Extensive *de novo* mutation rate variation between individuals and across the genome of *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii*

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Abstract

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Describing the process of spontaneous mutation is fundamental for understanding the genetic basis of disease, the threat posed by declining population size in conservation biology, and in much evolutionary biology. However, directly studying spontaneous mutation is difficult because of the rarity of de novo mutations. Mutation accumulation (MA) experiments overcome this by allowing mutations to build up over many generations in the near absence of natural selection. In this study, we sequenced the genomes of 85 MA lines derived from six genetically diverse wild strains of the green alga Chlamydomonas reinhardtii. We identified 6,843 spontaneous mutations, more than any other study of spontaneous mutation. We observed seven-fold variation in the mutation rate among strains and that mutator genotypes arose, increasing the mutation rate dramatically in some replicates. We also found evidence for fine-scale heterogeneity in the mutation rate, driven largely by the sequence flanking mutated sites, and by clusters of multiple mutations at closely linked sites. There was little evidence, however, for mutation rate heterogeneity between chromosomes or over large genomic regions of 200Kbp. Using logistic regression, we generated a predictive model of the mutability of sites based on their genomic properties, including local GC content, gene expression level and local sequence context. Our model accurately predicted the average mutation rate and natural levels of genetic diversity of sites across the genome. Notably, trinucleotides vary 17-fold in rate between the most mutable and least mutable sites. Our results uncover a rich heterogeneity in the process of spontaneous mutation both among individuals and across the genome.

Introduction 1 2 Understanding the processes that generate new genetic variation from mutation is a key goal of 3 genetics research. It is widely believed that the majority of new mutations that affect functional 4 elements of the genome are deleterious. In humans, new mutations cause Mendelian genetic 5 disorders, play a direct role in polygenic disease (e.g. Veltman and Brunner 2012), and are a major 6 factor in cancers (e.g. Alexandrov et al. 2013a). New mutations also play a central role in evolutionary 7 biology, since the variation that fuels adaptive evolution is ultimately derived from advantageous 8 mutations. For example, the input of new variation from mutation is pivotal for theory to explain the 9 evolution of recombination and sex (reviewed in Otto 2009). 10 If new mutations are harmful, theory predicts that the mutation rate should evolve towards zero, 11 because individuals with higher mutations rates will suffer a greater mutational load. However, the 12 mutation rate is always greater than zero in nature, ranging over seven orders of magnitude (reviewed 13 by Drake 2006), and two main explanations have been proposed for this. One explanation is that there 14 is a limit to the fidelity of DNA repair, due to a trade-off between the benefit of further reducing the 15 mutation rate and the costs of increased fidelity (Kimura 1967). Alternatively, a 'selection-drift' barrier 16 may constrain progress toward lower mutation rate when the selective advantage of further 17 improvement becomes so small that new mutations decreasing the mutation rate are effectively 18 neutral (Lynch 2010). Evidence for a selection-drift barrier comes from the negative correlation 19 between the mutation rate per generation and effective population size (N_e) (Sung et al. 2012). 20 However, when mutation rate is expressed per cell division, there is much less variation between 21 species and little relationship with N_e , consistent with the constraint on the fidelity of replication 22 hypothesis. It is currently difficult to fully evaluate the support for these hypotheses, however, because 23 studies of mutation are restricted to a small number of taxa, few genotypes per species and a limited 24 number of mutation events. 25 Although there is clear evidence for variation between species, we know relatively little about the 26 extent of mutation rate variation within species. Individuals with unusually high mutation rate have 27 been isolated from natural populations of prokaryotes (Matic et al. 1997; Sundin and Weigand 2007), 28 but no natural mutators have been found in eukaryotes. This discrepancy likely stems from the fact 29 that prokaryotes are asexual whereas eukaryotes are predominantly sexual. Theory predicts that in an 30 asexual population, a mutator allele can hitchhike to high frequency if it causes a beneficial allele on 31 the same genetic background (Johnson 1999). In contrast, recombination in sexual populations 32 uncouples a mutator from a linked beneficial allele, so the mutator allele is then expected to be 33 selected against because of its association with linked deleterious mutations (reviewed by Drake et al.

1998). Although a smaller amount of mutation rate variation is expected in sexual than asexual

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species, mutations that alter the mutation rate are nevertheless expected to occur, and potentially provide the basis for mutation rate evolution. Mutation rate variation within a species may also reflect mutation-selection balance, whereby new deleterious alleles that alter the mutation rate continually arise and are purged by selection. In this scenario, intraspecific mutation rate variation will reflect the distribution of phenotypic effects of mutations that alter DNA repair and stability and the effectiveness of selection against them. In the largest study of spontaneous mutation in humans, there was little evidence for mutation rate variation among individuals after accounting for parental age (Kong et al. 2012). Father's age was also an important factor explaining mutation rate variation in chimpanzees (Venn et al. 2014). Similarly, there was no evidence of mutation rate variation between two strains in both Caenorhabditis elegans and C. briggsae (Denver et al. 2012). There is evidence from Drosophila that individuals in poor condition have elevated mutation rates (Sharp and Agrawal 2012) and a separate study comparing two inbred lines revealed a 2.4-fold difference in the rate of mutation (Schrider et al. 2013). Moreover, two independent experiments in Chlamydomonas reinhardtii suggested that there is a 5-fold difference in the mutation rate between two natural strains (Ness et al. 2012; Sung et al. 2012). In addition to mutation rate variation within and between species, there is also evidence that mutation rate varies across the genome. Such heterogeneity is expected to alter the rate of evolution across the genome and to create variation in the susceptibility of genes or sites to deleterious or beneficial mutations. There is clear evidence for fine-scale variation in the rate of mutation. At the scale of individual sites, G:C positions tend to mutate at higher rates than A:T positions, and transitions from G:C→A:T are the most common change in a broad range of species (for example bacteria (Hershberg and Petrov 2010), animals (Kong et al. 2012; Schrider et al. 2013), fungi (Zhu et al. 2014) and plants (Ness et al. 2012)). Similarly, the bases surrounding a mutated site have a strong effect on mutability. For example, the high frequency of G:C A:T transitions in mammals is driven by the deamination of methylated C_pG sites (Ehrlich and Wang 1981). In general, the bases flanking a particular site, referred to as the 'sequence context', are one of the best predictors of mutation rate (Michaelson et al. 2012; Neale et al. 2012; Samocha et al. 2014; Zhu et al. 2014). However, the underlying mechanisms and the consistency of the effect of sequence context on mutability across species is unknown. At a broader genomic scale, evidence for mutation rate heterogeneity is weaker. Seguencing of MA lines in S. cerevisiae (Zhu et al. 2014) and D. melanogaster (Schrider et al. 2013) found no evidence of mutation rate variation between chromosomes. Although there is evidence that mutation rate increases as a function of replication timing (Stamatoyannopoulos et al. 2009; Lang and Murray 2011), this finding has not been supported by direct estimates of mutation rate (Samocha et al. 2014; Zhu et al. 2014). A variety of other genomic properties have been linked to increased susceptibility to

