

Plant genera *Cannabis* and *Humulus* share the same pair of well-differentiated sex chromosomes

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31 **Summary**

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- 34 • We recently described, in *Cannabis sativa*, the oldest sex chromosome system documented
35 so far in plants. Based on our estimate of its age, we predicted that it should be shared by its
36 sister genus *Humulus*, which is known to also possess XY sex chromosomes.
- 37 • Here, we used transcriptome sequencing of a F1 family of *Humulus lupulus* to identify and
38 study the sex chromosomes in this species using the probabilistic method SEX-DETECTOR.
- 39 • We identified 265 sex-linked genes in *H. lupulus*, located on the chromosome that is also the
40 *C. sativa* sex chromosome pair. Using phylogenies of sex-linked genes, we show that a
41 region of these chromosomes had already stopped recombining in the common ancestor of
42 the two species. Furthermore, as in *C. sativa*, Y gene expression was reduced in correlation
43 to the position on the X chromosome, and strongly Y degenerated genes showed dosage
44 compensation.
- 45 • Here we report, for the first time in the Angiosperms, a sex chromosome system that is
46 shared by two different genera. Recombination suppression started at least 21-25 My ago,
47 and then (either gradually or step-wise) spread to a large part of the sex chromosomes,
48 leading to a strongly degenerated Y.

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52 **Keywords**

53 Cannabaceae; dioecy; dosage compensation; *Humulus lupulus*; sex chromosomes; Y degeneration

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59 Introduction

60 Among more than 15,000 dioecious angiosperm species (*i.e.* species with separate sexes; Renner,
61 2014), less than twenty sex chromosome systems have been studied with genomic data (Ming *et al.*,
62 2011; Baránková *et al.*, 2020). Most plants with sex chromosomes exhibit male heterogamety, with
63 XY chromosomes in males, and XX chromosomes in females (Westergaard, 1958; Charlesworth,
64 2016). The Y chromosome, which never recombines, experiences reduced selection, which results
65 in an accumulation of deleterious mutations and transposable elements (Charlesworth &
66 Charlesworth, 2000). This phenomenon of Y degeneration is expected to gradually increase the size
67 of the Y chromosome initially, and then to reduce it (Ming *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, after sufficient
68 time of divergence, we expect to observe chromosome heteromorphy, *i.e.* a Y chromosome larger or
69 smaller than the X chromosome, depending on the progress of degeneration (Ming *et al.*, 2011).
70 In plants, dioecy is often of recent origin (Käfer *et al.*, 2017), thus limiting the age of the sex
71 chromosomes. Indeed, several rather recently evolved (less than 10 million years (My) old)
72 homomorphic sex chromosome systems with small non-recombining regions have been described,
73 as in *Carica papaya* and *Asparagus officinalis* (Wu & Moore, 2015; Harkess *et al.*, 2017).
74 Heteromorphic sex chromosome systems are also found, with the Y being larger than the X, but
75 recombination suppression happened also relatively recently (less than 20 My ago), as in *Silene*
76 *latifolia* and *Coccinia grandis* (Sousa *et al.*, 2013; Krasovec *et al.*, 2018; Fruchard *et al.*, 2020).
77 A few cases in which dioecy evolved longer ago also exist (Käfer *et al.*, 2017), but no strongly
78 degenerated sex chromosomes have been described so far. Pucholt *et al.* (2017) described very
79 young sex chromosomes in *Salix viminalis* despite ancestral dioecy for the sister genera *Salix* and
80 *Populus*. Thus, either the sex chromosomes evolved independently in different species, or there
81 have been frequent turnovers. In the fully dioecious palm tree genus *Phoenix*, a sex-linked region
82 evolved before the speciation of the fourteen known species (Cherif *et al.*, 2016; Torres *et al.*,
83 2018). These sex chromosomes might be old, but do not appear to be strongly differentiated. A
84 similar situation has been reported in the grapevine (*Vitis*) genus (Badouin *et al.*, 2020; Massonet *et*
85 *al.*, 2020), possibly because sex chromosome evolution is slowed down in such perennials with long
86 generation time (Muyle *et al.*, 2017).
87 Thus, to our knowledge, no sex chromosomes shared by species in different genera have been
88 described in plants so far, a situation in stark contrast to the animals, for which several systems are

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89 more than 100 My old and are shared by whole classes, *e.g.* birds and mammals (Ohno, 1969;
90 Fridolfsson *et al.*, 1998; Cortez *et al.*, 2014).

91 Dioecy very likely evolved before the genera *Cannabis* and *Humulus* split, and might even be
92 ancestral in the Cannabaceae family (Yang *et al.*, 2013; Zhang *et al.*, 2018). *Cannabis sativa*
93 (marijuana and hemp) is a dioecious species with nearly homomorphic XY chromosomes. These
94 sex chromosomes have a large non-recombining region and are estimated to have started diverging
95 between 12 and 28 My ago (Peil *et al.*, 2003; Divashuk *et al.*, 2014, Prentout *et al.*, 2020).

96 As for *C. sativa*, cytological analyses of *Humulus lupulus* (hop) found a XY chromosome system
97 with a large non-recombining region, but the Y chromosome is smaller than the X (Shephard *et al.*,
98 2000; Karlov *et al.*, 2003; Divashuk *et al.*, 2011). The divergence between *H. lupulus* and *C. sativa*
99 is estimated between 21 and 25 My old (Divashuk *et al.*, 2014; Jin *et al.*, 2020), which is lower than
100 our higher bound estimate of the age of the *C. sativa* sex chromosomes (Prentout *et al.*, 2020). It is
101 thus possible that the sex chromosomes of *C. sativa* and *H. lupulus* evolved from the same pair that
102 already stopped recombining in their common ancestor, a question we address here.

103 As in many cultivated dioecious species, only female hop plants are harvested. Hop is used in beer
104 brewing for its bitterness, and its production is increasing worldwide (Neve, 1991; King &
105 Pavlovic, 2017), mostly because of the craft beer revolution (Barth-Haas, 2019; Mackinnon &
106 Pavlovic, 2019). The molecule responsible for hop flowers bitterness, lupulin, is concentrated in
107 female ripe inflorescences, called cones (Okada & Ito, 2001). In pollinated cones, the presence of
108 seed reduces their brewing quality; since *H. lupulus* is wind pollinated, a single male plant in the
109 hop field or its vicinity can cause broad scale damage to the crop (Thomas & Neve, 1976).

110 Usually, hop is not grown from seeds, so female-only cultures are easy to obtain, and there is no
111 need for large-scale early sexing as in *Cannabis sativa* (cf. Prentout *et al.*, 2020). However, for
112 varietal improvement where controlled crosses are needed, knowing the sex early might be
113 beneficial. In *H. lupulus*, the identification of the sex is reliable 1-2 years after the sowing (Conway
114 and Snyder, 2008; Patzak *et al.*, 2002). A few markers have been developed, but the use of Y-
115 specific coding sequences may increase the marker quality (Patzak *et al.*, 2002, Cerenak *et al.*,
116 2019).

117 Here we sequenced the transcriptome of fourteen *H. lupulus* individuals. These individuals came
118 from a cross, from which we sequenced the parents and six offspring of each sex. We used the
119 probabilistic approach SEX-DETECTOR, which is based on allele segregation analysis within a cross,
120 to identify sex-linked sequences (Muyle *et al.*, 2016). From these analyses on *H. lupulus* and our

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121 previous results on *C. sativa* (Prentout *et al.*, 2020) we describe for the first time well-differentiated
122 sex chromosomes shared by two different genera in plants.

123

124 **Materials and Methods**

125 **Biological material and RNA-sequencing**

126 As indicated in Fig. **1a**, we realized a controlled cross for sequencing. The *H. lupulus* parents,
127 cultivar 'Wye Target' (WT; female) and the Slovenian male breeding line 2/1 (2/1), as well as 6
128 female and 6 male F1 siblings (Jakše *et al.*, 2013) were collected in July 2019 in the experimental
129 garden of Slovenian Institute of Hop Research and Brewing, Žalec.

