

JML: testing hybridization from species trees

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1 **Abstract.** I introduce the software JML that tests for the presence of hybridization in multi-species
2 sequence datasets by posterior predictive checking following Joly, McLenachan and Lockhart
3 (2009, *American Naturalist* 174:e54-e70). Although their method could potentially be applied on
4 any dataset, the lack of appropriate software made its application difficult. The software JML thus
5 fills a need for an easy application of the method, but also includes improvements such as the
6 possibility to incorporate uncertainty in the species tree topology. The JML software uses a
7 posterior distribution of species trees, population sizes and branch lengths to simulate replicate
8 sequence datasets using the coalescent with no migration. A test quantity, defined as the
9 minimum pairwise sequence distance between sequences of two species, is then evaluated on the
10 simulated datasets and compared to the one estimated from the original data. Because the test
11 quantity is a good predictor of hybridization events, departure from the bifurcating species tree
12 model could be interpreted as evidence of hybridization. Software performance in terms of
13 computing time is evaluated for several parameters. I also show an application example of the
14 software for detecting hybridization among native diploid North American roses.

15 **Introduction**

16 Hybridization is an important evolutionary process (Arnold 1997; Barton 2001). Its role in
17 speciation (Mallet 2007; Rieseberg 1997; Rieseberg *et al.* 2003; Seehausen 2004) and adaptation
18 (Arnold 2004; Joly & Schoen 2011) is understood theoretically and has also been confirmed
19 experimentally. Yet, the role of hybridization is hard to confirm in many instances because it is
20 often difficult to find statistical evidence for hybridization. Here, the term hybridization is used in
21 the broad sense. That is, it refers both to the event, the successful mating between individuals
22 from two distinct species, and its outcomes: hybrid speciation and introgression, where
23 introgression is the transfer of genetic material between species via sexual reproduction.
24 Typically, hybridization is detected using measures of gene tree incongruence (Funk & Omland
25 2003), either among gene trees or between the gene tree and the species tree, although other
26 processes can be in cause. Thus, distinguishing between hybridization and other processes
27 resulting in gene tree incongruence is a critical issue in evolutionary biology. A specific question
28 that has received a lot of attention is that of distinguishing incongruence caused by introgression
29 from that caused by incomplete lineage sorting. Incomplete lineage sorting arises when ancestral
30 polymorphisms present in the ancestral species have not been completely sorted out by genetic
31 drift in the daughter species, resulting in non-monophyletic species. Even though several methods
32 have been described to address this problem, none provide a clear and general test for the
33 presence of hybridization (reviewed in Joly *et al.* 2009).

34 Joly *et al.* (2009) proposed a method based on the idea that incomplete lineage sorting imposes a
35 limit to the minimum expected distance between sequences of two species because the sequences
36 compared have been diverging since the speciation event. Such limit does not exist for
37 introgressed sequences. Consequently, it should be possible to statistically identify introgressed
38 sequences when the pairwise distance between sequences found in two distinct species is smaller

39 than that expected under a lineage sorting scenario. Simulations have confirmed that this statistic
 40 is able to detect introgression, although the success rate depends on several parameters: the
 41 relative timing of the hybridization and of speciation events, the population sizes and the
 42 sequence length (Joly *et al.* 2009). The method of Joly *et al.* (2009) has the potential to be
 43 applied on any dataset, but the lack of software implementing the method has limited its use.
 44 Here, I introduce the software JML that implements the posterior predictive approach of Joly *et al.*
 45 (2009). I also improve the original approach by accounting for the uncertainty in the species tree
 46 topology.