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mutation, including transcription level, nucleosome occupancy, DNAse hypersensitivity and recombination rate (e.g. Michaelson et al. 2012). If these factors strongly influence mutation and generate variation between sites or large scale patterns of mutation rate variation, it is important to quantify their effects, in order to facilitate better predictive models of DNA sequence evolution. Detailed investigations of the process of spontaneous mutation and the extent of mutation rate variation are limited. This is because spontaneous mutations are very rare, constraining direct observation of sufficient numbers of mutations to infer the underlying biology. Sequencing of parents and their offspring is an increasingly common method for directly identifying de novo mutations (e.g. Keightley et al. 2014a; Keightley et al. 2014b). Although this approach has advantages, it is currently very expensive to sequence enough families to observe large numbers of mutations and has therefore only been applied on a large scale in humans (Kong et al. 2012). Another approach is to maintain experimental populations for many generations under minimal natural selection to allow mutations to accumulate regardless of their fitness consequences. Increasing the strength of genetic drift by bottlenecking the population each generation allows random, unbiased accumulation of all but the strongest deleterious mutations. These 'mutation accumulation' (MA) experiments have been used in a variety of species to investigate the phenotypic effects of new mutations (reviewed in Halligan and Keightley 2009) and are now being paired with whole genome sequencing to identify individual mutations. MA studies have generally been limited to sequencing a small number of genomes, and only two studies (Schrider et al. 2013; Zhu et al. 2014) have tested for heterogeneity in mutation rate across the genome, and no study has included more than two ancestral genotypes from a single species. In this study, we sequenced the genomes of 85 MA lines derived from six genetically diverse wild strains of the model green alga C. reinhardtii. We identified 6,843 mutations, seven-fold more than any previous MA study, and integrate this data with detailed annotation of genomic properties to investigate the process of spontaneous mutation with unprecedented detail. Specifically, we address the following fundamental questions (1) What is the relative frequency of different kinds of mutation, including the base spectrum and rate of insertion and deletion mutations? (2) What is the extent of mutation rate variation between individuals within a species? (3) Is there evidence of mutation rate heterogeneity across the genome and what genomic properties predict the rate of mutation at individual sites? Results We conducted a mutation accumulation experiment in six genetically diverse wild strains of C. reinhardtii that were chosen to broadly cover the geographic range of known C. reinhardtii samples in North America (Table 1). 15 replicate MA lines from each of the six ancestral strains were initiated for

a total of 90 MA lines. 85 of the initial 90 MA lines survived to the end of the experiment. The mean

- 1 number of generations per MA line was 940 (range 403 to 1,130). DNA was extracted from each line
- 2 and sequenced using Illumina whole genome sequencing allowing us to identify mutations in an
- 3 average of 75.4Mbp per line (72.5% of genome, range 58.5-84.9Mbp; See Materials and Methods for
- 4 details on mutation calling). In total, we identified 6,843 mutations, including 5,716 single nucleotide
- 5 mutations (SNMs) and 1,127 short indels. To confirm these mutation calls, we Sanger sequenced a
- 6 random sample of 192 mutations. 138 were successfully amplified and sequenced, 115 of 117 SNMs
- 7 were confirmed and 19 of 21 indels were confirmed, resulting in an accuracy of 98.3% and 90.5% for
- 8 SNMs and indels respectively.

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Mutation rate variation among genotypes.

- Including all MA lines, the total mutation rate was, $\mu = 1.15 \times 10^{-9}$ muts/site*generation, with SNM and
- indel mutation rates of $\mu_{SNM} = 9.63 \times 10^{-10}$ and $\mu_{INDEL} = 1.90 \times 10^{-10}$, respectively. The mutation rate
- 12 varied substantially among the MA replicates and between ancestral strains. Mutation rates of the
- individual MA lines ranged over nearly two orders of magnitude from $\mu_{CC-1952-MA4} = 5.65 \times 10^{-11}$ to $\mu_{CC-1952-MA4} = 5.65 \times 10^{-11}$ to $\mu_{CC-1952-MA4} = 5.65 \times 10^{-11}$
- 14 $_{2344-MA1} = 4.94 \times 10^{-9}$. There was significant variation in the mean mutation rate among the strains ($F_{1.5}$
- =30.96, *P*<0.0001, see Fig. 1). Post hoc Tukey tests showed strain CC-1373 had an average mutation
- rate significantly higher than all other strains (μ =28.1×10⁻¹⁰, P 0.01 to <0.001). This rate was nearly 7-
- fold higher than CC-1952 (μ =4.05×10⁻¹⁰), which had the lowest mutation rate, and was significantly
- lower than CC-1373 (P<0.001), CC-2931 (μ =15.6×10⁻¹⁰, P<0.001) and CC-2342 (μ =11.1×10⁻¹⁰,
- 19 P<0.01), Within strains CC-2344 and CC-2931, there were individual MA lines with significantly higher
- 20 mutation rates, 3.5× and 8.0× above their respective strain means (µ estimates are outside the
- 21 99.99% CI of their ancestral strain mutation rates, $\mu_{\text{CC-}2344\text{-MA1}}=56.9\times10^{-10}$, CC-2344 CI = 2.6 -12.0×10⁻¹⁰
- 22 ¹⁰; $\mu_{\text{CC-}2931\text{-MA5}}$ =36.2×10⁻¹⁰, CC-2931 CI = 7.2-20.0×10⁻¹⁰).

Indel mutations.

- There were significantly more short deletions (613) than insertions (514) (χ^2 =8.7, P < 0.005) and these
- 25 tended to be larger (mean length -7.9 and +5.9, respectively, Mann-Whitney U test, W=112604.5, P <
- 26 2.2×10⁻¹⁶), but the difference was not significant. MA lines of strain CC-2931 had an unusually high
- 27 number of indels (408) due to an abundance of 9bp deletions. 120 of 408 indels in CC-2931 were 9bp
- 28 deletions compared to a mean of five 9bp deletions in each of the other strains. These deletions did
- 29 not appear to have any shared sequence motif nor were they associated with coding exons, repetitive
- 30 sequence or any genomic property that we could identify. After adjusting for the excess of 9bp
- 31 deletions in CC-2931 by substituting the mean number of 9bp deletions found in the other strains,
- 32 there were similar numbers of insertions and deletions, but deletions were still significantly longer
- 33 (W=100759.5, P= 3.3×10⁻⁹).