130 All offspring were phenotypically confirmed to carry either male or female reproductive organs and
131 showed no anomalies in the microsatellite genotyping data (Jakše *et al.*, 2013). Young leaves from
132 the laterally developing shoots were picked, wrapped in aluminum foil and flash frozen *in situ* in
133 liquid nitrogen. Later they were pulverized and stored at -80°C until RNA isolation.

134 Total RNA was isolated from 100 mg frozen tissue pulverized in liquid nitrogen according to the
135 protocol of Monarch Total RNA Miniprep Kit, including removal of DNA from the column with
136 DNase I (New England Biolabs). Total RNA was quantified with Qbit 3.0, and quality was verified
137 with the Agilent RNA Nano 6000 Kit to confirm appropriate sample RIN numbers. The total RNA
138 samples were sent to Novogen for mRNA sequencing using Illumina's 100 bp paired end service.
139 The data were submitted to the SRA database of the NCBI (BioSample accession
140 SAMN17526021).

141

142 **Mapping, genotyping and SEX-DETECTOR**

143 The bioinformatic pipeline is schematically indicated in Fig. **1b**. The RNA-seq data were mapped
144 on the transcriptome of *H. lupulus* (Padgitt-Cobb *et al.*, 2019) and the transcriptome of *C. sativa*
145 that we also used for our previous *C. sativa* analysis (Supporting Information; Van Bakel *et al.*,
146 2011; Prentout *et al.*, 2020). For the mapping, we ran GSNAP (version 2019-09-12; Wu and Nacu,
147 2010; Wu *et al.*, 2016), an aligner that enables SNP-tolerant mapping, with 10% mismatches
148 allowed. This approach, already used for *C. sativa* analysis, increased through several iterations the
149 mapping quality by adding Y-specific SNPs to the references (and *H. lupulus* specific SNPs while
150 mapping on *C. sativa* reference; see Prentout *et al.*, 2020).

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151 Then, SAMTOOLS (version 1.4; Li *et al.*, 2009) was used to remove unmapped reads and sort
152 mapping outputs files for the genotyping. We genotyped individuals with reads2snp (version 2.0.64;
153 Gayral *et al.*, 2013), as recommended for SEX-DETECTOR (Muyle *et al.*, 2016), *i.e.*, by accounting
154 for allelic expression biases, without filtering for paralogous SNPs, and only conserving SNPs
155 supported by at least three reads for subsequent analysis.

156 We ran the XY model of SEX-DETECTOR on the genotyping data, using the SEM algorithm and a
157 threshold for an assignment of 0.8. SEX-DETECTOR computes a posterior probability of being
158 autosomal (P_A), XY (P_{XY}) and X-hemizygous ($P_{X\text{-hemi}}$) for each SNP and for each gene (Fig. 1c).
159 Thus, a gene with a P_A greater than or equal to 0.8 and at least one autosomal SNP without
160 genotyping error is classified as “autosomal”; a gene with $P_{XY} + P_{X\text{-hemi}}$ greater than or equal to 0.8
161 and at least one sex-linked SNP without genotyping error is classified as “sex-linked”; otherwise,
162 the gene is classified as “lack-of-information”. Among the sex-linked genes, X-hemizygous ones
163 are those with only X-hemizygous SNPs and at least one without genotyping error, as well as genes
164 with a Y expression detected only on aberrant SNPs (see Muyle *et al.*, 2016). A parameter that is
165 important to optimize with SEX-DETECTOR is the Y specific genotyping error rate (p ; see Muyle *et al.*
166 *et al.*, 2016). However, the Y mapping quality reduces with the XY divergence, therefore, old and
167 highly divergent sex chromosomes are more susceptible to mapping errors and thus genotyping
168 errors. p is expected to be close to the whole transcriptome genotyping error rate (ϵ), but could be
169 higher due to weak expression (resulting in less reads) of the Y copies of genes. To reduce the gap
170 between these two error rates, we ran 4 iterations with GSNAP, using at each time the SNPs file
171 output from SEX-DETECTOR to increase reference quality.

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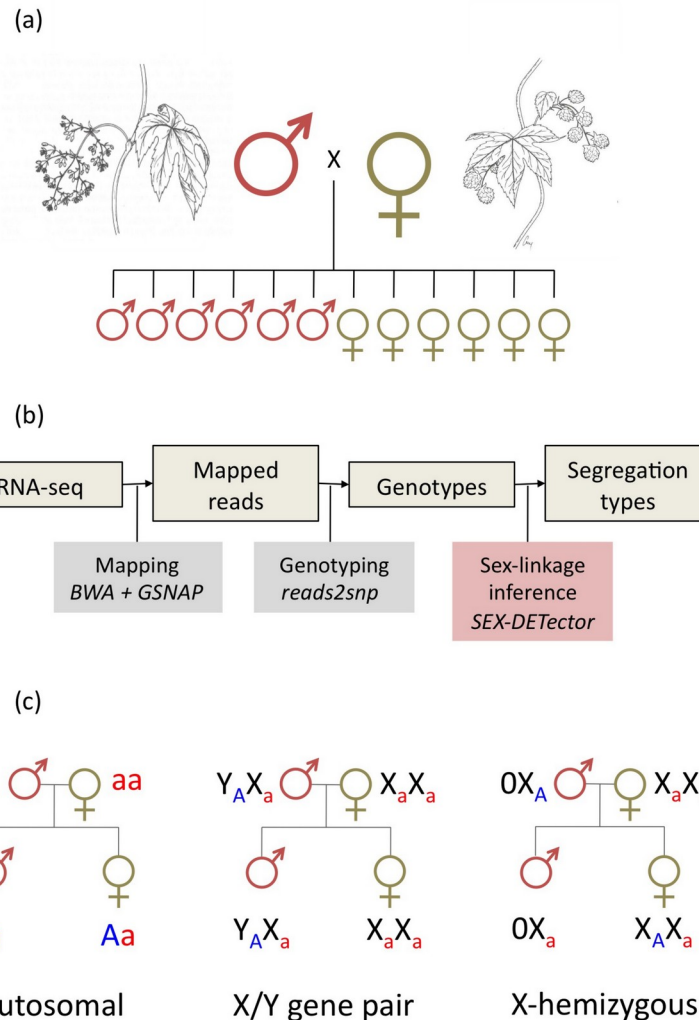


Figure 1. Schematic

202 representation of the workflow used to detect sex-linkage. (a) Experimental design: six females and six males

203 were obtained by a controlled cross, and all individuals (14) were sequenced.

204 (b) Bioinformatic pipeline for the treatment of RNAseq data. (c) Illustration of the underlying principles of the

205 SEX-DETECTOR segregation analysis.

206

207 Sex-linked gene positions on *C. sativa* genome

208 We determined the position of the transcript sequences, used for the mapping, on a chromosome-

209 level assembly of the *C. sativa* genome (Grassa *et al.*, 2018) with blast (version 2.2.30+; Altschul *et*

210 *al.*, 1990). We selected the best hit with an e-value lower than 10^{-4} to determine the position of the

211 transcript on the genome. Then, we split each chromosome in windows of 2 Mb and computed the

212 density of sex-linked genes and non-sex-linked genes per window using BEDTOOLS (version

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213 2.26.0; Quinlan & Hall, 2010). Proportions of sex-linked genes were computed by dividing the
214 number of sex-linked genes by the total number of genes (sex-linked, autosomal, and undetermined)
215 in the same window. For *C. sativa*, densities were already available from our previous analysis
216 (Prentout *et al.*, 2020).

