

# Phylogeny of *Wolbachia* in *Drosophila* mutant from Bandung, Indonesia

ENDANG SRIMURNI KUSMINTARSIH<sup>1,\*</sup>, PESONA GEMILANG<sup>1</sup>, AGUS NURYANTO<sup>1</sup>,  
HANAN HASSAN ALSHEIKH MAHMOUD<sup>1,2</sup>, TRISNOWATI BUDI AMBARNINGRUM<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Biology, Universitas Jenderal Soedirman. Jl. Suparno 63, Banyumas 53122, Central Java, Indonesia.

Tel.: +62-281-638794, Fax.: +62-281-631700, \*email: endangsk2402@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Department of Fisheries Science, College of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies, University of Bahri. Bahri El-Ingaz Street, Khartoum North (Bahri) 11111, Sudan

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**Abstract.** Kusmintarsih ES, Gemilang P, Nuryanto A, Mahmoud HHA, Ambarningrum TB. 2024. Phylogeny of *Wolbachia* in *Drosophila* mutant from Bandung Indonesia. *Biodiversitas* 25: 4894-4899. *Wolbachia* is a microorganism known as an intracellular endosymbiont in arthropods that causes reproductive changes and most commonly cytoplasmic incompatibility. *Wolbachia pipientis* A has been divided into two major subgroups (A and B) and 17 subgroups. Therefore, the present study aims to determine the presence of *Wolbachia* subgroup in *Drosophila* mutants and to analyze the phylogeny, of *Wolbachia* in *Drosophila* mutants using *Wolbachia* surface protein (*wsp*) primer genes. The presence of *Wolbachia* was determined based on the DNA band pattern on the agarose gel. The phylogenetic relationship among *Wolbachia* in *Drosophila* mutants was inferred from a phylogenetic tree. Based on the neighbor-joining method, the phylogenetic tree reconstruction was done in MEGA X software. The result shows that *Wolbachia* from 7 types of *Drosophila* mutant samples (taxi, ebony, dumpy, miniature, sepia, white, eye missing, in one subgroup as *Wolbachia* sp. wMel isolate Yunnan outer surface protein precursor (*wsp*) gene, partial cds., while between samples and out-group is closely related to *Wolbachia* sp. in *Diabrotica cristata* 16S rRNA sub-group A. This result is the first systematic survey of *Wolbachia* in *Drosophila* mutants and the first survey classifying *Wolbachia* infections by subgroup. The research future is to explore *Wolbachia* in many more insects.

**Keywords:** Bandung phylogeny, sequencing, sub-group, *Wolbachia pipientis*

## INTRODUCTION

*Wolbachia* is an obligate intracellular endosymbiont that belongs to the group of alpha-proteobacteria. This bacterium was found on arthropods and filarial nematodes of the family Onchocercidae (Scola et al. 2015). *Wolbachia* was initially found in the ovaries of *Culex pipiens* Linnaeus, 1758. The previous studies by Kittayapong et al. (2000), Bennet et al. (2012), Uday et al. (2015), and Ma et al. (2017) stated that so far *Wolbachia* is separated into 17 subgroups, from A-Q. Those subgroups are found in arthropods (A, B, E, G, H, I, K, M, N, O, P, and Q (Lefoulon et al. 2016), and nematodes (C, D, J)). Subgroup F is unique as it contains both nematode and arthropod-infecting strains (Lefoulon et al. 2016). However, there are no previous studies that explain *Wolbachia* which is found in *Drosophila* mutant. Due to that, it is important to show the similarity of *Wolbachia* infected in *Drosophila* mutant. Constructing phylogenetic trees is also important to determine the subgroup of *Wolbachia* carried by *Drosophila* mutants. Based on the description above, this research aims to identify a subgroup and build the phylogenetic relationship of *Wolbachia* in *Drosophila* mutant which is related to *Wolbachia* which is isolated from other organisms, such as insects, mites, crustacea, and the genetic distance.

