Phylogeny

Term invented by Ernst Haeckel in 1866 in order to define the relationship between animal and plant species across time

Darwin (1872) a phylogeny is the genealogical relationships between all organisms



From Lamarck 1809





From Darwin's notebooks

# **Goals of phylogenetic reconstruction**

- Try to explain the evolutionary history of actual characters (morphological traits, genes)
- Show how species are relating to one another
- A phylogenetic tree is a mathematical structure used to model the evolutionary history of a trait

# **Phenetic - Cladistic**

- Phenetic: classification of the organisms based on their similarities, trees obtained using a phenetic approach may not reflect evolutionary relationships. A tree based on this method is called a phenogram
- Cladistic (Hennig 1966): study of the different pathways of evolution, the most parsimonious pathway will be retained to build the best possible tree called a cladogram.

# **Morphological characters**

- Morphological
  - easy to access
  - can be influenced by external factors
  - ambiguous
  - qualitative argumentation
  - codification of the characters
  - homology difficult to assess
  - relationship between closely related species
  - sometimes visible morphology can be lacking

# **Molecular characters**

- Molecular
  - heritable
  - only 4 or 20 character states per site (relatively unambiguous)
  - no obvious polarity in their evolution
  - predictable evolution
  - large number of characters (about 17,000 bp in human mitochondrial DNA)
  - independent characters (probably not but better than morphological characters)

# **Molecular characters**

- Molecular
  - homology can be inferred without bias
  - large body of knowledge (and still accumulating) about how the characters change evolutionarily
  - sequences are know to evolve at different rate
    - rRNA
    - histones
    - immunoglobulin genes
    - animal mtDNA
    - micro/minisatellites

changes very slowly

changes very slowly

- changes quickly
- changes quickly
- changes very quickly
- relationship with distantly related species can be inferred
- easily generated (PCR)

# Definitions

- Homology
- Analogy
- Homoplasy
- Convergence
- Reversion
- Orthology / Paralogy
- Character classification

- Similarity: resemblance between two characters
- Analogy: similar in form or function without sharing an ancestry
- **Homology:** Two traits are homologous if they are derived (with or without modifications) from a common ancestor.



• Homoplasy: independent presence of similar characters between species



Homoplasy

- **Convergence:** process whereby non related organisms are evolving similar traits independently due to similar environmental pressures for example.
- **Reversion:** return of a character to one of its ancestral states
- **Parallelism:** identical changes in two or more lineages.

- Homologous traits or sequences can be:
  - orthologs homologous sequences are orthologous if they are separated by a speciation event
  - paralogs homology by duplication
  - xenologs homology through lateral gene transfer



- **Plesiomorphy:** primitive or ancestral character state
  - Primates all have hair.
  - Can we cluster primates as a group based on this characteristic?
- Apomorphy: derived state representing an evolutionary novelty
  - Humans are bipedal.
  - Can we phylogenetically place humans based on this characteristic?

- **Symplesiomorphy:** primitive state shared by several taxa
  - Hair is a shared primitive state for all primates
- Autapomorphy: derived character state unique to a taxa
  - Humans are uniquely bipedal among primates

- **Synapomorphy:** derived character state shared by several taxa
  - only these can be used to decipher relationships

## **Some vocabulary**



## **Some vocabulary**



## Some vocabulary



Operational Taxonomic Unit (OTU)

#### **Additive branch length**



Sum of the branch lengths between 2 OTUs

$$D_{AC} = d_1 + d_2 + d_3$$

#### **Ultrametric branch lengths**



When the distances from any two leaves to their shared common ancestor are equal (as shown here).

#### **Bifurcation / Multifurcation**



#### **Monophyletic / Paraphyletic**



- in the first diagram A and B are **monophyletic groups**; all taxa share a common ancestor and all descendants of that ancestor are members of the group.

- in the second diagram, B is a **paraphyletic group**; all taxa share a common ancestor but not all descendants of that ancestor are members of the group.

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#### Outgroup

**Outgroup:** sequences related to the group of sequences compared but not part of this group



#### **Unrooted tree**



#### **Unrooted tree**



#### **Unrooted tree**





From Haerty et al. 2005. Mol. Ecol. 14:3801-3807

- In a rooted tree a single node is designated as a common ancestor giving thereby a unique pathway is connecting this node to any other through evolutionary time
- An **unrooted tree** is only displaying the relationship between the nodes, no information about directionality is given.









#### **Number of nodes**

**Rooted tree** 

 $N = (2n-3)! / [2^{n-2}(n-2)!]$ 

**Unrooted tree** 

 $N = (2n-5)! / [2^{n-3}(n-3)!]$ 

n: number of species



**For a rooted tree** n= 15 N= 213,458,046,676,875

n=20 N= 8,200,794,532,637,891,559,375



## **Branch lengths**



These two trees give different information about the species/genes splits

### **Gene tree - Species tree**





1-e -T/2N

(1/3)e<sup>-T/2N</sup>

(2/3)e<sup>-T/2N</sup> From Nei 1987



	1-e <sup>-T/2N</sup>	(1/3)e <sup>-T/2N</sup>	(2/3)e <sup>-T/2N</sup>
T = 5.0(2N)	0.993	0.002	0.004
T = 2.0(2N)	0.865	0.045	0.090
T = 1.0(2N)	0.632	0.123	0.245
T = 0.5(2N)	0.393	0.202	0.404
T = 0.1(2N)	0.095	0.302	0.603



## Incomplete lineage sorting

From Nei 1987