Spatial heterogeneity.

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- When mutation rate was measured in 200kbp sliding windows, μ ranged from 0.0 to 23.5×10⁻¹⁰ By
- 3 comparing the distribution of mutation rates for each window with a simulation distribution, much of
- 4 this variation could be accounted for as noise around the genome average mutation rate (KS test D =
- 0.038, P = 0.43). In 1,000 simulations where mutation positions were randomized, the 95% confidence
- 6 interval (CI) was $\mu = 5.3 18.3 \times 10^{-10}$ compared to a 95% CI of $\mu = 4.8 19.4 \times 10^{-10}$ in the observed
- 7 data. 8% of 200kbp windows were above the 95th percentile of simulated mutation rates, suggesting a
- 8 very slight excess of windows with a high mutation rate. Notably, the chloroplast genome had a
- 9 mutation rate of $\mu_{cpDNA} = 5.17 \times 10^{-9}$, nearly 4.5× the genome average.
- 10 We detected a significant deviation in the distribution of minimum intermutation distance compared to
- 11 those expected under simulation (Fig. 2, K-S test: D = 0.048, $P = 4.5 \times 10^{-14}$). There was a large excess
- of mutations clustered very near to one another (<100bp apart) and most of this excess was caused
- by mutations at adjacent sites. Specifically, we expected zero adjacent mutations, but identified 55
- 14 mutations where two adjacent sites were mutated, each of which was visually inspected in the
- 15 Integrated Genomics Viewer, IGV (Thorvaldsdóttir et al. 2012). 27 of these clustered mutations
- occurred at CC (or GG) sites, and 25 of 27 mutated to AA/AT/TA/TT. We also found a number of
- indels where a short amount of sequence was replaced by an unrelated stretch of sequence. These
- 18 complex indels are often reported by GATK HaplotypeCaller as a separate deletion and insertion
- 19 rather than a single event. The excessive clustering occurred only within MA lines and when we
- 20 limited our analysis to test for the presence of clustering of mutations found in different lines there was
- 21 no evidence for this effect (K-S test D = 0.02, P = 0.13).

Base composition.

- 23 Treating the strand symmetrically we found a significantly non-random distribution of the six possible
- SNMs (χ^2 =1630.3, P < 0.0001; Fig. 3). Mutations occurring at C:G sites were 4.2× more frequent than
- 25 mutations at A:T sites, after correcting for genomic base composition, and this pattern was consistent
- across all MA lines and ancestral strains. Transitions from C:G→T:A were over-represented nearly
- 27 two-fold compared to random expectation. While transitions from A:T→G:C were more common than
- 28 the other mutations possible at A:T sites, they were still less common than any mutation at C:G sites.
- 29 Transversions from A:T→C:G or T:A were the least common and were found 2.4× less frequently than
- 30 expected by chance.
- 31 To assess the effect of the local sequence context on mutation rate, we measured the frequency of
- 32 the bases surrounding random A:T and C:G sites in the genome and compared this to the base
- 33 frequencies in the window surrounding SNMs (Fig. 4). We found non-random patterns surrounding all

- 1 six kinds of mutation, but the extent of the deviation was strongest for mutations at C:G sites. The
- 2 deviation was particularly strong in the 2-4bp upstream of mutations at C:G sites and to a lesser extent
- 3 1bp downstream of all mutation types. Specifically, the composition of the two nucleotides
- 4 immediately upstream of mutated C:G sites was strongly biased. In the case of the CTC trinucleotide,
- 5 for example, where the final C was mutated, that mutation rate was 4.5x the background rate.

Mutability.

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- 7 To determine which genomic properties influenced the mutability of individual sites we used logistic
- 8 regression to differentiate between the identified mutations and randomly selected not mutated sites.
- 9 Using this model, we then calculated the probability of mutation, or 'mutability', for each site in the
- 10 genome (See Materials and Methods for details). To assess the accuracy of the model we binned
- 11 sites in the genome based on their mutability (0-1) and calculated the observed mutation rate in each
- bin (bin width = 0.01). The predicted mutability of sites was strongly correlated with observed mutation
- rate (Fig. 5, R^2 =0.953, weighted by number of site-generations per bin). To ensure that the fit was not
- due to using the same mutations to generate the model and assess its fit, we also trained a model
- using a random subset of 1,000 mutations and excluded these sites when assessing the fit. As with
- the full data set, predicted and observed mutability were highly correlated (R^2 =0.88). The fit was
- 17 slightly reduced, presumably because using fewer mutations to calculate mutation rates led to more
- 18 noise. Although mutability ranged from nearly 0 to 1.0, we found that 99.9% of the genome had
- mutability values between 0.01 and 0.30, corresponding to mutation rates of 0.25-55.9×10⁻¹⁰. The top
- 20 25% of genome by mutability accounts for 57% of all mutations. Mutability was highest for sites in the
- 3' and 5' UTRs (predicted $\mu = 1.37 \times 10^{-9}$) and lowest for 0-fold and 4-fold degenerate sites (predicted μ
- 22 = 7.92×10^{-10}).
- In neutrally evolving haploid DNA the level of nucleotide diversity (θ_{π}) is expected to be twice the
- 24 product of mutation rate and the effective population size $(2N_e\mu)$. We binned silent sites (intergenic.
- 25 intronic and 4-fold degenerate sites) into 100 uniformly spaced mutability categories from 0.0-1.0 and
- 26 calculated θ_{π} for each bin using natural variation in the six ancestral strains used to initiated the MA
- 27 lines. We found that, as predicted, sites with higher mutability have higher neutral genetic diversity
- 28 (Fig. 6).

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Factors influencing mutability.

