

1 **Truly ubiquitous CRESS DNA viruses scattered across the eukaryotic tree of life**

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8 Running title: endogenized CRESS DNA virus Reps

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22 **Truly ubiquitous CRESS DNA viruses scattered across the eukaryotic tree of life**

23 **Abstract**

24 Until recently, most viruses detected and characterized were of economic significance, associated
25 with agricultural and medical diseases. This was certainly true for the eukaryote-infecting circular
26 Rep (replication-associated protein)-encoding single-stranded DNA (CRESS DNA) viruses,
27 which were thought to be a relatively small group of viruses. With the explosion of metagenomic
28 sequencing over the past decade and increasing use of rolling-circle replication for sequence
29 amplification, scientists have identified and annotated copious numbers of novel CRESS DNA
30 viruses – many without known hosts but which have been found in association with eukaryotes.
31 Similar advances in cellular genomics have revealed that many eukaryotes have endogenous
32 sequences homologous to viral Reps, which not only provide “fossil records” to reconstruct the
33 evolutionary history of CRESS DNA viruses but also reveal potential host species for viruses
34 known by their sequences alone. The Rep protein is a conserved protein that all CRESS DNA
35 viruses use to assist rolling circle replication that is known to be endogenized in a few eukaryotic
36 species (notably tobacco and water yam). A systematic search for endogenous Rep-like sequences
37 in GenBank’s non-redundant eukaryotic database was performed using tBLASTn. We utilized
38 relaxed search criteria for the capture of integrated Rep sequence within eukaryotic genomes,
39 identifying 93 unique species with an endogenized fragment of Rep in their nuclear, plasmid (1
40 species), mitochondrial (6 species) or chloroplast (8 species) genomes. These species come from
41 19 different phyla, scattered across the eukaryotic tree of life. Exogenous and endogenous
42 CRESS DNA viral Rep tree topology suggested potential hosts for one family of uncharacterized
43 viruses and supports a primarily fungal host range for genomoviruses.

44 Keywords: paleovirology, single-stranded DNA virus, integration, CRESS DNA virus

45

46 **Introduction**

47 Recent metagenomics advances have widened our knowledge of all viruses, including a
48 previously understudied group of viruses, circular Rep-encoding ssDNA (CRESS DNA) viruses
49 (Zhao et al., 2019b, Krupovic et al., 2020). The homologous Rep protein these viruses share is a
50 replication-associated protein that facilitates rolling-circle replication (Rosario et al., 2012b).
51 Several families of viruses with circular ssDNA genomes (CRESS DNA viruses) have been
52 recently united into the order *Cressdaviricota*, including the plant-infecting *Geminiviridae* and
53 *Nanoviridae*, the animal-infecting *Circoviridae*, the fungal-infecting *Genomoviridae*, the diatom-
54 infecting *Bacilladnaviridae*, and two families without a confirmed host range: *Smacoviridae* and
55 *Redondoviridae* (Krupovic et al., 2020). Among these the nanoviruses are multipartite, with one
56 ORF for each of their 6-9 genomic segments, and the geminiviruses can be monopartite or have
57 two segments to encode 4-8 proteins. The remaining families are all monopartite and encode
58 fewer ORFs; for instance, smacoviruses only encode a Rep and a capsid protein, while
59 bacilladnaviruses have four ORFs (Krupovic et al. 2020). This new order will likely expand
60 shortly, as sequences have been identified that are not closely related to any of these genera
61 (Kazlauskas et al., 2018; Kinsella et al., 2020). The ubiquitous presence of these CRESS DNA
62 viruses in different environments has been confirmed by numerous sequencing efforts, but
63 seldom have cellular hosts been identified in these metagenomic studies. Many of these viruses
64 may not be very virulent in their hosts (Roossinck and Bazán, 2017), and isolating these hundreds
65 of unclassified viruses to screen against thousands to millions of potential hosts is a daunting task
66 with low probability of success. Another way to narrow the potential host range for viruses
67 known by sequence alone could be through finding “fossil records” inside host genomes, which
68 would indicate that a related virus infected that host some time ago (Dennis et al., 2018b; Patel et
69 al., 2011, Kinsella et al, 2020).

70 Many viruses integrate themselves inside host genomes during an infection, including retro-
71 transcribing viruses replicating through an integrated DNA intermediate (Nisole and Saïb, 2004).
72 Eight percent of the human genome consists of retroviral elements because they were inserted
73 inside germline cells (Hayward and Katzourakis, 2015); the same process is currently ongoing in
74 the koala genome (Stoye, 2006). Phages, with both dsDNA and ssDNA genomes, can be
75 equipped with integrases and transposases to facilitate endogenization (Krupovic and Forterre,
76 2015). These interactions can be helpful to the host for a short time, for instance, by providing
77 protection against related lytic viruses, or over millions of years, as endogenized viruses can
78 provide genetic novelty for improved fitness such as in the mammalian placenta (Mi et al., 2000).
79 In eukaryotes, viruses that replicate in the host's nucleus will have a better chance of
80 endogenization than others (Gilbert and Feschotte, 2010). While the mechanisms for retrovirus
81 and dsDNA viral integration are well-studied, how other viral sequences become endogenized is
82 an active area of research (Tu et al., 2017). The mechanism by which the CRESS DNA viruses
83 integrate into their eukaryotic host genomes is still not clear (Krupovic and Forterre, 2015), but
84 the conventional wisdom is that viral use of host replication machinery inside the nucleus
85 facilitates illegitimate recombination between viral and host genome (Belyi et al., 2010; Gilbert
86 and Feschotte, 2010). Integration must sometimes occur in germline cells to allow CRESS DNA
87 endogenous viral elements (EVE) to be transmitted and persist in the host's lineage.

88 Previous studies have found strong evidence of endogenous CRESS DNA virus sequences in
89 some eukaryotic genomes. One of the earliest studies identified 35 species with Rep-like
90 sequences after a BLAST search using circovirus, geminivirus and nanovirus Rep proteins as
91 queries (Liu et al., 2011). Circovirus-like Rep sequences were found in vertebrates such as cat,
92 dog, panda, frog, opossum, and sloth, and assuming these came from a single genomic integration
93 event, it was dated to ~55 million years ago (Belyi et al., 2010). More recently, another group
94 searched for circovirus-like endogenous elements in vertebrate genome assemblies, confirming

95 the previously observed shared integration event, and suggesting that circovirus-like sequences
96 had been introduced nineteen times into vertebrate germlines (Dennis et al., 2018a). Geminivirus-
97 like Rep sequences have been found in a number of plant species. Multiple studies have reported
98 *Begomovirus* (a genus within the plant-infecting *Geminiviridae*) -derived sequences inside several
99 tobacco *Nicotiana* species: *N. tabacum*, *N. tomentosiformis*, *N. tomentosa* and *N. kawakamii*,
100 (Ashby et al., 1997; Bejarano et al., 1996; Kenton et al., 1995; Murad et al., 2004). Evidence
101 showed geminivirus might have integrated more than once into the ancestors of *Nicotiana* species
102 (Murad et al., 2004). Two endogenized Rep fragments similar to geminiviruses have also been
103 found in the genome of the water yam (*Dioscorea alata*) and 22 other *Dioscorea* species. These
104 Rep fragments appear to be actively expressed: they are under purifying selection and small
105 RNAs and the expressed proteins have been detected in *Dioscorea* (Filloux et al., 2015).
106 Recently, large magnitude surveys were conducted searching for traces of all non-
107 retrotranscribing viral sequences in over four thousand eukaryotic genomes (Kryukov et al.,
108 2018). While CRESS DNA viruses were not the only focus of that study, it showed the
109 distribution of endogenous sequences among diverse eukaryotic taxa. However, there was neither
110 discussion nor detailed presentation of their CRESS DNA virus-like endogenized sequence
111 results.

