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Combining population genomics and fitness QTLs to identify the genetics of local adaptation in *Arabidopsis thaliana*

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Evidence for adaptation to different climates in the model species *Arabidopsis thaliana* is seen in reciprocal transplant experiments, but the genetic basis of this adaptation remains poorly understood. Field-based quantitative trait locus (QTL) studies provide direct but low-resolution evidence for the genetic basis of local adaptation. Using high-resolution population genomic approaches, we examine local adaptation along previously identified genetic trade-off (GT) and conditionally neutral (CN) QTLs for fitness between locally adapted Italian and Swedish *A. thaliana* populations [Ågren J, et al. (2013) *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA* 110:21077–21082]. We find that genomic regions enriched in high F_{ST} SNPs colocalize with GT QTL peaks. Many of these high F_{ST} regions also colocalize with regions enriched for SNPs significantly correlated to climate in Eurasia and evidence of recent selective sweeps in Sweden. Examining unfolded site frequency spectra across genes containing high F_{ST} SNPs suggests GTs may be due to more recent adaptation in Sweden than Italy. Finally, we collapse a list of thousands of genes spanning GT QTLs to 42 genes that likely underlie the observed GTs and explore potential biological processes driving these trade-offs, from protein phosphorylation, to seed dormancy and longevity. Our analyses link population genomic analyses and field-based QTL studies of local adaptation, and emphasize that GTs play an important role in the process of local adaptation.

divergent selection | ecotype | F_{ST} | selective sweep | tradeoff

The study of local adaptation has a long history (1), yet its genetic basis is poorly understood (2). A major open question is whether local adaptation results from (i) genetic trade-offs (GTs), where alleles that maximize fitness in the home environment are deleterious in alternative environments, or (ii) conditionally neutral (CN) alleles that are advantageous in the home environment but neutral in alternative environments (3). Addressing the above will help enhance our understanding of how temporally or spatially varying selection maintains genetic variation (4, 5), which population genetic signatures can be used to identify local adaptation in the genome (6–8), and finally the biological process underlying local adaptation in different organisms (9).

Loci underlying GTs between populations are the result of variation in selection over space creating different local fitness optima (4). These loci should exhibit signals of divergent selection (6, 10) including the following: an increase in allele frequency differences between populations, an excess of intermediate frequency variants in the site frequency spectrum across all populations, and, if local adaptation is due to recent novel mutations that have fixed or gone to high frequency, evidence of a selective sweep in at least one population (11, 12). The identification of selective sweeps, like all methods used to detect local adaptation, can be influenced by population structure and demography (13), but also the strength of selection and whether it is acting on standing genetic variation (14). If the abiotic environment directly or

indirectly creates the GT, we expect allele frequencies at these loci to be correlated with climate or other abiotic variables across the species' range (15–17). By definition, CN alleles are evolving neutrally in some subset of the species range, and thus population genetic signals at these loci should resemble drift more than GT alleles and therefore be more difficult to identify (6, 7).

Sessile organisms like plants are excellent systems for studies of local adaptation, and evidence for such local adaptation is abundant and well established (18). As in many species, reciprocal transplant experiments show substantial local adaptation in the model system *Arabidopsis thaliana* (19–21), and genome scans, climate associations, and genetic mapping of fitness in field experiments highlight genomic regions that may underlie local adaptation (8, 15, 16, 22). Genetic mapping, functional, and modeling studies have all illuminated the genetic basis of putatively adaptive traits (15, 23–27). However, evidence linking polymorphism at specific loci to variation in fitness across environments in natural populations is lacking.

Ågren et al. (19) identified six GT quantitative trait loci (QTLs) and three CN QTLs in a recombinant inbred (RIL) population derived from a cross between *A. thaliana* accessions from Italy and Sweden, evaluated in both parental environments for 3 y. At GT

Significance

Local adaptation can occur due to individual genetic variants that increase the fitness of individuals in their home environments but decrease fitness in other environments [genetic trade-offs (GTs)] or genetic variants that increase fitness in one environment but have no effect in other environments [conditional neutrality (CN)]. Here, we show that GT quantitative trait loci (QTLs) for fitness between Italian and Swedish *Arabidopsis thaliana* exhibit strong population genomic signatures of local adaptation, including elevated levels of allele frequency differentiation, correlations to climatic variables, and recent sweeps. Highly divergent genes between Italy and Sweden populations show evidence of more recent selection in Sweden than Italy, and the biological annotations of these genes suggest interesting mechanisms underlying local adaptation.

