

***ACPT* gene is inactivated in mammalian lineages that lack enamel and teeth**

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1 **Abstract**

2 Loss of tooth or enamel is widespread in multiple mammal lineages. Although several studies
3 have been reported, the evolutionary mechanisms of tooth / enamel loss are still unclear.
4 Most previous studies have found that some tooth-related genes have been inactivated in
5 toothless and / or enamel-less mammals, such as *ENAM*, *ODAM*, *C4orf26*, *AMBN*, *AMTN*,
6 *DSPP*, etc. Here, we conducted evolutionary analyses on *ACPT* plays a key role in
7 amelogenesis, to interrogate the mechanisms. We obtained the *ACPT* sequences from 116
8 species, including edentulous and enamel-less mammals, then evolutionary analyses were
9 implemented. The results showed that variant ORF-disrupting mutations have been detected
10 in *ACPT* coding region among nine edentulous baleen whales and three enamel-less taxa
11 (pygmy sperm whale, armadillo, nine-banded armadillo). Furtherly, selective pressure
12 uncovered that the selective constraints have been relaxed among all toothless and enamel-
13 less lineages. Moreover, our results support the hypothesis that mineralized teeth were lost or
14 degenerated in the common ancestor of crown Mysticeti through two shared single-base sites
15 deletion in exon 4 and 5 of *ACPT* among all living baleen whales. D_N / d_S values on
16 transitional branches were used to estimate *ACPT* inactivation times. In the case of armadillo,
17 inactivation of *ACPT* was estimated at ~23.60-28.32 Ma, which is earlier than the oldest
18 pangolin fossil time (*Orycteropus minutus*, ~19Ma), suggesting that *ACPT* inactivation may
19 result in degeneration or loss of enamel. Conversely, the inactivation time of *ACPT* estimated
20 in armadillo (~10.18-11.30 Ma) is later than the oldest fossil time, suggesting that
21 inactivation of *ACPT* may result from degeneration or loss of enamel in these mammals. Our
22 findings suggested that different mechanisms of degeneration of tooth / enamel might exist
23 among toothless and enamel-less lineages during evolution. Our study further considered that
24 *ACPT* is a novel gene for studying tooth evolution.

25 **Key words:** *ACPT*, Tooth evolution, Enamel, Mammals, Inactivation time, Pseudogene

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31 **Introduction**

32 Dental innovations (such as differentiated dentitions and the evolution of tribosphenic molar,
33 etc.) have been regarded as the great success of mammalian evolution and adaptation (Ungar
34 2010). Various sets of dentition facilitated mastication to gain energy from food efficiently,
35 promoted major changes in feeding strategy, life history, and ecological niches for
36 mammalian radiation during the past 220 million years ago (Ma) (Bergqvist 2003; Ungar
37 2010). However, in spite of their importance for animal survival, teeth have been lost
38 independently in multiple mammal lineages, such as baleen whales and pangolins. In
39 addition, some lineages have lost their outer enamel of teeth, such as pygmy sperm whale and
40 dwarf sperm whale, armadillos and species from Xenarthra (Davitbeal et al. 2009). Tooth loss
41 and / or enamel loss is one of the most important field for mammalian tooth evolution.

42 Amelogenesis imperfecta (AI) and tooth loss are the diseases that characterized by
43 genetic defects in the formation of enamel and teeth. Multiple studies have suggested these
44 genetic disorders are mainly caused by mutations of protein-coding genes functioned in
45 formation of enamel and teeth (Stephanopoulos et al. 2005; Smith et al. 2017). Of these
46 genes, three enamel matrix protein genes (EMPs, i.e., *AMELX*, *AMBN* and *ENAM*), two
47 enamel proteases genes (*MMP20* and *KLK4*), and some other related genes (e.g., *C4orf26*,
48 *AMTN*, *ODAM*, *ACPT*, *DSPP*) have been confirmed to be candidate genes responsible for the
49 diseases (Crawford et al. 2007; Smith et al. 2017). The variant inactivating mutations have
50 been detected in these genes among toothless and enamel-less mammalian lineages.
51 However, the mechanisms of tooth loss or enamel loss are still unclear.

52 It has been reported that *ACPT* was lower expressed in testicular cancer tissues
53 compared to normal tissues and is regulated by steroid hormones (Yousef et al. 2001).
54 Besides, *ACPT* is also expressed in the brain and acts as a tyrosine phosphatase to modulate
55 signals mediated by ErbB4 (Fleisig et al. 2004). But, it is interesting to note that *ACPT* is
56 expressed in secretory-stage ameloblasts (Seymen et al. 2016), which can induce
57 odontoblasts differentiation, mineralization of dentin, and amelogenesis (Choi et al. 2016).
58 Furthermore, there are some increasing evidences that homozygous missense variants of
59 *ACPT* would lead to AI (e.g., c.226C>T, p.Arg76Cys; c.746C4T, p.P249L) (Seymen et al.
60 2016; Smith et al. 2017). Sharma et al. (2018) found that *ACPT* was pseudogene in minke
61 whale (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*), armadillo (*Dasypus novemcinctus*) and armadillo
62 (*Oryzomys afer*), whose teeth or enamel are absent. These evidences suggested that *ACPT*

63 should play an important role in amelogenesis.

