

Research paper

Plastid phylogenomic insights into the evolution of subfamily Dialioideae (Leguminosae)

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ABSTRACT

The subfamily Dialioideae (Leguminosae) consists of 17 genera and about 85 species. Previous studies have detected significant plastid genome (plastome) structure variations in legumes, particularly in subfamilies Papilionoideae and Caesalpinioideae. Hence it is important to investigate plastomes from the newly recognized Dialioideae to better understand the plastome variation across the whole family. Here, we used nine plastomes representing nine genera of Dialioideae to explore plastome structural variation and intergeneric relationships in this subfamily. All plastomes of Dialioideae exhibited a typical quadripartite structure, and had relatively conserved structure compared with other legume subfamilies. However, the genome size ranged from 154,124 bp to 165,973 bp and gene numbers ranged from 129 to 132, mainly due to the expansion and contraction of the inverted repeat (IR) regions. The IR of *Distemomanthus benthamianus* has experienced two separate expansions into the large single copy (LSC) region and the small single copy (SSC) region, and one contraction from SSC. *Poëppigia procera* has experienced two separate IR expansions into LSC, while *Dicorynia paraensis* has experienced an IR contraction from LSC. Highly divergent regions or genes (*ndhC-trnV^{UAC}*, *psbK-trnQ^{UUG}*, *rps19-rps3*, *rpl33-rps18*, *accD-psaI*, *trnG^{UCC}*, *trnS^{GCU}*, *psbI-trnS^{GCU}*, *5'rps16-trnQ^{UUG}* and *ycf1*) were identified as potential molecular markers for further species delimitation and population genetics analysis in legumes. Phylogenetic analysis based on 77 protein-coding sequences fully resolved the intergeneric relationships among nine genera except a moderately supported sister relationship between *Petalostylis labicheoides* and *Labichea lanceolata*. Our study reveals new insights into the structural variations of plastomes in subfamily Dialioideae and advances our understanding of the evolutionary trajectories of legume plastomes.

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1. Introduction

Plastome of most photosynthetic angiosperms consist of a pair of inverted repeat (IRs; usually around 25-kb) regions, a large single copy region (LSC; usually around 80-kb), and a small single copy region (SSC; usually around 20-kb) (Jansen, 2012). However, some plastomes show variable size due to the expansion and contraction of IR, and variable structure due to the inversion of genes or genome segments, the loss of IRs, the duplication and loss of the gene and genome segments, and the reduction of introns and genes

(Wicke et al., 2011; Jansen, 2012). The GC content of the plastome, which is highly conserved, ranges between 34% and 40% (Jansen, 2012).

Leguminosae show significant variation in plastome size and structure. Significant structural variations have been reported in three studied legume subfamilies: in subfamily Papilionoideae, IR loss, expansion and contraction, multiple large inversions, gene and intron loss occur (Bruneau et al., 1990; Wojciechowski et al., 2000; Martin et al., 2014; Schwarz et al., 2015); in subfamily Caesalpinioideae, significant IR expansion and contraction, small inversion and gene loss occur (Dugas et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2017); in subfamily Cercidoideae, IR expansion and contraction, and several large inversions occur (Dugas et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2018). However, plastomes in three other subfamilies (Deterioideae, Duparquetioideae, and Dialioideae) have been unaddressed.

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The Dialioideae has been recently recognized as a separate subfamily of Leguminosae (LPWG, 2017). Containing 17 genera and ca. 85 species, this subfamily is distributed in the tropical to warm regions in Africa, Australia, America, and Southern China (LPWG, 2017). Morphologically, the Dialioideae is highly diverse with multiple symmetries and widely varied numbers of floral organs (Zimmerman et al., 2017). Some key morphological traits displayed in all or nearly all species of the Dialioideae distinguish this group from other subfamilies, including the presence of highly branched thyrid (less racemes with distichous anthotaxy in *Labichea* Gaudich. ex DC., *Petalostylis* R.Br.; Irwin and Barneby, 1981; Tucker, 1998; LPWG, 2017), leaves mostly imparipinnate with alternate leaflets (rarely paripinnate with opposite leaflets in *Eligmocarpus* Capuroni and *Poepigia* C.Presl; LPWG, 2017), commonly indehiscent drupaceous or samaroid fruit (Irwin and Barneby, 1981), and usually 1–2 seeds lacking pleurograms (LPWG, 2017). Some species from Dialioideae are economically important. For example, *Dialium cochinchinense* Pierre is a common fruit in Southeast Asia, and *Distemonanthus benthamianus* Baill. produces wood with high quality. Phylogenetic analysis has shown that Dialioideae is well supported as the sister to the clade consisting of subfamilies Caesalpinioideae and Papilionoideae (LPWG, 2017); however, some intergeneric relationships within this subfamily are poorly resolved or not well supported (Zimmerman et al., 2017). To our knowledge, no studies have examined plastome structural variation in Dialioideae.