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change, whereas in Italy we observe no significant sweeps with the smaller sample size (*SI Appendix, Fig. S5*).

High F_{ST} Regions and Recent Selective Sweeps in Sweden Colocalize with Climate-Correlated Regions. Since climate is an important factor in local adaptation, we expect selective sweeps and high F_{ST} regions to colocalize with climate-correlated regions of the genome. We estimated the mean and median distances from the midpoint of the 42 windows with elevated proportions of sites with significant climate correlations to (i) the midpoint of 20 regions with elevated proportions of high F_{ST} SNPs and (ii) the location of the highest CLR within 20 recent sweeps in Sweden. The mean and median distances for both high F_{ST} regions and selective sweeps were ~ 1.60 and ~ 0.80 Mb. The difference between mean and median indicates a skew in the distribution of distances. The observed median distance of ~ 0.80 Mb is at approximately the 35th percentile of a permuted distribution of 10,000 random genomic samples of the same size (*SI Appendix, Fig. S6*), which indicates that certain sweeps or high F_{ST} regions (e.g., strongest sweep on Chr. 1, Fig. 1D) are not close to climate-correlated regions. To identify single high F_{ST} regions or sweeps that are found significantly close to regions with a significant proportion of climate correlated SNPs, we performed a single locus permutation test and identified three sweeps in Sweden and four high F_{ST} regions within the fifth percentile, or ≤ 0.08 Mb from a climate-correlated region (*SI Appendix, Table S2*). The proportion of high F_{ST} regions within ≤ 0.08 Mb from a climate-correlated region is significantly higher than expected by chance (binomial test P value < 0.05). Notably, two selective sweeps and a high F_{ST} region are within GT QTL 2.2, where the first sweep is associated with a minimum temperature of the coldest month correlated region and the second sweep with a soil moisture correlated region (*SI Appendix, Fig. S7*), potentially representing adaptation to different environmental variables.

GT QTLs Colocalize with High F_{ST} Regions. Given that divergent selection between Italy and Sweden populations generated GT and CN QTLs identified in the field (19), we expect an enrichment of population genetic signatures of local adaptation near QTL sites. GT QTLs span an average of ~ 3 Mb, much larger than the length of population signatures of local adaptation they contain (Fig. 1). The large genomic regions of GT QTLs could be the result of the low resolution of QTL mapping and/or represent linked fitness QTLs that are difficult to disentangle (30). To account for these factors and the difference in length between CN and GT QTLs, we took pairs of single-year QTLs whose peaks were the shortest pairwise distance from each other within GT QTLs (Fig. 1A, red and blue arrows). Using the genomic midpoint between these pairs and the location of CN QTL peaks, we estimated mean and median distances to the nearest region with population genomic evidence of local adaptation including (i) elevated proportions of high F_{ST} SNPs, (ii) elevated proportion of climate-correlated SNPs, and (iii) highest CLR of sweep regions in Sweden. High F_{ST} and climate-correlated regions are closer to GT QTLs than selective sweeps (*SI Appendix, Table S3*). Climate-correlated regions are similarly close to CN QTLs and GT QTLs, while GT QTLs are closer to high F_{ST} regions than would be expected by chance alone ($\sim 2\%$ of the permuted median distance of 10,000 random genomic samples; Fig. 2).

Protein-Coding Genes Undergoing Adaptive Evolution in Italy and Sweden Populations. Following the colocalization of high F_{ST} regions with GT QTLs and correlations to climate, we examined the distribution of high F_{ST} SNPs along the genome in more detail. Approximately 67% of the 2,401 high F_{ST} SNPs are within transcribed genic regions, with $\sim 17\%$ in *cis*-regulatory regions. Relative to the proportion of the genome covered by these regions (transcribed genic regions, 23%; promoter regions, 14%), both transcribed regions and promoter regions are significantly enriched in high F_{ST} SNPs (binomial test; P value < 0.0001 for each test).

