the

449 ortholog MAFFT-aligned dataset. The median number of estimated substitutions was 8.65

for clades that would resolve the polytomy in the consensus topology, compared to 30.08, 75.09,

1025 and 144.00 informing the monophyly of Polemoniaceae and Fouqieriaceae, Lecythidaceae, and

1026 the non-Balsaminoid Ericales respectively.

1027

Figure 6. Placements of putative whole genome duplications (WGDs) on a consensus phylogeny

of Ericales. Green stars represent WDGs that have been corroborated by sequenced genomes

(Shi. et al., 2010; Xia et al., 2017; Soza et al., 2019). Yellow stars represent WGDs that have

been proposed previously based on transcriptomes and are corroborated in this study (Leebens-

Mack et al., 2019). Blue tick marks identify branches with evidence of previously

uncharacterized WGDs that should be investigated in future studies. Ad-α and Ad-β are named

after the WGD first detected in *Actinidia* (Shi et al. 2010). Cm-α is a name proposed in this study

for a WGD unique to Theaceae that has been characterized previously and corroborated here

(e.g. Wei et al., 2018). In cases were a possible or confirmed WGD was inferred along a branch

leading to or within a botanical family, tips represent the genera sampled in this study. If no

lineage-specific WGD was inferred for a family, the tip represents all taxa sampled for that

family.

1040

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Supplemental Appendix 1. The origins of transcriptome assemblies, reference genomes, and

raw reads used in homolog clustering. Citations associated with raw reads available on the

National Center for Biotechnology Information Sequence Read Archive are included where such

information was provided in the accession record or could be confidently identified through a

Google Scholar query of the relevant accession information.

1047

1048   **Supplemental Appendix 2.** Phylogram inferred using maximum likelihood on a supermatrix

1049   consisting of the genes *rpoC2*, *rbcL*, *nhdF*, and *matK*. The topology of the tree was used to

1050   assign taxa into eight groups for hierarchical homolog clustering, such that each clustering group

1051   was monophyletic and not prohibitively large.

1052

Supplemental Appendix 3. Results of a two-topology test comparing gene-wise support in the

387 ortholog dataset for two alternative placements of Lecythidaceae recovered by the maximum

likelihood (ML) search. Delta gene-wise log-likelihood represents the extent to which an

ortholog supports the ML topology over that recovered unanimously in rapid bootstraps. The

dashed line represents the cumulative difference in log-likelihood between the two competing

topologies, such that removing any of the 27 orthologs with a score more positive than that

would cause the ML topology to change, even in the absence of obvious outlier genes.

1060

1061   **Supplemental Appendix 4.** Results of unguided, full bootstrapping with the 387 ortholog

1062   supermatrix in RAxML. The number of bootstrap replicates in which various contentious

1063   backbone relationships were recovered are reported.

1064

1065   **Supplemental Appendix 5.** The maximum quartet support species tree topology for the 387

1066   ortholog set generated with ASTRAL. Node support values are ASTRAL local posterior

1067   probabilities and nodes receiving support less than 1.0 are labeled. Branch lengths are in

1068   coalescent units.

1069

Supplemental Appendix 6. Results from the gene-wise comparisons of likelihood contributions

for the three candidate topologies for the 387 ortholog dataset. A) The absolute log-likelihood for

each ortholog, sorted by which topology they best support and organized in descending order of

likelihood. B) The cumulative difference in log-likelihood relative to the ML topology as

orthologs are added across the supermatrix. Delta gene-wise log-likelihood (ΔGWLL) represents

the extent to which the topology has a worse score than the ML topology; values below zero

indicate that a topology has a better likelihood than the ML topology. C) Schematic of the three

candidate topologies in question.

1078

1079   **Supplemental Appendix 7.** Log-likelihood penalties incurred by constraining contentious edges

1080   consistent with each of the three candidate topologies for a 387 ortholog dataset using EdgeTest.

1081   Direct comparisons of scores between conflicting relationships can be used as a metric of support

1082   with lower scores suggesting stronger support.

1083

1084   **Supplemental Appendix 8.** Phyckle results regarding the placement of Ebenaceae for the 387

1085   ortholog dataset. Of the relationships examined, Ebenaceae+Sapotaceae was supported by the

1086   highest number of orthologs whether or not two log-likelihood support difference was required.