64 To our knowledge, all extant Mysticeti, descended from toothed ancestors, have no teeth
65 where instead of baleen (Uhen 2010). Paleontological evidences have shown that mineralized
66 teeth were lost in the common ancestor of crown Mysticeti. Moreover, a transitional stage
67 from tooth to baleen in stem mysticetes have been revealed in some taxa bearing both teeth
68 and baleen (Deméré et al. 2008). Although many tooth-related genes have been revealed to be
69 inactivated in various living mysticetes (e.g., *AMBN*, *ENAM*, *AMEL*, *AMTN*, *MMP20*,
70 *C4orf26* and *DSPP*) (Deméré et al. 2008; Meredith et al. 2009; Meredith et al. 2011; Gasse et
71 al. 2012; Delsuc et al. 2015; Springer et al. 2016; Springer et al. 2019), only the *MMP20* are
72 commonly inactivated across all the living baleen whales, which indicates enamel common
73 ancestor of baleen whales had already lost teeth (Meredith et al. 2011). This molecular
74 evidence is consistent with earlier studies of paleontology and anatomy.

75 Despite its significance in mammalian enamel maturation, very little is known about
76 *ACPT* evolutionary trajectory, relationship and function in mammals. To address this issue,
77 we carried out a series of evolutionary analyses on *ACPT*, aim to uncover the evolutionary
78 pattern of *ACPT* gene among mammalian lineages.

79 **Methods**

80 **Sequences mining and BLAST searches**

81 The full-length coding sequences (CDS) of *ACPT* gene were extracted from the OrthoMaM
82 v10b (http://orthomam2.mbb.univ-montp2.fr/OrthoMaM_v10b10/), ENSEMBL
83 (<http://www.ensembl.org/index.html?redirect=no>) and NCBI
84 (<http://www.ensembl.org/index.html?redirect=no>) databases ([Appendix Table 1](#)). *ACPT* of
85 some whales were extracted from their Genome and SRA database of NCBI ([Appendix Table](#)
86 [2, 3](#)). To further ensure the sites of inactivating mutation of toothless / enamel-less lineages,
87 we used the CDSs of some representative placental species with well-annotated genomes
88 (*Homo sapiens* [human], *Canis lupus familiaris* [Dog], *Bos taurus* [Cow], *Echinops telfairi*
89 [Lesser hedgehog tenrec]) as queries including ~50bp of flanking sequence on each exon.
90 These sequences were used as queries to BLAST against toothless / enamel-less mammals
91 from the closely related taxa to confirm the related inactivating mutation among baleen
92 whales.

93 **Identification of inactivating mutations and functional sites and domains**

94 The intact *ACPT* sequences (human, cow, tenrec) were used for identifying inactivating
95 mutations (including mutation of initiation codons, frame-shift insertions and deletions,
96 premature stop codons, splice sites mutation of intron / exon boundary [GT/AG], etc.). The
97 inactivating mutation was identified based on BLAST searches against whole genomes of the
98 relevant taxon from NCBI.

99 **Alignment and phylogenetic analysis of mammalian *ACPT***

100 The 116 mammalian *ACPT* sequences were aligned based on their amino acid translations
101 using online PRANK (<https://www.ebi.ac.uk/goldman-srv/webprank/>), and then deleted the
102 gaps and non-homologous regions by using GBLOCK, then we corrected the multiple
103 sequences alignment (MSA) in MEGA 7 (Kumar et al. 2016) by eye.

104 A gene tree was reconstructed by MrBayes 3.2 (Ronquist et al. 2012) with a general time
105 reversible (GTR) substitution model and rate heterogeneity modeled with a Gamma
106 distribution, as conducted by MrModeltest version 2 using the Akaike information criterion
107 (AIC) (Nylander 2004). In bayesian analysis, four simultaneous runs with four chains each
108 were run for two million generations, sampling every 1000 trees. The first 25% of these trees
109 were discarded as burn-in when computing the consensus tree (50% majority rule).