In this study, we investigated plastome variation in nine species representing nine genera of Dialioideae. The major purpose of this study is to reveal plastome variation in Dialioideae and reconstruct a highly resolved backbone of this subfamily.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Plastome data set selection

We used nine plastomes from nine species representing nine genera of Dialioideae from Zhang et al. (2020). The nine species are *Baudouinia* sp., *Dialium schlechteri* Harms, *Dicorynia paraensis* Benth., *Distemonanthus benthamianus*, *Labichea lanceolata* Benth., *Petalostylis labicheoides* R.Br., *Poepigia procera* C.Presl, *Storckiella pancheri* Baill., and *Zenia insignis* Chun (NCBI accessions are available in Appendix: Supplementary material 1). We rechecked the annotations of all plastomes. In addition, protein coding genes were double-checked by finding open reading frames using the Find ORFs function in Geneious v.9.0.2 (Kearse et al., 2012). We used the online tRNAscan-SE service (Schattner et al., 2005) to check the identification of tRNA genes.

2.2. Analysis of plastome content

The GC content (%), the plastome size (bp), the length of IR (bp), SSC (bp), and LSC (bp), the gene number, and gene distributions of all annotated plastomes were examined in Geneious. Genome

maps of all annotated plastomes were generated by the online Organellar Genome DRAW (Lohse et al., 2013), and enclosed as Appendix: Supplementary material 2.

2.3. Analysis of plastome structure

The gene names and other information at the junction between the IR region and the single copy region were obtained using Geneious v.9.14. To detect the presence of gene inversions, we aligned the plastomes of nine Dialioideae species through the progressiveMauve algorithm of Mauve v.2.3.1 (Darling et al., 2010) implemented in Geneious. The sequence identity plot of all nine sampled Dialioideae plastomes was analyzed by mVISTA with shuffle-LAGAN model (Frazer et al., 2004). The plastome of *Cercis glabra* Pamp. was downloaded from NCBI (NCBI accession: KY806281) as a reference for structural analysis.

To identify sequence divergence in Dialioideae plastomes, 81 coding regions and 124 noncoding regions of 10 plastomes were extracted and aligned using MAFFT v.7.271 (Katoh and Standley, 2013). The variable sites and parsimony-informative sites in coding regions and noncoding regions were identified by PAUP v.4.0 (Swofford, 2002). Nucleotide diversity (π) of each region was calculated by a python script “nucleotide_freqs_by_site” (<https://github.com/KatyBrown/>).

2.4. Phylogenetic analysis

To reconstruct the phylogenetic relationships among Dialioideae, we complemented our data set of nine Dialioideae species with *Duparquetia orchidacea* Baill (NCBI accession: MN709829) of Duparquetioideae and *Cercis glabra* of Cercidoideae as outgroups. Four rRNA and 30 tRNA genes were not used in phylogenetic analysis due to limited parsimony-informative sites. Following the methods of Zhang et al. (2020), the 77 protein-coding genes (CDS) were extracted and aligned to generate alignment using MAFFT with LINSI algorithm.

The Maximum Likelihood (ML) tree was reconstructed by RAxML-HPC2 v.8.1 on XSEDE (Stamatakis, 2014) with the GTR+ Γ substitution model and 1000 replicates of rapid bootstrap. The phylogenetic tree was visualized by FigTree v.1.4.3 (<http://tree.bio.ed.ac.uk/>).

3. Results

3.1. Plastome organization

Results of the sampling information and NCBI accessions of nine Dialioideae plastomes in this study are provided in Appendix: Supplementary material 1. The mean coverage of the nine Dialioideae plastomes ranged between $132.5 \times$ (*Dicorynia paraensis* Benth.) and $2211.5 \times$ (*Labichea lanceolata*) (Table 1). All plastomes show the typical quadripartite structure, a similar gene content and order. Among the nine plastomes, the smallest one in length is

Table 1
The length and basic characteristics of the plastomes of nine genera of Dialioideae (Genes that have two copies are counted twice, and *Cercis glabra* is used as an outgroup.).

Species	<i>Dialium schlechteri</i>	<i>Petalostylis labicheoides</i>	<i>Distemonanthus benthamianus</i>	<i>Dicorynia paraensis</i>	<i>Poepigia procera</i>	<i>Baudouinia</i> sp.	<i>Labichea lanceolata</i>	<i>Storckiella pancheri</i>	<i>Zenia insignis</i>	<i>Cercis glabra</i>
Genome size (bp)	159,190	157,565	161,595	160,661	165,973	159,072	154,124	157,343	159,784	159,181
LSC size (bp)	87,530	86,491	84,755	89,541	91,963	87,966	84,796	86,578	88,915	88,240
Coverage (\times)	1806.4	906.6	402.6	132.5	2021.0	611.0	2211.5	1363.6	583.6	–
IR (A/B) size (bp)	26,565	25,900	28,326	26,070	27,659	26,235	25,640	26,058	26,086	25,625
SSC size (bp)	18,530	19,274	20,188	18,980	18,692	18,636	18,048	18,649	18,697	19,691
GC content (%)	36.2	36.6	35.9	36.0	35.2	36.2	36.8	36.5	36.3	36.2
CDS	83	83	88	83	84	83	83	83	83	83
Total gene	130	130	132	129	131	130	130	130	130	130
rRNA gene	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
tRNA gene	37	37	36	37	38	37	37	37	37	37