Mutations can affect both genotype and phenotype. It is known that there are four types of *Drosophila melanogaster* Meigen, 1830 mutants, namely body part

mutants, eye color mutants, wing shape mutants, and body color mutants. Of the four types of mutants, there are 10 types of mutants, namely eye missing, yellow-white, sepia, vestigial, ebony, black, taxi, curly, white, and miniature. In terms of eye color, there are white, scarlet, or dark red, and blackish brown (sepia). Mutations in body color consist of black, yellow, or dark brown (ebony) mutants. Mutations that occur in wings are divided into curly wings (curve upwards), taxi (length stretched away from the body), miniature (wings stretched along the body), and dumpy (split wings). Mutations that occur in an eye shape include oval and large shapes (roughoid), reduced eyes (lobe), having no eyes (eye missing), and narrow eyes (barr) (Weasner BM et al. 2016; Xiao et al. 2017; Hartwell 2018; Kandasamy et al. 2021; Varte et al. 2022). However, research by Oktarianti et al. 2021 indicates that there are no differences in phylogeny between wild and mutant *Drosophila* as mentioned that *D. melanogaster* wild type and all mutant strains have high similarity to *D. melanogaster* 28S rRNA gene partial sequence (NCBI GenBank Accession number GU597379) (identity score up to 99%). The phylogenetic tree showed that *D. melanogaster* plum mutant was closely related to *D. melanogaster* 28S rRNA gene partial sequence (NCBI GenBank Accession number GU597379), they also belonged to one cluster. Next to this cluster are sepia and clot mutants, in addition to the wild type and black mutant in one cluster. All the mutants and wild types belonged to one clade, while the vestigial mutant stayed in a different

clade. Research by O'Grady and DeSalle (2018) about the phylogeny of the genus *Drosophila* shows that the first visible mutants discovered in Morgan's fly laboratory to the many whole genomes that are being generated today, these flies have made important contributions to our understanding of nearly every aspect of modern biology.

The genus *Drosophila*, contains over 1600 species, for over a century, one species in this group, *D. melanogaster*, has been key to studies of animal development and genetics, genome organization and evolution, and human disease (O'Grady and DeSalle 2018). Due to the many interests in *Drosophila*, researchers are working with it, and the result shows twelve drosophilids have been awarded Nobel Prizes. One reading the historical account above might wonder why, despite the progress made over many years, so much remains unknown concerning the phylogenetic relationships within this important model system. However, much like *D. melanogaster* serves as a model for human genetics Drosophilidae is also a powerful model for future systematic research. This system, and how *Drosophila* biologists work toward a complete understanding of their study organism, will help set the tenor of integrative systematic research across the tree of life. Apart from being interesting to study in terms of mutation and genetics, *Drosophila* has even won a Nobel Prize, it is also interesting to study the endosymbionts in it, including *Wolbachia* and other endosymbionts which have not been studied much. Therefore, research on endosymbionts other than *Wolbachia* is still wide open.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Sampling

Sample *Drosophila* mutants were taken from the culture at the Universitas Padjadjaran, Bandung. There are seven types of *Drosophila* mutants i.e., taxi/Tx, ebony/€, sepia/Se. white/w, eye missing/eym, miniature/m), and dumpy/dp. This research has been conducted based on ethical clearance no. 1521/EC/KEPK/VII/2024.

### DNA isolation

Genomic DNA of *Wolbachia* was isolated from flies using the QIAprep-Spin Miniprep kit (QIAGEN). Adult flies were inserted 1.5 mL into a sterile microtube. A total of 180 µL of tissue lysis buffer (ATL buffer) was added to the sample, and the sample was smashed using the microsmash tool (pestle). Then, 20 µL proteinase K and 200 µL lysis buffer (AL buffer) were added to the sample and homogenized with vortex, and incubated at 70°C for 10 min. A total of 200 µL of 100% cold ethanol was sequentially added to the sample and homogenized again to denature the proteinase K. The supernatant was pipetted and transferred to DNeasy ion exchange spin columns which are above 2 mL of the collection tube and centrifuged at 8,000 rpm for 1 min. DNeasy spin columns were moved to new collection tubes of 2 mL, and 500 µL of wash buffer (AW 1 buffer) was added to each sample to perform unwanted ethanol washing from the sample and to conduct the centrifugation. The collected supernatant and

collection tubes were discarded. The DNeasy spin columns were replaced with new ones, as before into 2 mL collection tubes and as much as 500 µL of AW 2 Kandasamy V Kandasamy for 1 min, and dried on the DNeasy membrane. The collected supernatant and collection tubes were discarded. The DNeasy columns were placed above 1.5 mL microtubes, and 75 µL elution buffer (AE buffers) were pipet directly above the membrane. Samples were centrifuged for 1 min at 8000 rpm to remove DNA. DNeasy spin columns were removed, and DNA samples were stored at -20°C for future use. Calculation of concentration and purity of DNA isolation products were carried out using the NanoDrop 1000 spectrophotometer (Table 1).

