Genome Variation: From the Linear Reference to Graph Pangenomes

CONTENTS

- introduction
- genome evolution with linear assemblies
- graph pangenome approaches
- perpectives

Lorenzo Tattini 21 May 2025





genotypes

GTCGTGTACGTCAGTCGTGCTAGTCAG TCGTCATTGACTGCAGTCAGTCAGTCA GTCGTGTACGTCAGTCGTCGTGCTAGT CGGCTAGTCATCGCCAAATCATGCGTT GACTGCAGTTCTGACGTGTACGTCAGT CAGTCGAGTCCGTTGACGTCATGCAGT CGTGTACGTCAGTCGTGCTAGTCAGTC GTCATTGACTGCACCAGTCAGTCAGTC AGTCGTGTACGTCAGTCGTCGTGCTAG TCGGCTAGTCATGACGTACCAGTGTCA GTACTGTCAGTCAGTCAGTCAGTCA

GGCGTGTACGTCTGTCGTGCTAGTCAG

reference





phenotypes

why genome variation?

the reference bias

origin and consequences





Eizenga JM, ... & Garrison E. Pangenome graphs. ANNU REV GENOMICS HUM GENET. 2020.

the clinical reference bias

genotyping: SGS vs Sanger sequencing



legend: match mismatch

pushing the heterozygosity

genome variation in yeast hybrids using telomere-to-telomere assemblies



competitive mapping

a solution for mutation accumulation lines in hybrids



Tattini L[@], …, & Liti G[@]. Accurate tracking of the mutational landscape of diploid hybrid genomes. MOL BIOL EVOL. 2019.

what's a variation graph?



conceptual aspects



building a variation graph



the scrap/pggb variation graph

9

nature genetics

Article

https://doi.org/10.1038/s41588-023-01459-y

Telomere-to-telomere assemblies of 142 strains characterize the genome structural landscape in Saccharomyces cerevisiae

Saccharomyces cerevisiae reference assembly panel

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Check for updates

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Building pangenome graphs

pangenome graph builder

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O'Donnell S, Yue JX, ..., Fischer G. Telomere-to-telomere assemblies of 142 strains characterize the genome structural landscape in S. cerevisiae. NAT GENET. 2023. Garrison E, Guarracino A, ..., Prins P. Building pangenome graphs. NATURE METHODS. 2024.

materials & methods

- scrap collection subset
 - 107 S.c. haplotypes
 - 86 diploid strains

- pggb
- vg
- odgi
- impg
- distBWT2

- sgp-eva
- panda







investigations on the scrap graph

- pangenome (annotations)
- chromosome-ends
- origin
- admixture
- pangenome (variants)
- phylogeny



SGP VA



03.B

01.W4



Peter J, De Chiara M, ... Liti G & Schacherer J. Genome evolution across 1,011 Saccharomyces cerevisiae isolates. NATURE. 2018.

the Saccharomyces graph phylogeny evaluation tool



Guerrini V, ..., & Tattini L. phyBWT2: phylogeny reconstruction via eBWT positional clustering. ALGORITHMS MOL BIOL. 2023.

quantifying tree similarity

with a generalised Robinson-Foulds distance







Smith MR. Information theoretic generalized Robinson-Foulds metrics for comparing phylogenetic trees. BIOINFORMATICS. 2020.

comparing phylogenies

nucmer



pggb + vg (vs SGD)



pggb (SNVs) benchmark

pangenome	time (hours)	memory (GB)	compression	N(SNV) / N(genomes)	F1 score (mean)
ecoli500	41.39	210.87	23.75	60,243	0.967
scerevisiae142.hc	20.46	119.68	57.12	61,439	0.972
athaliana82	204.06	130.59	36.28	572,924	0.920
tomato23	22.34	42.06	19.73	861,654	0.968
mouse36.chr19	3.80	28.66	11.68	166,734	0.940
hsapiens90.chr6	18.46	135.52	137.72	86.88	0.976

graph phylogenies

reference-based vs reference-free



origin & admixture on a graph



only 80% of chrIX can be traced to unadmixed strains

the missing origin



ADI chrIX coordinate [bp]

the missing origin



ADI chrIX coordinate [bp]

panda

pangenome annotations data analysis

which strain bears the largest number of RID genes? N(RID) strain ADI 263 how many RID genes are on chrIX? CQS_1a 65 -ATM_1a 62 65 -AIF_HP2 60 BBM_1a 49 how many are at chromosome-ends? **DBVPG6044** 37 CNT_HP1 36 all -35 CEQ_1a



summary

- sgp: ADI unique features otherwise missed
- origins: the expansions at chromosome-ends (chrIX)
- panda: high RID genes content
- est1- (ineffective telomerase system)
- est1 is (slightly) transcribed
- ultra-long reads
- graph multi-scale investigation



Bergström A, ..., R & Liti G. A high-definition view of functional genetic variation from natural yeast genomes. MOL BIOL EVOL. 2014.

Skelly DA, ..., & Akey JM. Integrative phenomics reveals insight into the structure of phenotypic diversity in budding yeast. GENOME RES. 2013.

Lundblad V & Blackburn EH. An alternative pathway for yeast telomere maintenance rescues est1- senescence. CELL. 1993.



p<mark>ggb</mark> + odgi

perspectives

fundamental questions

dynamics at chromosome-ends



what are the evolutionary trajectories at subtelomeres and telomeres?

heritability

the missing



why GWAS fails to fully associate phenotypes to genotypes?

gene flow



what is the genomic impact of introgression and HGT?

disease-specific pangenomes

- cancer genomics - ageing

- novel genetic risk factors - personalised medice*

- gene therapy*

- drug resistance reversion

Musunuru K, ..., & Ahrens-Nicklas RC. Patient-specific in vivo gene editing to treat a rare genetic disease. NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL OF MEDICINE. 2025.

acknowledgements



"Progress in science depends on new techniques, new discoveries, and new ideas, probably in that order."

- Sydney Brenner, 2002 Nobel Prize Winner -