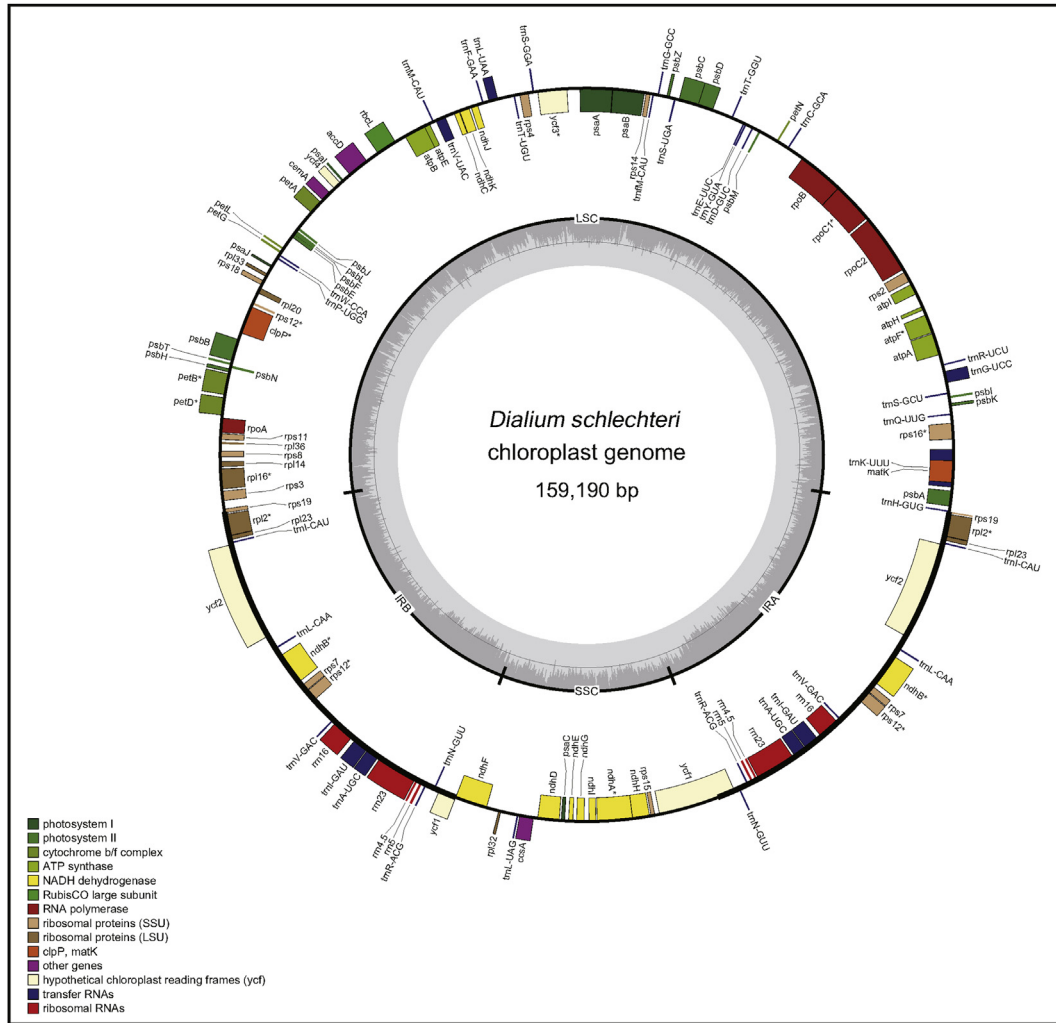


Fig. 1. Gene map of the plastome of *Dialium schlechteri*. Boxes inside and outside the circle refer to the forward genes and reverse genes. Different types of genes are colored in different colors. Genes containing introns are marked by *.

Table 2

Gene content (genes on IR are marked by *, pseudogenes are marked by Ψ , duplicated genes in *Distemonanthus* are marked by $\hat{\cdot}$, the duplicated gene in *Poeppigia* is marked by $\hat{\cdot}$).

Gene group	Gene name
Large subunit of ribosomal proteins	*rpl2, $\hat{\cdot}$ rpl14, $\hat{\cdot}$ rpl16, rpl20, *rpl23, rpl32, rpl33, rpl36
Small subunit of ribosomal proteins	rps2, $\hat{\cdot}$ rps3, rps4, *rps7, rps8, rps11, *rps12, rps14, rps15, rps16, rps18, $\hat{\cdot}$ Ψ rps19
Ribosomal RNA genes	*rrn4.5, *rrn5, *rrn16, *rrn23
Transfer RNA genes	*trnA-UGC, trnC-GCA, trnD-GUC, trnE-UUC, trnF-GAA, trnG-CAU, trnG-GCC, trnG-UCC, #trnH-GUG, *trnI-CAU, *trnI-GAU, trnK-UUU, *trnL-CAA, trnL-UAA, trnL-UAG, trnM-CAU, *trnN-GUU, trnP-UGG, trnQ-UUG, *trnR-ACG, trnR-UCU, trnS-GCU, trnS-GGA, trnS-UGA, trnT-GGU, *trnV-GAC, trnV-UAC, trnW-CCA, trnY-GUA
DNA-dependent RNA polymerase	rpoA, rpoB, rpoC1, rpoC2
Photosystem I	psaA, psaB, psaC, psal, psaj
Photosystem II	petA, petB, petD, petG, petL, petN
Cytochrome b/f complex	psbA, psbB, psbC, psbD, psbE, psbF, psbH, psbI, psbJ, psbK, psbL, psbM, psbN, psbT, psbZ
ATP synthase	atpA, atpB, atpE, atpF, atpH, atpI
Maturase K	matK
Envelope membrane proteins	cemA
subunit of acetyl-CoA	accD
RubisCO large subunit	Rbcl
Hypothetical reading frames	Ψ ycf1, *ycf2, ycf3, ycf4
Protease	clpP
NADH dehydrogenase	ndhA, *ndhB, ndhC, ndhD, ndhE, ndhF, ndhG, ndhH, ndhI, ndhJ, ndhK
c-type cytochrome	ccsA