110 **Selection analyses**

111 To evaluate the selective pressure of relevant branches leading to enamel-less and toothless
112 lineages respectively, we implemented *two ratio branch model* to calculate the ratio of the
113 nonsynonymous substitution rate (d_N) to the synonymous substitution rate (d_S) ($\omega = d_N/d_S$) by
114 running CodeML in PAML 4.8a package (Yang 2007). We also recoded premature stop
115 codons as missing data. Akaike information criterion (AIC) scores were used to select the
116 most appropriate codon frequency model in CodeML. The *ACPT* gene tree exhibits different
117 topological relationship compared to species tree, which may be unrelated to incomplete
118 lineage sorting. In order to illuminate the detected signal reasonably and accurately, we used
119 a species tree supported by some previous studies ([Appendix Figure 1](#)).

120 Refer to the methods of Springer and Gatesy (Springer and Gatesy 2018), several
121 different branch categories have been considered during selective analyses: (1) One category
122 accounted for 'background' branches, which are lineages with intact teeth and an intact copy
123 of *ACPT*. (2) Nine branch categories to terminal branches with unique inactivating mutations

124 (baleen whales), which lacks teeth. (3) Three branch categories to terminal branches with
125 unique inactivating mutations (pygmy sperm whale, nine-banded armadillo and aardvark),
126 whose enamel has been vestigial. (4) One branch categories were assigned for stem Mysticeti
127 where mineralized teeth were degraded. (5) One branch categories were assigned for crown
128 Mysticeti.

129 To better understand the selective pressure, a series of evolutionary models were
130 compared in the likelihood. We first use the M0 model (Model A), which assumed that all
131 branches in the phylogenetic tree has a common value, and compare it with the null
132 hypothesis (Model B), which assumed that the common value in the phylogenetic tree is 1.
133 To further understand whether the selective pressure on the lineages leading to pseudogenes
134 was relaxed, we constructed Model C, which assumed that the branches with pseudogene had
135 their own selection pressure ω_2 , while the background branches without pseudogenation was
136 ω_1 , and then compared Model C with Model A. To further confirm whether the selective
137 pressure on the lineages leading to pseudogenes was completely relaxed, we build the Model
138 D, which assumed that the branches with pseudogene had their own selection pressure $\omega_2 = 1$,
139 while the selective pressure of background branches was ω_1 , and then compared Model C
140 with Model D.

141 **Estimation of inactivation times**

142 To estimate when *ACPT* was inactivated in different lineages of Placentalia, we followed the
143 procedure described in (Sharma et al. 2018). For a branch along which the gene was
144 inactivated, this method assumes that a gene evolves under a selective pressure similar to that
145 in other species until it is inactivated. Afterward, the gene is assumed to accumulate both
146 synonymous and nonsynonymous mutations at a neutral rate. The K_a / K_s (K) value estimated
147 for this entire branch is then the average of the K_a / K_s value for the part of the branch where
148 the gene was under selection (K_s), and the K_a / K_s value for the part of the branch where the
149 gene evolved neutrally ($K_n = 1$). It is weighted by the proportion of time for which the gene
150 was evolving under selection (T_s / T) and neutrally (T_n / T):

$$151 \quad K = K_s \times T_s / T + K_n \times T_n / T$$

152 where T represents the time since the split from the last common ancestor. Using the lower
153 and upper bound of the confidence interval for the species divergence time T obtained from
154 TimeTree (<http://www.timetree.org/>) and using the K_a / K_s value for mammals with a
155 functional *ACPT*, one can estimate a lower and upper bound for T_n as:

156
$$T_n = T \times (K - K_s) / (1 - K_s)$$

157 which provides an estimate of how long *ACPT* has been evolving neutrally.

158 **Results**

159 **Characterization of *ACPT* sequence**

160 The complete protein-coding sequence of *ACPT* in 116 taxon were used to alignment by
161 PRANK. One or more inactivating mutations (frame-shift mutation, initial codon mutation,
162 premature stop codons, splice site mutations, etc.) were detected in all placental taxa without
163 teeth or without enamel (Figure 1, Appendix Table 4, Appendix Figure 2). For example,
164 among toothless baleen whales, the initial codon mutation (n. ATG→GTG, p. M→V) was
165 found in *Balaenoptera borealis*, *B. physalus*, *B. musculus*, *Eschrichtius robustus*, *Eubalaena*
166 *glacialis*. Meanwhile, premature stop codons were found in *B. acutorostrata* and *B.*
167 *bonaerensis*, frameshift indels were also found in baleen whales. Interestingly, two shared
168 single-base site deletion was found on exon 4 and 5 of *ACPT* among all living baleen whales
169 (Figure 1, Appendix Figure 2). The splice site mutations were detected in *B. edeni*, *B. omurai*
170 and *Megaptera novaeangliae* (Appendix Figure 2). On the contrary, the premature stop
171 codons were found in enamel-less *Dasypus novemcinctus* and *Orycteropus afer*. Besides,
172 frameshift indels were found in *Kogia breviceps*.