1087

1088   **Supplemental Appendix 9.** Cladogram showing results from quartet sampling on the rapid

1089   bootstrap topology (RBT) from a 387 ortholog dataset. Branch labels show quartet concordance

1090   (QC), quartet differential (QD), and quartet informativeness (QI) respectively for each

1091   relationship. Quartet fidelity (QF) for each taxon is shown in parentheses after the relevant taxon

1092   label.

1093

Supplemental Appendix 10. A) Ortholog tree concordance and conflict for the 387 ortholog set

mapped to the rapid bootstrap topology. B) The same analysis except requiring 70% ortholog

tree bootstrap support for an ortholog to be considered informative. Blue indicates the proportion

of informative orthologs that are concordant with the topology, green indicates the proportion of

informative orthologs that support the single most common conflicting topology, red indicates all

other informative ortholog conflict and grey indicates orthologs that are uninformative, either

due to support requirements or lack of appropriate taxon sampling.

1101

Supplemental Appendix 11. Phyckle results regarding the placement of Ebenaceae for the 2045

ortholog dataset. Ebenaceae+Primulaceae was supported by the highest number of orthologs

whether or not two log-likelihood support difference was required.

1105

Supplemental Appendix 12. Gene duplications mapped to a cladogram of the 449 ortholog

MAFFT-aligned, partitioned, supermatrix ML tree. Number of inferred gene duplications in

shown along branches. The diameter of circles at nodes are proportional to the number of

duplications.

1110

Supplemental Appendix 13. Single species K_s plots for pairs of paralogs within each taxa as a

density plot. Density peaks indicate evidence for a large proportion of genes having been

duplicated at approximately the same time, as would occur during a whole genome duplication.

For each taxa, the x-axis ranges from 0.0 to 3.0 with each tick representing 0.5 synonymous

substitutions between paralogs. The y-axis is scaled to the maximum density value for each

1116   transcriptome and ticks correspond to 0.25, 0.5, 0.75, and 1.0 of the maximum density

1117   respectively. Input transcriptomes have been filtered to remove short sequences and sample-

1118   specific duplications since these can represent transcript splice-site variants or errors in

1119   assembly.

1120

Supplemental Appendix 14. Multispecies K_s plots representing a broad range of taxonomic

pairings. Single species K_s density plots (i.e. pairs of paralogs) within each taxa are plotted on the

same axis as a K_s density plot representing pairs of orthologs between the two taxa. The density

peak for the orthologs corresponds to the time of divergence between the two taxa, since

orthologs in both taxa begin accumulating synonymous substitutions after speciation. If

evolutionary rate in the two taxa are equal and the accumulation of synonymous substitutions is

clock-like, then the timing the duplication events relative to divergence of the two taxa can be

compared, with older events occurring farther to the right. The x-axis ranges from 0.0 to 3.0 with

each tick representing 0.5 synonymous substitutions. The y-axis is scaled to the maximum

density value of any of the three density distributions (therefore the magnitudes of all peaks are

relative) and ticks correspond to 0.25, 0.5, 0.75, and 1.0 of the maximum density respectively.

Input transcriptomes have been filtered to remove short sequences and sample-specific

duplications since these can represent transcript splice-site variants or errors in assembly.

1134

Supplemental Appendix 15. Multispecies K_s plots representing each non-balsaminoid ericalean

taxa paired with *Impatiens balsamifera* for which there is an unambiguous ortholog peak. Single

species K_s density plots (i.e. pairs of paralogs) within each taxa are plotted on the same axis as a

K_s density plot representing pairs of orthologs between the two taxa. The density peak for the

orthologs corresponds to the time of divergence between the two taxa, since orthologs in both

taxa begin accumulating synonymous substitutions after speciation. The dashed line represents

the point along the x-axis where the ortholog peak achieves its maximum value and would be

expected to occur at approximately the same point in all pairings under clock-like accumulation

of synonymous substitutions since all pairs share the same MRCA. The x-axis ranges from 0.0 to

3.0 with each tick representing 0.5 synonymous substitutions. The y-axis is scaled to the

maximum density value of any of the three density distributions (therefore the magnitudes of all

peaks are relative) and ticks correspond to 0.25, 0.5, 0.75, and 1.0 of the maximum density

respectively. Input transcriptomes have been filtered to remove short sequences and sample-

specific duplications since these can represent transcript splice-site variants or errors in

assembly.