154,124 bp (*Labichea lanceolata*), and the largest in length is 165,973 bp (*Poeppigia procera*). The lengths of the LSC, SSC, and IR range from 84,755 bp (*D. benthamianus*) to 91,963 bp (*P. procera*), 18,048 bp (*Labichea lanceolata*) to 20,188 bp (*D. benthamianus*), and 25,640 bp (*L. lanceolata*) to 28,326 bp (*D. benthamianus*), respectively (Table 1). The average GC content of the plastomes of nine species in Dialioideae is 36.19% (Supplementary material 2; Table 1). These nine plastomes have 129–132 genes, including 83–88 protein-coding genes, 36–38 tRNA genes, and 8 rRNA genes (genes within IR regions were counted twice). Of these genes, 12 genes have introns, and 17 genes are located in IR regions (Fig. 1). The plastomes of all Dialioideae species examined, except *D. benthamianus*, have one copy each of *rpl14*, *rps3* and *rpl16*, two copies of *trnN^{GUU}*, and an extra pseudogene copy of the *ycf1*. *Distemonanthus benthamianus* has two copies each of *rpl14*, *rps3* and *rpl16*, one copy of *trnN^{GUU}*, and lacks a pseudogene copy of *ycf1*. There is only one copy of the *rps19* gene in *Dicorynia paraensis*, but two copies of the *rps19* gene in *D. benthamianus* and *Poeppigia*

procera, while one functional copy and one pseudogenized copy in other species. *Poeppigia procera* has two copies of *trnH^{GUG}* gene, while others only have one copy (Table 2).

3.2. IR expansion and contraction

Six of nine Dialioideae plastomes (*D. schlechteri*, *P. labicheoides*, *Baudouinia* sp., *Labichea lanceolata*, *S. pancheri* and *Z. insignis*) have canonical IR regions (ranging from 25,640 bp in *Labichea lanceolata* to 26,565 bp in *D. schlechteri*; Table 1). Within these six plastomes, the LSC/IR_B junction (J_{LB}) is located in *rps19*, resulting in the duplication of the 3' end of this gene (85 bp in *Z. insignis*, and 74 bp in the other four species); the SSC/IR_A junction (J_{SA}) is located in *ycf1*, moving 520–1221 bp of the 3' end of this gene into the IR; the SSC/IR_B junction (J_{SB}) is located between the duplicated 3' end of *ycf1* and *ndhF*; and the LSC/IR_A junction (J_{LA}) is located between the duplicated 3' end of *rps19* and *trnH^{GUG}*. However, the IR size and boundaries show significant variation in *D. benthamianus*, *P. procera*