217

218 **Molecular clock and age of sex chromosomes**

219 We used the translated reference transcripts (van Bakel *et al.*, 2011) to determine the X and Y Open
220 Reading Frame (ORF) of nucleotide reference transcripts. For each XY gene pair, the *dS* values
221 were estimated with codeml (PAML version 4.9; Yang, 2007) in pairwise mode. Then, we used two
222 molecular clocks, derived from *Arabidopsis* species, to estimate the age of *H. lupulus* sex
223 chromosomes (Koch *et al.*, 2000; Ossowski *et al.*, 2010). In the wild, *H. lupulus* flowers in the
224 second or third year of the development (Patzak *et al.*, 2002; Polley *et al.*, 1997), therefore, we took
225 a generation time (GT) of 2 years, and used the molecular clock as follows:
226 $(GT \times dS) / rate = dS / (7.5 \times 10^{-9})$ using the molecular clock from Koch *et al.* (2000);
227 $(GT \times dS) / (2 \times \mu) = dS / (7 \times 10^{-9})$ using the clock from Ossowski *et al.* (2010). Three different
228 estimates of *dS* were used: the maximum *dS* value, the mean of 5% highest *dS* values, and the mean
229 of 10% highest *dS* values.

230

231 **X and Y allele-specific expression analysis**

232 In addition to identifying X and Y alleles, SEX-DETECTOR estimates their expression based on the
233 number of reads (Muyle *et al.*, 2016). These estimates rely on counting reads spanning XY SNPs
234 only and were normalized using the total read number in a library for each individual. They were
235 further normalized by the median autosomal expression for each individual. *C. sativa* results
236 presented here were generated in our previous analysis on *C. sativa* sex chromosomes (Prentout *et al.*
237 *et al.*, 2020).

238

239 **Correction of Y read mapping bias.**

240 The use of a female reference for the mapping of the reads might create mapping biases, resulting in
241 the absence of Y reads in the mostly diverging parts of the genes. This issue may reduce the
242 divergence detected and change the phylogenetic signal (Dixon *et al.*, 2019). If, within the same
243 gene, regions that lack Y reads coexist with regions where the Y reads were correctly mapped, we expect

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244 to see a signature similar to gene conversion, *i.e.* region-wise variation in the divergence. Therefore,
245 we ran geneconv (version 1.81a; Sawyer, 1999) in pairwise and group mode with the multiple
246 alignments used for the phylogeny (on 85 gene alignments before Gblock filtering, see below) in
247 order to identify and remove regions with reduced divergence. We defined two groups, one for X
248 and Y sequences in *H. lupulus* and the other one for X and Y sequences in *C. sativa*. Then, we
249 conserved only inner fragments and split the gene conversion regions from regions without gene
250 conversion to obtain two subsets per genes. Thus, we obtained a subset of sequences corrected for
251 the mapping bias, in addition to the set of genes not filtered with geneconv.

252

253 **Phylogenetic analysis**

254 We reconstructed gene families for genes identified as sex-linked in both *C. sativa* and *H. lupulus*.
255 Then, we used blastp, filtering for the best hit (with an e-value threshold fixed at 10^{-4}), to find
256 homologous sequences between *C. sativa* reference transcripts (the query sequence in blastp) (van
257 Bakel *et al.*, 2011) and 4 outgroup transcriptomes (the subject sequence in blastp): *Trema orientalis*
258 (Cannabaceae; van Velzen *et al.*, 2018), *Morus notabilis* (Moraceae; He *et al.*, 2013), *Fragaria*
259 *vesca ssp. vesca* (Rosaceae; Shulaev *et al.*, 2011), and *Rosa chinensis* (Rosaceae; Raymond *et al.*,
260 2018). Gene families for which at least two outgroup sequences have been identified were
261 conserved, incomplete gene families were discarded from subsequent analysis. Then, we added X and
262 Y sequences reconstructed by SEX-DETECTOR to each gene families. To identify potential
263 paralogous sequences or variants from alternative splicing, a blast of all sequences vs all sequences
264 was realized. If two sequences from two distinct gene families blast with each other (with an e-
265 value threshold fixed at 10^{-4}), then both families were removed from the dataset. Finally, we
266 retrieved the corresponding nucleotidic sequences of each protein families, which constituted the
267 dataset used for the phylogenetic analysis.

268 Using Macse (version 2.03; Ranwez *et al.*, 2011), and before alignment, non-homologous segments
269 of at least 60 nucleotides within or 30 nucleotides at the extremity of a nucleotide sequence were
270 trimmed if they showed less than 30 % of dissimilarity compared to any other sequences in the gene
271 family. This step allowed to remove misidentified outgroup sequences, then, gene families with no
272 remaining outgroup sequences were discarded. Finally, remaining families were aligned with
273 Macse, allowing sequences to be removed and realigned, one sequence at a time and over multiple
274 iterations, to improve local alignment.

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275 Nucleotide alignments were cleaned at the codon level using Gblocks (with default parameters) to
276 conserve only codons shared by all sequences (version 0.91b; Castresana, 2000). For maximum-
277 likelihood (ML) phylogenetic tree reconstruction, we used ModelFinder in IQ-TREE (version
278 1.639; Nguyen *et al.*, 2015; Kalyaanamoorthy *et al.*, 2017) to select the best-fit substitution model
279 for each alignment. Those models were then used in RAxML-NG (version 1.0.0; Kozlov *et al.*,
280 2019) to reconstruct gene family trees. The number of bootstrap replicates was estimated using
281 autoMRE (Pattengale *et al.*, 2010) criterion (maximum 2,000 bootstraps). The ML phylogenetic tree
282 reconstruction was run on two datasets, one without removing potential mapping biases, and one
283 with the potential mapping bias removed, as described above.

284 Bayesian phylogenies were built using Phylobayes (version 3.4; Lartillot *et al.*, 2009) with the site-
285 specific profiles CAT and the CAT-GTR models with a gamma distribution to handle across site rate
286 variations. Two chains were run in parallel for a minimum of 500 cycles. The convergence between
287 the two chains was checked every 100 cycles (with a burn-in equal to one fifth of the total length of
288 the chains). Chains were stopped once all the discrepancies were lower or equal to 0.1 and all
289 effective sizes were larger than 50 and used to build a majority rule consensus tree.

290

291 **Statistics and linear chromosome representations**

292 The statistical analyses have been conducted with R (version 3.4.4; R Core Team, 2013). We report
293 exact p-values when they are larger than 10^{-5} . The representation of phylogenetic topologies, *dS*
294 values on the first chromosome and the dosage compensation graphics have been done with ggplot2
295 (Wickham, 2011). For the circular representation of the sex-linked genes density along the *C. sativa*
296 genome we used Circos (version 0.69-6; Krzywinski *et al.*, 2009). We calculated confidence
297 intervals for the median of a dataset of *n* observations by resampling 5000 times *n* values from the
298 dataset (with replacement). The confidence intervals are then given by the quantiles of the
299 distribution of median values obtained by resampling.

300

301 **Results**

302 **Identification of sex-linked genes in *H. lupulus***

303 As detailed in the Supporting Information, we retained the *C. sativa* reference transcriptome for
304 downstream analysis based on the quality of the mapping and the results of SEX-DEtector.

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305 Of the 30,074 genes in the *C. sativa* reference transcriptome, 21,268 had detectable expression in
306 our *H. lupulus* transcriptome data. The difference of properly-paired mapped reads between males
307 (mean: 32.3%) and females (mean: 34.9%) is slightly significant (Wilcoxon's test two-sided p-value
308 = 0.038, see Supporting Information Table S1), which may be explained by a lack of Y-specific
309 reads mapping on the female reference.

310 The sex-linked sequences from *H. lupulus* transcriptome data were identified with SEX-DETECTOR
311 (Muyle *et al.*, 2016). It is important that genotyping error rate parameters ϵ and p have similar
312 values (ϵ : whole transcriptome; p : Y chromosome) to obtain reliable SEX-DETECTOR outputs. At the
313 fourth iteration of GSNAP mapping on *C. sativa* reference transcriptome ϵ and p stabilized at 0.06
314 and 0.20, respectively (Supporting Information Table S2). Upon closer inspection, one *H. lupulus*
315 male (#3) appeared to have many genotyping errors, as for some XY genes, this male was
316 genotyped both heterozygous (XY) and homozygous (XX), which increased the error rate p . A
317 particularly strong Y reads mapping bias in this male may explain these observations. After removal
318 of this male, the error rate p dropped to 0.10 (Supporting Information Table S2). A total of 265 sex-
319 linked genes were identified in *H. lupulus*, which represents 7.8% of all assigned genes (Table 1).