173 Except for the species mentioned above, *ACPT* gene in other species were found to be
174 intact. Nevertheless, some crucial amino acids mutation was found in toothed species, such as
175 site 76 has been mutated (R76C) in *Neophocaena asiaeorientalis*.

176 **Reconstruction of *ACPT* gene tree**

177 We recovered the *ACPT* gene tree with well-supported values by using Mrbayes method
178 (Figure 2). In this gene tree, most of orders have been well reconstructed, and have high
179 support rate, e.g., Cetartiodactyla, Perissodactyla, Eulipotyphla, Carnivora, Chiroptera etc. In
180 addition, phylogenetic relationships of higher levels have also been well reconstructed, such
181 as Laurasiatheria, Euarchontoglires, Boreoeutheria and Afrotheria. In this gene tree, bayesian
182 posterior probability (PP) values of nearly 70% nodes are generally greater than 0.70.
183 However, the relationship between some order level were relatively chaotic, such as
184 Lagomorpha didn't cluster with Rodentia, but as the sister group of Primate; Chiroptera and
185 Carnivora clustered together first, and then they became sister group of Perissodactyla.

186 **Evolutionary analyses among toothless and enamel-less mammals**

187 We carried out the PAML analysis to detect the selective pressure of toothless / enamel-less
188 lineages, and found the selective pressure of these toothless / enamel-less lineages (including
189 ancestral nodes, terminal branches and even the whole toothless / enamel-less group) was
190 significantly higher than that of background branches. For example, the terminal branch of
191 *Balaenoptera physalus*: $\omega_1=0.116$, $\omega_2=1.883$; the terminal branch of *Megaptera*
192 *novaeangliae*: $\omega_1=0.116$, $\omega_2=0.641$; the terminal branch of *Eschrichtius robustus*:
193 $\omega_1=0.116, \omega_2=2.688$; the terminal branch of *Eubalaena glacialis*: $\omega_1=0.116$, $\omega_2=0.503$. A
194 similar tendency was found in the terminal branches of other baleen whales, and further
195 model comparison showed that the selective pressure of these branches had been completely
196 relaxed. Whilst, much higher selective pressure was detected in the ancestral branch of stem
197 mysticeti ($\omega_1=0.120$, $\omega_2=0.436$), even the clade of crown mysticeti ($\omega_1=0.116$, $\omega_2=0.522$).
198 Meanwhile, higher selective pressure was detected among enamel-less lineages, such as the
199 terminal branch of *Dasypus novemcinctus* ($\omega_1=0.116$, $\omega_2=0.206$), the terminal branch of
200 *Orycteropus afer* ($\omega_1=0.116$, $\omega_2=0.414$), and the terminal branch of *Kogia breviceps*
201 ($\omega_1=0.116$, $\omega_2=0.581$). And the selective pressure of these branches had been completely
202 relaxed, except for the terminal branch of *K. breviceps* (Table S5).

203 **ACPT inactivation dates**

204 Estimates of inactivation times for ACPT based on d_N / d_S ratios and equations in Sharma et
205 al. (Sharma et al. 2018). The mean estimate for the inactivating time of ACPT on the branch
206 of *K. breviceps*, *D. novemcinctus* and *O. afer* is 12.20-15.52Ma, 10.18-11.30Ma and 23.60-
207 28.32Ma, respectively (Figure 3). The mean estimate for the inactivation of ACPT on the
208 Mysticeti clade is 14.05-16.30Ma.

209 **Discussion**

210 **ACPT is a novel candidate gene for studying mammalian tooth loss and enamel loss**

211 The well-conserved gene structure indicates that this organization was present in the last
212 common mammalian ancestor, and the protein function was already defined 220 Ma (Madsen
213 2009). In our study, the number of ACPT exons are 11 in placental mammals, which encode
214 427 amino acids (human ACPT sequence as the reference sequence). Our study highlighted
215 that four residues (191N, 269N, 330N and 339N) of the extracellular region were for
216 glycosylation, two residues (41H and 289D) directly involved in catalysis. In addition,

217 mutation in seven residues were reported that were responsible for AI (Seymen et al. 2016;
218 Smith et al. 2017) ([Appendix Figure 3](#)). Three disulfide bond regions were identified, namely,
219 site 159 to 378, site 214 to 312, site 353 to 357. In fact, we detected not only teratogenic
220 mutations but also inactivated mutations in these functional sites and domains. For example,
221 enamel in finless porpoise were degenerated (Ishiyama 1987), mutation in site 76 (R→C)
222 was found in *N. asiaeorientalis*. Previous research has confirmed that site 76 mutated into
223 Cys (C) in human ACPT would lead to hypoplastic AI (Seymen et al. 2016), from which this
224 result further supported that teeth in finless porpoise were degenerated in molecular level. Of
225 cause, some mutations were also detected in toothless and enamel-less lineages. The most
226 obvious characteristics of ACPT is that different types of inactivating mutations were found
227 in toothless and enamel-less mammals. Therefore, ACPT could be a candidate gene for AI
228 and should be regarded as a target gene in the diagnosis of this genetic disease.