### *Wsp* gene amplification and sequencing

The *wsp* gene was amplified with a polymerase chain reaction. Amplification was performed using specific primers for *Wolbachia* outer surface protein (*wsp*) gene of *Wolbachia*, forward primer *wsp81F* (5'-TGGTCCAATAAGTGATGAAGAAAC-3'), and reverse primer *wsp691R* (5'-AAAAATTAAACGCTACTCCA-3') yield a 0.6-kb segment of *wsp*. A master mix reaction for PCR was made consisting of 13.5 µL of ultrapure water, 2 µL of 10× polymerase buffer, 2 µL of 25 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 0.5 µL of 20 µM primer *wsp81F*, 0.5 µL of 20 µM primer *wsp691R*, 0.5 µL of 10 mM dNTP (deoxynucleotide) where each 0.2 mL microtube was added the DNA template of sample (1 µL) and master mix (19 µL). PCR process was conducted under an initial denaturation at 95°C for 5 min followed by 35 cycles of 95°C for 1 min, 55°C for 1 min, and 72°C for 2 min, followed by 72°C for 10 min. The fragments were separated by 1% agarose gel electrophoresis and visualized by staining with ethidium bromide (Borst 2005). A 40 µL of PCR unpurified product from each sample was sent to 1<sup>st</sup> base DNA sequencing service.

### Phylogenetic analysis

The sequence of *wsp* genes obtained in this study was assembled using Bio-Edit, and multiple sequence alignments were conducted with ClustalW using MEGA X (Kumar et al. 2018).

**Table 1.** DNA concentration and purity of *Drosophila* mutant

Sample Code	Individual Number	DNA Concentration (ng/µL)	DNA Purity (260/280 nm)
tx	31	268.76	2.20
e	31	403.13	2.08
se	42	497.30	2.13
w	17	716.66	2.06
eym	15	396.19	2.00
m	15	412.27	2.07
dp	10	557.30	1.96

The sequences' similarity for fragments generated in this study was compared in the GenBank database using a Blastn search (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>). Accession numbers were obtained after all sequences generated in this study were submitted to NCBI GenBank (Table 2). Partial sequences obtained in this study were used to build a phylogenetic tree using the Neighbor-Joining (NJ) method in Mega X software (Kumar et al. 2018). The length of the branch was estimated based on Kimura's two-parameter evolution model. Bootstrap testing was carried out as many as 1000 repetitions. Trees were inferred with the Tamura3-parameters model by 1000 replicates bootstrapping. To estimate the level of phylogenetic relationship with *Wolbachia* in *Tribolium confusum* (Subgroup B) X65674.1, *Wolbachia* endosymbiont of *Litomosoides sigmodontis* (Subgroup D), AF0690.1, *Wolbachia* endosymbiont of *Rhinocyllus conicus* (Subgroup F) 85267.1, *Wolbachia* endosymbiont of *Diabrotica cristata* (Subgroup A) AY007550.1, and *Wolbachia* endosymbiont of *Culex pipiens* (Subgroup E) AF179630.1 were retrieved from GenBank and used to construct a phylogenetic tree.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Measurement of DNA concentration of *Drosophila* mutant

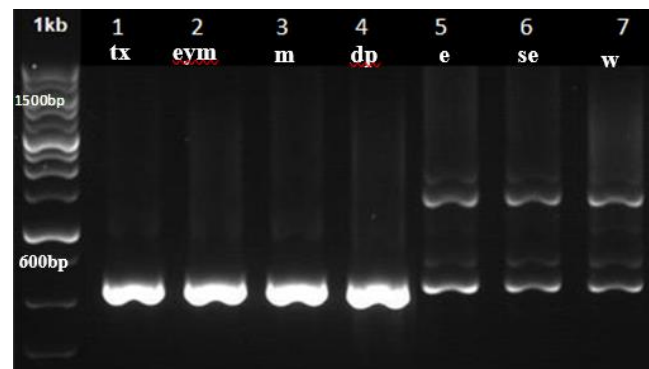
DNA isolation is carried out from seven types of *Drosophila* mutant i.e., taxi (tx); ebony €; sepia (se); white (w); eye missing eym); miniature (m); and dumpy (dp). The results of DNA isolation of the mutant species (10-42 individuals) showed a high DNA concentration, which ranged between 268.76 and 716.66 ng/μL. The purity of isolated DNA (260/280 nm) was ranged from 1.96 to 2.20 (Table 1).

### Detection of *wsp* gene of *Wolbachia* on *Drosophila* mutant samples using the PCR

The result of gel electrophoresis on samples tx; eym; m; dp showed that there was only one thick DNA band that is

on 600 bp. However, in e; se; w showed there were five DNA bands consisting of two DNA bands (measuring 600 bp and 1500 bp thinner band, and three very thin DNA bands (measuring 750 bp; between 1000 and 1500 and between 1500 and 2000). There should be only one band in 600 bp, but it appears five bands caused by dimer (Figure 1). For PCR cycle-sequencing reactions in four samples (tx; eym; m; dp) DNA bands with size 600 bp were obtained as a DNA template. After that, sequencing was conducted by FIRSTBASE.