To test whether the unfolded site frequency spectrum (uSFS) is shifted for genes containing high F_{ST} SNPs in transcribed

regions, we compared it to the uSFS across genes lacking high F_{ST} SNPs (Fig. 3). The uSFS for genes containing high F_{ST} SNPs in transcribed regions in Italy and Sweden populations are significantly different from those observed for other genes (two-tailed X^2 : Italy, 429.90; Sweden, 1,113.23; $df = 40$ and $P < 0.0001$ for both tests). When comparing the uSFS spectrum of genes containing high F_{ST} SNPs within their transcribed regions to that of all other genes with 1:1 orthologs in *Arabidopsis lyrata* and *Capsella rubella*, in Sweden the pattern observed is that expected under a model of recent selection (31), including an increase in low-frequency variants (≤ 0.1), a lower proportion of intermediate-frequency variants (> 0.1 and ≤ 0.9), and a higher proportion of high-frequency variants (> 0.9 ; Fig. 3). This observation aligns with the high CLRs observed in Sweden in regions with high F_{ST} (Fig. 1A and D). By comparison, in the Italian population, the pattern is much less pronounced, perhaps suggestive of older positive selection (31) (Fig. 3). This may explain the much lower CLRs observed in Italy (Fig. 1D).

Adaptive evolution can occur through changes at the amino acid level, in which we expect an increase in their frequency within a population. To detect such possible changes we examined derived amino acid frequency differences between Italy and Sweden populations ($x = fr_{Italy}[i] - fr_{Sweden}[i]$; i : polymorphic amino acid site). Among the 327 genes with high F_{ST} along transcribed regions, 90 genes contained sites with a high derived amino acid frequency in Sweden ($x < -0.90$), 56 genes contained sites with a high derived frequency in Italy ($x > 0.90$), and 30 genes contained sites with a high derived amino acid frequencies in both populations ($x < -0.90$ and $x > 0.90$). The proportion of high F_{ST} genes with high derived amino acid frequency differences in both populations was significantly higher ($\sim 9\%$) than the rest of the genes in the genome (0.3%).

Candidate Genes Underlying GTs. Given the significant association between high F_{ST} SNPs and GT QTLs (Fig. 2), we identified a comprehensive list of putative candidate genes underlying these GTs using the following criteria: (i) genes within 0.6 Mb of the peaks of GT QTLs (approximately the median distance between

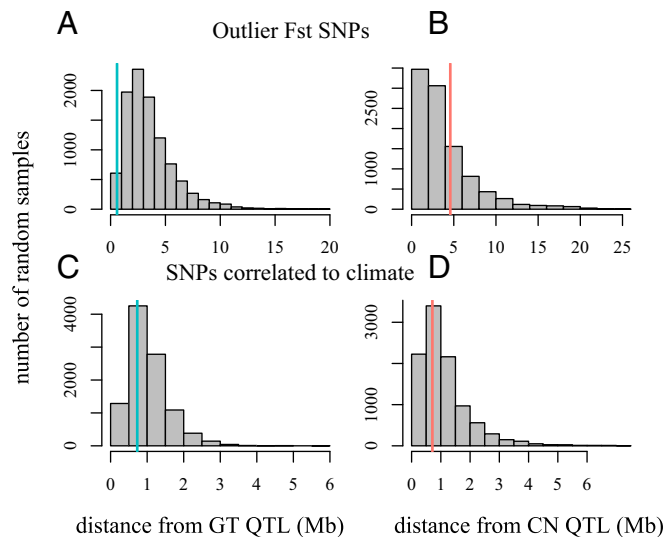


Fig. 2. Significant association between peaks of fitness QTLs and regions with population signatures of selection. (A and B) The median distance of the six GT QTLs (A; $\sim 2\%$ of the randomly sampled distributions) and three CN QTLs (B; 73%) to the nearest region with a high proportion of significant outlier F_{ST} SNPs. (C and D) The median distance of the six GT QTLs (C; $\sim 32\%$) and the three CN QTLs (D; $\sim 30\%$) to the nearest region with a high proportion of SNPs with significant correlations to one or more of the six climate variables examined. The permuted distributions are of median distances from 10,000 random genomic location samples of the same size (3, 6).