112 Paleovirology is the emergent field studying ancient extinct viruses through endogenized
113 sequences or viral “fossil records.” These sequences are not only useful in studying the origin and
114 evolution of viruses, but also have many implications for how viruses have shaped the evolution
115 of their hosts (Feschotte and Gilbert, 2012). Endogenized viral sequences are used to answer
116 questions concerning evolutionary time-scale of the exogenous viruses, such as ancient host-
117 shifting events and determining long-term substitution rates (Gilbert and Feschotte, 2010).
118 Endogenized lentiviruses were used to estimate endogenization events about 4.2 million years
119 ago, and suggested that endogenous sequences are very useful in studying ancestral host-

120 pathogen dynamics and reconstructing ancient viruses (Gilbert et al., 2009). Paleovirology has
121 already yielded important insights for CRESS DNA viruses. While studies of extant crop virus
122 nucleotide sequences often coalesce around the time of the dawn of agriculture (~10,000 years
123 ago), with the evidence of an endogenized Rep sequence from *Nicotiana* spp., we know that
124 geminiviruses originated more than ten million years ago (Gibbs et al., 2006; Lefeuvre et al.,
125 2011). As endogenous sequences can serve as evidence of past host use, further detection of
126 endogenous Rep-like sequences can deduce likely hosts for uncharacterized CRESS DNA viruses
127 (Aiewsakun and Katzourakis, 2015)

128 In this study, we performed a relaxed sequence identity search (tBLASTn) of the non-redundant
129 eukaryotic nucleotide database for endogenized CRESS DNA viral Reps, including a family of
130 Rep-encoding alphasatellites that are known to be related to CRESS DNA viral Reps. We
131 detected endogenous CRESS DNA Rep sequences in 434 unique accession entries from 93
132 unique eukaryotic species. The endogenous Rep fragments came from species of 19 different
133 phyla, scattered across the eukaryotic tree of life. All viral families displayed intriguing findings;
134 for example, genomovirus Reps were closely related to endogenous sequences from fungal
135 genomes, showing that fungal species might indeed serve as hosts for uncharacterized
136 genomoviruses. The circovirus tree showed strong intermingling of exogenous and endogenous
137 sequences, suggesting that extant circovirus diversity might still not be well-sampled.
138 Geminivirus Reps were, as expected, surrounded by endogenous sequences from *Nicotiana* and
139 *Dioscorea* spp. Endogenous sequences found by searching with nanoviruses and related
140 alphasatellite (associated with CRESS DNA viral infection of plants) Reps were from a wide
141 range of hosts, not just their current plant host range. The few endogenous sequences found by
142 searching with bacilladnavirus Reps were distantly related to exogenous viral sequences, which
143 did not help explicate the evolutionary history of these undersampled viruses. Finally, Reps from
144 *Smacoviridae*, a CRESS DNA virus family without a single cultured member, were unexpectedly

145 found to be similar to a sequence from a diatom, which is not an animal species, with which most
146 smacovirus sequences are found in association.

147 **Material and Methods**

148 BLAST searches

149 Local tBLASTn runs were carried out with the replication-associated protein (Rep) sequences of
150 CRESS DNA viruses from the RefSeq database (downloaded December 2017) as queries, against
151 the non-redundant (nr) eukaryote nucleotide database (taxid: 2759; downloaded March 2018)
152 from NCBI. The queries dataset includes 66 Reps from *Alphasatellitidae*, 8 Reps from
153 *Bacilladnaviridae*, 154 Reps from *Circoviridae*, 416 Reps from *Geminiviridae*, 67 Reps from
154 *Genomoviridae*, 8 Reps from *Nanoviridae*, 26 Reps from *Smacoviridae*, and 164 Reps from
155 Unclassified ssDNA viruses (Table S1). Family *Redondoviridae* had not been proposed until
156 2019, and thus it was not included in the scope of this project (Abbas et al., 2019). The tBLASTn
157 search ran with the following less stringent criteria: BLOSUM50 matrix, word size 6, e-value
158 threshold 0.001, gap penalty 15 and extension penalty 1 (Altschul et al., 1990).

159 BLAST results processing

160 Repetitive and overlapping hits of the same accession entry resulted from queries from the same
161 family were manually merged into one consensus sequence using Seaview (Gouy et al., 2010).
162 Consensus sequences were omitted if they were less than 50 amino acids in length. We then
163 conducted a reciprocal BLAST analysis, where putative endogenous Rep-like sequences were
164 used as queries for a tblastn search of the full nt/nr GenBank database (June 2020). Only
165 sequences that had at least one high-ranking hit to a CRESS DNA virus were retained for further
166 analysis. To provide more confidence that the sequences identified are truly endogenous, five
167 hundred nucleotides up and down stream of the consensus sequences were extracted from
168 Genbank and scanned for repetitive elements using WSCensor (<http://www.girinst.org/censor/>),

169 Kohany et al., 2006). The presence of repetitive elements was taken as strong evidence that the
170 Rep-like sequence was integrated into a eukaryotic genome. Sequences that did not have evidence
171 of transposable elements near their sequence were then examined for the size of genomic
172 fragment they had been assembled into. As CRESS DNA virus genomic segments are generally
173 very compact (<6000 bases, Krupovic et al., 2020), we took the presence of more than 6000 bases
174 in either direction on the sequence as evidence that the Rep-like sequence was not in a CRESS
175 DNA virus and instead was integrated into a host's genome. Finally, some of the sequences
176 identified here have been previously noted by other groups that conducted experiments that
177 demonstrate the location of the sequence in a eukaryotic genome (Ashby et al., 1997; Lefeuvre et
178 al., 2011; Theze et al., 2014; Filloux et al., 2015; Metegnier et al., 2015). The sequences that
179 fulfilled at least one of these criteria and the information about their reciprocal BLAST hits are
180 given in Supplementary File 1.

181 Endogenous and viral sequence alignment and tree generation

182 All endogenous consensus sequences and the viral Reps used to search for them were aligned
183 using MUSCLE (default maximum 16 iterations, Edgar, 2004) and trimmed using TrimAl (-
184 gappyout) (Capella-Gutierrez et al., 2009). 256 begomoviruses were taken out of the dataset,
185 leaving 100 representative members of *Begomovirus* within the geminivirus and endogenous
186 sequences dataset. This was to save computation time and avoid overrepresentation of
187 *Begomovirus*, the most speciose genus of all classified viruses, within the alignment. All trimmed
188 endogenous and viral sequence alignments were inputs to PhyML 3.0 (Guindon and Gascuel,
189 2003) to estimate maximum likelihood trees using CRESS+G+F model (Zhao et al., 2019a). The
190 Shimodaira-Hasegawa approximate likelihood ratio test (SH-aLRT, or SH-like) statistic was
191 selected as the branch support option from PhyML, which is a more efficient choice for larger
192 data sets with good accuracy (Guindon et al., 2010). Trees were visualized and colored using
193 Figtree (<http://tree.bio.ed.ac.uk/software/figtree/>).

194 **Results and Discussion**

195 tBLASTn results

196 With our relaxed search criteria and using 908 CRESS DNA viral Rep amino acid sequences as
197 queries, we were able to obtain 111,344 raw hits after the search, which collapsed to 434 unique
198 accession entries, 93 unique species and 19 eukaryotic phyla (Table 1 and Figure 1).
199 Bacilladnavirus Reps found the smallest number of similar sequences in eukaryotic genomes and
200 geminivirus Reps found the greatest number of hits per viral Rep. However, circovirus Reps were
201 the most widespread sequences, as they were found in 69 unique species genomes. These
202 endogenous Rep sequences spread across Plantae, Chromalveolates, Unikonts, and Excavates
203 across the eukaryotic tree of life. The phyla with the most representing species in our study are
204 Magnoliophyta, Ascomycota and Chordata. Some of the species were identified with multiple
205 Rep queries, and thus are present in multiple phylogenetic analyses, aligned with different extant
206 CRESS DNA viruses in different trees. In some cases this reflects the homology of Rep among
207 CRESS DNA virus families. This is best illustrated with the geminiviruses and genomoviruses,
208 as the latter was named the Gemini-like No Movement protein viruses based on similarities to
209 geminiviruses including a closely related Rep protein (Varsani and Krupovic, 2017). In others, it
210 perhaps reflects that the integrated sequences may be most related to an as yet unclassified
211 CRESS DNA virus family, as could be the case for the bulk of hits in the *Entamoeba* spp.
212 (Kinsella et al., 2020).