229 **Degeneration or loss of mineralized teeth in LCA of Mysticeti**

230 Fossil evidence showed that the earliest ancestors of baleen whales possessed complete
231 dentitions without baleen (such as *Janjucetus* and *Mammalodon*), and then evolved the
232 baleen with teeth (such as *Aetiocetus*), until the lineages only baleen existed (e.g.,
233 *Eomysticetus* and *Micromysticetus*) (Fitzgerald 2006; Fitzgerald 2010). This supported the
234 hypothesis that mineralized teeth were lost or degenerated in the common ancestor of crown
235 Mysticeti. The fact is all living baleen whales lack teeth and instead baleen (Uhen 2010).
236 However, the successive steps of vestigial tooth development was found in the fetal period of
237 living baleen whales (Davitbeal et al. 2009; Thewissen 2018). Molecular sequences of some
238 specific genes, such as *AMBN*, *ENAM*, *AMELX*, *AMTN*, *C4orf26* and *ODAM*, contain
239 different types of inactivating mutations (e.g., stop codons, frameshift mutations, splice site
240 mutations, etc.) in various mysticete species (Deméré et al. 2008; Meredith et al. 2009;
241 Alhashimi et al. 2010; Gasse et al. 2012; Meredith et al. 2013; Delsuc et al. 2015; Springer et
242 al. 2019), which is consistent with loss-of-teeth. But none of the inactivating mutations are
243 shared by all living mysticetes species. Meredith et al. found a common insertion of CHR-2
244 SINE retroposon in *MMP20* gene among all living baleen whales (Meredith et al. 2011),
245 which further confirmed the hypothesis that mineralized teeth were lost or degenerated in the
246 common ancestor of crown Mysticeti in the molecular level. It has been confirmed that
247 mutations or deletions of *MMP20* gene would result in thin and brittle enamel layer (Caterina

248 et al. 2002). Some studies have confirmed that *ACPT* gene is responsible for the development
249 of enamel, and mutations can also lead to amelogenesis imperfecta (Choi et al. 2016; Seymen
250 et al. 2016; Smith et al. 2017). Different inactivating mutations was detected among all
251 mysticete species in *ACPT* gene in our study, besides, two shared single-base sites deletion
252 were found on exon 4 and 5 of *ACPT* among all living baleen whales, which result in loss of
253 function. Similar to the result of Meredith et al. (Meredith et al. 2011), our study supported
254 the hypothesis that that mineralized teeth were lost or degenerated in the common ancestor of
255 crown Mysticeti.

256 **Is inactivation of *ACPT* neutral or adaptive?**

257 The degeneration and / or loss of some morphological structures (such as limbs, teeth, and
258 eyes, etc.) is a complex process that may result from the relaxation of the negative selection
259 (neutral evolution), adaptive evolution (direct natural / positive selection to conserve energy
260 and / or eliminate the disadvantageous effects of morphological structure), and / or gene
261 pleiotropy (indirect selection on another traits) (Wang et al. 2006; Zhang 2008; Krishnan and
262 Rohner 2017). Sharma et al. revealed that evolutionary gene losses are not only a
263 consequence, but may also be causally involved in phenotypic adaptations (Sharma et al.
264 2018). By estimating the inactivation time of pseudogenes, and comparing with fossil
265 evidence, we will speculate whether gene inactivation is due to the adaptive or neutral
266 selection.

267 The record of enamel-degenerated armadillo fossil is significantly earlier than the
268 estimated time of *ACPT* inactivation (10.18-11.30Ma) (Ciancio et al. 2014), which suggested
269 gene loss as a consequence of adaptation is likely the result of the relaxation of the negative
270 selection. The results further supported the previous study (Sharma et al. 2018). Whereas, the
271 inactivation time of *ENAM* (~45.5Ma) and *ODAM* (~40.43 Ma, range 36.38-45.45Ma) is
272 much older than inactivation date for *ACPT* in armadillo (Springer et al. 2019). Conversely,
273 the inactivation time of *ENAM* is relatively earlier than the fossil record time (~3.5-6.5Ma).
274 The inactivation of *ENAM* gene might be the one of most main causes of degeneration / loss
275 of tooth enamel in armadillos.

276 Inactivation date for *ACPT* (23.60-28.32Ma) is relatively younger than inactivation
277 dates for *ENAM* (28.8-35.3Ma) and *ODAM* (~30.7Ma) in *O. afer* (Meredith et al. 2009;
278 Springer et al. 2019). However, estimates for *ACPT*, *ODAM* and *ENAM* inactivation are both
279 older than the oldest fossil armadillo, *O. minutus*, which is ~19Ma (Patterson 1975). It

280 strongly suggested that gene loss may be the reason, not the consequence, for degeneration
281 and / or loss of enamel, which is different from the result of Sharma et al. (Sharma et al.
282 2018).