320

321

322 Table 1. Summary of the SEX-DETECTOR results.

	Number
All genes*	30,074
Expressed genes	21,268
Genes with SNPs used by SEX-DETECTOR	4,472
Genes with undetermined segregation type class 1 **	462
Genes with undetermined segregation type class 2 ***	354
Autosomal genes	3391
Sex-linked genes	265
XY genes	265
X-hemizygous genes	0

323 *transcripts from gene annotation of the *C. sativa* reference genome (van Bakel *et al.*, 2011).

324 ** Posterior probabilities < 0.8

325 ***Posterior probabilities > 0.8 but absence of SNPs without error.

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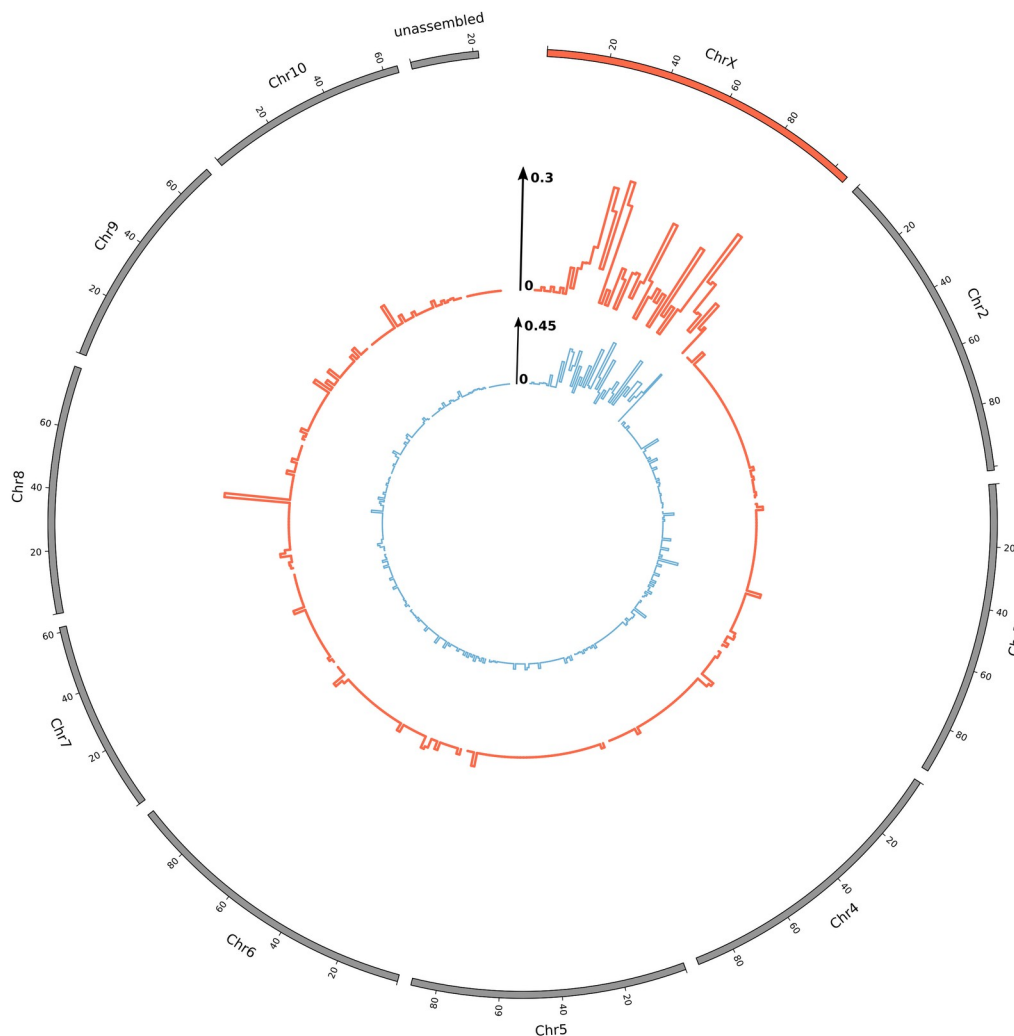
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329 *H. lupulus* and *C. sativa* sex chromosomes are homologous

330 Among 265 *H. lupulus* XY genes from the *C. sativa* transcriptome assembly (van Bakel *et al.*,
331 2011), 254 genes are present on the *C. sativa* chromosome-level genome assembly (Grassa *et al.*,
332 2018). As shown in Figure 2, 192 of these genes (75.6%) map to on *C. sativa* chromosome number
333 1, which is the chromosome we previously identified as the X chromosome in *C. sativa* (Prentout *et*
334 *al.*, 2020). Of the 265 sex-linked genes in *H. lupulus*, 112 were also detected as sex-linked in *C.*
335 *sativa*, while 64 were detected as autosomal and 89 had unassigned segregation type (Prentout *et*
336 *al.*, 2020).