213 Maximum likelihood trees

214 *Geminivirus Reps and endogenous sequences*

215 Seven maximum likelihood trees were built with PhyML3 using the CRESS+G+F model (Zhao et
216 al., 2019a), one for each family of Reps used to query the database. The geminivirus and similar
217 endogenous sequences ML tree is shown in Figure 2 (a version with accession numbers for all

sequences is shown in Supplementary Tree S2). While the majority of eukaryotic species in which CRESS DNA endogenous elements were found were plants, there are some surprising results showing geminivirus-like sequences integrated into protists, oomycetes and fungi. The unclassified species Niminivirus and Baminivirus are in a well-supported clade containing species from the fungal groups Ascomycota and Basidiomycota (SH-like support 0.964). One large clade (SH-like support 0.956) containing all Reps from *Begomovirus*, *Curtovirus*, *Topocurtovirus*, and *Turncurtovirus* includes only one endogenous Rep sequence, from the common sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*). The sister group to this clade is composed entirely of *Nicotiana* species (tobacco), in which endogenous geminivirus Rep homologues have been long described (Ashby et al., 1997; Gibbs et al., 2006; Lefeuvre et al., 2011). The sister group to these two clades exclusively contains more endogenized sequences, mostly *Dioscorea* species (water yam, previously described by Filloux et al., 2015), three additional sequences from *Nicotiana* and two from the mitochondrion of *Amborella trichopoda* (understory shrubs, KF754803). These two clades of endogenized sequences and the clade dominated by extant begomovirus sequences formed a distinct group (SH-like 0.787). Deeper in the tree, the intron-containing (spliced) and non-intron-containing (unspliced) geminivirus Rep sequences are quite separated (as in Filloux et al 2015, Zhao et al., 2019a), and there are no endogenous sequences from plant genomes that group with the spliced Reps. More distantly related geminivirus-like Rep sequences were found in another plant (narrow-leafed ash *Fraxinus angustifolia*, as had been noted by Filloux et al., 2015), the chloroplast genomes of two species (*Euglena garcilis* and *Paradoxia multiseta*), several *Entamoeba* species, an algal plasmid, and the mitochondria of two oomycetes (*Phytophthora infestans*, *Peronospora tabacina*).

Endogenous sequences similar to geminivirus Reps have previously been found not only in many *Nicotiana* and *Dioscorea* spp., but also in assorted other plants like black cottonwood (*Populus trichocarpa*, Liu et al., 2011, Filloux et al., 2015), lettuce (*Lactuca sativa*, Filloux et al., 2015)

243 and Coffee (Sharma et al., 2020). We can add common sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*) to this list,
244 but we did not find these previously established homologs in our search. This is due to the non-
245 redundant eukaryotic database excluding the whole genome sequencing projects that produced
246 the genomic sequences for these plants. Our complementary analyses are conservative, and our
247 relaxed search strategy identified homologs in a much wider range of taxa than previous studies
248 (e.g., putative endogenized geminivirus sequences in fungus, compared to the few in Liu et al.,
249 2011).

250

251 *Circovirus Reps and endogenous sequences*

252 The circovirus Reps and similar endogenous sequences are shown in a tree in Figure 3 (a version
253 with accession numbers for all sequences is shown in Supplementary Tree S3). The close
254 relationships and intermingling of exogenous viral sequences and endogenous elements justifies
255 the significant research done on EVEs of this viral family (Liu et al., 2011; Theze et al., 2014;
256 Metegnier et al., 2015); circoviruses leave marks in the genomes of their hosts. Endogenous
257 sequences similar to circovirus Rep proteins were found in 69 eukaryotic species from 17 phyla.
258 Unlike the geminiviruses (Figure 2), the extant circoviruses are not together in large groups, and
259 close relationships between extant and endogenous sequences are apparent. An exception to this
260 would be the well-supported clade (SH-like support 0.963) containing most of the sequences
261 assigned to the genus *Cyclovirus* (Rosario et al., 2017). However, this clade still includes
262 endogenous Rep-like elements from four species: an ant (*Pseudomyrmex gracilis*) and three
263 tapeworms (*Hymenolepis diminuta*, *Spirometra erinaceieuropaei*, *Taenia asiatica*). This
264 provides independent support for the invertebrate host range inferred for many of cyclovirus
265 species (Rosario et al., 2012a; Rosario et al., 2018).

266 The official members of genus *Circovirus* are dispersed throughout the tree, with classified
267 members forming clades with both unclassified circoviruses and endogenized eukaryotic

268 sequences. Some clades reinforced similar host ranges for extant circoviruses and their related
269 integrated sequences. For instance, the clade containing Barbel circovirus includes sequences
270 from four fish species (and one sequence from the parasitic mite *Varroa jacobsoni*, SH-like
271 support 0.952). However, this was not the only part of the tree that included fish – salmon and
272 carp sequences both also appear elsewhere in the tree, and a sequence from spiny chromis
273 damselfish forms a weakly supported clade with a circovirus isolated from a bird (Garrulus
274 glandarius associated virus 1). Other well-supported clades suggest hosts for uncultured viruses.
275 For instance, sequences from two related parasitic flukes (*Opisthorchis viverrini* and
276 *Dicrocoelium dendriticum*) group well with two aquatic animal-associated extant viral sequences
277 (SH-like support 0.946). These circovirus sequences obtained from marine animals in their
278 natural habitat may reflect viral infections of their parasites such as flukes. The unclassified
279 circovirus species had sister groups from a much wider range than either of the two genera,
280 suggesting a very wide host range for this family among animals, commensurate with the high
281 sequence diversity among unclassified circoviruses (Dayaram et al., 2014; Li et al., 2010; Steel et
282 al., 2016).

283 The wide net cast by our search strategy is evident by the large representation on the tree of
284 sequences related to geminiviruses (especially those in *Nicotiana* and *Dioscorea*), but these were
285 not closely grouped with extant circoviruses and the results are understandable due to the
286 homology between geminivirus and circovirus Rep proteins. More surprising was that circovirus
287 Rep queries yielded more chloroplast hits than plant-infecting geminivirus Rep queries (Figure
288 2). This could be another artifact of our relaxed search approach, as reciprocal BLAST searches
289 for the chloroplast sequences in this tree produced strong hits to geminiviruses (4 sequences),
290 alphasatellites (2 sequences) with only the chloroplast of the diatom *Pseudo nitzschia multiseriata*
291 having a hermit crab-associated circovirus as its top viral hit (Supplementary File 1). The
292 relatively close groupings of some chloroplast sequences with circulating circoviruses (e.g.,
293 *Cylindrotheca closterium*'s chloroplast clustering with the fiddler crab associated circular virus,

294 SH-like support 0.861) could reflect a wider host range of sequenced exogenous circoviruses than
295 currently understood, or bizarre parallel evolution towards circovirus-like Rep sequences after an
296 ancestral integration of a CRESS DNA virus Rep that was associated with plants. There also
297 exists the possibility that not all of the data in GenBank is accurate – either in sequence, or in the
298 declared organism the nucleic acid came from. For instance, we found that a handful of sequences
299 that we used in our analysis have since been retracted from GenBank at the submitters' request
300 (e.g., *Taenia asiatica*, which grouped with the exogenous cycloviruses).

301

302 *Nanovirus Reps and endogenous sequences*

303 In Figure 4 (a version with accession numbers for all sequences is shown in Supplementary Tree
304 S4), the small number of sequenced nanovirus Reps formed their own clade (SH-like support
305 0.933). The eukaryotic sequences identified by the nanovirus Rep queries were largely those that
306 were found in the circovirus analysis (Figure 3) and do not reflect the plant host range of extant
307 nanoviruses. The circulating nanoviruses are most closely related to the Rep-like sequence of the
308 liver fluke *O. viverrini*, and are more distantly related to sequences found in Varroa mites and
309 marine chordates, then to pillbugs and a crustacean. The other clade in the tree includes more
310 diverse taxa: additional marine invertebrates, a fungus, a green alga (*Micromonas pusilla*) and
311 three chloroplast sequences. This tree is not very informative about the historical host range of
312 the nanoviruses because the current sequences form a clade and it is likely that the other
313 sequences are more closely related to Reps from other families. For instance, the sister taxon *O.*
314 *vierrini*'s best viral reciprocal BLAST hit was to a circovirus not a nanovirus (Supplementary
315 File 1).