47 **Formal description of the test**

48 In JML, posterior predictive checking is used to test for the presence of hybridization. The
 49 program uses as input a posterior distribution of species trees (S) with branch lengths (l) and
 50 population sizes (θ). This posterior distribution is generally defined as

$$P(S, l, \theta | D) = \int_G \left(\prod_{i=1}^n P(d_i | g_i) P(g_i | S) \right) P(S) dG.$$

51 D is the data that consist of n multiple sequence alignments (d_i). The equation integrates over all
 52 possible gene trees (G) for all alignments, and g_i represents one specific gene tree. $P(d_i | g_i)$ is the
 53 likelihood of the data given the gene tree (Felsenstein 1981), $P(g_i | S)$ is the multispecies
 54 coalescent (Degnan & Rosenberg 2009; Rannala & Yang 2003), and $P(S)$ is the prior on species
 55 trees.

56 Replicated datasets are simulated from the posterior distribution $P(S, l, \theta | D)$. A test quantity is then
 57 estimated on the observed data and on the simulated datasets to see how well the model is
 58 consistent with the data. This approach of posterior predictive checking is commonly used in
 59 Bayesian analyses to check the adequacy of a model (Gelman *et al.* 2004); if the test quantity

60 estimated on the observed data departs strongly from the quantities estimated from the simulated
 61 data, then we can conclude that the model is inadequate. Here, the test quantity used is the
 62 minimum pairwise distance between sequences of two species (*minDist*), which has been shown
 63 to be a useful quantity for detecting hybridization (Joly *et al.* 2009). In the presence of
 64 hybridization, *minDist* can sometimes be much smaller than that expected in a scenario without
 65 hybridization. Suppose that *minDist*(*AB*) represents *minDist* between species *A* and *B* on the
 66 observed data and that *minDist*(*AB*)^{*sim*} represents *minDist* between species *A* and *B* on simulated
 67 data. The *p*-value for hybridization between species *A* and *B* is

$$p = \Pr(\text{minDist}(AB) < \text{minDist}(AB)^{\text{sim}}).$$

68 The probability is taken over the posterior distribution of parameters *S*, *l*, and θ (i.e., $P(S, l, \theta | D)$)
 69 and the posterior predictive distribution of *minDist*(*AB*)^{*sim*}. This probability can be approximated
 70 by simulation. If we simulate *M* datasets from the posterior distribution $P(S, l, \theta | D)$, we can
 71 calculate *minDist*(*AB*)^{*sim*(*m*)} on each simulated dataset *m* and the *p*-value is the proportion of these
 72 *m* simulations for which *minDist*(*AB*) < *minDist*(*AB*)^{*sim*(*m*)}. If the model is good, then $\Pr(\text{minDist}(AB) < \text{minDist}(AB)^{\text{sim}}) \approx 0.5$. On the contrary, a small *p*-value will indicate that the
 73 model doesn't fit the data well. Because a small value is characteristic of hybrid sequences in a
 74 dataset, one can tentatively conclude that the inaccuracy of the model is due to the presence of
 75 hybrid sequences.
 76 hybrid sequences.

77 **Implementation**

78 Incorporating species tree topology uncertainty in posterior predictive checking represents an
 79 improvement compared to the original description of the method where the species tree topology
 80 was fixed (Joly *et al.* 2009). This is done by using as input the posterior distribution obtained
 81 from *BEAST analyses (Heled & Drummond 2010; Drummond & Rambaut 2007). *BEAST is a

82 Bayesian method that estimates the posterior distribution of species trees, branch lengths and
83 population sizes using sequence information from multiple genes. Note that posterior
84 distributions from other programs could also be used in JML as long as the tree file is in the same
85 format as the *BEAST nexus format. For the simulations, species trees (with branch lengths and
86 populations sizes) are sampled from the stationary phase of the Markov Chain Monte Carlo.

87 For each species tree, a gene tree is then simulated using the coalescent. The code for the gene
88 tree simulation routine was adapted from MCMCcoal (Yang 2007). The number of gene copies
89 simulated per species is the same as in the original dataset. The user can scale the species tree
90 population sizes using a heredity scalar to reflect the effective population size of the marker being
91 simulated. Similarly, the mutation rate of the species tree can also be scaled for the simulations to
92 allow the possibility that the mutation rate of the marker being simulated is not the same as the
93 mutation rate implied in the species tree.