- 30 From the model of mutation rate, we extracted the relative contribution of different genomic properties
- 31 to mutability. To allow comparison among the genomic properties, we scaled continuous predictors so
- 32 that a change from 0 to 1 was a change of one standard deviation. We found that GC-content of the
- 33 surrounding genome strongly influenced the mutability at a site. Increasing the GC content of the 10bp

1 surrounding a site increased its mutability (GC% 10bp, odds ratio = 1.38), but at larger scales GC 2 content was negatively related to mutability (GC% 1000bp, odds ratio = 0.12). The negative 3 relationship between GC-content and mutation rate was supported by a highly significant correlation 4 between the observed mutation rate and GC content across the genome (see Supplementary Fig. S1, 5 R^2 =0.831, P<0.001). Reflecting similar patterns of sequence context described above, the trinucleotide 6 sequence in which a mutation occurred also had a strong effect on mutability. The most mutable 7 trinucleotides were CTC and CAC, where the final C was the mutant position (odds ratio = 3.54 and 8 2.02 respectively), and the least mutable were GTT and AGA (odds ratio = 0.57 and 0.58 9 respectively). It was not possible to combine the triplets into a single predictor, but the maximum 10 difference in mutability between triplets indicated a strong effect of sequence context on mutability. A 11 number of other genomic properties increased mutability, such as gene density (odds ratio =1.17) and 12 being upstream of a transcription start site (odds ratio =1.13). Interestingly, although a change of one 13 standard deviation in transcription level had little effect on mutability (odds ratio =1.02), the most 14 highly transcribed sites in the genome were 3.7× more mutable than untranscribed sites. **Discussion** 15 16 In total we detected 6,843 mutations, the largest set of characterized spontaneous mutations to date. 17 The overall rate of mutation across all lines was $\mu = 11.5 \times 10^{-10}$ /site/generation, and the mutation rate for SNMs was 9.63×10⁻¹⁰ and 1.90×10⁻¹⁰ for small indels. There are therefore five SNMs for each small 18 19 indel, consistent with previous results in C. reinhardtii, and similar to Arabidopsis thaliana (~5:1), but 20 substantially lower than the ratios recently reported from MA studies in S. cerevisiae (33:1) and D. 21 melanogaster (12:1). This large set of mutations, and the inclusion of multiple natural genotypes, 22 allowed detailed examination of mutation rate variation between individuals within a species and 23 mutation rate heterogeneity across the genome. In what follows we discuss the key results as they 24 relate to the extent of mutation rate variation between natural strains and across the genome. 25 Within species mutation rate variation. 26 Our estimate of total mutation rate in C. reinhardtii is 14.2-fold and 4.6-fold higher than two previous 27 estimates (Ness et al. 2012; Sung et al. 2012). The current estimate of mutation rate was partly driven 28 by the higher rate in MA lines derived from ancestor CC-1373, but even after excluding this line the

mutation rate is still substantially higher than previous estimates. The two MA lines (CC-2937-MA1, CC-2937-MA2) that were used to estimate mutation rate by Ness et al. (2012) continued to

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accumulate mutations for an average of ~611 generations additional generations, and the final

mutation rate estimate for each of these two lines is within the confidence interval of the earlier

estimate. Unfortunately, our experiment did not include strain CC-124 used in Sung et al. (2012), and

so we can not directly compare mutation rates to this study. Only a single MA line (CC-1952-MA4) had

The increase in mutation rate in line CC-2344-MA1 was greater than the extent of natural variation

- 1 among ancestral strains, suggesting that mutations that strongly alter mutation rate are common, and
- 2 may segregate in natural populations until purged by selection. Therefore the high mutation rate of
- 3 CC-1373 may be caused by a naturally occurring mutator allele. Alternatively, if C. reinhardtii is
- 4 primarily asexual in nature, theory predicts that if a mutator allele results in a linked beneficial allele.
- 5 the mutator will hitchhike to high frequency. A key parameter determining whether selection will favor
- 6 higher mutation rates is the rate of recombination, but the frequency of sex and recombination in
- 7 natural populations of *C. reinhardtii* is unknown.

Spatial heterogeneity in mutation rate.

- 9 By examining the spectrum of mutations and the local sequence in which they occur, we found clear
- 10 evidence for heterogeneity in mutation rate at fine-scales. In particular, the rate of mutation at C:G
- sites (12.2×10⁻¹⁰) was 2.4x higher than at A:T sites (5.19×10⁻¹⁰) and transitions from C:G \rightarrow T:A
- occurred at twice the rate expected if all mutations occurred at even rates (Fig. 2). An AT-biased
- mutation spectrum is consistent with a growing body of evidence suggesting that it might be universal
- in prokaryotes (Hershberg and Petrov 2010) and eukaryotes (e.g. Zhu et al. 2014). Additionally, we
- 15 found that the sequence flanking a mutated site strongly influenced the mutation rate. In mammals
- methylated CpG sites are frequently deaminated, causing C to T transitions, but in *C. reinhardtii* there
- is only weak evidence of CpG methylation, and our data reveals only a small excess of CpG motifs in
- 18 C to T mutations (Fig. 3). The most mutable triplet (CTC) had a mutation rate more than 10× higher
- than the least mutable triplet (GCA), and after accounting for background triplet frequencies, a
- 20 mutation from CTC to CTT was 17× more likely than a mutation from AAA to AAG. Interestingly, this
- 21 CTC triplet appears to be highly mutable across a very wide diversity of organisms, including fungi
- 22 (Zhu et al. 2014), plants and animals (Alexandrov et al. 2013b). In human tumor genomes, there is a
- 23 predominance of C to T and C to G mutations in the same CTCG sequence motif, which has been
- 24 linked with the APOBEC family of cytidine deaminases (Alexandrov et al. 2013b). Given that this motif
- has been found repeatedly, it seems probable that the mutability of other sequence motifs may be
- shared across species, however the mechanisms underlying this phenomenon are unknown. The fact
- 27 that the mutation rate can vary to this extent over very short scales has consequences for the
- 28 evolution of DNA and protein sequence. In the future, incorporation of direct measurements of
- 29 mutability into models of sequence change will facilitate better predictions of disease susceptibility and
- 30 molecular evolution (see Michaelson et al. 2012; Neale et al. 2012; Samocha et al. 2014).
- 31 By comparing the distribution of intermutation distances to a random expectation, we found that there
- is an excess of mutations clustered within 1-10bp of one another (Fig. 4). The fact that these clusters
- 33 all occur within MA-lines suggests that each represents a single multinucleotide mutation (MNM)
- event. In total there were 80 pairs and two trios of MNMs within 10bp of one another, implying that

window, Odds ratio = 0.12, 1-SD=5.4%). A negative correlation between mutability and GC content in

insights that can be gained by combining MA with whole genome sequencing. We found 7-fold

vary across large genomic windows, the mutation rate of individual sites was strongly affected by their

flanking sequence, resulting in fine-scale heterogeneity of mutation rate. Other genomic properties,

such as GC content, gene density and expression level, also influenced mutability. Similar results

across a wide diversity of species suggests that general properties of mutation exist and that models

of sequence evolution could be improved to reflect these properties and better detect selection in the

genome or estimate phylogenetic relationships. In the near future rapidly evolving sequencing

technologies will facilitate even more detailed investigation into the process of mutation from both MA

and parent-offspring sequencing. One important avenue of future research will be a synthesis of

findings from studies like ours with the underlying DNA repair and damage mechanisms to provide

explanations for patterns mutational heterogeneity between individuals and across the genome.

Methods

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Mutation accumulation experiment.