283 Cetacean includes both toothless Mysticeti and enamel-less *Kogia*. Relaxation of
284 selective pressure was detected in both crown and stem Mysticeti ([Appendix Table 5](#)), which
285 is consistent with the archaic toothless mysticete, e.g., *Eomysticetus whitmorei* (Deméré et al.
286 2008). Molecular evidence showed *ACPT* has been lost its function in LCA of Mysticeti.
287 However, The inactivation time of *ACPT* in Mysticeti is 14.05-16.30Ma, which is much
288 younger than the toothless mysticete (~30Ma) and the split of Mysticeti (~25.9Ma).
289 Obviously, this is not consistent with the facts. It might be associated with relatively lower
290 rates of frameshift accumulation during evolution of mysticete pseudogenes and long lifespan
291 of mysticete (Meredith et al. 2009; Meredith et al. 2011). To our knowledge, whether
292 adaptive or neutral, the shared single-base site deletion in *ACPT* fills an important gap in our
293 understanding of the macroevolutionary transition leading from the LCA of crown Cetacean
294 to the LCA of crown Mysticeti. Stem physeteroids (sperm whales) are known from the
295 Miocene and had teeth with enamel (Bianucci and Landini 2010). Our results provide support
296 for loss of the intact *ACPT* in *K. breviceps*. *ACPT* was reported that play key roles in
297 amelogenesis and differentiation of odontoblasts (Choi et al. 2016; Seymen et al. 2016; Smith
298 et al. 2017). Our result is in line with the enamel-less morphological structure in *K. breviceps*.

Figure legends

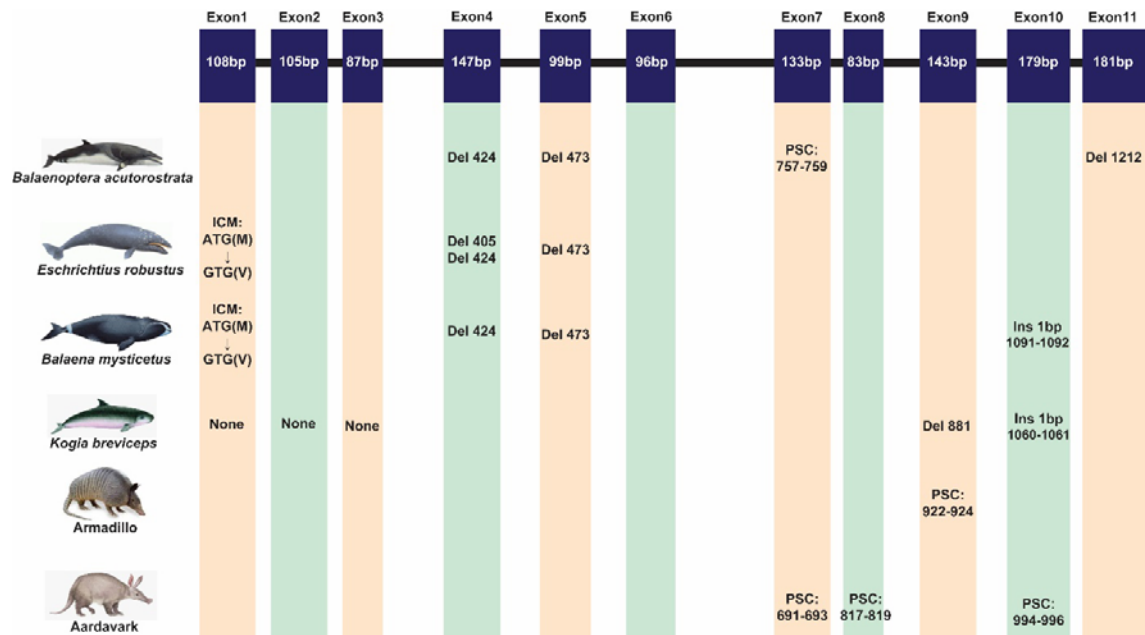


Figure 1 The inactivating mutation of *ACPT* gene in toothless/enamel-less mammals.
(Abbreviation: ICM, initiation codon mutation; Del, deletion; Ins, insertion; PSC, premature stop codon)