Dataset	ML (MAFFT)	Unpartitioned ML (MAFFT)	ML (PRANK)	Unpartitioned ML (PRANK)	ASTRAL (MAFFT)	ASTRAL (PRANK)
2045	E-I	E-I	E-II	E-III	E-III	E-VII
4682	E-I	E-I	E-II	E-II	E-III	E-VI
449	E-I	E-II	E-II	E-II	E-IV	E-V
661	E-I	E-I	E-III	E-III	E-IV	E-V
1899	E-I	E-I	E-III	E-III	E-IV	E-V

Topologies recovered:

E-I. Lecy,(Pole,((Sapo,(Prim,Eben)),Core))

E-II. Prim,(Pole,((Lecy,Eben),(Sapo,Core)))

E-III. Lecy,((Prim,Eben),(Pole,(Sapo,Core)))

E-IV. (Pole,Prim),(Eben,(Lecy,(Sapo,Core)))

E-V. Pole,(Prim,((Lecy,Eben),(Sapo,Core)))

E-VI. Pole,((Prim,Eben),(Lecy,(Sapo,Core)))

E-VII. Prim,(Pole,(Lecy,(Eben,(Sapo,Core))))

Estimated substitutions informing clades

Rhododendron fortunei
Rhododendron rex
Rhododendron delavayi
Rhododendron scopulorum
Rhododendron longipedicellatum
Rhododendron latoucheae
Rhododendron tomentosum[1]
Rhododendron tomentosum
Rhododendron dauricum
Vaccinium corymbosum
Vaccinium virgatum
Vaccinium arboreum
Vaccinium dunalianum
Cavendishia cuatrecasasii
Vaccinium macrocarpon
Group 8

Enkianthus perulatus
Actinidia chinensis
Actinidia eriantha
Actinidia arguta
Roridula gorgonias
Sarracenia purpurea subsp. *venosa*

Camellia sinensis var. *sinensis*
Camellia taliensis
Camellia oleifera
Camellia ptilophylla
Camellia nitidissima
Camellia azalea
Camellia reticulata
Camellia japonica
Schima superba
Symplocos tinctoria
Symplocos paniculata
Galax urceolata
Sinojackia xylocarpa
Group 7

Eschweilera coriacea
Eschweilera coriacea[3]
Eschweilera sagotiana
Lecythis persistens
Eschweilera congestifolia
Grias cauliflora
Gustavia superba[4]
Gustavia superba
Gustavia augusta
Couropita guianensis
Barringtonia racemosa
Napoleonaea imperialis
Ternstroemia gymnanthera
Group 6

Phlox drummondii
Phlox sp.
Phlox roemeriana
Phlox cuspidata
Phlox pilosa
Saltugilia australis
Saltugilia splendens subsp. *grantii*
Saltugilia latimeri
Saltugilia splendens subsp. *splendens*
Group 5

Fouquieria macdougalii
Diospyros lotus
Diospyros kaki
Diospyros malabarica
Diospyros mespiliformis
Manilkara zapota
Synsepalum dulcificum
Sideroxylon reclinatum
Group 4

Primula forbesii
Primula obconica
Primula sinensis
Primula vulgaris
Primula veris
Primula wilsonii
Primula poissonii
Primula ovalifolia
Ardisia revoluta
Ardisia humilis
Aegiceras corniculatum
Jacquinia sp.
Maesa lanceolata
Group 3

Impatiens balsamifera
Impatiens balsamina
Souroubea exauriculata
Group 2

Philadelphus inodorus
Cornus florida
Hydrangea quercifolia
Dichroa febrifuga
Caiophora chuquitensis
Nyssa ogeche
Helianthus annuus
Solanum lycopersicum
Beta vulgaris
Arabidopsis thaliana
Group 1

0.03

Unguided, regular bootstrap results

Clade	Number of replicates in which recovered
Lecy+Eben	62/200
Sapo+Eben	122/200
Prim+Eben	6/200
Eben+Eben+Core	122/200
Lecy+Eben+Sapo	36/200
Prim+Eben+Sapo	6/200
Lecy+Eben+Sapo+Core	180/200
Prim+Eben+Sapo+Core	6/200
Prim+Eben+Sapo+Core+Lecy	25/200
Pole+Fouq+Eben+Sapo+Core	13/200
Lecy+Eben+Sapo+Core+Pole+Fouq	175/200

A — Gene-wise log-likelihoods by topology supported

Log-likelihood vs Orthologs Ordered by Log-likelihood

B — Cumulative ΔGWLL vs ML tree

Cumulative ΔGWLL vs Ortholog

C

Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae
Lecythidaceae
Primulaceae