94 Sequences are then simulated on the gene tree. This was implemented by adapting the code of the
95 software seq-gen 1.3.2 (Rambaut & Grassly 1997), which allows any nucleotide substitution
96 model to be used. This procedure is repeated for all species tree of the posterior distribution (or a
97 subset of them). Finally, JML outputs the posterior predictive distribution of the smallest distances
98 between sequences of any two species of the dataset, from which p -values could be estimated.

99 JML can also output the exact p -value for each pairwise species comparison if the empirical
100 sequence dataset is given.

101 **Interpretation and multiple comparisons**

102 Different approaches can be used for interpreting results from posterior predictive checking. An
103 intuitive one is to interpret the p -value(s) directly. The p -values estimated by JML are posterior
104 probabilities (Gelman *et al.* 2004) and can be interpreted as the probability that the model will

105 generate a minimum distance between sequences of two species smaller than that observed from
106 the data, given the data. However appealing is this interpretation, it could lead to statistical issues
107 when multiple tests are performed. Indeed, the need to correct for multiple statistical testing (Rice
108 1989) diminishes the likelihood of finding statistically significant results. This is especially
109 problematic for the present application because the large variance in mutation rate for short
110 sequences (Edwards & Beerli 2000), combined with the difficulty to get long nucleotide
111 sequence stretches that lack evidence of recombination in practice, result in power issues (Joly *et*
112 *al.* 2009). The problem is even more acute when the approach is used in an explorative way, that
113 is if there are no a priori hypotheses of hybridization to test and if JML is only used to investigate
114 the presence of hybridization in the dataset. In such cases, all pairwise species comparisons can
115 be tested simultaneously and the statistical power will be greatly affected. To minimize power
116 issues it could thus be important to specify hybridization hypotheses a priori without reference to
117 the sequence data.

118 There is an alternative interpretation of posterior predictive checking, which is to see “how
119 particular aspects of the data would be expected to appear in replications” (Gelman *et al.* 2004).
120 For instance, we could evaluate the overall adequacy of a model by assessing if there are some
121 aspects of the data that are not well predicted by the model. To do this, it would be of interest to
122 report all observed distances that have a low probability of being observed, e.g. distances with p
123 < 0.1 (this value is arbitrary and can be fixed by the user). This could indicate species
124 comparisons where the model cannot adequately predict the observed minimum distances. If
125 there were several of those instances, one could thus conclude that a strictly bifurcating species
126 tree model is not adequate, probably because of the presence of hybridization. Note, however,
127 that this is not the same as concluding that there has been hybridization between two given
128 species. With such interpretations of posterior predictive distributions, the type I error is less of a

129 concern because we use posterior predictive checking to evaluate the fit of the model rather than
130 to test a specific hypothesis (Gelman *et al.* 2004).

131 Regardless of the multiple comparison issues associated with posterior predictive checking, there
132 are two points that should always be kept in mind when interpreting results from JML. First,
133 posterior predictive checking is a test of the model and not of hybridization. If one rejects the
134 model (bifurcating species tree without gene flow), this may well be because of the presence of
135 hybridization, although it could also be due to other properties of the data such as undetected
136 gene duplication (Maddison 1997), population substructure along the branches of the phylogeny
137 (Machado *et al.* 2002), and parallel evolution (Joly *et al.* 2010). The second point to take into
138 account is that a lack of evidence for hybridization with JML should not be interpreted as an
139 absolute absence of hybridization in the dataset because (1) a lack of statistical significance can
140 also be caused by a lack of data and that (2) not all hybridization events leave a detectable
141 molecular signature (Joly *et al.* 2009, 2006).