316 *Genomovirus Reps and endogenous sequences*

317 Most genomovirus Reps are in a strongly supported clade (SH-like support 0.975) in the viral and
318 eukaryotic sequence tree in Figure 5 (a version with accession numbers for all sequences is

319 shown in Supplementary Tree S5). Together with sequences from two Basidiomycetes
320 (mushroom bicoloured deceiver [*Laccaria bicolor*] and dry rot fungus [*Serpula lacrymans* var.
321 *lacrymans* S7.9]) and one Ascomycete (*Exophiala spinifera*), all the exogenous genomoviruses
322 form a well-supported clade (SH-like support 0.981). The more distantly related sequences to the
323 genomoviruses, understandably, resemble a subset of the sequences related to geminiviruses:
324 plant endogenous sequences (from *Nicotiana* and *Dioscorea*, *Helianthus annuus* and *Fraxinus*
325 *angustifolia*), *Entamoeba* spp, the mitochondria of oomycetes and *Amborella trichopoda*, the red
326 algal plasmid and one of the chloroplast sequences. There are a few more fungal taxa, including
327 taxa previously identified by Liu et al (2011): *Aspergillus nidulans*, *Nectria haematococca*,
328 *Magnaporthe oryzae*, and some novel Rep-like sequences (*Cordyceps militaris*, *Verticillium*
329 *dahlia*, *Colletotrichum higginsianum*, *Metarhizium majus*) but no other endogenous sequences are
330 closely related to the genomoviruses. All of these fungal sequences were also identified in the
331 geminivirus tree (Figure 2) but were closely related only to the unclassified Niminivirus and
332 Baminivirus sequences – distantly related to all the recognized genera of *Geminiviridae*. These
333 results suggest that these viral sequences might be misclassified as geminiviruses, and might fit
334 better within *Genomoviridae*.

335 The only cultivated genomovirus was isolated from a fungus (SsHADV-1, which infects the
336 ascomycete *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum*, Yu et al., 2010), and this tree suggests that the current and
337 extinct genomovirus host range is primarily restricted to fungi. Recently, a study showed
338 SsHADV-1 is able to infect fungi and the mycophagous insects feeding on them (Liu et al.,
339 2016). Virus-like particles with genome sequences most similar to genomoviruses have also been
340 found in fungus-farming termites (Kerr et al., 2018). These findings suggest members of
341 *Genomoviridae* are primarily fungal infecting but may also infect fungal-feeding predators. Host
342 range is hard to infer from the presence of viral genomes, since, for example, fungal viruses are
343 often part of a meal of fungus that an insect would eat. This is one of the major reasons that many

344 sequences of CRESS DNA viruses are named with the word “associated” since it is increasingly
345 rare that the identified virus has a confirmed ability to infect any host (Zhao et al., 2019b). It has
346 been previously proposed that SsHADV-1 could be a biological fungal pathogen control agent
347 (Yu et al., 2010). Our findings would undermine that application, since they indicate
348 genomoviruses likely have infected fungi for a long period of time, and the integrated
349 genomovirus-like sequences inside fungal hosts suggest some fungi may be able to resist viral
350 infection through the production of small antiviral RNAs (Campo et al., 2016).

351

352 *Bacilladnavirus Reps and endogenous sequences*

353 There were very few eukaryotic sequences identified using the Reps of bacilladnaviruses as
354 queries (Figure 6, a version with accession numbers for all sequences is shown in Supplementary
355 Tree S6). This could be due to the small number of representative Reps from this newly codified
356 family (Kazlauskas et al., 2017), compared to the diversity within the geminivirus, circovirus and
357 genomovirus query sets. Alternatively, this could reflect the true relationship between the
358 bacilladnavirus Reps and endogenous sequences: that no close relatives to bacilladnaviruses have
359 integrated into sequenced eukaryotes, or that such events happened so long ago as to erase any
360 close sequence relationship. The extant viruses formed a well-supported clade (SH-like support
361 0.918), and only two other species joined them on this tree: the parasitic *Loa loa* worm and a
362 parasitic alveolate, *Gregarina niphandrodes*. These sequences were also identified with
363 circovirus queries and are very distantly related to the heterokont diatoms that bacilladnaviruses
364 are known to infect, so this analysis does not expand our current, limited understanding of this
365 group’s host range.

366

367 *Smacovirus Reps and endogenous sequences*

Smacovirus Reps also did not produce many hits in eukaryotic genomes and many of the few identified endogenous sequences were also found when querying with Reps from other families. A sequence from the chloroplast of a diatom (*Pseudo-nitzschia multiseriata*), which had been identified in the circovirus search, was nested within the extant smacovirus Reps, implying a closer relationship to smacoviruses than circoviruses (Figure 7, a version with accession numbers for all sequences is shown in Supplementary Tree S7). Therefore, the smacovirus-like endogenous sequences were detected in a basal metazoan, an arthropod, a fungus, an alga, a sea snail, and the California two-spot octopus. However, the best viral reciprocal BLAST hits for these species were neither in nanovirus nor smacovirus (they were variously circovirus, geminivirus, alphasatellite, and unclassified CRESS DNA viruses, Supplemental File 1), indicating that only the diatom chloroplast sequence likely has a more recent relative with extant smacoviruses. As this viral family has no confirmed hosts, it was disheartening that other potential hosts were not identified in this study. This could be because hosts that have endogenized sequences related to smacoviruses have not yet been sequenced, or there might be no benefit to hosts to maintain smacovirus Rep-like sequences. Perhaps smacoviruses are less likely to experience sequence endogenization compared to other CRESS DNA viruses. Since the definitive hosts of smacoviruses have not yet been identified, any explanation for the single diatom species' chloroplast genome with sequence similarity is speculative. These results do not shed light on why viruses that have been so widely associated with vertebrate and invertebrate samples (Varsani and Krupovic, 2018), might have an endogenous fossil in diatoms.

388

389 *Alphasatellite Reps and endogenous sequences*

The alphasatellite Reps, which group with nanovirus Reps in phylogenies of CRESS DNA viruses (Simmonds et al., 2017) found sequences similar to BLAST hits to both the nanoviruses and geminiviruses with which they associate (Figure 8, a version with accession numbers for all

393 sequences is shown in Supplementary Tree S8). Most of the extant geminivirus- and nanovirus-
394 associated alphasatellites formed a clade with strong support, with no endogenous sequences
395 (SH-like support 0.991). With a relative diverse set of exogenous sequences, the alphasatellite
396 Rep queries were able to identify divergent homologs in eukaryotic genomes because they still
397 found the *Nicotiana* and *Dioscorea* endogenous elements that are unambiguously due to
398 geminivirus integration events. Alphasatellite Reps are much more closely related to nanovirus
399 Reps than geminivirus Reps (Zhao et al., 2019b), and nanovirus queries found relatively few Rep-
400 like sequences in eukaryotic genomes, so it was surprising that alphasatellites were able to find
401 geminivirus-like Rep-like sequences. This is likely due to the small number of queries used in the
402 nanovirus endogenous search compared to the alphasatellite queried search; very few nanovirus
403 species have been identified and sequenced. The alphasatellite tree shared many of the same
404 eukaryotic sequences as both the nanoviruses and geminiviruses, evincing both their close
405 ancestry with nanoviruses and the obligately shared host range of the alphasatellites with the
406 nanoviruses and geminiviruses. These included terrestrial and marine animals found on the
407 circovirus (Figure 3) and bacilladnavirus trees (Figure 6), which was unexpected from
408 exclusively plant-associated viruses and satellites (Briddon et al., 2018). Perhaps the host range of
409 alphasatellites extends to animals, and these elements might be found in association with CRESS
410 DNA viruses of animals in the future. Four chloroplast sequences were also found with the
411 alphasatellite dataset, but none of the sequences were closely grouped with alphasatellite
412 sequences and it is much more likely that the chloroplast sequences descended from viral Reps
413 instead of these satellite Reps.

414

415 *Endogenous elements in organelles*

416 There are three mitochondria and seven chloroplasts from eukaryotes that appear in these seven
417 trees, often in more than one tree (three additional mitochondrial sequences and an eighth

418 chloroplast sequence were identified by using unclassified CRESS DNA virus Reps as queries,
419 Supplementary File 1). The mechanism of how eukaryotic CRESS DNA viruses would integrate
420 into these erstwhile prokaryotes is an open area of inquiry, though it is thought that some
421 replication genes in mitochondria trace back to double-stranded DNA T-odd-like phages (Shutt
422 and Gray, 2006). Other researchers who have found CRESS DNA virus-like sequences in
423 mitochondria did not attempt a mechanistic explanation (Liu et al., 2011), but there are some
424 theoretical ways Rep proteins might be useful in an organelle. Mitochondrial genomes and their
425 plasmids have been detected in single-stranded states, undergoing rolling-circle replication in
426 higher plants (Backert et al., 1996). This suggests the requirement of a protein with a similar
427 function as Rep, which would not have been ancestral to mitochondrial genomes. Similarly,
428 strand displacement during mtDNA synthesis has also been suggested as a mode of human
429 mitochondrial DNA replication (Miralles Fusté et al., 2014). Independent of these obvious uses of
430 a rolling-circle replication enhancing enzyme in mitochondria, it is likely that these Rep-like
431 sequences have a function in the organelles, since these organelles are so genome-reduced that it
432 is hard to imagine useless integrated sequence lasting over long evolutionary times (Smith and
433 Keeling, 2015). It is unlikely that these Rep-like sequences are descended from a prokaryotic
434 virus with a Rep protein, because all phage RepA proteins are quite divergent from eukaryotic
435 CRESS DNA virus Reps – they are more different from the Reps studied here than the CRESS
436 DNA viral Reps are from one another (Koonin and Ilynia 1993). Although no direct evidence of a
437 Rep from any CRESS DNA virus has been shown to be harnessed by mitochondria, we identified
438 several potential candidates for such investigations. The mitochondria of *Amborella trichopoda*,
439 *Peronospora tabacina*, and *Phytophthora infestans* and the chloroplasts of *Pediastrum duplex*,
440 *Dunaliella salina*, *Euglena gracilis*, *Pediastrum duplex*, *Paradoxia multiseta*, *Pseudo-nitzschia*
441 *multiseries*, and *Cylindrotheca closterium* might hold intriguing evidence showing tangents of the
442 evolution of the CRESS DNA viral Rep protein.