The results of PCR showed that in three types of *Drosophila* mutants (e, se, w), multiple bands appear. This can be predicted as dimers, proven after the process of sequencing, and the results show only one size with a length of 600 bp is fine with a good sequence, and another size could not be found as a good result of them, so then we did not continue these sequences on the discussion and only used 600 bp.

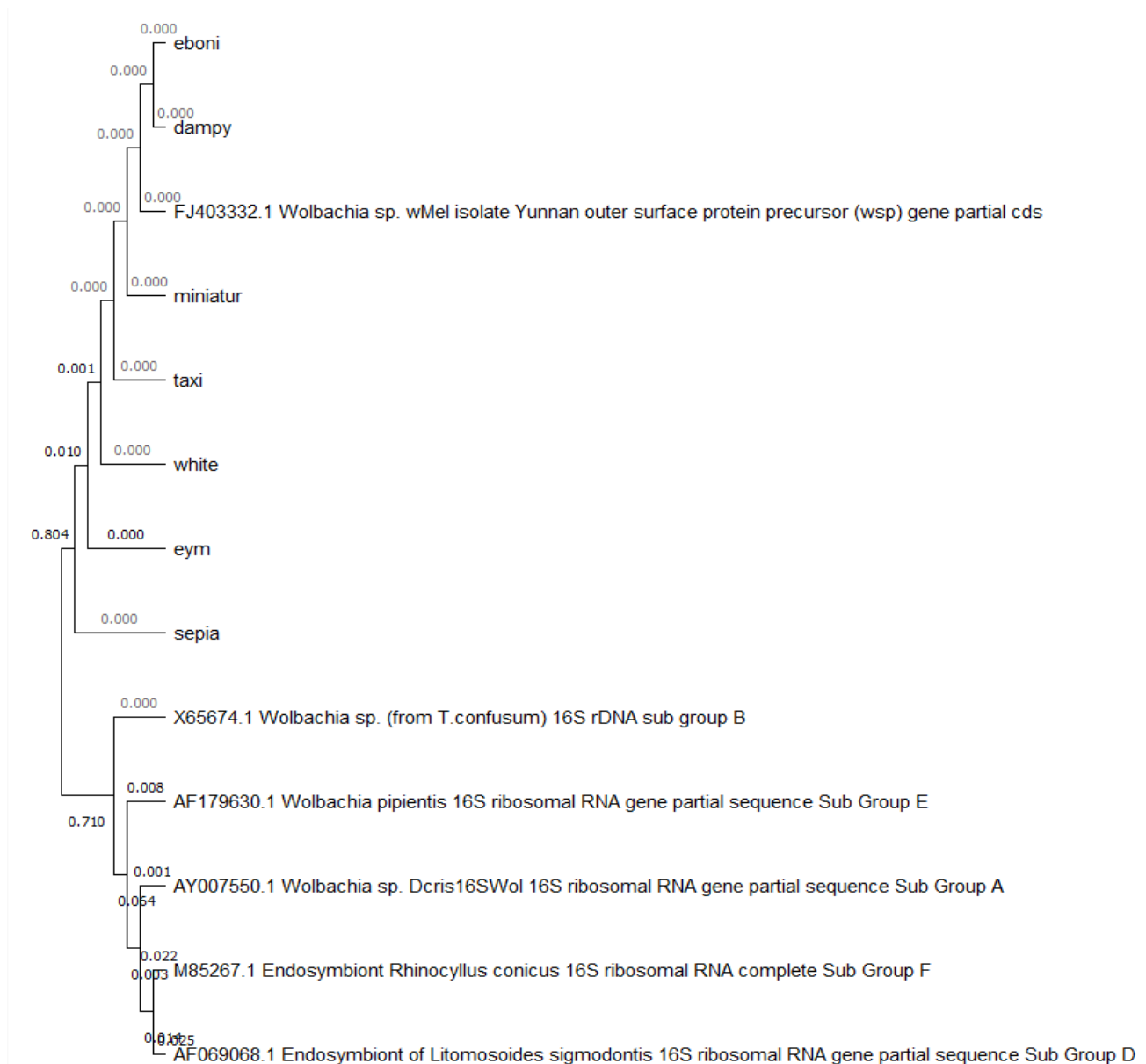


**Figure 1.** The results of electrophoresis of *Wolbachia wsp* gene in *Drosophila* mutant samples. One band in wells 1-5 (tx; eym, m, dp), and five bands in wells 6-8 (e; se; w). Band size based on DNA marker 1 kb from bottom to top: tape 1, size 600 bp; 2nd band 1500 bp