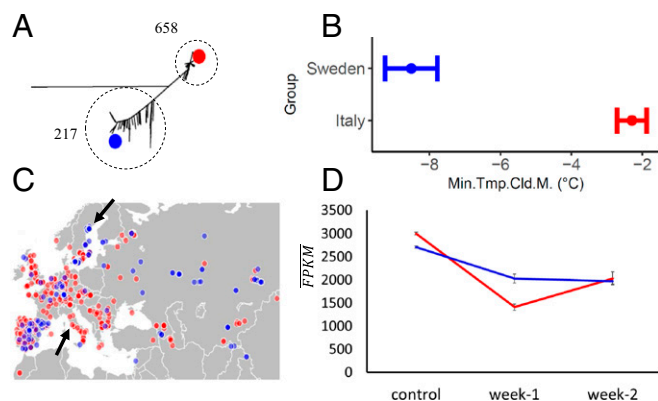


Fig. 4. Highly diverged alleles of AT2G35050 segregate to locations across Eurasia with significantly different temperatures during the coldest month of the year. (A) The rooted genealogy (outgroups: *A. lyrata* and *C. rubella*) of AT2G35050 using 875 Eurasia accessions. The blue and red dots indicate the topology of the Sweden and Italy RIL parent accessions, with the number of accessions in each major clade labeled. (B) Map of accessions sharing the same allele as the Sweden (blue) or Italy parent (red). Arrows indicate approximate location of Italy and Sweden parents. (C) Accessions sharing the same allele as the Sweden parent grow in regions with significantly lower temperatures during the coldest month of the year (Min.Tmp.Cld.M) than accessions sharing the same allele as the Italy parent (95% CI). (D) Average expression (FPKM) and corresponding SEs of AT2G35050 under control conditions (22 °C) and 2 wk of cold (4 °C). According to *DESeq2* (57), AT2G35050 showed strong G×E interactions (*SI Appendix, Table S4*).

Similar to our study, Long et al. (22) identified 22 recent sweeps in North Sweden, and almost none in South Sweden. Subsequently, Huber et al. (8) analyzed these sweeps using various models to account for complex demographic history and identified nine new local sweeps in South Sweden, with only three of the original sweeps remaining significant in North Sweden. The three sweeps in North Sweden were all on chromosome 5 and did not include the highly significant and well-supported sweeps that were observed in the present study (e.g., along QTL 2:2) (*SI Appendix, Fig. S7*) even when accessions were subsampled to limit the effects of substructure (*SI Appendix, Fig. S5*). Our results suggest a lower false-positive rate in recent sweeps than estimated by Huber et al. (8). While there is reason to worry about the false-positive rate of SweepFinder2 under certain demographic models, our evidence of sweeps at GT QTLs is buttressed by the colocalization of climate correlations and regions enriched for high F_{ST} sites.

Among the candidate genes underlying GT QTLs (*SI Appendix, Table S4*), we find some interesting prospects for the biological mechanisms of local adaptation between Italy and Sweden. We described the potential role of AT2G35050 (QTL 2:2) in local adaptation to temperature above (Fig. 4). Using the same RIL population, Postma and Ågren (39) had found seed dormancy QTLs overlapping GT QTL 2:2 and 5:1. Seed dormancy is one mechanism for avoiding germination during stressful conditions (40, 41). Genes AT2G34900, AT2G34940, and AT5G01560 within these QTLs were found to regulate (42, 43) or affect germination (44), with genes AT2G34900 and AT5G01560 acting through the ABA response pathway (42, 43) and AT2G34940 showing expression G×E interactions under cold (*SI Appendix, Table S4*). AT5G65410 (QTL 5:5) loss-of-function mutants decrease seed longevity (45), so it may be a candidate for trade-offs between seed longevity and dormancy. Seed dormancy and longevity can be negatively correlated (46) and have shown G×E interactions (47).

This study suggests that GTs are a major component of local adaptation in *A. thaliana* and points to climate as one of the selective agents driving these trade-offs. Fitness trade-offs are of particular importance in evolution, because such spatial variation in the fitness

of alleles can stably maintain genetic polymorphism across the species range (48, 49). However, fitness trade-offs have also proven difficult to observe, requiring careful experimentation across environments, often over multiple years, and so such studies are rare relative to studies of local adaptation more broadly. From our analyses, it is clear this effort will be needed to fully understand patterns of local adaptation and the maintenance of genetic variation.

Methods

Whole-Genome Sequencing of Italy and Sweden Parent Accessions. We used resequencing data of the RIL parent accessions described in Ågren et al. (19) to identify SNPs between the Italy and Sweden parent accessions (details in *SI Appendix, SI Method 1*).