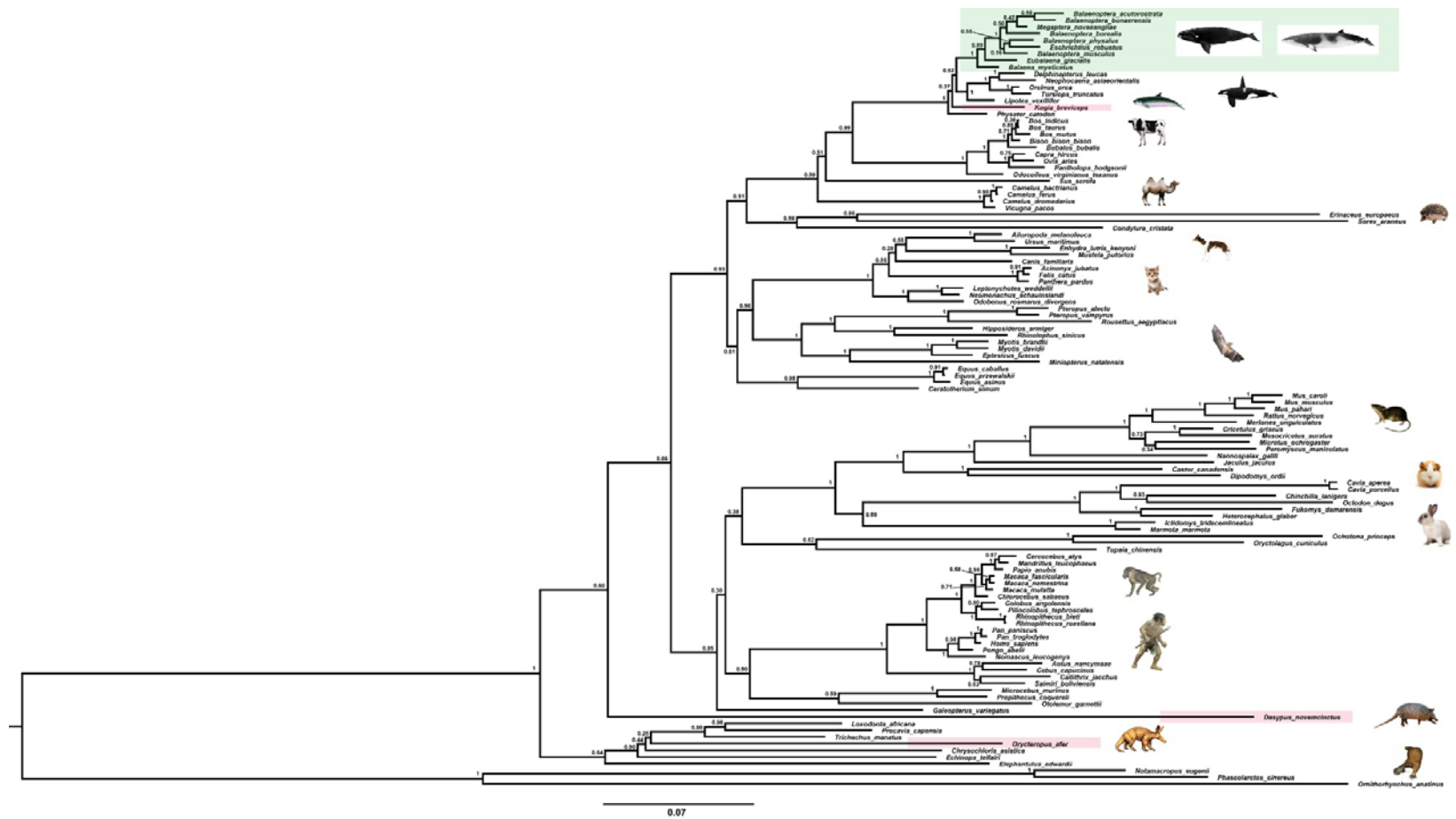


Figure 2 The BI phylogenetic relationship of 115 mammalian *ACPT* gene.

(Nucleotide optimal substitution model: GTR+GAMMA; green box indicates toothless taxa, red boxes indicate enamel-less taxa)