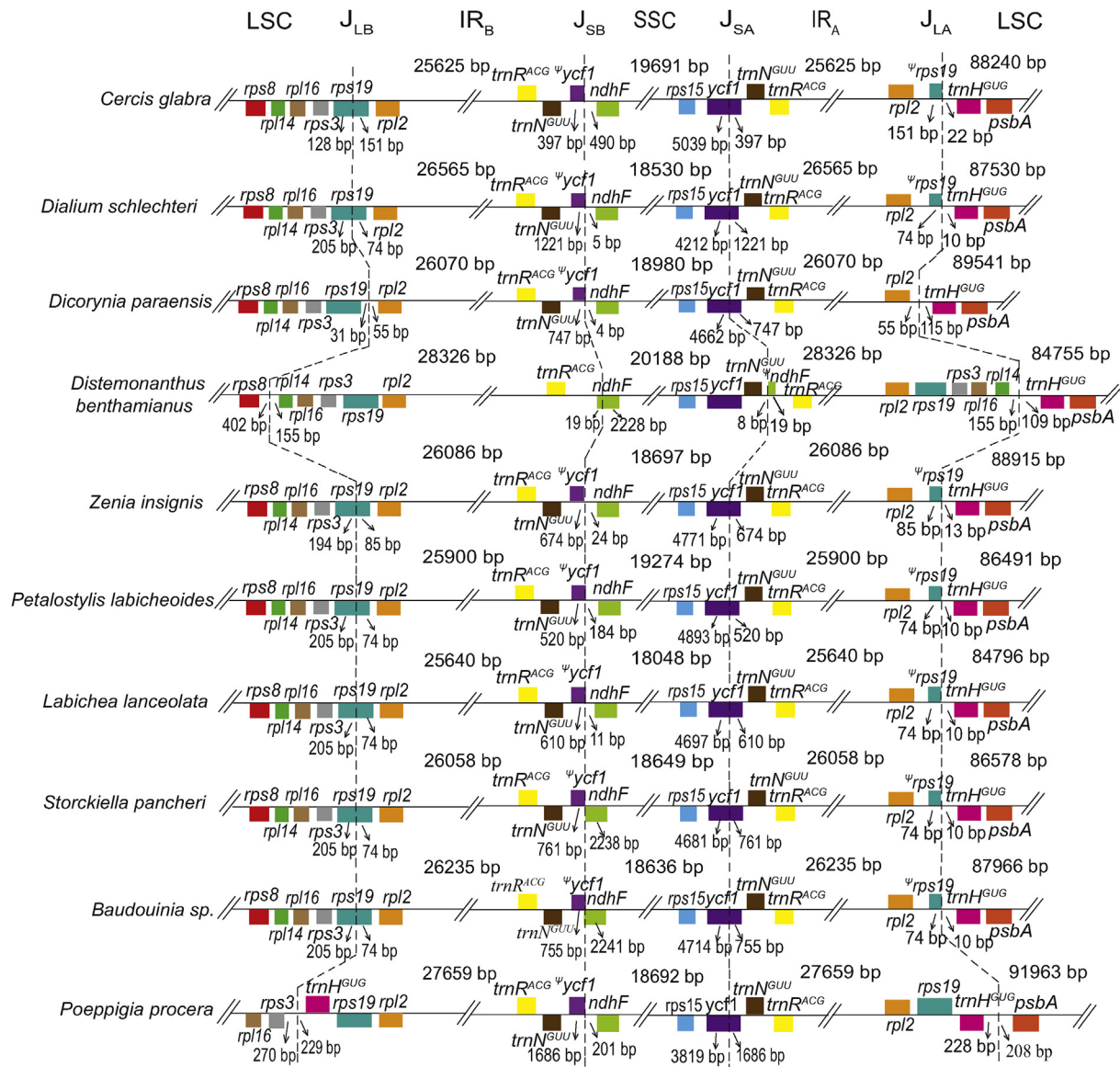


Fig. 2. IR/SC junctions in Dialioideae. J_{LB}, J_{SB}, J_{SA}, and J_{LA} refer to the junctions of LSC/IR_B, SSC/IR_B, SSC/IR_A, and LSC/IR_A. The boxes above and below the line refer to the forward and reverse genes. The tree on the left is built by RAxML-HPC2 on XSEDE. Pseudogenes are marked by ψ .

and *D. paraensis* (Fig. 2). The IR of *D. benthamianus* has expanded its J_{LB} into LSC to include four more complete genes (*rps19*, *rps3*, *rpl16*, *rpl14*), its J_{SB} into SSC to include 19 bp of the 5' end of *ndhF*, and has contracted its J_{SA} to release the complete *ycf1* and *trnN^{GUU}* into the SSC (Fig. 2). The IR of *P. procera* has expanded its J_{LB} into the LSC to include *rps19*, and expanded its J_{LA} into the LSC to include *trnH^{GUG}*. The IR of *D. paraensis* has experienced contraction out of the LSC, moving the whole sequence of *rps19* into the LSC.

3.3. Identification of sequence divergence

The number of variable sites and parsimony-informative sites from 81 coding regions and 124 noncoding regions were collected. Among coding regions, the percentage of variable sites ranges from 0 (*rrn5* gene) to 24.82% (*ycf1* gene), and the percentage of parsimony-informative sites ranges from 0 (*petN*, *psbL*, *petL*, *rrn4.5* and *rrn5* genes) to 6.83% (*ycf1* gene) (Fig. 3a and Appendix: Supplementary material 3). Among noncoding regions, the percentage of variable sites ranges from 0.05 (*trnN^{GUU}*–*ycf1*) to 48.24% (*psbK*–*trnQ^{UUG}*), and the percentage of parsimony-informative sites ranges from 0 (five intergenic regions including *ndhK*–*ndhC*, *rpl23*–*trnI^{CAU}*, *trnI^{CAU}*–*ycf2*, *rrn16*–*trnV^{GAC}* and *rrn23*–*rrn4.5*) to 22.14% (*accD*–*rbcl*) (Fig. 3b and Appendix: Supplementary material 3). Among the whole plastome, coding

regions are more conserved than noncoding regions, and IR regions are more conserved than LSC and SSC regions (Figs. 3c and 4). The mean value of the percentage of variable sites from coding regions is 7.81%, which is around 40% that from noncoding regions (19.60%). Similarly, the mean value of the percentage of parsimony-informative sites from noncoding regions is 5.92%, which is around 2.65 times that from coding regions (2.23%). The mean percentage of variable sites and parsimony-informative sites in the IR region are 3.66% and 0.95%, which are lower than that in the LSC region (16.90% for variable sites and 5.13% for parsimony-informative sites) and the SSC region (18.41% for variable sites and 5.14% for parsimony-informative sites) (Appendix: Supplementary material 4).