- 14 We conducted a mutation accumulation experiment in six genetically diverse wild strains of C.
- 15 reinhardtii obtained from the Chlamydomonas Resource Center (chlamycollection.org). The strains
- 16 were chosen to broadly cover the geographic range of known C. reinhardtii samples in North America
- 17 (Table 1). To initiate the MA lines, a single colony from each of the six ancestral strains was streaked
- 18 out, and we randomly selected 15 individual colonies to start the replicated MA lines (for a total of 90
- 19 MA lines). We bottlenecked the MA lines at regular intervals by selecting a random colony which was
- 20 streaked onto a fresh agar plate. We estimated the number of generations undergone by each MA line
- 21 over the course of the experiment by measuring the number of cells in colonies grown on agar plates
 - after a period of growth equivalent to the times between transfers in the experiment. The details of the
- 23 MA line creation and generation time estimation can be found in Morgan et al. (2014).

Sequencing and alignment.

- 25 To extract DNA, we grew cells on 1.5% Bold's agar for 4 days until there was a high density of cells, at
- 26 which point the cells were collected and frozen at -80°C. We disrupted the frozen cells using glass
- 27 beads, and extracted DNA using a standard phenol-chloroform extraction. Whole-genome re-
- 28 sequencing was conducted using the Illumina GAII platform at the Beijing Genomics Institute (BGI-
- 29 HongKong Co., Ltd, Hong Kong). The sequencing protocol was modified to accommodate the
- 30 unusually high GC content of the *C. reinhardtii* genome (mean GC= 63.9%). Variation in GC-content is
- 31 known to cause uneven representation of sequenced fragments, especially when GC > 55% (Aird et
- 32 al. 2011). We therefore used a modified PCR step in sequencing library preparation, following Aird et
- 33 al. (2011) (3 min at 98°C; 10 × [80 sec at 98°C, 30 sec at 65°C, 30 sec at 72°C]; 10 min at 72°C, with

1 2M betaine and slow temperature ramping 2.2°C/sec). We obtained ~30× coverage of the genome

2 (3Gbp of 100bp paired-end sequence) for each of the MA lines.

3 We aligned reads to the *C. reinhardtii* reference genome (version 5.3) using BWA 0.7.4-r385 (Li and

4 Durbin 2009). We included the plastid genome (NCBI accession NC_005353), mitochondrial genome

5 (NCBI accession NC_001638) and the MT- locus (NCBI accession GU814015) to avoid misalignment

of reads derived from these loci onto other parts of the nuclear genome. We tested a variety of values

7 for the fraction of mismatching bases allowed in alignments, but variation about the default (n=0.04)

8 did not improve the number of high quality reads mapped or genome coverage (results not shown).

9 After alignment, we removed duplicate reads with the Picard tool MarkDuplicates (v1.90). To avoid

10 calling false variants due to alignment errors, we used the GATK (v2.8-1) tools

11 RealignerTargetCreator and IndelRealigner (Mckenna et al. 2010; Depristo et al. 2011) to realign

reads flanking potential insertions and deletions. We realigned all replicate MA lines from each starting

strain together to ensure that the same alignment solutions were chosen in all lines derived from that

14 strain. The realigned BAM files included all MA lines from given ancestral strain and were then used to

jointly call genotypes using the UnifiedGenotyper from GATK. We used the "--output mode

16 EMIT_ALL_SITES" option to output all genomic positions so that we could identify both high quality

sites regardless of whether they had mutated. We used a "heterozygosity" parameter of 0.01, but

previous testing in *C. reinhardtii* showed that our genotyping is not sensitive to this prior as long as

read depth is high, as it is in the present experiment (Ness et al. 2012). To identify short insertions and

deletions (indels) we used the GATK v(2.8-1) tool 'HaplotypeCaller', which performs local re-assembly

21 of reads (i.e., indels called with UnifiedGenotyper were ignored). The six resulting Variant Call Format

22 files (VCFs) (one per ancestral strain) were converted to wormtable databases using the python

package WormTable v0.1.0 (Kelleher et al. 2013) which enabled efficient exploration of quality filters

for mutation identification.

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Mutation identification.

26 MA lines within an ancestral strain were genetically identical at the start of the experiment, so any

unique allele carried by a replicate within a strain was a candidate mutation. We applied a number of

filters to genotype calls to identify mutations, while minimizing false positive and false negative calls. A

site was called as a mutation if within that ancestral strain:

(1) The mapping quality (MQ) ≥ 90 and the PHRED called site quality (QUAL) ≥ 100

(2) All MA lines were 'homozygous'; C. reinhardtii is haploid therefore this filter avoided

mapping errors due to paralogous loci.

(3) The genotype of exactly one MA line differed from the rest of the lines

(4) All non-mutated lines shared the same genotype

(5) At least two sequences have confident genotype calls

Callable sites.

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3 To calculate mutation rates and define null expectations, we needed to know the total number of sites

with equivalent quality to the new mutations, hereafter referred to as "callable" sites. However, the

definitions and distributions of quality scores are often different for variant and invariant sites. We

therefore inferred a second measures of quality for invariant sites that was comparable to that used for

mutant sites. For each mutant site we extracted the QUAL and MQ for the mutation and the nearest

invariant site, under the assumption that because most reads are shared between adjacent sites the

quality characteristics of the sites will be similar. We then estimated the correlation and relationship

10 between quality scores at neighboring mutant and invariant sites using a linear model (MQ:

 R^2 =0.9996, P < 0.001, QUAL: R^2 =0.38, P < 0.001). The linear relationships between invariant and

variant quality scores were used to predict appropriate MQ and QUAL thresholds for invariant sites

(invariant MQ threshold = 90, invariant QUAL threshold =36.4). Analogous to the mutation calling, a

site was callable within an ancestral strain if no line was called as a heterozygote, all lines with

mapped reads had the same genotype call and at least two MA lines had genotype calls.

Sanger confirmation.

17 We estimated the accuracy of our mutation calls using Sanger sequencing. We randomly selected 192

mutation calls (32 per ancestral strain) including both short indels and SNMs. We amplified each locus

19 in the putative mutant MA line and a non-mutated MA line from the same ancestral strain. Sequences

were then visually inspected in SeqTrace v0.9.0 to confirm the presence of the mutated site.

Mutation rate calculations.