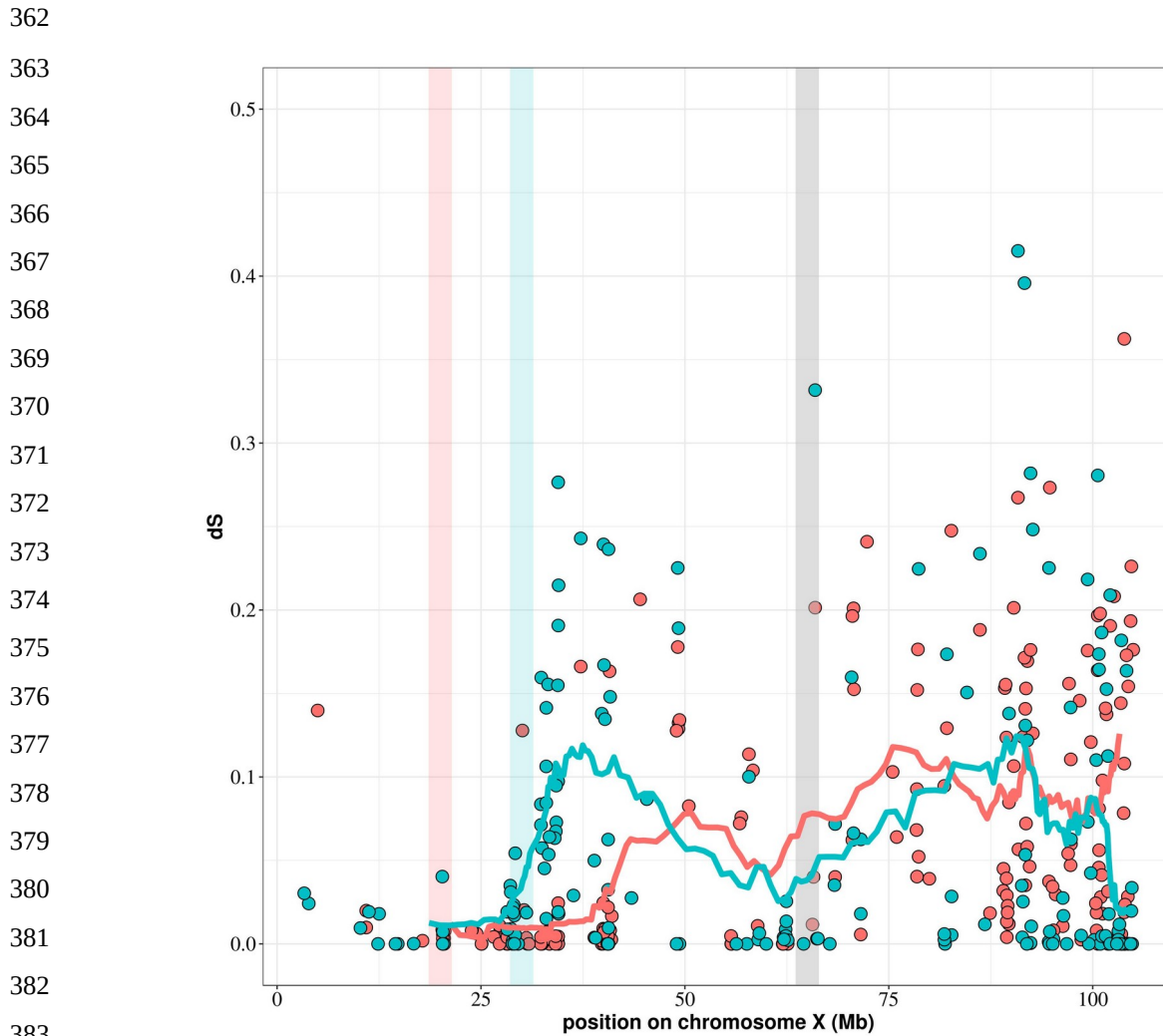


353 Figure 2. *H. lupulus* sex-linked genes mapped on the *C. sativa* genome (Grassa *et al.*, 2018). Inner graphs (in
354 blue): *C. sativa* sex-linked gene density corrected by the total gene density in 2-Mb windows (from Prentout *et al.*,
355 2020). Outer graphs (in red): *H. lupulus* sex-linked gene density corrected by the total gene density in 2-Mb
356 windows. Chromosome positions are given in Megabases.

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358 The synonymous divergence (dS) between X and Y copies of the sex-linked genes of *H. lupulus* is
359 distributed similarly along the *C. sativa* sex chromosome as the values for this latter species, as
360 shown in Figure 3. While the sampling variation of these dS values is large, as expected, it can be
361 observed that these values tend to be larger in the region above 75 Mb.



384 Figure 3. Synonymous divergence (dS) between X and Y copies of *H. lupulus* sex-linked genes (red) and those of
385 *C. sativa* (blue) along the X chromosome of *C. sativa*. The curves represent the dS with sliding windows
386 (windows of 20 points), for *H. lupulus* (red) and *C. sativa* (blue). The vertical red bar represents the putative
387 Pseudo-Autosomal Boundary (PAB) in *H. lupulus*, the vertical blue bar represents the putative PAB in *C. sativa*,
388 the vertical grey bar represents the putative boundary between the region that stopped recombining in the common
389 ancestor and the region that stopped recombining independently in the two species (see below).

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393 **X-Y recombination stopped before *Cannabis* and *Humulus* genera split**

394 We reconstructed phylogenetic trees of genes detected as sex-linked in both species, including
395 outgroup sequences from the order Rosales. For 27 out of the 112 sex-linked genes present in both
396 species, we could not identify any homolog in the outgroup species and those genes were excluded
397 from further analysis. For the remaining 85, we quantified the topology of the gametologous
398 sequences in the Cannabaceae, considering a node as well resolved when the bootstrap support
399 exceeded 95%, or Bayesian support exceeded 0.95.

400 The three different methods for phylogenetic reconstruction provided consistent phylogenies (Table
401 2). More precisely, we observed three major topologies, as shown in Figure 4: X copies of both
402 species form a clade separated from a clade of Y sequences (topology I, Fig. **4a**), the X and Y
403 sequences of each species group together (topology II, Fig. **4b**), or a paraphyletic placement of the
404 X and Y sequences of *H. lupulus*, relative to *C. sativa* sequences (topology III, Fig. **4c**). As shown
405 in Table 2, we found that most genes had topology II, corresponding to recombination suppression
406 after the split between the species. A few genes, however, had topology I, which corresponds to
407 genes for which recombination was suppressed in a common ancestor of both species. As shown in
408 Fig. **4d**, topologies I and III occurred mainly beyond 80 Mb, while topology II occurred all over the
409 chromosome. Topology I is associated with higher synonymous divergence.

410 We identified 42 genes, out of the 85 genes used for the phylogeny, with at least one fragment in at
411 least one species that displayed reduced divergence (with a p-value < 0.05 in geneconv output).
412 Because this reduction of divergence may be caused by a mapping bias of Y reads, we ran the ML
413 phylogenetic reconstruction method on regions with and without mapping bias (example in
414 Supporting Information Fig. S7). As shown in Table 2 and Fig. **4e**, representing genes filtered for
415 mapping bias, the proportion of genes displaying topology I, indicating recombination suppression
416 in the most recent common ancestor, increased, while less genes with topology II were mainly
417 found in a restricted region corresponding to the region where recombination stopped independently
418 between the two species.

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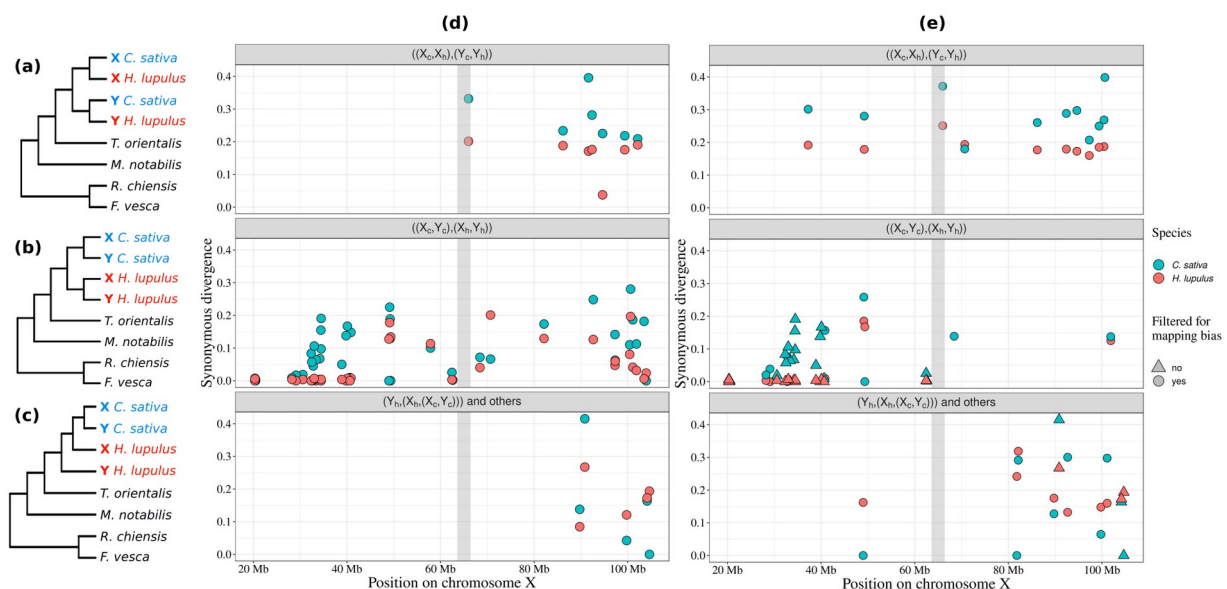
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424 Table 2. Results of the phylogenetic reconstruction of sex-linked genes. Phylogenetic trees with a bootstrap equal
 425 or greater than 95% (and posterior probabilities higher than 0.95 for Bayesian reconstructions) at the node
 426 separating *C. sativa* and *H. lupulus*, or Y and X sequences, are presented in the first four columns. Phylogenetic
 427 trees without such support are classified as “unresolved”.

	Topology I $((X_c, X_h), (Y_c, Y_h))$	Topology II $((X_c, Y_c), (X_h, Y_h))$	Topology III $(Y_h, (X_h, (X_c, Y_c)))$	Other	Un- resolved	Total
Maximum Likelihood (ML)	7	44	7	1	26	85
GTR (bayesian)	4	45	4	8	24	85
CAT-GTR (bayesian)	4	44	7	7	23	85
ML after geneconv filtering	11	27	11	4	32	85



429 Figure 4. Distribution of the three topologies of the sex-linked genes on the X chromosome: **(a)** Topology I, XX-
 430 YY – arrest of recombination older than the split between the two genera, **(b)** Topology II, XY-XY – arrest of
 431 recombination younger than the split between the two genera, **(c)** Topology III, Y-X-XY – *H. lupulus* X
 432 chromosome is closer to *C. sativa* sequences than its Y counterpart. **(d)** Distribution of the topologies along the *C.*
 433 *sativa* X chromosome (“other” topology is included in the Y-X-XY topology panel), using the full gene sequences.
 434 For each gene, dots represent the *dS* values in *C. sativa* (blue) and *H. lupulus* (red). **(e)** Distribution of the
 435 topologies after filtering out possible mapping biases through geneconv. Triangles indicate that at least one
 436 segment was removed, dots indicate sequences for which no mapping bias was detected.