3.4. Phylogenetic analysis

Phylogenetic analysis based on 77 protein-coding gene sequences fully resolves phylogenetic relationships among sampled species with strong bootstrap support (BS = 100%) for all nodes except a moderately supported (BS = 63%) sister relationship between *Petalostylis labicheoides* and *Labichea lanceolata* (Fig. 5). The monophyly of Dialioideae is strongly supported (BS = 100%). *Poeppigia procera* and *Baudouinia* sp. are supported as the

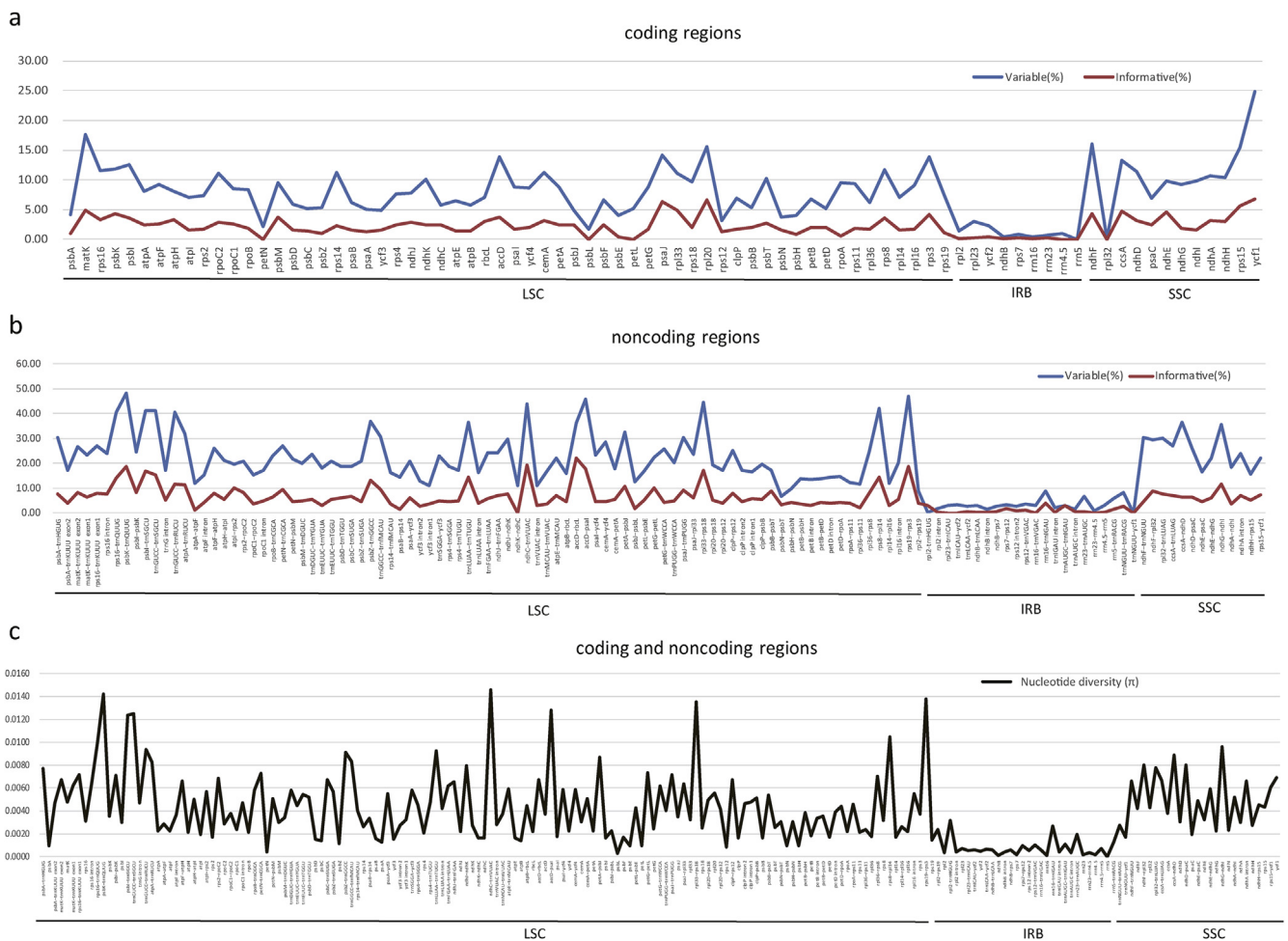


Fig. 3. The percentages of variable sites and parsimony informative sites, and nucleotide diversity (π) across coding regions and noncoding regions (a The percentages of variable sites and parsimony informative sites in coding regions, b The percentages of variable sites and parsimony informative sites in noncoding regions, c nucleotide diversity in coding and noncoding regions).