Lecythidaceae
Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae
Primulaceae

Lecythidaceae
Primulaceae
Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae

EdgeTest results for contentious edges consistent with three candidate topologies

Relationship tested	Log-likelihood difference	Absolute log-likelihood	No Constraint
Comparison 1			
Lecythidaceae+ESC	**5065.730187**	**-5813588.499**	**-5808522.769**
Primulaceae+ESC	5982.457531	-5814505.226	-5808522.769
Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae+ESC	5277.176353	-5813799.945	-5808522.769
Comparison 2			
Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae+Lecythidaceae+ESC	**3324.947489**	**-5811847.716**	**-5808522.769**
Primulaceae+Lecythidaceae+ESC	3955.4859	-5812478.255	-5808522.769
Comparison 3			
Ebenaceae+Sapotaceae	**2845.31446**	**-5811368.083**	**-5808522.769**
Primulaceae+Ebenaceae	3252.138454	-5811774.907	-5808522.769

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Phyckle results for the 387 ortholog dataset

No support requirement	
Ebenaceae+Core	29
Ebenaceae+Sapotaceae	**87**
Ebenaceae+Primulaceae	76
Ebenaceae+Lecythidaceae	79
Ebenaceae+Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae	41
Ebenaceae+Marcgraviaceae+Balsaminaceae+outgroups	29
Total	**341**
Requiring two log-likelihood support	
Ebenaceae+Core	12
Ebenaceae+Sapotaceae	**38**
Ebenaceae+Primulaceae	32
Ebenaceae+Lecythidaceae	36
Ebenaceae+Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae	17
Ebenaceae+Marcgraviaceae+Balsaminaceae+outgroups	13
Total	**148**

Phyckle results for the 387 ortholog dataset

No support requirement	
Ebenaceae+Core	134
Ebenaceae+Sapotaceae	416
Ebenaceae+Primulaceae	**432**
Ebenaceae+Lecythidaceae	316
Ebenaceae+Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae	224
Ebenaceae+Marcgraviaceae+Balsaminaceae+outgroups	309
Total	**1831**
Requiring two log-likelihood support	
Ebenaceae+Core	47
Ebenaceae+Sapotaceae	158
Ebenaceae+Primulaceae	**202**
Ebenaceae+Lecythidaceae	140
Ebenaceae+Polemoniaceae+Fouquieriaceae	94
Ebenaceae+Marcgraviaceae+Balsaminaceae+outgroups	144
Total	**785**

This page is a grid of small density plots (Ks plots), each labelled with a species name, family abbreviation, and code.

Axis labels (top-left plot): Scaled Density (y-axis), Ks (x-axis)

Row 1:
- Actinidia arguta (Actinidi.)—ACTARG
- Actinidia chinensis (Actinidi.)—ACTCHI1
- Actinidia chinensis (Actinidi.)—ACTCHI2
- Actinidia eriantha (Actinidi.)—ACTERI
- Aegiceras corniculatum (Primul.)—AEGCOR
- Ardisia humilis (Primul.)—ARDHUM
- Ardisia revoluta (Primul.)—ARDREV
- Barringtonia racemosa (Lecythid.)—BARRAC
- Caiophora chuquitensis (Loas.)—OG_CAICHU
- Camptotheca acuminata (Corn.)—OG_CAMACU
- Camellia azalea (The.)—CAMAZA
- Camellia japonica (The.)—CAMJAP

Row 2:
- Camellia nitidissima (The.)—CAMNIT
- Camellia oleifera (The.)—CAMOLE
- Camellia ptilophylla (The.)—CAMPTI
- Camellia reticulata (The.)—CAMRET
- Camellia sinensis (The.)—CAMSIN
- Camellia taliensis (The.)—CAMTAL
- Cavendishia cuatrecasasii (Eric.)—CAVCUA
- Cornus florida (Corn.)—OG_CORFLO
- Couropita guianensis (Lecythid.)—COUGUI
- Dichroa febrifuga (Hydrange.)—OG_DICFEB
- Diospyros kaki (Eben.)—DIOKAK
- Diospyros lotus (Eben.)—DIOLOT