We calculated the mutation rate (μ) in each replicate as, μ = mutations / (callable sites × MA

generations). Whenever multiple MA lines were combined for mutation rate calculations, the number

of callable sites and MA generations (site-generations) for each MA line was included to accurately

account for differences amongst replicate lines. Similarly, all null expectations and mutation rate

estimates for particular classes of sites take into account the number of site-generations for the

specific positions included. To compare the average mutation rate of the six ancestral strains, we used

the GLS function in R to fit a linear model to the individual mutation rate estimates of the MA lines. The

model included mutation rate as the response variable and ancestral strain as a fixed factor. We

allowed the variance to differ among ancestral lines using the varident function (Zuur et al. 2009). We

then used the ghlt function to generate linear contrasts, allowing us to further explore differences

32 among the ancestors.

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- 2 Throughout our analyses of the mutation spectrum, we treated complementary mutations (C:G and
- 3 A:T) symmetrically, such that there were six distinct SNMs (A:T \rightarrow C:G, A:T \rightarrow T:A,
- 4 C:G \rightarrow A:T, C:G \rightarrow G:C, C:G \rightarrow T:A). To assess the base spectrum of mutations, we calculated the
- 5 frequency of each of the six mutation types relative to the expected frequency calculated from the
- 6 base composition of the callable sites. To analyze the local sequence context in which mutations
- 7 occurred, we measured base composition at each of the positions 5bp upstream and downstream of
- 8 the mutated site. To calculate the null expectation for sequence context we estimated base
- 9 composition in analogous windows surrounding 10⁶ randomly selected callable sites. Separate
- 10 expectations were generated for sites centered on A:T and C:G.

Spatial heterogeneity of mutation.

- 12 To assess whether there was spatial heterogeneity in mutation rate we calculated the mutation rate
- across the genome in sliding windows. We conducted the analysis with windows of 100Kbp, 200Kbp,
- 14 500Kbp and 1Mbp but because the results were qualitatively similar and we report only the 200Kbp
- analysis. The mutation rate of each window was calculated as the number of mutations in that window
- divided by the total number of callable site*generations. To assess how the mutation rate in these
- 17 windows varied relative to null expectations, we simulated a random distribution of mutations. For
- 18 each MA line we generated a corresponding simulated line where the number of mutations carried by
- 19 that line was distributed amongst the 200Kbp windows in proportion to the number of callable site-
- 20 generations in each window. This procedure was repeated 1,000 times to generate an expected
- 21 distribution of mutation rates across the 200Kbp windows.
- We also tested for the presence of a non-random spatial distribution of mutations by comparing the
- 23 observed distribution of intermutation distances to a simulated distribution. This approach differs from
- 24 the analysis above because it can detect fine scale clusters of mutations. We simulated data under a
- 25 model where mutations occur randomly across the genome, while retaining the same number of
- 26 mutations per MA line and accounting for differences in the callable genome positions. For each MA
- 27 line we generated a corresponding simulated sample by randomly assigning the number of mutations
- that occurred in that MA line to individual callable positions. This allowed us to assess whether there
- 29 was significantly more clustering within and between lines while accounting for line-specific differences
- 30 in callable sites. The observed and simulated distributions of intermutation distances were compared
- 31 using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov (KS) test in R.

keeps one and discard the others (lasso, α =1). The fit of the model was unchanged by the selection of α and all results presented used α =0.01. To compare the log(odds ratio) of each genomic property on

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deviation. As alternate scaling we also normalized the predictors such that each ranged from exactly

3 zero to one.

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4 Data Access

- 5 All genomic data generated as part of this project is publicly available through the NCBI Sequence
- 6 Read Archive (SRA BioProject Accession: SRP052900)

7 Figure Legends

- 8 Figure 1. Variation in mutation rate between strains.
- 9 Total mutation rate (μ = total mutations / (site × generation)) for each of the MA lines, categorized
- based on their ancestral strain. The boxes outline the 1st to 3rd quartile of the mutation rate in lines
- 11 from a given ancestral strain, the thick horizontal line indicates the median mutation rate and the
- whiskers extend to the last data point that is within 1.5× the interquartile range, points outside the
- 13 whiskers are filled black.
- 14 Figure 2. Expected and observed distributions of intermutation distance.
- 15 Comparison of observed (red) and expected (blue) distributions of the distance between mutations. In
- 16 this plot, intermutation distance was measured as the nearest mutation irrespective of the MA line or
- 17 strain it occurred in. The expected distribution was generated by randomizing the location of mutations
- in each MA line and recalculating the intermutation distances. The simulation was repeated 1000
- 19 times and the average of those iterations is shown here.
- 20 Figure 3. Mutation base spectrum of single nucleotide mutations.
- 21 Base mutation spectrum of 5716 single nucleotide mutations (SNMs). The deviation of the mutation
- 22 rate for each of the six possible SNMs relative to its expectation based on equal mutation rates was
- 23 calculated as the observed number of mutations of each kind divided the number of mutations
- 24 expected if mutations occurred randomly with respect to base. Background base composition was
- calculated only from sites that have high quality genotype calls (callable sites).
- 26 Figure 4. Sequence context of spontaneous mutations.
- 27 Deviations in the local sequence context of the 2bp flanking mutated sites. Deviations were calculated
- 28 from the observed frequency of each base (A, T, C, G) in the flanks of mutated sites and the expected
- 29 background composition based on flanking sequences of 10° random A:T or C:G sites. Each horizontal
- 30 panel represents one of the six possible mutations indicated in the centre. Significant deviations from
- 31 the background base composition at each position were detected with tests and indicated as *P <0.05,
- 32 **P<0.01, ***P<0.001 (alpha-values were adjusted for multiple tests using a Bonferroni correction).

Figure 5. Linear fit between observed mutation rate and predicted mutability.

Mutability was estimated using a logistic regression, where the presence or absence of a mutation was the response variable, and a variety of genomic properties were used as predictors (see

Supplementary table S1). Each point represents multiple genomic sites placed in discrete bins (width = 0.01) based on each site's mutability score. The size of each point is proportional to the number of sites in the genome with a given mutability. Observed mutation rates for each point were calculated as

8 The linear regression was weighted by the number of sites in each bin and the shaded grey area

the number of observed mutations divided by the total number of callable sites-generations in that bin.

around the line represents the 95% confidence region.

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Figure 6. Relationship between natural genetic diversity and predicted mutability.

11 Each point represents multiple genomic sites placed in discrete bins (width = 0.01) based on the

12 predicted mutability of each site. Only putatively neutral sites (intronic, intergenic and 4-fold

degenerate sites) were included in this figure. Nucleotide diversity (θ_{π}) was calculated in each bin from

the six ancestral strains used to start the mutation accumulation lines. The size of each point is

proportional to the number of sites in the genome with a given mutability.