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437 The vertical grey bar (panels **(d)** and **(e)**) represents the putative boundary between the region that stopped
438 recombining in the common ancestor and the region that stopped recombining independently in the two species
439 (see below).

440

441 This leads us to define three regions on the X chromosomes of *C. sativa* and *H. lupulus* (with the *C.*
442 *sativa* X chromosome as a reference). A region from ~65Mb to the end of the X chromosome that
443 stopped recombining in the last common ancestor; from ~20-30Mb to ~65Mb, a part of the non-
444 recombining region that evolved independently in the two species; and from the beginning of the
445 chromosome to ~20-30Mb, the pseudo-autosomal region (PAR), where few sex-linked genes are
446 found.

447

448 **Age of *H. lupulus* sex chromosomes**

449 To estimate the age of the sex chromosomes, we used the maximum synonymous divergence
450 between X and Y sequences and two molecular clocks, which were both derived from *Arabidopsis*.
451 Because the sampling variance in *dS* values can be large, we used three ways to calculate the
452 maximum *dS* value: the single highest *dS* value; the average of the 5% highest values; and the
453 average of the 10% highest values. Furthermore, we calculated these on the raw alignments as well
454 as the alignments with possible mapping biases removed. The different estimates, all calculated
455 assuming a generation time of 2 years, are given in Table 3, and yield values between 29 and 51.4
456 My. Minimal synonymous divergence between *C. sativa* and outgroup species *Morus notabilis* and
457 *Rosa chinensis* is ~0.45 and ~0.65, respectively (Supporting Information Fig. S5 and Fig. S6),
458 higher than the maximum synonymous divergence between sex-linked gene copies, indicating that
459 the sex chromosomes probably evolved in the Cannabaceae family.

460

461 Table 3. Age estimates (in millions of years, My) with two molecular clocks and different maximum *dS* values, for
462 a generation time of two years. For each estimation of the *dS* value, two ages were obtained using the molecular
463 clocks of ¹ Ossowski *et al.* (2010) and ² Koch *et al.* (2000). Two alignment datasets were used, with or without
464 filtering for possible mapping bias.

	No filtering			Mapping bias filtering		
	<i>dS</i>	age (My) ¹	age (My) ²	<i>dS</i>	age (My) ¹	age (My) ²
Highest <i>dS</i>	0.362	51.4	48.0	0.362	51.4	48.0
Mean top 5%	0.249	35.6	33.2	0.274	39.1	36.5
Mean top 10%	0.217	31.0	29.0	0.214	34.4	32.1

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465 Y gene expression

466 The Y over X expression ratio is a standard proxy for studying the degeneration of the Y
467 chromosome. An Y/X expression ratio close to 1 means no degeneration, an Y/X expression ratio
468 close to 0.5 or below means strong degeneration. In *H. lupulus*, the median Y/X expression ratio is
469 equal to 0.637 (Supporting Information Fig. S1), which is significantly different from 1 (99th
470 percentile of median distribution with 5,000 samples in initial distribution = 0.673, see methods).
471 The median is not different when considering all sex-linked genes (0.637) or only the sex-linked
472 genes mapping on *C. sativa* X chromosome (0.639, p-value = 0.70, one-sided Wilcoxon rank sum
473 test).

474 In both species, the reduced Y expression is correlated to the position on the X chromosome (linear
475 regression: adjusted $R^2 = 0.134$, p-value $< 10^{-5}$; and adjusted $R^2 = 0.278$, p-value $< 10^{-5}$ for *H.*
476 *lupulus* and *C. sativa*, respectively). As shown is Figure 5, the Y/X expression ratio is decreasing
477 while moving away from the PAR in *H. lupulus*, and this is also confirmed in *C. sativa*.

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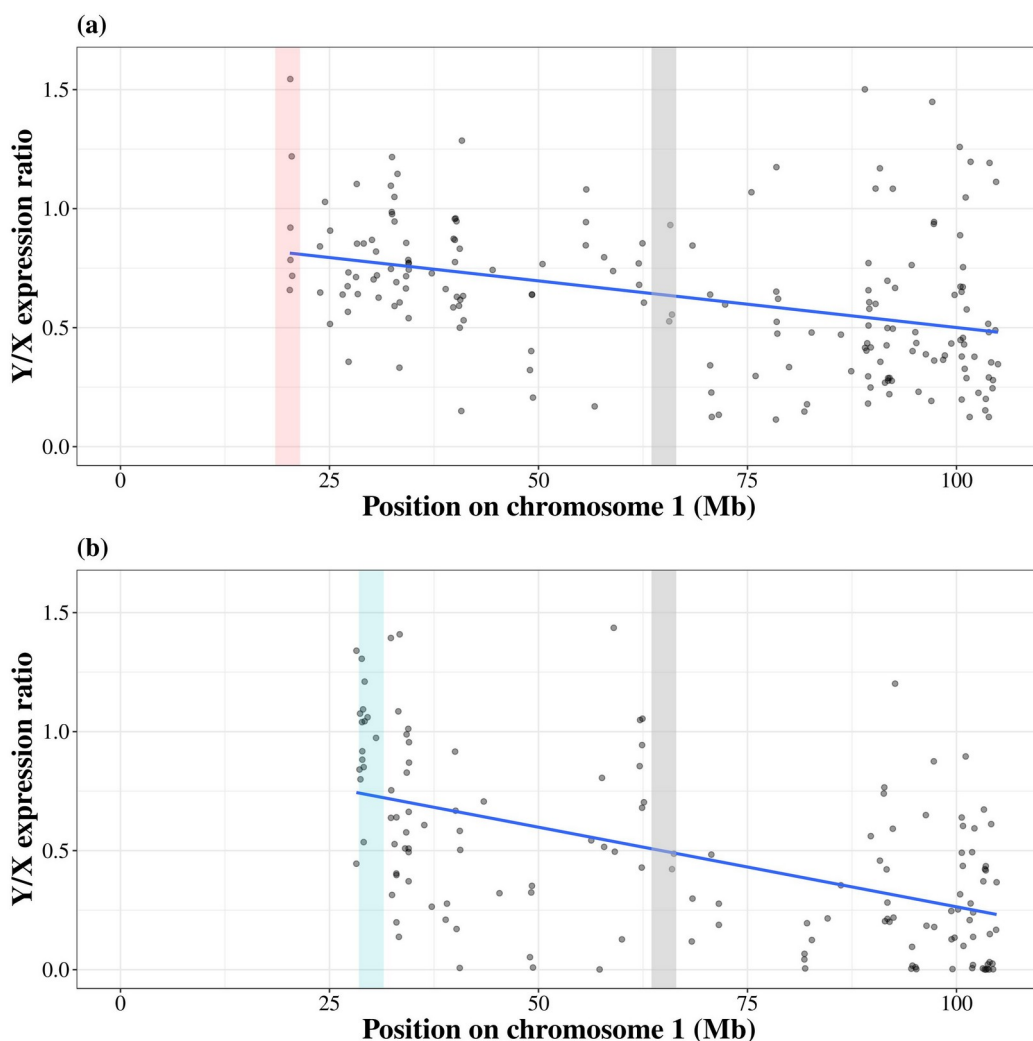
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499 Figure 5. Y/X expression ratio along the X chromosome in *H. lupulus* (a), and *C. sativa* (b). The grey dots
500 represent the Y/X expression ratio for each gene in the non-recombining region only. The blue line represents a
501 linear regression. The vertical red bar represents the putative PAB in *H. lupulus*, the vertical blue bar represents
502 the putative PAB in *C. sativa*, the vertical grey bar represents the putative boundary between the region that
503 stopped recombining in the common ancestor and the region that stopped recombining independently in the two
504 species.