142 **Performance**

143 Thorough simulations regarding the performance of the test statistic have already been conducted
144 for several parameters such as sequence length, population size, speciation time and time of the
145 hybridization event (Joly *et al.* 2009). Here I report results on the impact of different parameters
146 values on computing time. The parameters investigated were the number of species (5, 10, 15),
147 the number of sequences per species (5,10,15), the number of simulations (1000, 2000, 4000),
148 and the sequence length (500, 1000, 1500). Random species trees were simulated under a birth
149 and death model with the R package ‘geiger’ (Harmon *et al.* 2008); the birth and death
150 parameters were set to 0.00025 and 0.000125, respectively, and the phylogeny was evolved for
151 0.01 units of time. These settings resulted in phylogenies with a tree depth (time \times mutation rate)

152 similar to that of empirical datasets (Joly *et al.* 2009). The first phylogenies obtained with five,
153 ten and fifteen extant species were retained for the simulations (extinct species were pruned from
154 the tree). Mutational population sizes ($\theta = 4N_e\mu$) of the tree were generated randomly by
155 sampling from a truncated normal distribution with mean and standard deviation of 0.005, with a
156 lower cut-off of 0.0001. Again, this is similar to empirical observations. These phylogenies were
157 treated as “fixed” and JML generated simulated datasets (using the GTR + I + Γ substitution
158 model) using combinations of the parameters mentioned above. Because repeated runs had very
159 small coefficients of variation (0.5%), only one full run was performed for each combination of
160 parameters. Simulations were performed on a HP desktop computer with an Intel core2 duo CPU
161 at 2.33 GHz with 2 Gb of RAM.

162 The results show that the computing time for a complete run grows linearly with the number of
163 datasets simulated (data not shown) and with the sequence length (Fig 1a). In contrast, the
164 computing time increases according to a power function relative to the number of species and
165 relative to the number of sequences per species (Fig. 1b).

166 **An application example—North American roses**

167 To give an application example of the software, I reanalyse here sequence data from three nuclear
168 genes for the native diploid roses of North America. Three nuclear genes (*GAPDH*, *TPI*, *MS*)
169 have been sequenced for 46 individuals from eight species and have been analysed with distances
170 and gene tree parsimony approaches (Joly & Bruneau 2006, 2009). Alleles within individuals
171 were obtained through direct sequencing or via cloning when an individual was heterozygous for
172 a gene (Joly & Bruneau, 2006). Previous studies showed that there might be introgressed
173 sequences in the dataset; i.e. some sequences in one species are often either identical or one

174 mutation away from a sequence of another species (Joly & Bruneau 2006). Yet, no formal tests of
175 hybridization have been conducted to date.

176 Previous studies could not find evidence of recombination in these datasets (Joly & Bruneau
177 2006) and thus the three genes could be analysed integrally. Species tree analyses were
178 performed in *BEAST. The nucleotide substitution model used was the one that received the
179 highest Akaike Information Criteria (AIC) score in Modeltest 3.7 (Posada & Crandall 1998)
180 when fitted on a maximum likelihood tree obtained from five independent searches in Garli 1.0
181 (Zwickl 2006) with a GTR + I + Γ substitution model. A strict clock was used for all genes; the
182 rate of the *GAPDH* gene was set to 1 and the rate of the other genes were estimated relative to
183 *GAPDH*. Population sizes were modelled as constant along branches. More details on parameters
184 and priors can be found in the .xml file given as supplementary information. The analysis was run
185 for 10^7 generations, recording the trees and parameters every 10^4 generations, and the first
186 million generations was discarded as burnin. Independent runs converged on the same parameters
187 values and species tree topologies.

188 The species tree obtained with *BEAST (Fig. 2) was identical to one of the two most
189 parsimonious species trees obtained by gene tree parsimony (Joly & Bruneau 2009). The branch
190 support was relatively high for most nodes, but there is nevertheless clearly some uncertainty in
191 the tree topology which was clearly worth accounting for in the hybridization tests. The wide
192 branches along the backbone of the tree are likely the results of gene tree incongruence, which
193 could be caused by either incomplete lineage sorting or hybridization.