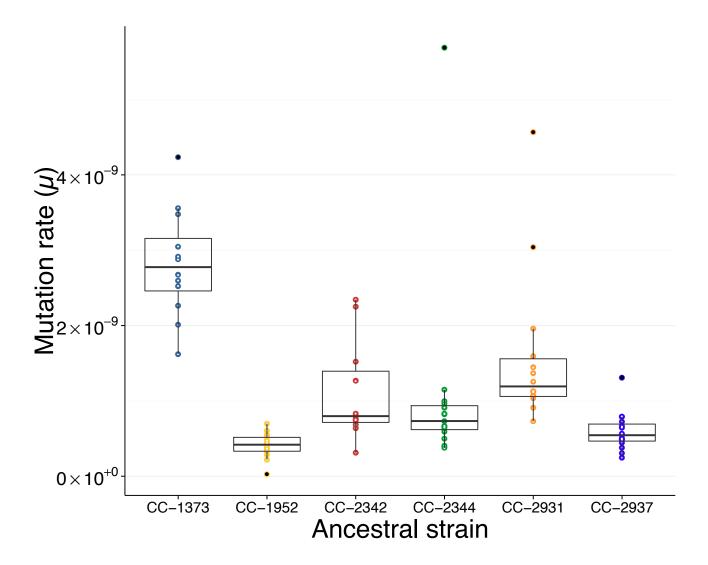


Figure 1. Variation in mutation rate between strains.

Total mutation rate (μ = total mutations / (site × generation)) for each of the MA lines, categorized based on their ancestral strain. The boxes outline the 1st to 3rd quartile of the mutation rate in lines from a given ancestral strain, the thick horizontal line indicates the median mutation rate and the whiskers extend to the last data point that is within 1.5× the interquartile range, points outside the whiskers are filled black.

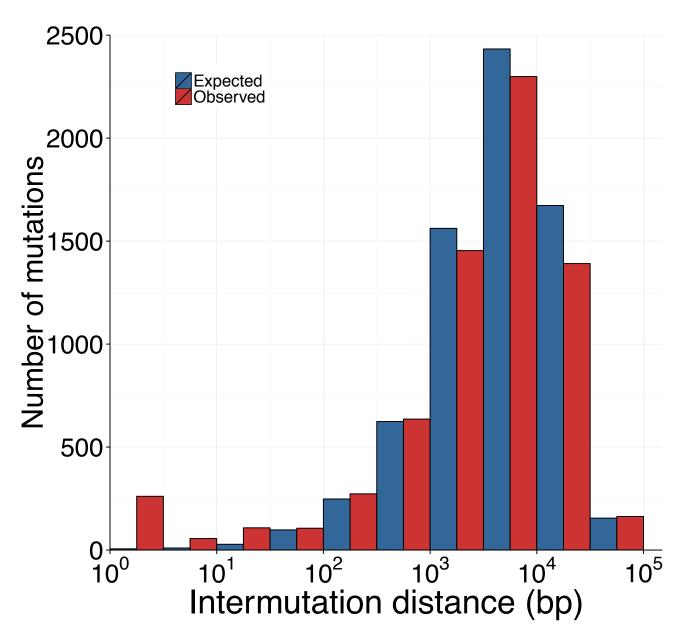


Figure 2. Expected and observed distributions of intermutation distance.

Comparison of observed (red) and expected (blue) distributions of the distance between mutations. In this plot, intermutation distance was measured as the nearest mutation irrespective of the MA line or strain it occurred in. The expected distribution was generated by randomizing the location of mutations in each MA line and recalculating the intermutation distances. The simulation was repeated 1000 times and the average of those iterations is shown here.

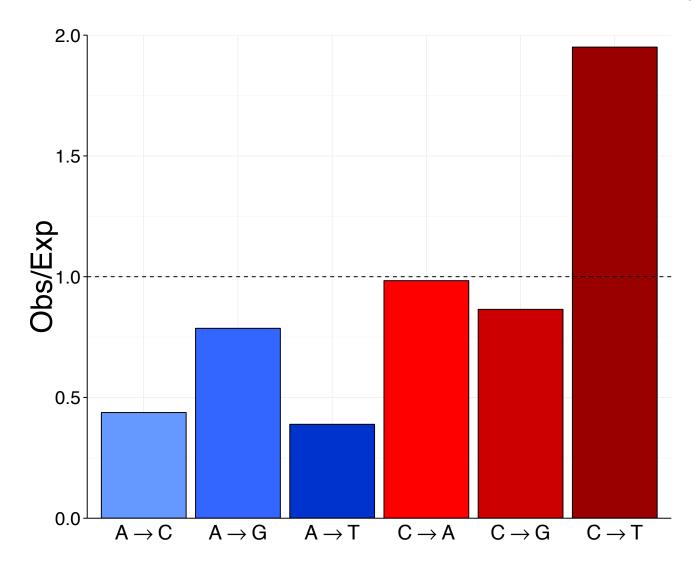


Figure 3. Mutation base spectrum of single nucleotide mutations.

Base mutation spectrum of 5716 single nucleotide mutations (SNMs). The deviation of the mutation rate for each of the six possible SNMs relative to its expectation based on equal mutation rates was calculated as the observed number of mutations of each kind divided the number of mutations expected if mutations occurred randomly with respect to base. Background base composition was calculated only from sites that have high quality genotype calls (callable sites).

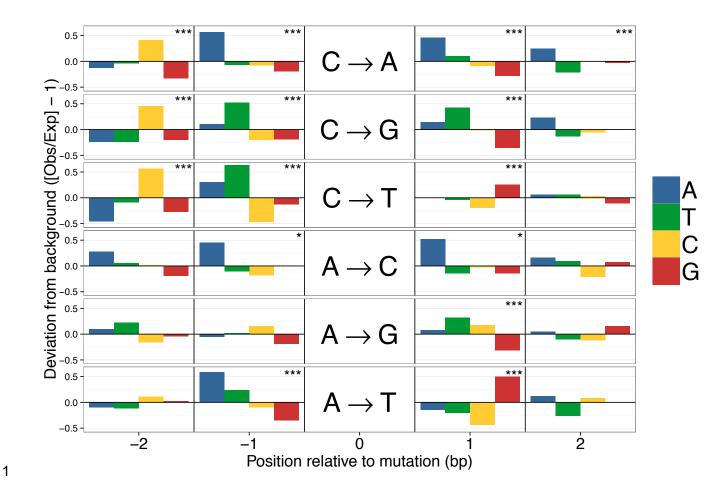


Figure 4. Sequence context of spontaneous mutations.

Deviations in the local sequence context of the 2bp flanking mutated sites. Deviations were calculated from the observed frequency of each base (A, T, C, G) in the flanks of mutated sites and the expected background composition based on flanking sequences of 10° random A:T or C:G sites. Each horizontal panel represents one of the six possible mutations indicated in the centre. Significant deviations from the background base composition at each position were detected with tests and indicated as *P <0.05, **P<0.01, ***P<0.001 (alpha-values were adjusted for multiple tests using a Bonferroni correction).