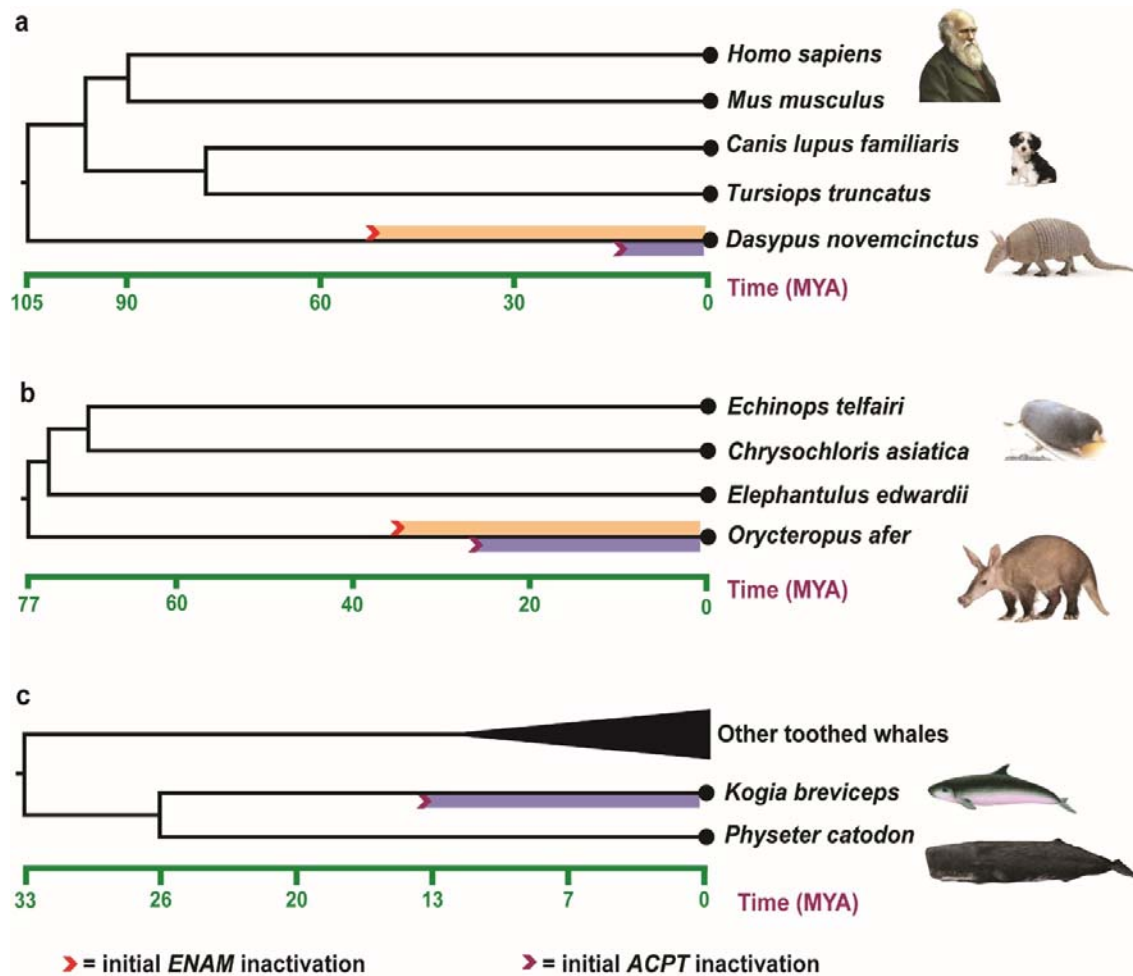


Figure 3 Estimated inactivation times of ACPT versus ENAM.

(a) *Dasypus novemcinctus* (nine-banded armadillo), (b) *Orycteropus afer* (aardvark), (c) *Kogia breviceps* (pygmy sperm whale). The inactivation times of ENAM is from (Meredith, et al. 2009; Springer, et al. 2019).

Appendix files

Appendix Figure 1 The tree topology used to conduct the selective pressure analysis in PAML.

Appendix Figure 2 The detailed information about inactivated mutation of *ACPT* among relative cetaceans. (Orange represents initiation codon mutation, yellow represents deletion, green represents insertion, and blue represents two common deletion sites among all baleen whales).

Appendix Figure 3 The information of mutation sites about amelogenesis imperfecta in *ACPT* protein sequence.

Appendix Table 1 Mammalian species used in this study and the sources of sequences.

Appendix Tables 2 The genome information of cetacean species used in this study.

Appendix Table 3 SRA information of 4 baleen whales species used in this study.

Appendix Table 4 The information of exon/intron boundary in relative whales (obtained by BLAST by using python script *in silico*)

Appendix Table 5 Likelihood and omega values estimated under two ratio branch model on *ACPT* gene among toothless and enamel-less branches.

Abbreviations

ACPT: Acid Phosphatase, Testicular; EMP: enamel matrix protein;

PAML: phylogenetic analysis by maximum likelihood;

PP: posterior probability; Ma: million years ago

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent to publish

Not applicable.

Availability of data and materials

The data generated and analyzed during this study are included in this article and its appendix files, including 5 tables and 6 figures.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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Authors' contributions

Yuan Mu: contributed to conception and design, acquisition, analysis, and interpretation, drafted manuscript, critically revised manuscript, agrees to be accountable for all aspects of work ensuring integrity and accuracy.

Xin Huang: contributed to acquisition and analysis, drafted manuscript

Rui Liu: contributed to analysis and interpretation

Yulin Gai: contributed to design, critically revised manuscript

Na Liang: contributed to analysis, drafted manuscript

Daiqing Yin: contributed to conception, contributed to interpretation

Lei Shan: contributed to conception and design, critically revised manuscript

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