194 The species trees (with branch length and population sizes) estimated by *BEAST were then
195 input into JML and posterior predictive distributions generated for *minDist* between all species for
196 all genes. For each gene, sequences of the same length as the original ones were simulated
197 according to the best substitution model and parameter values as determined by the AIC in

198 ModelTest (see above). The relative mutation rate used in the simulations for each gene was set
199 to the median posterior value obtained from the *BEAST analyses. The species tree from the first
200 million generations were discarded as burnin in JML and the remaining 9000 trees were used for
201 the simulations. Because I did not have a specific hypothesis of hybridization to test, I decided to
202 investigate the overall fit of the model and report all observed distances that had a probability <
203 0.1 of being generated by the posterior distribution.

204 Six distances between alleles were smaller than the 10th quantile in the posterior predictive
205 distributions (Table 1). These involved one individual of *Rosa blanda* (incl. *R. woodsii*) and one
206 of *R. pisocarpa*, each with three individuals of *R. gymnocarpa* for the *TPI* gene. Although the
207 observed distances are not statistically significant at the 5% level, they are small enough to
208 suggest that the model does not explain these observations very well. In other words, although
209 there is not statistical evidence for a hybridization event between *R. gymnocarpa* and *R. blanda* /
210 *R. pisocarpa*, the data suggest this could be the case. Hybridization could have occurred in
211 different ways, but most likely towards *R. gymnocarpa* given that *R. gymnocarpa* sequences are
212 nested with a *R. blanda* / *R. pisocarpa* clade (see supplementary Figures), whereas the species
213 tree suggest *R. gymnocarpa* is basal to the other species (Fig. 2). Because both *R. blanda* and *R.*
214 *pisocarpa* share the introgressed allele, the hybridization event could have occurred between
215 either of these species and *R. gymnocarpa* or between the ancestor of *R. blanda* and *R. pisocarpa*
216 and *R. gymnocarpa*. More data are needed to confirm these hypotheses. For instance, the addition
217 of genes might help to narrow down the confidence intervals of the species tree and perhaps
218 provide stronger statistical results in the future.

219 One interesting observation from this example is that although there were several cases of shared
220 alleles between species (*R. nitida* and *R. palustris* (*TPI*, *MS*, *GAPDH*); *R. pisocarpa* and *R.*
221 *blanda* (*TPI*, *MS*, *GAPDH*), *R. blanda* and *R. foliolosa* (*MS*), *R. blanda* and *R. nitida* (*TPI*); see

222 supplementary figures), none of these were found to be significant. In other words, even
223 relatively good evidence for the presence of hybridization such as identical sequences between
224 non-sister species does not mean that it is necessarily caused by hybridization. Due to
225 stochasticity in the coalescent process and in the mutation rates for short sequences, it is
226 relatively difficult to statistically infer hybridization events from empirical data. In the present
227 example, only one possible instance of hybridization was confirmed. In this case identical
228 sequences were found in a putative hybrid formed between two of the most diverged species in
229 the group.

230 This application example shows why it is important to test hybridization hypotheses. Lack of
231 significance could mean that hybridization is not responsible for the observed pattern, but it could
232 also stimulate the gathering of additional data to eventually obtain statistical support for
233 hybridization hypotheses. The statistical approach implemented in JML should thus help
234 researchers to attain a better knowledge regarding the presence of hybridization in their study
235 groups and hopefully contribute to better understand the contribution of hybridization to
236 evolution.

237 **Availability**

238 JML is written in C++ and is released under the GNU General Public License 3+. Source code and
239 precompiled binaries can be downloaded from www.plantevolution.org/jml.html. The manual of
240 JML version 1.0 is available as supplementary material.