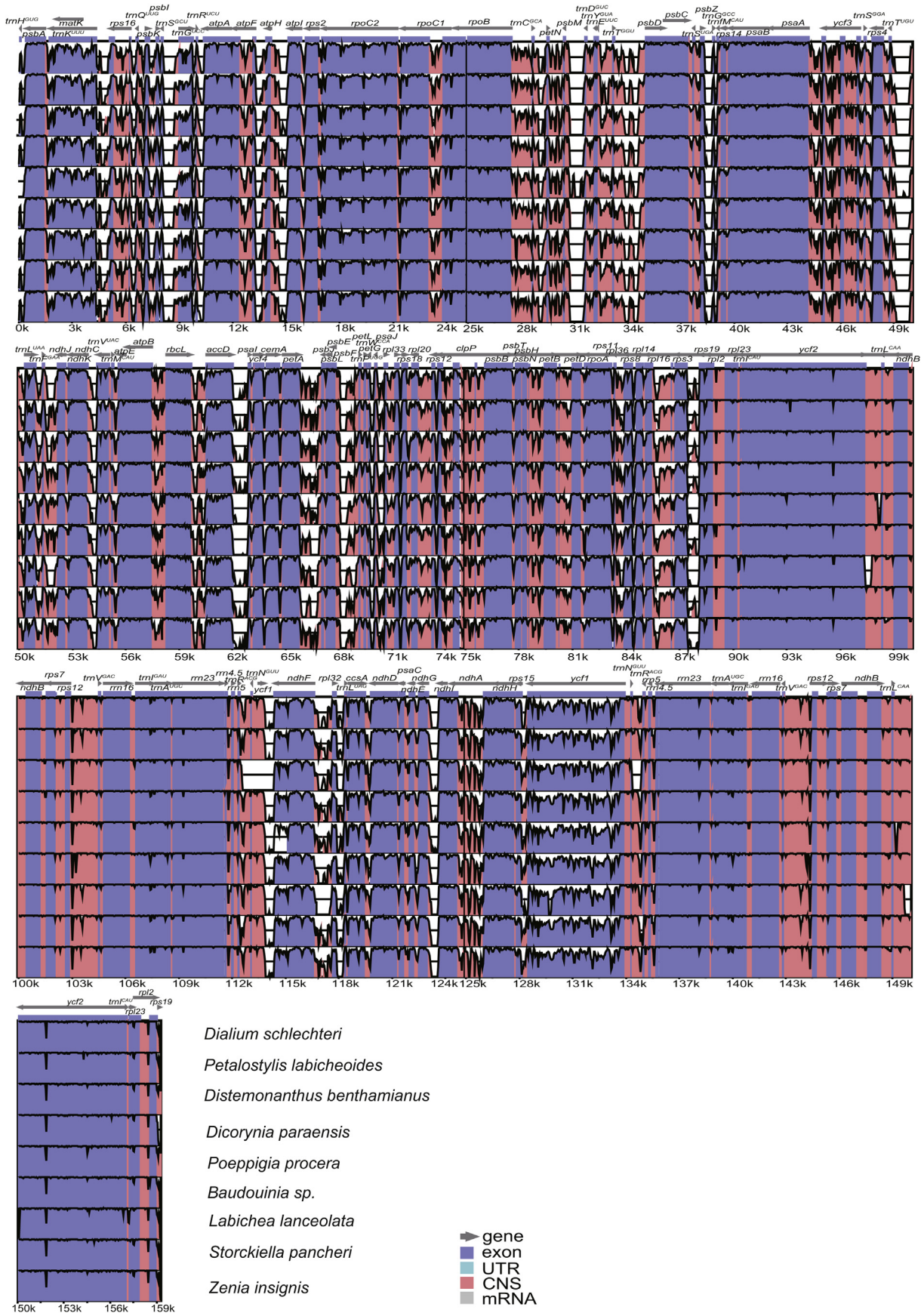


Fig. 4. Sequence alignment of complete plastome sequences of Dialioideae and outgroup samples compared in this study using the mVISTA program. The vertical scale represents the percent of identity ranging from 50% to 100%. *Cercis glabra* is used as a reference.