Population Genetic Sampling. We used three sets of accessions downloaded from the *Arabidopsis thaliana* 1001 Genomes database (25): (i) 41 accessions in North-Central Italy; (ii) 49 accessions in North Sweden (*SI Appendix, Fig. S2*); and (iii) 875 accessions from across Eurasia (25). Collectively, the three sets included 880 unique accessions whose latitude and longitude coordinates are listed in *Dataset S1*. We aggregated the genotype files for these accessions and filtered for biallelic, nonindel sites. To test for selective sweeps, we used all 41 and 49 accessions in Italy and Sweden, and a subset of 17 accessions in Sweden and 8 accessions in Italy to compare our results to Huber et al. (8). For other population genetic analyses including F_{ST} , Tajima's D , and HKA, we chose a subset of 40 accessions from each region (*SI Appendix, Fig. S2*).

F_{ST} Peaks Along Chromosomes. We used BayeScan2.0 (50) to estimate F_{ST} : a method that incorporates a multinomial Dirichlet likelihood (51) to account for variation in allele frequencies due to various neutral population genetic models. We used two populations within our BayeScan analysis (Italy and Sweden) and analyzed each chromosome separately for computational practicality. We kept the prior odds for the neutral model at the default value 10. We set the individual test threshold at q value < 0.2 since the highest F_{ST} values fall within q values of 0–0.2 (*SI Appendix, Fig. S8*). To identify regions containing a high proportion of significant F_{ST} values, we used a sliding window of 50 kb and a step size of 1 kb. We estimated the proportion of significant F_{ST} values as the number of significant F_{ST} values within a window over the total number of F_{ST} values along the whole chromosome. We set significance for proportions at the 99th percentile of all proportions across the genome.

Selective Sweeps. We used Sweepfinder2 (52) and the largest sample of accessions from each region (41 from Italy and 49 from Sweden; *SI Appendix*) to calculate CLR for recent selective sweeps. We estimated CLR every 1 kb along the genome within each population, and used *A. lyrata* as an outgroup to polarize SNPs (alignments downloaded from the VISTA database; ref. 53). We called polarity when the *A. lyrata* and *A. thaliana* nucleotide states were the same. To arrive at a significance threshold, we used a similar method as Long et al. (22): standard neutral simulations in the program ms (54). We scaled diversity (θ) to a sequence of length of 1 Mb and set recombination rate to five times smaller than the value of θ . Our significance thresholds were estimated at 85 CLR for Sweden and 89 CLR for Italy.

LD. To estimate LD (r^2) across the genome, we used the program plink 1.07 (55) with a window size of 1 kb (“-ld-window-kb 1”). To further normalize LD across the genome, we used a sliding window of 100 kb and a step size of 1 kb and estimated the mean of all r^2 within the window. We used the 99th percentile of all windows across the genome as our significance threshold.

Testing for Divergent Selection at the Genic Level. To estimate divergent selection at the genic level, we used the HKA test and Tajima's D test, and examined unfolded site frequency spectra at third codon positions or derived amino acid frequencies at the amino acid level ($x = fr_{Italy[i]} - fr_{Sweden[i]}$; i : polymorphic amino acid site). Details in estimating all of the above statistics are explained in *SI Appendix, SI Method 2*.

Correlations to Climate. We downloaded a SNP genotype matrix for a panel of 1,135 globally distributed accessions from the 1001 Genomes database. From this panel, we filtered out accessions from outside the native Eurasian and North African range of *A. thaliana*, as these accessions may have weaker patterns of local adaptation (17). We also filtered out accessions that were likely laboratory escapees or contaminants (56), leaving 875 accessions (*SI Appendix*). We filtered for biallelic SNPs with minor allele frequency > 0.05. For each SNP, we tested association with home climate of ecotype and tested

for potential confounding effects of population structure using the software “gemma” (29). Details on the methodology and climate variables are examined in *SI Appendix, SI Method 3*.

Estimating Distance Between QTLs and Regions Showing Population Signatures of Selection. To estimate distances between CN and GT QTLs, we first defined regions under selection by merging overlapping 50-kb windows with significantly high proportions of high F_{ST} sites and correlations to climate (Fig. 1 A and B). In the case of sweeps (Fig. 1C), we used a window of 500 kb as a single sweep event (22). We then estimated the physical distance between CN or GT QTLs and the nearest genomic region containing population genetic signatures of selection. Details on how distance was estimated is explained in *SI Appendix, SI Method 4*.

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