**Table 2.** The results for sequence similarity of *Wolbachia wsp* gene sequence data in *Drosophila* mutant samples

No.	Same codes	Close related BLASTn result	Size (bp)	Identity (%)	Query coverage (%)	Sequence references
1	dp	<i>Wolbachia</i> sp. wMel isolates Yunnan outer surface protein precursor ( <i>wsp</i> ) gene, partial cds	651	97.69	99	FJ403332
2	e	<i>Wolbachia</i> sp. wMel isolate Yunnan outer surface protein precursor ( <i>wsp</i> ) gene, partial cds	656	97.39	99	FJ403332
3	se	<i>Wolbachia</i> sp. wMel isolate Yunnan outer surface protein precursor ( <i>wsp</i> ) gene, partial cds	659	96.94	99	FJ403332
4	w	<i>Wolbachia</i> sp. wMel isolate Yunnan outer surface protein precursor ( <i>wsp</i> ) gene, partial cds	654	97.69	99	FJ403332
5	tx	<i>Wolbachia</i> sp. wMel isolate Yunnan outer surface protein precursor ( <i>wsp</i> ) gene, partial cds	654	97.55	99	FJ403332
6	eym	<i>Wolbachia</i> sp. wMel isolate Yunnan outer surface protein precursor ( <i>wsp</i> ) gene, partial cds	653	97.38	99	FJ403332
7	m	<i>Wolbachia</i> sp. wMel isolate Yunnan outer surface protein precursor ( <i>wsp</i> ) gene, partial cds	662	96.20	99	FJ403332





**Figure 2.** Phylogenetic tree of *Wolbachia* samples based on *wsp* genes *Wolbachia* and *Wolbachia* from Subgroup *Wolbachia* in *Tribolium confusum* (Subgroup B) X65674.1, *Wolbachia* endosymbiont of *Litomosoides sigmodontis* (Subgroup D), AF069068.1, *Wolbachia* endosymbiont of *Rhinocyllus conicus* (Subgroup F) M85267.1, *Wolbachia* endosymbiont of *Diabrotica cristata* (Subgroup A) AY007550.1, and *Wolbachia* endosymbiont of *Culex pipiens* (Subgroup E) AF179630.1

Based on the result of distance analysis, it shows that *Wolbachia* on *Drosophila* mutant has the same group as to *wMel* isolate from Yunan 1.48 (0.0), same as all samples. While the genetic distance relationship between each sample in *Drosophila* mutants to other subgroups is close to *Wolbachia* endosymbiont of *Diabrotica cristata* (Subgroup A) (0.01). This indicates that the phenetics of *Drosophila* mutant is not caused by *Wolbachia* which is a very common endosymbiont that infects insects. The genome of *Wolbachia* is very diverse (Ros et al. 2009). This genomic and phenotypic diversity makes *Wolbachia* increase its abundance as intracellular bacteria. Genomic diversity and phenotype in *Wolbachia* are caused by its ability to make changes to the genomic exchange. The

genomic exchange that occurs in *Wolbachia* is caused by the reason that *Wolbachia* is a cosmopolitan bacterium and acts as a facultative endosymbiont. Since the discovery of many eye color mutants, the eye color pigments of *D. melanogaster* have been the subject of numerous investigations. Beadle and Tatum (1930) discovered the concept of one gene-one enzyme (in Beadle and Tatum 1941), but with the development of science, this concept changed to one gene-one polypeptide (Berg and Singer 2003). There are two pathways for eye pigment synthesis in *Drosophila*, namely: rosin, and ommochrome. The results of protein synthesis, molecular biologists began to think about the concept of one gene-one protein. However, many proteins are composed of two or more different polypeptide

chains, and each polypeptide is specified by its respective gene. Therefore, two classes of pigments, the brown “ommochromes and the red drospterins, contribute to the typical eye color phenotype of *Drosophila* and serve as light-screening pigments. The biosynthetic pathways of these two pigments are distinct and do not share enzymes; ommochromes are synthesized from tryptophan, whereas drospterins are synthesized from guanosine-5'-triphosphate (GTP).

In conclusion, *Wolbachia* infects *Drosophila* mutants and does not play a role in the occurrence of mutations. Mutations are changes that occur in genetic material, there are two types of mutations, namely point mutations and chromosomal mutations. Mutations can affect both genotype and phenotype.

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