Row 3:
- Diospyros malabarica (Eben.)—DIOMAL
- Diospyros mespiliformis (Eben.)—DIOMES
- Enkianthus perulatus (Eric.)—ENKPER
- Eschweilera congestifolia (Lecythid.)—ESCCON
- Eschweilera coriacea (Lecythid.)—ESCCOR1
- Eschweilera coriacea (Lecythid.)—ESCCOR2
- Eschweilera sagotiana (Lecythid.)—ESCSAG
- Fouquieria macdougalii (Fouquieri.)—FOUMAC
- Galax urceolata (Diapensi.)—GALURC
- Grias cauliflora (Lecythid.)—GRICAU
- Gustavia augusta (Lecythid.)—GUSAUG
- Gustavia superba (Lecythid.)—GUSSUP1

Row 4:
- Gustavia superba (Lecythid.)—GUSSUP2
- Hydrangea quercifolia (Hydrange.)—OG_HYDQUE
- Impatiens balsamifera (Balsamin.)—IMPBASF
- Impatiens balsamina (Balsamin.)—IMPBASN
- Jacquinia sp. (Primul.)—JACSP
- Lecythis persistens (Lecythid.)—LECPER
- Maesa lanceolata (Primul.)—MAELAN
- Manilkara zapota (Sapot.)—MANZAP
- Monotropastrum humile (Eric.)—MONHUM
- Monotropa hypopitys (Eric.)—MONHYP
- Monotropa uniflora (Eric.)—MONUNI
- Napoleonaea imperialis (Lecythid.)—NAPIMP

Row 5:
- Nyssa ogeche (Corn.)—OG_NYSOGE
- Philadelphus inodorus (Hydrange.)—OG_PHIINO
- Phlox cuspidata (Polemoni.)—PHLCUS
- Phlox drummondii (Polemoni.)—PHLDRU
- Phlox pilosa (Polemoni.)—PHLPIL
- Phlox roemeriana (Polemoni.)—PHLROE
- Phlox (Polemoni.)—PHLSP
- Primula forbesii (Primul.)—PRIFOR
- Primula obconica (Primul.)—PRIOBC
- Primula ovalifolia (Primul.)—PRIOVA
- Primula poissonii (Primul.)—PRIPOI
- Primula sinensis (Primul.)—PRISIN

Row 6:
- Primula veris (Primul.)—PRIVER
- Primula vulgaris (Primul.)—PRIVUL
- Primula wilsonii (Primul.)—PRIWIL
- Rhododendron dauricum (Eric.)—RHODAU
- Rhododendron delavayi (Eric.)—RHODEL
- Rhododendron fortunei (Eric.)—RHOFOR
- Rhododendron latoucheae (Eric.)—RHOLAT
- R, longipedicellatum (Eric.)—RHOLON
- Rhododendron obtusum (Eric.)—RHOOBT
- Rhododendron rex (Eric.)—RHOREX
- Rhododendron scopulorum (Eric.)—RHOSCO
- Rhododendron tomentosum (Eric.)—RHOTOM

Row 7:
- Rhododendron tomentosum (Eric.)—LEDPAL
- Roridula gorgonias (Roridul.)—RORGOR
- Saltugilia australis (Polemoni.)—SALAUS
- Saltugilia caruifolia (Polemoni.)—SALCAR
- Saltugilia latimeri (Polemoni.)—SALLAT
- Saltugilia splendens (Polemoni.)—SALSPLGR
- Saltugilia splendens (Polemoni.)—SALSPLSP
- Sarracenia purpurea (Sarraceni.)—SARPUR
- Schima superba (The.)—SCHSUP
- Sideroxylon reclinatum (Sapot.)—SIDREC
- Sinojackia xylocarpa (Styrac.)—SINXYL
- Souroubea exauriculata (Marcgravi.)—SOUEXA

Row 8:
- Symplocos paniculata (Symploc.)—SYMPAN
- Symplocos tinctoria (Symploc.)—SYMTIN
- Synsepalum dulcificum (Sapot.)—SYNDUL
- Ternstroemia gymnanthera (Pentaphylac.)—TERGYM
- Vaccinium arboreum (Eric.)—VACARB
- Vaccinium corymbosum (Eric.)—VACCOR
- Vaccinium dunalianum (Eric.)—VACDUN
- Vaccinium macrocarpon (Eric.)—VACMAC
- Vaccinium virgatum (Eric.)—VACVIR
- Helianthus annuus (Aster.)—HELANN
- Solanum lycopersicum (Solan.)—SOLLYC
- Beta vulgaris (Amaranth.)—BETVUL