443 The Reps of eukaryotic CRESS DNA viruses form a clade with the Reps of ssDNA plasmids,
444 including those of red algae, and it has been proposed that the viruses evolved from the plasmid
445 (Krupovic et al., 2009; Saccardo et al., 2011). When a Rep-like sequence was first observed in the
446 oomycete *P. infestans*, it grouped with a Rep from ssDNA algal plasmids (Liu et al., 2011), and a
447 plasmid from *Pyropia pulchra* is in the same clade with the *Phytophthora* mitochondrial
448 sequences. These eukaryotic sequences set apart from the more geminivirus-like clades (Figure 2)
449 could well represent Rep elements from plasmids, not viruses. While plasmids are more expected
450 than eukaryotic viruses inside organelles, this cannot explain the Rep-like sequences that are very
451 closely related to exogenous viruses, such as one of the integration events into the *Amborella*
452 *trichopoda* mitochondrion or the *Cylindrotheca closterium* chloroplast.

453 **Conclusions**

454 Despite the proliferation of papers discussing endogenized CRESS DNA viral sequences, we
455 were able to find more endogenous circovirus Rep sequences and fragments than previous studies
456 (Dennis et al., 2018a; Liu et al., 2011; Metegnier et al., 2015; Theze et al., 2014). This is because
457 we used relaxed search criteria, allowing for distantly related sequences to be included, which
458 also accounts for the rapid evolution of proteins in ssDNA viruses (Duffy and Holmes, 2008;
459 Firth et al., 2009) and diversification over the potential millions of years since integration (Gibbs
460 et al., 2006; Lefeuvre et al., 2011). Many of the sequences identified here have been previously
461 observed to be related to CRESS DNA viruses of eukaryotes and were found through multiple
462 different viral family searches in our study (e.g., *Phytophthora infestans*, Liu et al., 2011;
463 *Entamoeba histolytica* HM-1:IMSS, Gibbs et al., 2006). All of the Rep-like sequences identified
464 here, especially those in supported clades with exogenous CRESS DNA viral Reps, either are the
465 product of very recent integration events or are likely under some purifying selection, since all
466 homologs were identified by conserved sequence similarity. While we cannot quantify the
467 lineages that may have been harmed by integrating CRESS DNA Rep sequences, the existence of

so many Rep-like sequences in contemporary times, some of them reflecting integration events that occurred millions of years ago, means that these sequences derived from viruses may have been beneficial for at least some of the hosts.

The preponderance of CRESS DNA viruses known by sequence alone has stymied our understanding of the ecological impact of this group. Although all genomic sequences inferred from metagenomes that we used in this study were verified with PCR and Sanger sequencing to obtain the complete genome sequences, we lack the biological isolates to conduct any host range screening for nearly all of these species (Male et al., 2016; Rosario et al., 2015; Steel et al., 2016). We hope the host taxa showing evidence of a historical host range for these viruses will help researchers target the hosts of a given CRESS DNA virus family, and increase the odds of isolating viral particles for in depth characterization. We find evidence to support the host range assertions of several CRESS DNA virus groups, including arthropod-infecting circoviruses (Dayaram et al., 2014; Dayaram et al., 2013; Rosario et al., 2012a; Rosario et al., 2011; Rosario et al., 2018), the fungal host range of genomoviruses (Yu et al., 2010), and the closely related species that likely expand the host range of vertebrate-infecting circoviruses (Dennis et al., 2018a; Dennis et al., 2018b). We look forward to further screening of the genomes and transcriptomes that will be sequenced in the coming years as we anticipate our relaxed search approach will help reveal many more endogenized Rep-like sequences in the future.

Data Availability

All sequence data was retrieved from NCBI GenBank (accession numbers in supplemental figures and files). Alignments and phylogenetic trees can be accessed from Dryad.

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695 Table 1 Summary of results from tBLASTn using viral Rep queries.

Virus family	Queries	Initial raw hits	Unique Species	Number of Species hit more than once	Consensus sequences (cutoff 50 amino acids)
<i>Alphasatellitidae</i>	66	2396	50	24	189
<i>Bacilladnaviridae</i>	8	55	2	1	3
<i>Circoviridae</i>	153	15680	69	39	290
<i>Geminiviridae</i>	416	71708	41	23	191
<i>Genomoviridae</i>	67	7290	37	19	148
<i>Nanoviridae</i>	8	359	17	7	55
<i>Smacoviridae</i>	26	233	11	2	15
<i>Unclassified</i>	164	13623	91	46	N/A

696

697

698 Figure 1. Distribution of endogenous Reps across eukaryotic phyla. The numbers (top) represent
 699 number of species containing endogenous viral sequences. The percentages (bottom) represent
 700 the relative amounts of identified endogenous sequence by each viral family.