505

506 3 - Dosage compensation

507 We tested whether the expression of the X chromosome has changed following degeneration of the
508 Y chromosome, a phenomenon called dosage compensation (Muyle *et al.*, 2017). We used the ratio
509 of the male X expression over the female XX expression as a proxy for dosage compensation
510 (Muyle *et al.*, 2012) and Y/X expression ratio as a proxy for Y degeneration. Genes with strong
511 degeneration (Y/X expression ratio close to zero) display an increased expression of the X in male
512 (linear regression: adjusted $R^2=0.179$, p-value $< 10^{-5}$ and adjusted $R^2=0.097$, p-value $< 10^{-5}$ for *H.*
513 *lupulus* and *C. sativa* respectively), as shown in Figure 6. A dosage compensation pattern was found
514 in both in *H. lupulus* and *C. sativa* in agreement with previous work (Prentout *et al.*, 2020).

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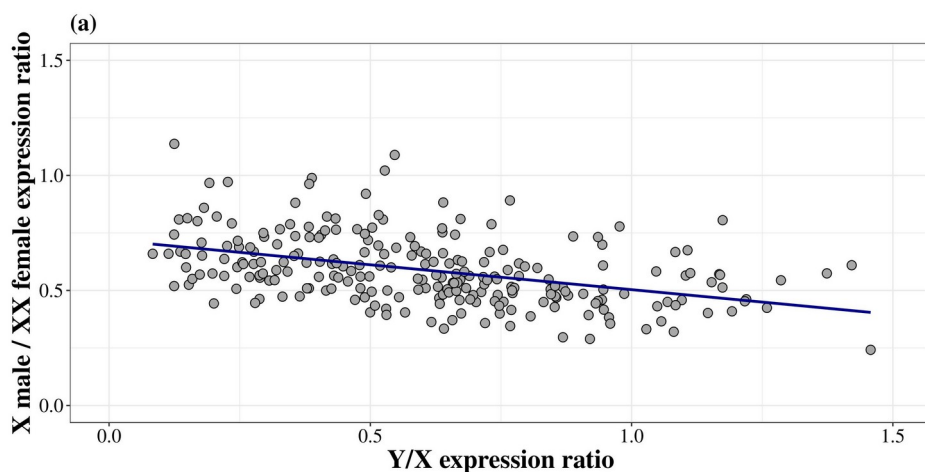
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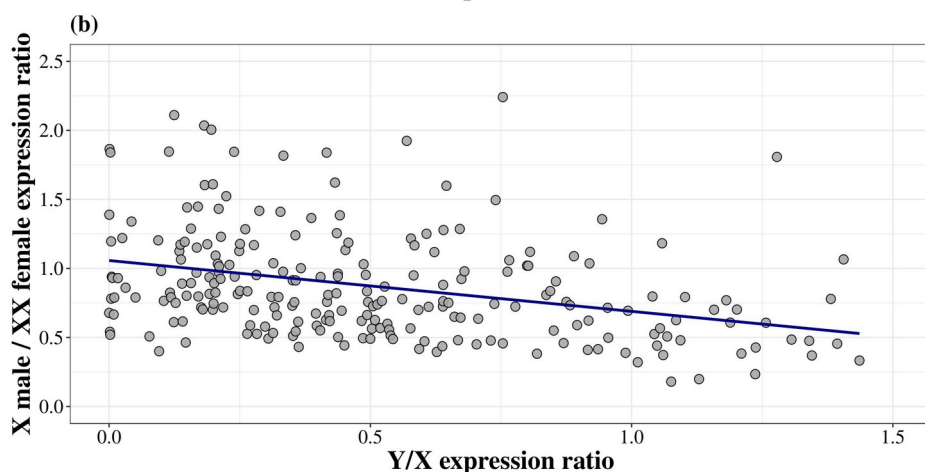
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528 Figure 6. The male X expression over female XX expression versus Y/X expression ratio for *H. lupulus* (a) and *C.*
529 *sativa* (b). Each black dot represents one gene. The blue line represents a linear regression.

530

531 Discussion

532 We here identify the *H. lupulus* sex chromosomes, and find that they are homologous to those of *C.*
533 *sativa* (Prentout *et al.*, 2020), and that a part of these chromosomes had already stopped
534 recombining in the common ancestor of the two species. Performing a segregation analysis with
535 SEX-DETECTOR (Muyle *et al.*, 2016), we identified 265 XY genes in *H. lupulus*, among which 112
536 are sex-linked in *C. sativa*. Mapping these genes on the chromosome-level assembly of *C. sativa*
537 (Grassa *et al.*, 2018) suggests that the non-recombining region is large in *H. lupulus*, as proposed
538 before, based on cytological studies (Divashuk *et al.*, 2011).

539 We identify three different regions on the sex chromosome, based on the distribution of sex-linked
540 gene topologies and synonymous divergence between the X and Y copies on the *C. sativa* X
541 chromosome: one region that had already stopped recombining in the most recent common ancestor
542 of *C. sativa* and *H. lupulus*, a region that independently stopped recombining in both species, and
543 the pseudo-autosomal region. Our results suggest the pseudo-autosomal boundary (PAB) in *H.*
544 *lupulus* may be located around position 20Mb, whereas we estimated a PAB's position around
545 30Mb in *C. sativa* (Prentout *et al.*, 2020); the non-recombining region may thus be larger in *H.*
546 *lupulus* than in *C. sativa*. However, a chromosome-level assembly of the *H. lupulus* genome would
547 be needed to localize the exact position of the PAB in this species, as synteny might not be fully
548 conserved.

549 Several sex-linked genes had topologies that were not compatible with either recombination
550 suppression in the most recent common ancestor or in each of the species independently. Strikingly,
551 most of these topologies placed the *H. lupulus* Y sequence as an outgroup to the other sex-linked
552 gene sequences. Whether this is the result of errors (*e.g.* long branch attraction, mapping biases)
553 remains to be investigated. Our approach to correct for the Y read mapping read relies on geneconv,
554 which is known to have a high rate of false negatives (Lawson & Zhang, 2009). This could also
555 explain the unexpected presence of some of the XY-XY genes in the older region.

556 While recombination suppression clearly did not occur for all the sex-linked genes at the same time,
557 we cannot distinguish whether this recombination suppression occurred gradually or stepwise,
558 creating evolutionary strata (Charlesworth *et al.*, 2005; Bergero & Charlesworth 2009; Muyle *et al.*,
559 2017). It is unlikely this question can be addressed using synonymous divergence alone, given the

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560 important sampling variation present in this statistic. Y chromosome assemblies for both *H. lupulus*
561 and *C. sativa* may help address this question in the future by identifying possible chromosomal
562 inversions with respect to the X chromosomes.

563 We did not find X-hemizygous genes in *H. lupulus*. This is striking as 218 X-hemizygous genes
564 (38% of all sex-linked genes) were found in *C. sativa* using the same methodology (Prentout *et al.*,
565 2020). A very low level of polymorphism could result in the inability of SEX-DETECTOR to identify
566 X-hemizygous genes (Muyle *et al.*, 2016), but in that case SEX-DETECTOR should also have
567 problems identifying autosomal genes, which was not the case here. Non-random X-inactivation in
568 females could be an explanation, as the expression of a single X allele in females would impede
569 SEX-DETECTOR to identify X-linkage and X-hemizygous genes (Muyle *et al.*, 2016). We ran an
570 Allele-Specific Expression (ASE) analysis, which doesn't support this hypothesis (Supporting
571 Information Fig. S2, Fig. S3, Fig. S4). *H. lupulus* is probably an ancient polyploid that reverted to
572 the ancestral karyotype (Padgitt-Cobb *et al.*, 2019). It is possible however, that the *H. lupulus* X
573 chromosome is made of two copies of the ancestral X as some cytological data seem to suggest
574 (Divashuk *et al.*, 2011). In this case, SEX-DETECTOR would manage to identify the XY gene pairs,
575 but would fail to identify the X-hemizygous genes as these genes would exhibit unexpected allele
576 transmission patterns (Supporting Information Fig. S10).