241 **Acknowledgements**

242 I want to thank colleagues that showed interest in the original method and that motivated the
243 development of JML. I am also thankful for the useful comments provided by Peter Lockhart and
244 three anonymous reviewers. This work was supported by an NSERC discovery grant.

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302 sequence datasets under the maximum likelihood criterion.
- 303

304
 305 **Table 1.** List of distances with p-values < 0.1 according to the posterior predictive distributions.

Gene	individual 1	individual 2	Obs. Distance	p-value
<i>TPI</i>	<i>R. pisocarpa</i> 847	<i>R. gymnocarpa</i> 543	0	0.0529
<i>TPI</i>	<i>R. pisocarpa</i> 847	<i>R. gymnocarpa</i> 751	0	0.0529
<i>TPI</i>	<i>R. pisocarpa</i> 847	<i>R. gymnocarpa</i> 767	0	0.0529
<i>TPI</i>	<i>R. blanda</i> 741	<i>R. gymnocarpa</i> 543	0	0.0812
<i>TPI</i>	<i>R. blanda</i> 741	<i>R. gymnocarpa</i> 751	0	0.0812
<i>TPI</i>	<i>R. blanda</i> 741	<i>R. gymnocarpa</i> 767	0	0.0812

306 *Note: the number designating the individual is the accession number. See Joly et al. (2006) for*
 307 *more details on accessions.*
 308

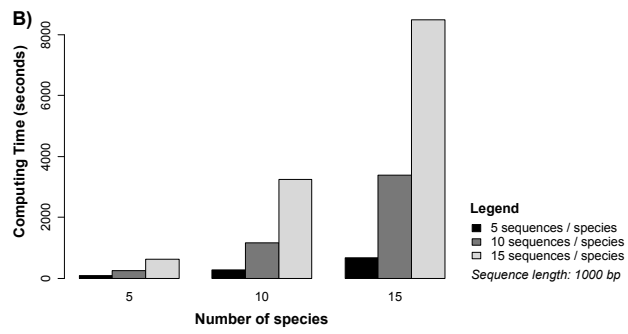
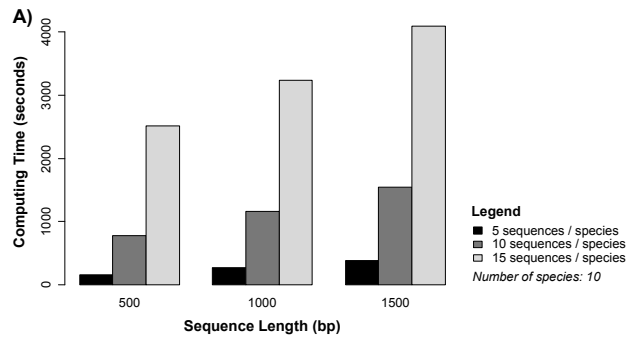
309 **Figure Legends**