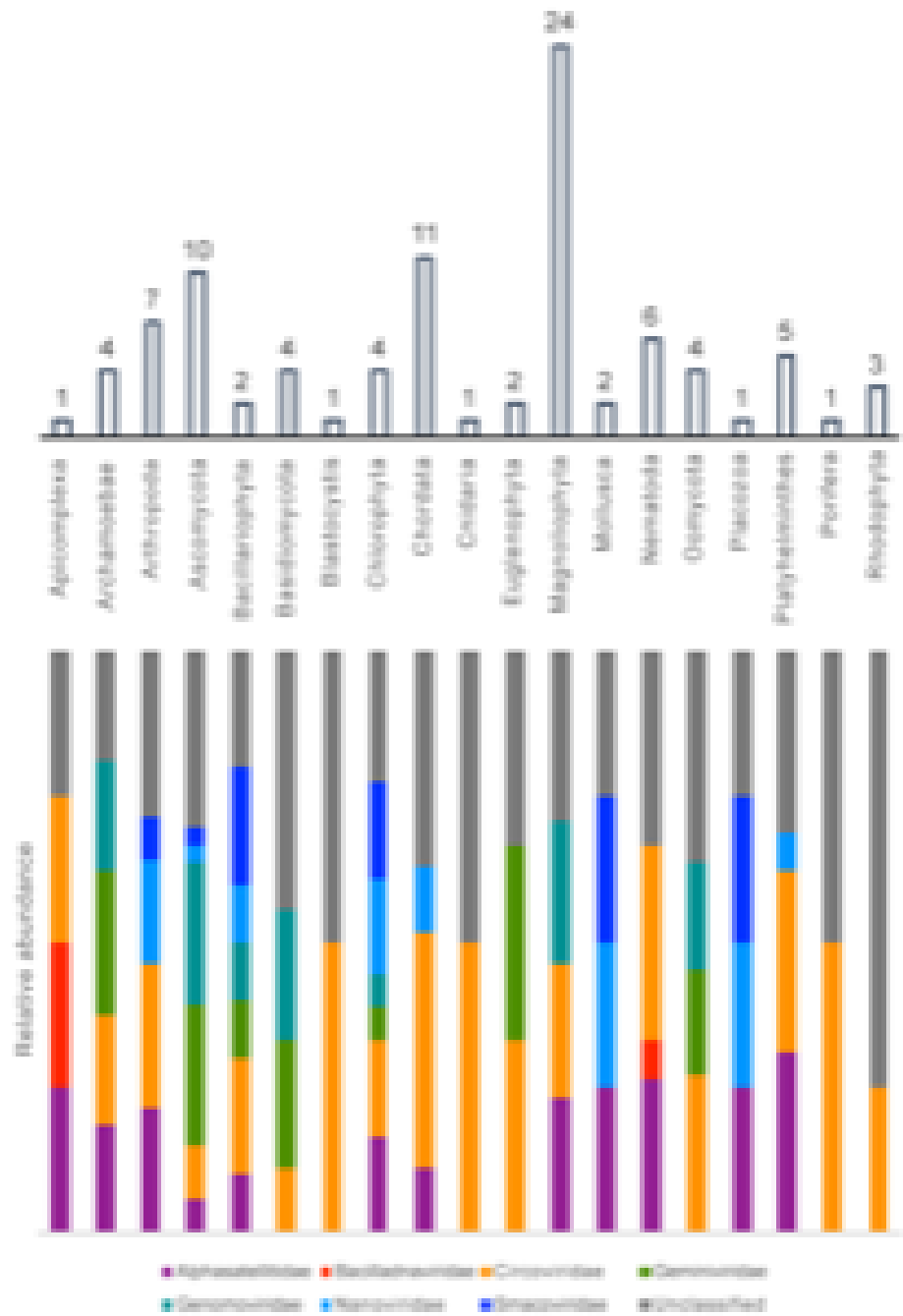


Figure 2. Geminivirus Reprs and endogenous sequences midpoint-rooted maximum likelihood tree. Eukaryote sequences are colored in grey, geminivirus Reprs are colored green, mitochondrial sequences are colored dark red, chloroplast sequences are colored bright green, plasmids from red algae are colored dark yellow. Open circles indicate SH-like support between 0.75 and 0.90, while filled circles indicate SH-like support ≥ 0.90 . A version of this tree with protein accession numbers is in Supplementary Tree S2.

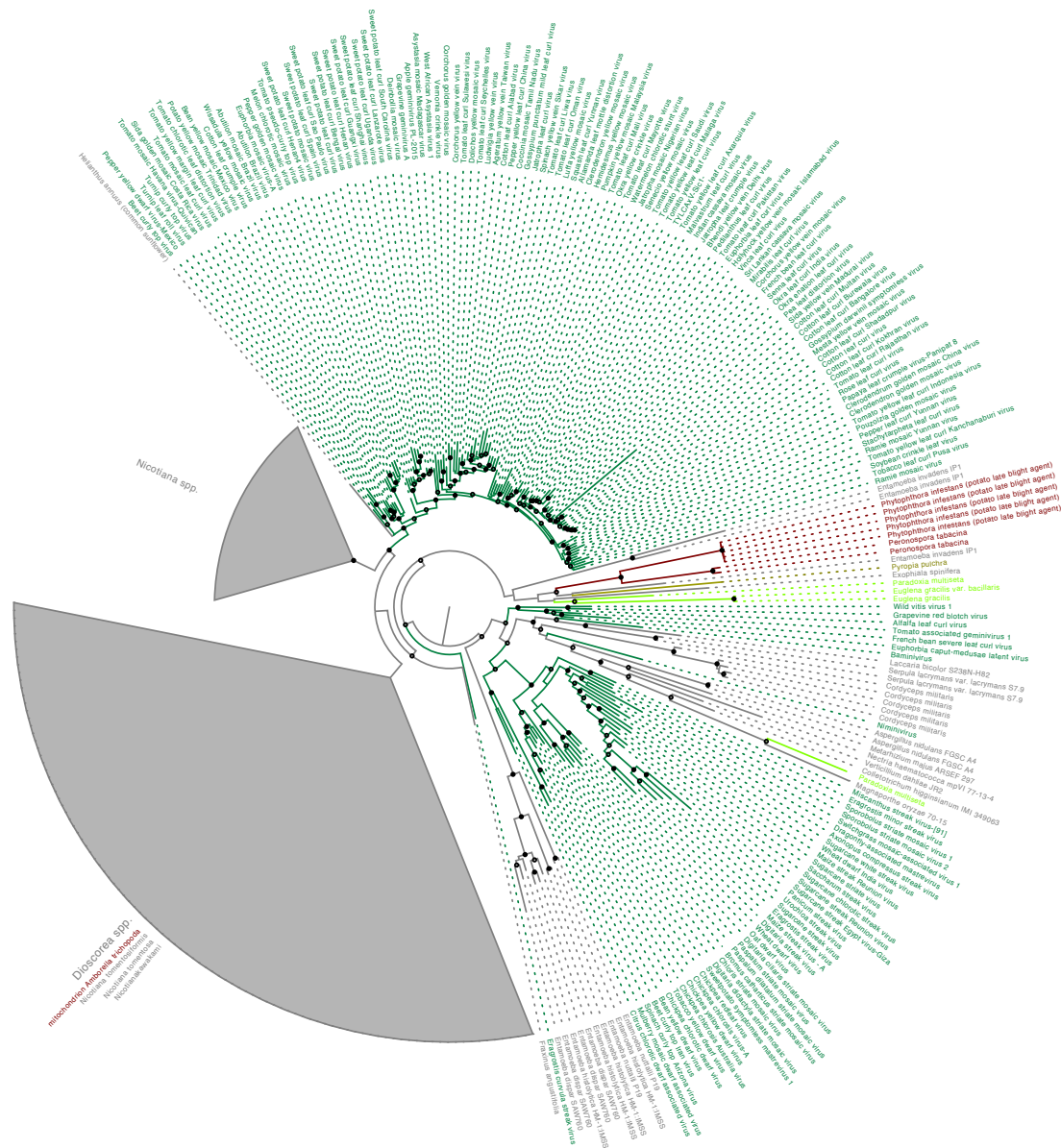
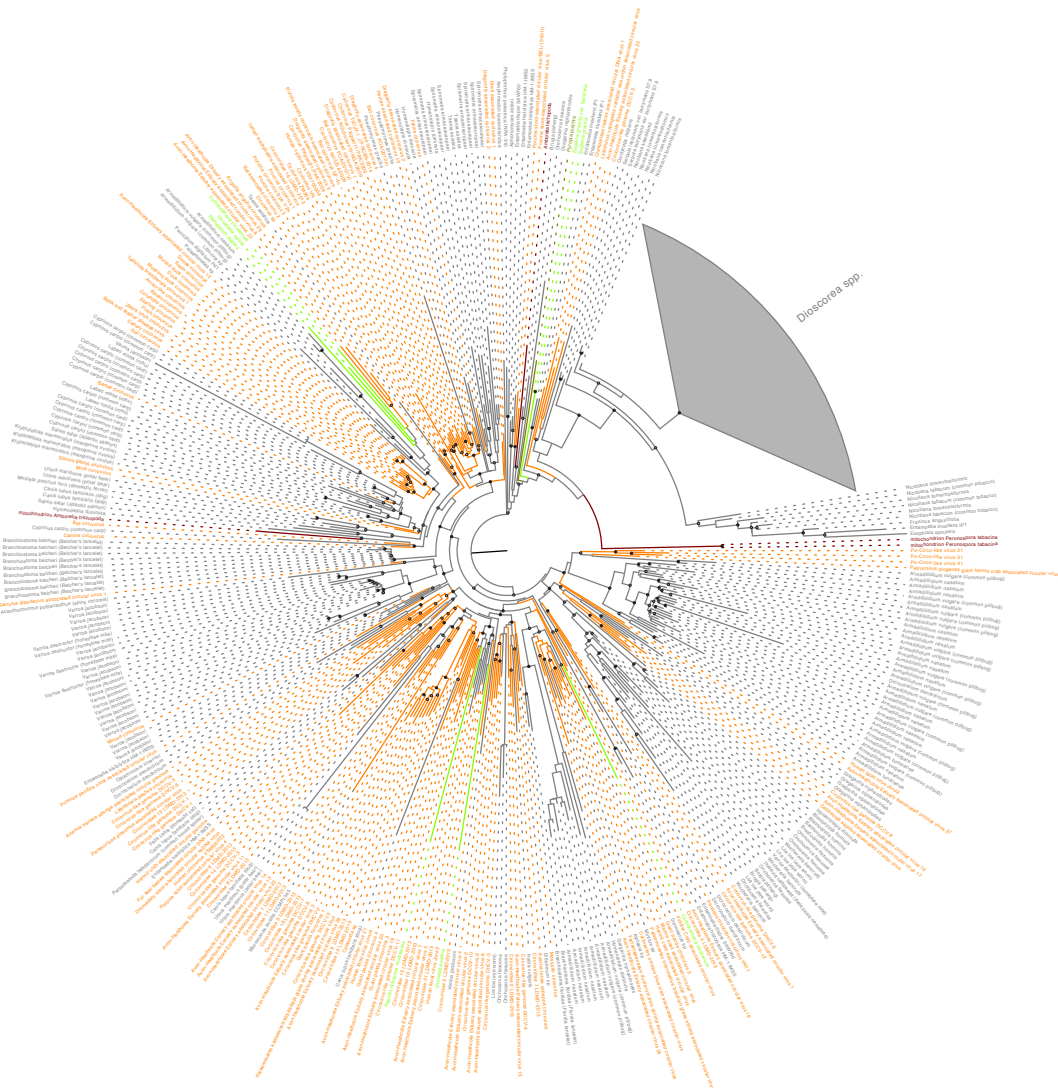


Figure 3. Circovirus Reps and endogenous sequences midpoint-rooted maximum likelihood tree. Eukaryote sequences are colored in grey, circovirus Reps are colored orange, mitochondrial sequences are colored dark red, chloroplast sequences are colored bright green, plasmids from red algae are colored dark yellow. Open circles indicate SH-like support between 0.75 and 0.90, while filled circles indicate SH-like support ≥ 0.90 . A version of this tree with protein accession numbers is in Supplementary Tree S3.