577 *H. lupulus* is a rare case of XY systems in plants in which the Y is smaller than the X (cf Ming *et al.*
578 *et al.*, 2011). In *C. sativa*, both sex chromosomes have similar size (Divashuk *et al.*, 2014). If the size
579 difference is caused by deletions of parts of the *H. lupulus* Y chromosome, which is the
580 hypothesized mechanism in many species (cf Ming *et al.*, 2011), we expect to observe that many
581 XY gene pairs in *C. sativa* have missing Y copies in *H. lupulus*. As explained above, we did not
582 detect any X-hemizygous genes. However, the XY gene pairs of *H. lupulus* are distributed
583 uniformly on the *C. sativa* X chromosome. No region appeared to be depleted in XY genes, which
584 is not what we should have observed if large deletions were present on the *H. lupulus* Y
585 chromosome. The sex chromosome size differences observed in *H. lupulus* probably reflect
586 complex dynamics, different from that of old animal systems with tiny Y chromosome due to large
587 deletions (*e.g.* Skaletsky *et al.*, 2003; Ross *et al.*, 2005). The large size of the X chromosome in *H.*
588 *lupulus* may be due to a full-chromosome duplication followed by a fusion (see above), whereas the
589 Y chromosome has remained unrearranged. Assemblies of the *H. lupulus* sex chromosomes will be
590 needed to test these hypotheses.

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591 Our estimates of the age of the *H. lupulus* sex chromosomes are larger than the estimates for *C.*
592 *sativa*, although we found very similar X-Y maximum divergence in both species (higher bound age
593 estimates are ~50My and ~28My; highest *dS* values are 0.362 and 0.415 in *H. lupulus* and *C. sativa*
594 respectively, see Prentout *et al.*, 2020). Of course, the molecular clocks that we used are known to
595 provide very rough estimates as they derive from the relatively distant *Arabidopsis* genus and are
596 sensitive to potential differences in mutation rates between the annual *C. sativa* and the perennial *H.*
597 *lupulus* (Neve, 1991; Petit & Hampe, 2006; Small, 2015; but see Krasovec *et al.*, 2018). The
598 difference found here mainly comes from the generation time (two years versus one year in *H.*
599 *lupulus* and *C. sativa*, respectively). The short generation time in *C. sativa* is probably a derived
600 trait, not reflecting the long-term generation time of the *Cannabis-Humulus* lineage, as the
601 *Cannabis* genus is the only herbaceous genus in the Cannabaceae family (Yang *et al.*, 2013). Thus,
602 the remarkable similarity between the highest *dS* values in both species rather indicates that *C.*
603 *sativa* and *H. lupulus* sex chromosomes have similar age, as expected if they derive from the same
604 common ancestor, and the age estimate for *H. lupulus* recombination suppression might be the more
605 representative one. We thus confirm here that the XY system shared by *C. sativa* and *H. lupulus* is
606 among the oldest plant system sex chromosome documented so far (Prentout *et al.*, 2020).

607 Dioecy was inferred as the ancestral sexual system for the Cannabaceae, Urticaceae and Moraceae
608 (Zhang *et al.*, 2018; note however that many hermaphrodite Cannabaceae were not included). We
609 found that the synonymous divergence between the Cannabaceae species and *Morus notabilis* was
610 about 0.45, higher than the maximum divergence of the X and Y copies in the Cannabaceae. It
611 remains possible that the sex chromosomes evolved before the split of the Cannabaceae and
612 Moraceae families, because the oldest genes might have been lost or were not detected in our
613 transcriptome data. There is however no report of whether or not sex chromosomes exist in
614 Urticaceae and Moraceae (Ming *et al.*, 2011).

615 To estimate the Y expression, we counted the number of reads with Y SNPs. Therefore, the impact
616 of a potential Y reads mapping bias should be weaker on Y expression analysis than on X-Y
617 divergence analysis. We validated this assumption by removing genes with detected mapping bias
618 from the analysis, which didn't change the signal of Y expression reduction and dosage
619 compensation (Supporting Information Fig. S8, Fig. S9). Dosage compensation is a well-known
620 phenomenon in animals (*e.g.* Gu & Walters, 2017). It has only been documented quite recently in
621 plants (reviewed in Muyle *et al.*, 2017). Here we found evidence for dosage compensation in *H.*
622 *lupulus*. This is not surprising as previous work reported dosage compensation in *C. sativa* and we

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623 showed here that both systems are homologous. *C. sativa* and *H. lupulus* add up to the list of plant
624 sex chromosome systems with dosage compensation (see Muyle *et al.*, 2017 for a review and
625 Prentout *et al.*, 2020; Fruchard *et al.*, 2020 for the latest reports of dosage compensation in plants).
626 *H. lupulus* sex chromosomes, as those of *C. sativa*, are well-differentiated, with a large non-
627 recombining region. Both species show similar patterns of Y degeneration and dosage
628 compensation, despite the fact that a large part of the non-recombining region evolved
629 independently in both species. These similarities, as well as the age of the chromosomes and the
630 fact that they have been conserved since the most recent common ancestor of the two genera, a
631 unique situation in plants so far, provide an exciting opportunity to test and elaborate hypotheses on
632 sex chromosome evolution in plants.

633

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641

642

643 Author Contribution

644 Conceptualization of the study: G.A.B.M., J.K. and D.P.; methodology: G.A.B.M., J.K. N.S. and
645 J.J.; software: D.P., T.T. and C.B.A.; formal analysis: D.P., T.T. and C.B.A.; investigation: D.P.,
646 N.S., T.T., C.B.A., J.J., J.K., and G.A.B.M.; resources: A.C., N.S. and J.J.; writing—original draft:
647 D.P., G.A.B.M., J.K. and T.T.; writing—review and editing: all authors; visualization: D.P. and T.T.;
648 supervision: G.A.B.M., J.K.; project administration: G.A.B.M.; funding acquisition: N.S. and J.J.

649

650 Data Availability

651 The sequence data were deposited under the Bioproject with accession number PRJNA694508,
652 BioSample SAMN17526021 (SRR13528971 ; SRR13528970; SRR13528969; SRR13528968;
653 SRR13528966; SRR13528965; SRR13528964; SRR13528967; SRR13528963; SRR13528962;
654 SRR13528961; SRR13528960; SRR13528959; SRR13528958)

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920 **Supporting information legends**

921

922 Table S1.

923 Statistics of mapping on *H. lupulus* and *C. sativa* references.

924

925 Table S2.

926 Summary of SEX-DETECTOR genotyping errors and inferences

927

928 Table S3.

929 Expression analysis statistics summary.

930

931 Figure S1.

932 Histogram of the Y/X expression ratio.

933

934 Figure S2.

935 Histogram of the Allele-specific expression analysis for the parents.

936

937 Figure S3.

938 Histogram of the Allele-specific expression analysis for the daughters.

939

940 Figure S4.

941 Histogram of the Allele-specific expression analysis for the sons.

942

943 Figure S5.

944 Histogram of synonymous divergence (*dS*) between *C. sativa* and *M. notabilis*.

945

946 Figure S6.

947 Histogram of synonymous divergence (*dS*) between *C. sativa* and *R. chinensis*.

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- 948
949 Figure S7.
950 Example of genes which topology changed with the mapping bias filtering.
951
952 Figure S8.
953 Y/X expression ratio along the sex chromosome without genes with a detected mapping bias.
954
955 Figure S9.
956 Dosage compensation analysis without genes with a detected mapping bias.
957
958 Figure S10.
959 SEX-DETECTOR inference errors due to Whole Genome Duplication in *H. lupulus*.