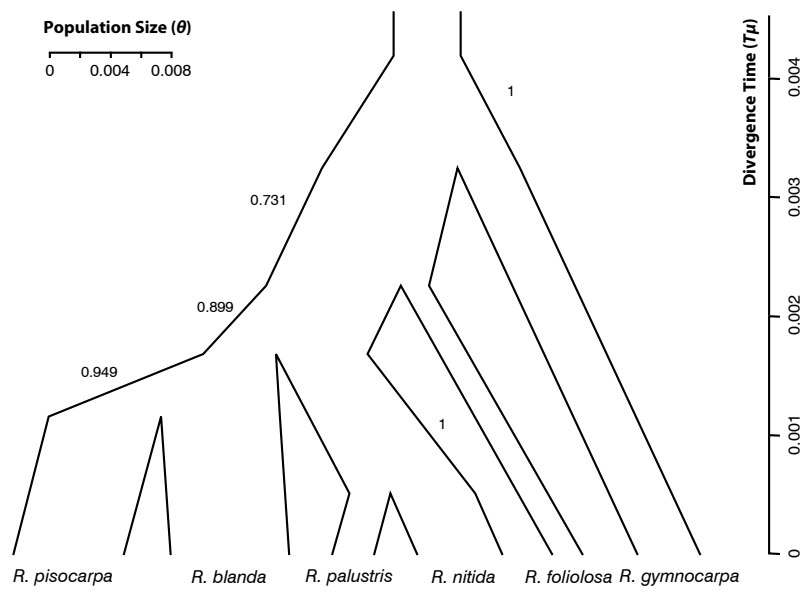
310

311 **Figure 1.** Performance of the JML software in terms of computing time for (A) different
312 sequence lengths and number of sequences per species, keeping the number of species to 10, and
313 for (B) different number of species and sequences per species, keeping the sequence length to
314 1000 bp.

315

316 **Figure 2.** Species tree of diploid North American roses obtained with *BEAST. The branch
317 widths are proportional to the estimated population sizes and the branch lengths are proportional
318 to their divergence times (both median estimates). The variations in population sizes along the
319 branches are a consequence of the graphical representation; population sizes were constant along
320 branches and the correct population sizes are those at the beginning of the branches. Numbers
321 besides branches represent the posterior probabilities of the groups. The outgroup (*R. setigera*
322 and *R. multiflora*) is not shown.

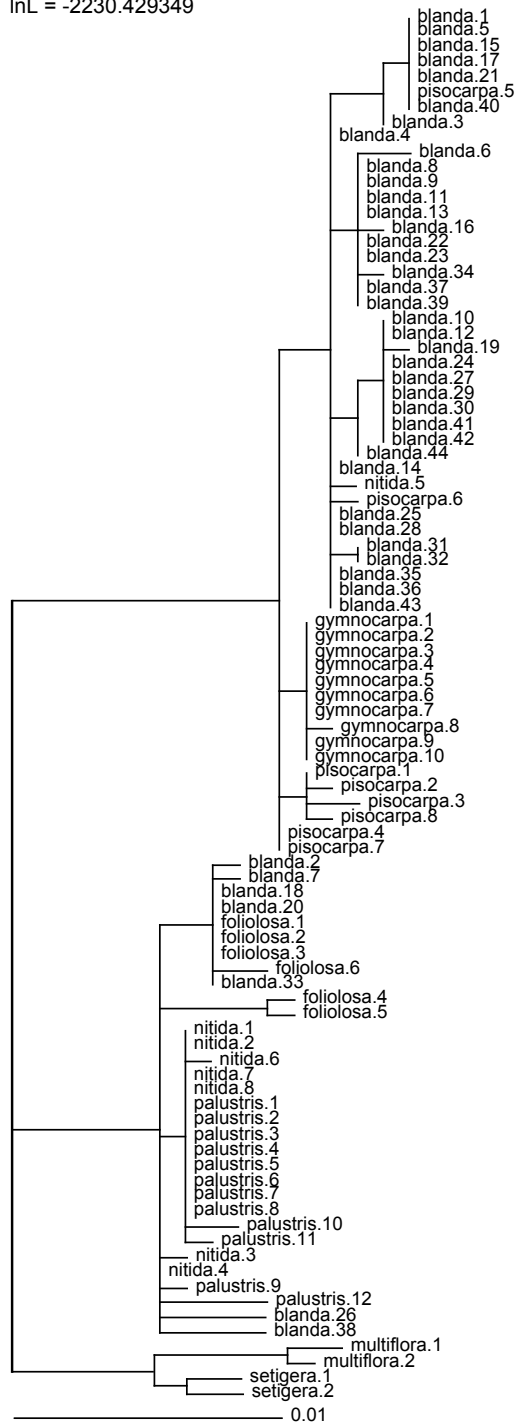




MS

GTR+I+G

InL = -2230.429349



GAPDH

GTR+I+G

InL = -1752.771898



TPI

GTR+I+G

InL = -1886.737453