716 Figure 4. Nanovirus Reps and endo sequences midpoint-rooted maximum likelihood tree.
 717 Eukaryote sequences are colored in grey, nanovirus Reps are light blue, chloroplast sequences are
 718 colored bright green. Open circles indicate SH-like support between 0.75 and 0.90, while filled
 719 circles indicate SH-like support ≥ 0.90 . A version of this tree with protein accession numbers is in
 720 Supplementary Tree S4.

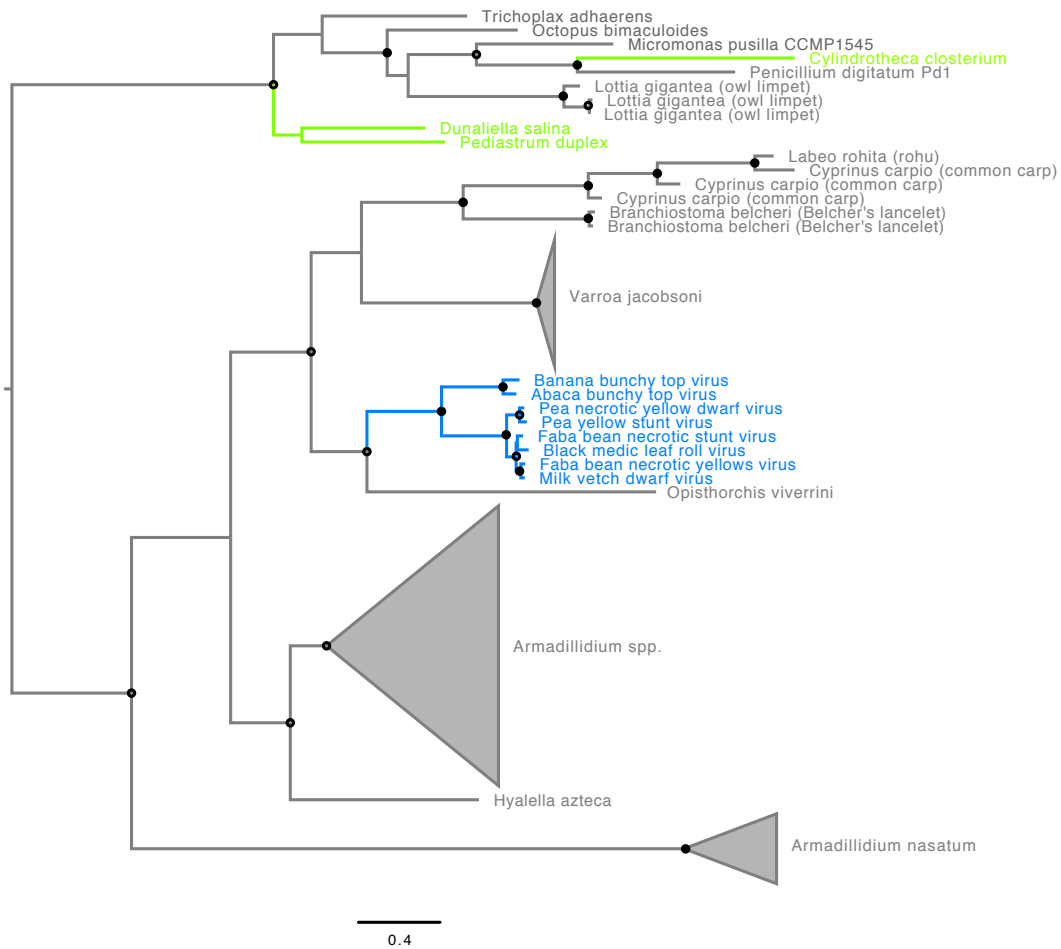
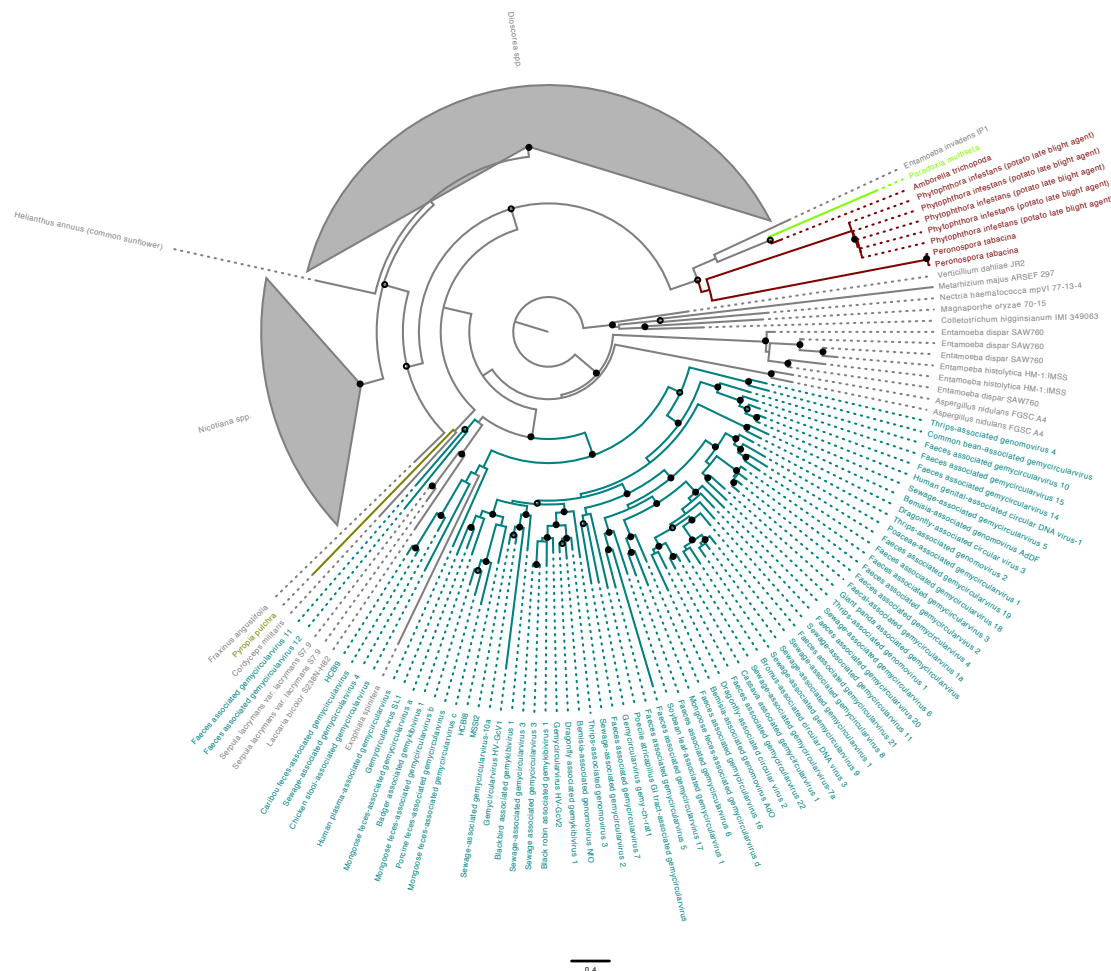
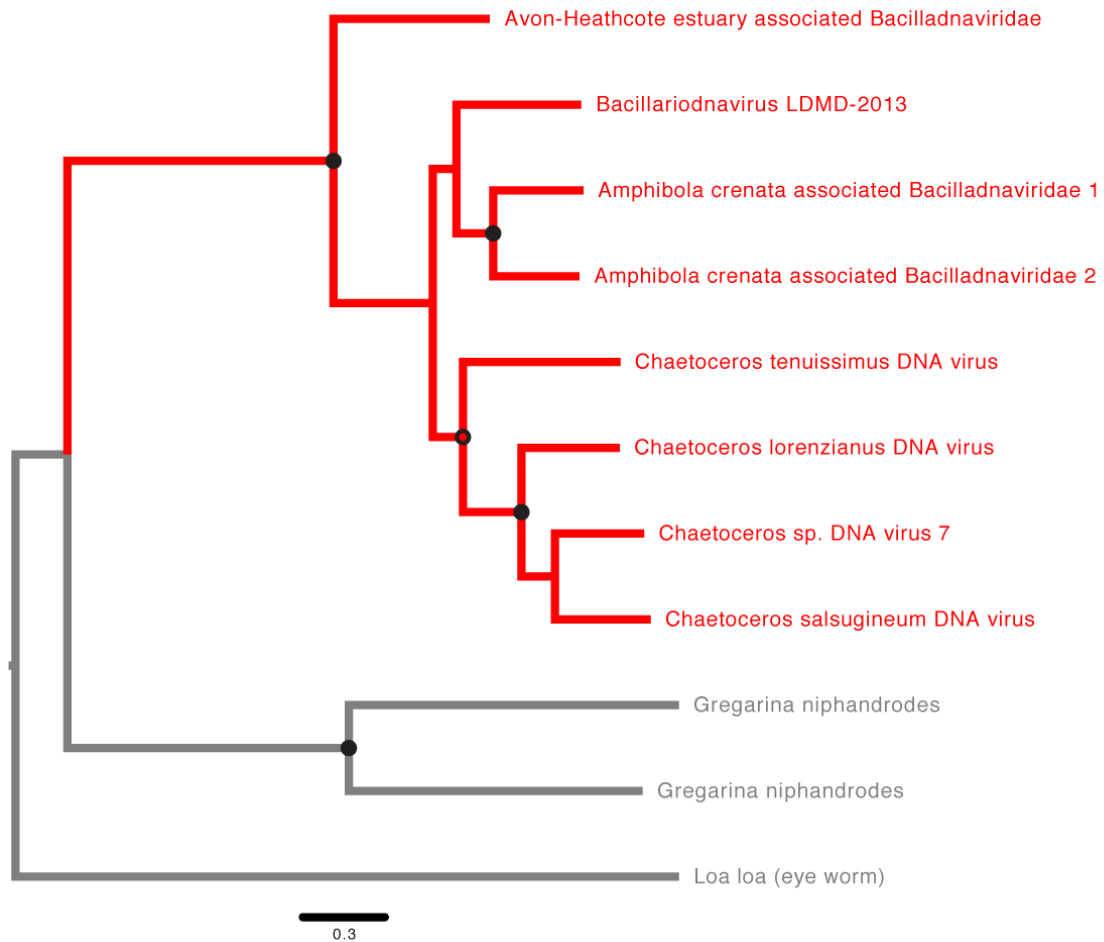