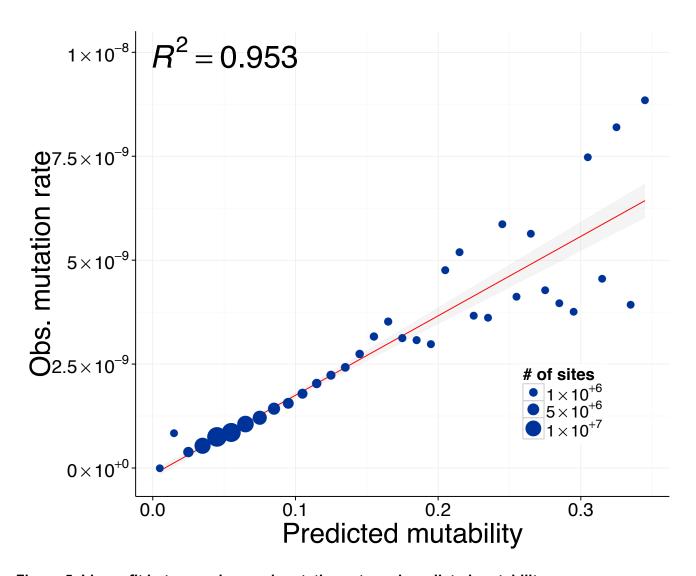


Figure 5. Linear fit between observed mutation rate and predicted mutability.

Mutability was estimated using a logistic regression, where the presence or absence of a mutation was the response variable, and a variety of genomic properties were used as predictors (see Supplementary table S1). Each point represents multiple genomic sites placed in discrete bins (width = 0.01) based on each site's mutability score. The size of each point is proportional to the number of sites in the genome with a given mutability. Observed mutation rates for each point were calculated as the number of observed mutations divided by the total number of callable sites-generations in that bin. The linear regression was weighted by the number of sites in each bin and the shaded grey area around the line represents the 95% confidence region.

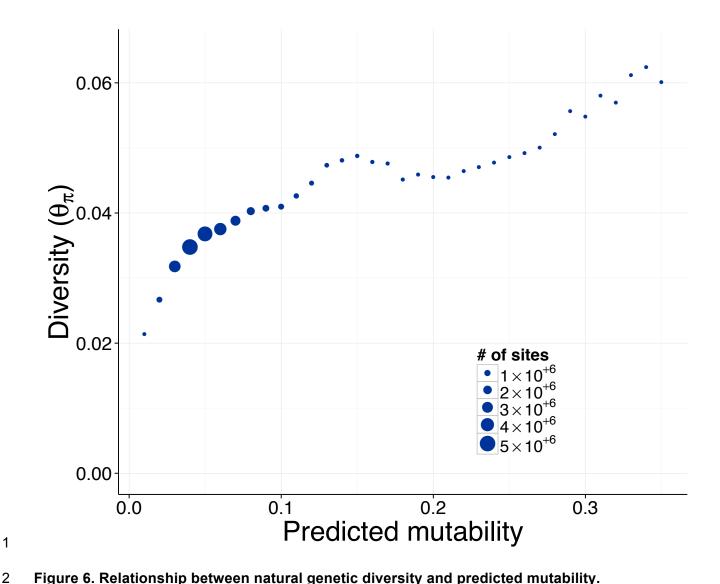


Figure 6. Relationship between natural genetic diversity and predicted mutability. Each point represents multiple genomic sites placed in discrete bins (width = 0.01) based on the predicted mutability of each site. Only putatively neutral sites (intronic, intergenic and 4-fold

degenerate sites) were included in this figure. Nucleotide diversity (θ_{π}) was calculated in each bin from

the six ancestral strains used to start the mutation accumulation lines. The size of each point is

proportional to the number of sites in the genome with a given mutability.

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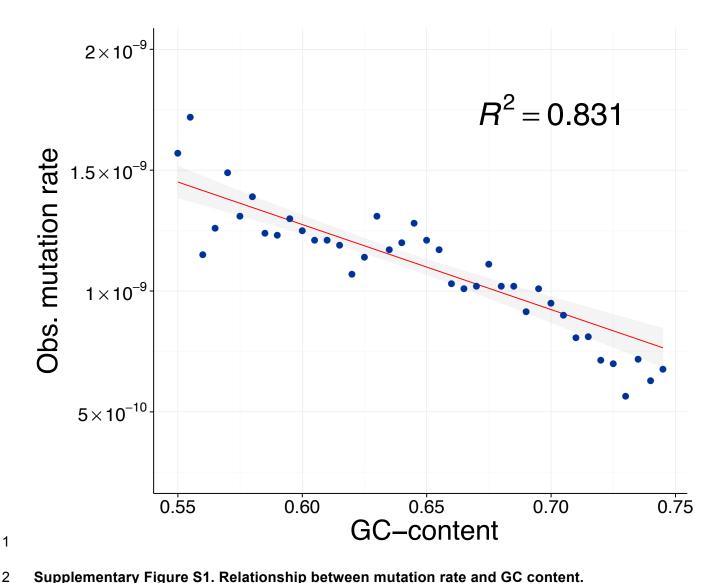
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Supplementary Figure S1. Relationship between mutation rate and GC content.

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Linear fit between observed mutation rate and GC content of the 1000bp surrounding a site. Each point represents multiple genomic sites placed in discrete bins (width = 0.005) based on each site's GC content. Observed mutation rate for each point was calculated as the number of observed mutations divided by the total number of callable sites-generations in that bin. The shaded grey area around the line represents the 95% confidence region.

- 2 Each of the six strains was used to generate 11-15 replicate MA lines. The original sampling location,
- 3 date and mating type (+/-) are indicated. The total number of single nucleotide mutations (SNMs) and
- 4 short indels (<50bp) identified across all replicates of each strain are reported, along with the mean
- 5 number of high quality ('callable') genomic sites sequenced in each strain.

Ancestral Strain	Collection Location/Year	Mating Type	MA lines	Mutations (SNMs / short indels)	Mean callable sites (Mbp)
CC-1373	Massachusetts/1945	+	12	1696/222	78.8
CC-1952	Minnesota / 1986	-	14	366/66	74.4
CC-2342	Pennsylvania / 1989	-	11	824/73	72.0
CC-2344	Pennsylvania / 1989	+	15	946/181	75.3
CC-2931	North Carolina / 1991	-	14	1215/405	72.5
CC-2937	Quebec / 1993	+	15	508/149	78.6

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