Figure 5. Genomovirus Reps and endo sequences midpoint-rooted maximum likelihood tree. Eukaryote sequences are colored in grey, genomovirus Reps are teal, mitochondrial sequences are colored dark red, chloroplast sequences are colored bright green, plasmids from red algae are colored dark yellow. Open circles indicate SH-like support between 698 0.75 and 0.90, while filled circles indicate SH-like support ≥ 0.90 . A version of this tree with protein accession numbers is in Supplementary Tree S5.



729 Figure 6. Bacilladnavirus Reps and endo sequences midpoint-rooted maximum likelihood tree.
 730 Eukaryote sequences are colored in grey, bacilladnavirus Reps are red. Open circles indicate SH-
 731 like support between 0.75 and 0.90, while filled circles indicate SH-like support ≥ 0.90 . A version
 732 of this tree with protein accession numbers is in Supplementary Tree S6.



734 Figure 7. Smacovirus Repts and endo sequences unrooted maximum likelihood tree. Eukaryote
 735 sequences are colored in grey, smacovirus Repts are blue, chloroplast sequences are colored bright
 736 green. Open circles indicate SH-like support between 0.75 and 0.90, while filled circles indicate
 737 SH-like support ≥ 0.90 . A version of this tree with protein accession numbers is in Supplementary
 738 Tree S7.

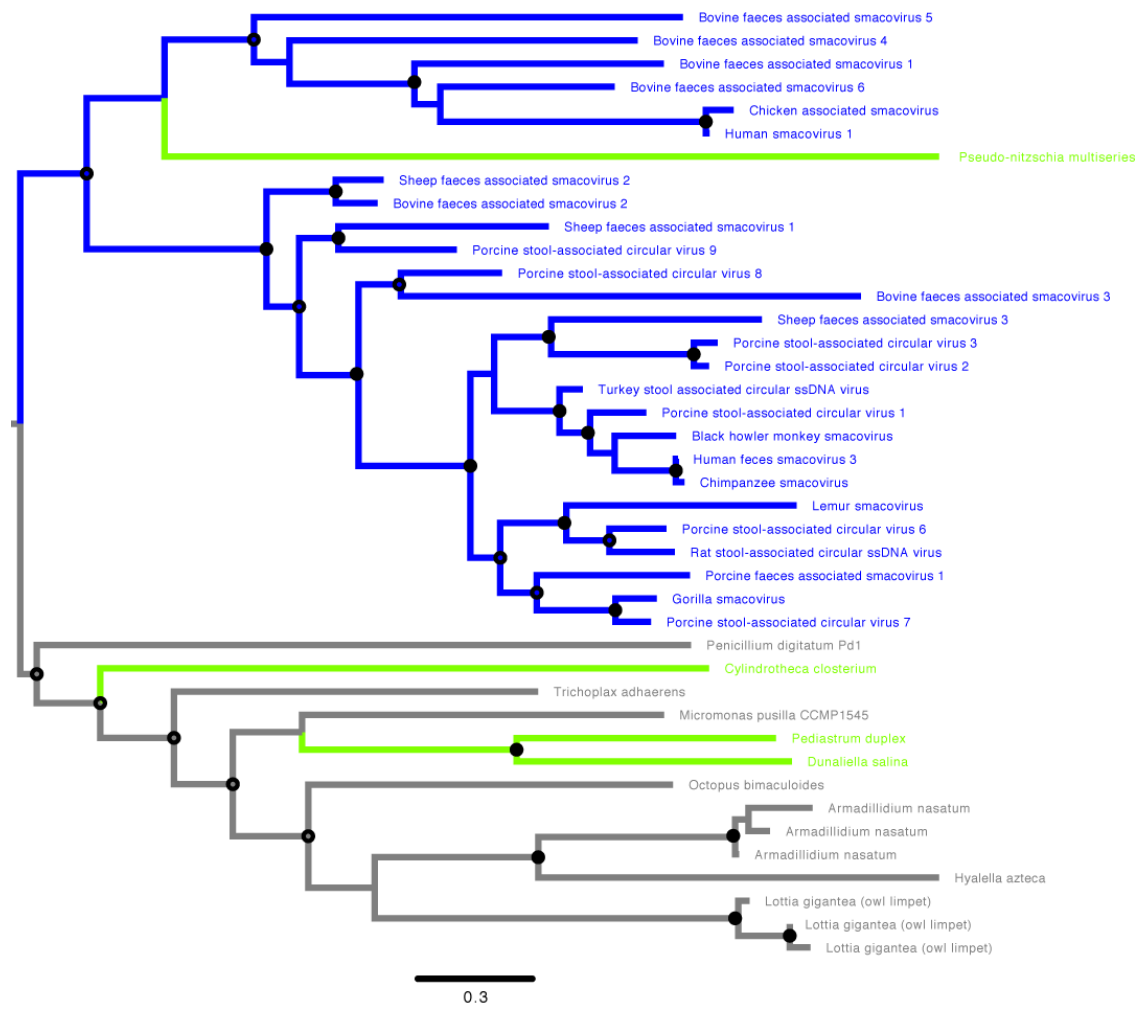


Figure 8. Alphasatellites Reps and endo sequences midpoint-rooted maximum likelihood tree. Eukaryote sequences are colored in grey, alphasatellite Reps are purple, chloroplast sequences are colored bright green. Open circles indicate SH-like support between 0.75 and 0.90, while filled circles indicate SH-like support ≥ 0.90 . A version of this tree with protein accession numbers is in Supplementary Tree S8.