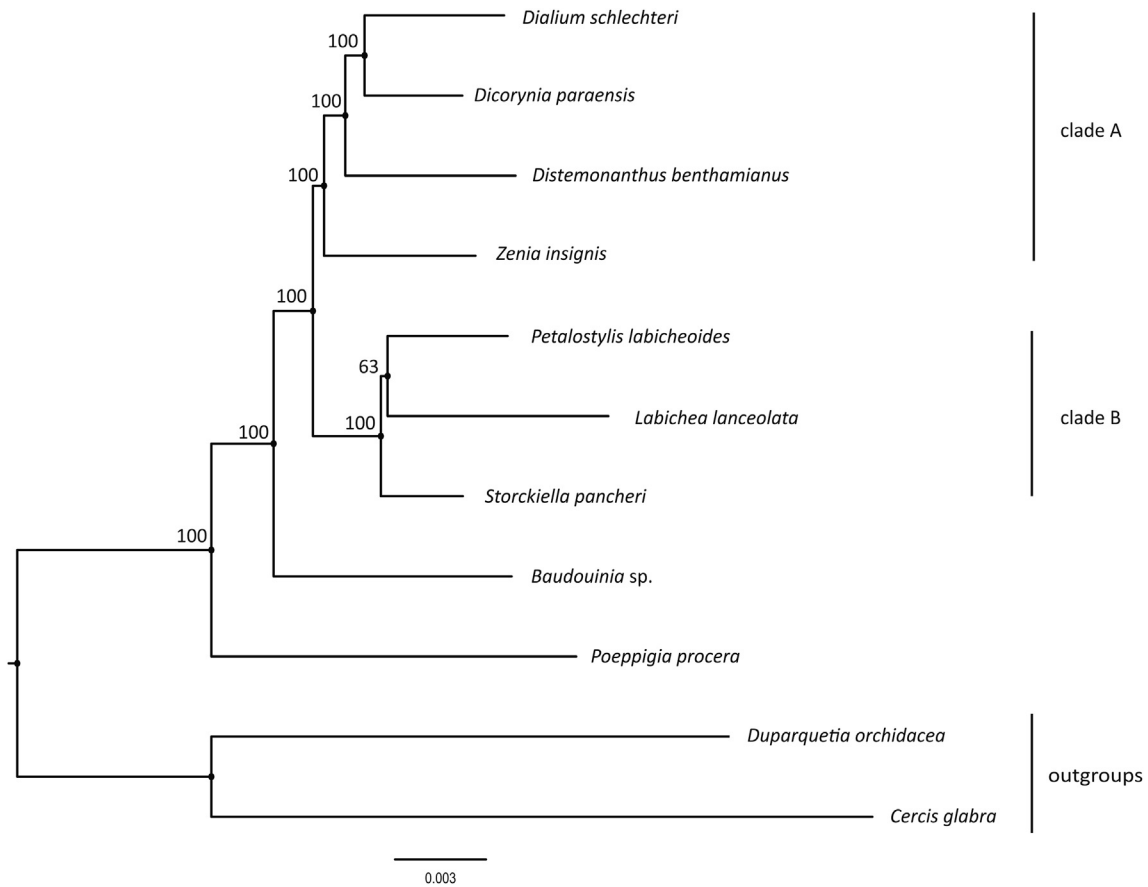


Fig. 5. Phylogeny of Dialioideae species inferred from plastome protein coding genes using the maximum likelihood (ML) method. The ML tree shows bootstrap values on each node.

successive sisters to other Dialioideae, which is further divided into two clades (clade A and clade B).

4. Discussion

Plastome of three legume subfamilies (Papilionoideae, Caesalpinioideae and Cercidoideae) have experienced significant structural variations. In Papilionoideae, plastome structural variation includes an IR loss in one large clade (Wojciechowski et al., 2000), multiple large inversions (e.g., a 78-kb inversion in tribe Phaseoleae, a 36-kb inversion in *Lupinus* L., a 39-kb inversion in *Robinia* L.) (Bruneau et al., 1990; Martin et al., 2014; Schwarz et al., 2015), multiple losses of introns and genes (Downie et al., 1991; Jansen et al., 2008; Martin et al., 2014), and multiple losses of intergenic spacer sequences (Schwarz et al., 2015). In Cercidoideae, plastome variations include large inversions (38-kb, 24-kb and 7.5-kb), large IR expansions and contractions (Kim and Cullis, 2017; Wang et al., 2018). In Caesalpinioideae, multiple IR expansions and contractions, and the loss of *rpl22* have been observed in some species (Dugas et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2017). However, aside for some size variation, plastomes of Dialioideae have a relatively conserved structure. This study shows that not all legume lineages have experienced significant plastome structural variation.

The reduction of plastome size is mainly caused by IR contraction or loss, gene loss, intron loss, or intergenic spacer loss (Jansen et al., 2008; Dugas et al., 2015; Schwarz et al., 2015). In contrast, the increase of plastome size is usually caused by IR expansion and gene duplication (Dugas et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2018). The plastome size of nine Dialioideae species varies from 154,123 to 165,973

bp, and gene number varies from 129 to 132. These differences are mainly caused by IR expansion and contraction in three species. The IR of *Distemonanthus benthamianus* has experienced two expansions to include four genes and part of *ndhF*, and one contraction to move the whole *ycf1* and *trnN^{GUU}* sequences into the SSC. The IR of *Poeppigia procera* has experienced two expansions to include two genes, and the IR of *Dicorynia paraensis* has experienced one contraction that caused the partial loss of *rps19*.

Plastome sequences have been widely used to infer relationships at all taxonomic levels from deep relationships of land plants, through relationships among orders, families or genera, to relationships among species or populations (see Shaw et al., 2014). *RbcL* and *matK* have been proposed as core barcodes for land plants (CBOL Plant Working Group, 2009), and *psbA-trnH* as a complementary barcode (China Plant BOL Group, 2011). Ten plastid noncoding loci (*5'rps16-trnQ^{UUG}*, *ndhC-trnV^{UAC}*, *ndhF-rpl32*, *trnT^{GGU}-psbD*, *psbE-petL*, *petA-psbJ*, *rpl32-trnL^{UAG}*, *rpl16* intron, *ndhA* intron and *rpoB-trnC^{GCA}*) have been consistently considered the most variable regions across angiosperm lineages (Shaw et al., 2014). Similarly, *ndhC-trnV^{UAC}* (0.0146) and *5'rps16-trnQ^{UUG}* (0.01) are two highly variable regions with high nucleotide diversity. Aside from these sequences, we found that the seven most informative regions for Dialioideae are *psbK-trnQ^{UUG}* (0.0142), *rps19-rps3* (0.0138), *rpl33-rps18* (0.0135), *accD-psal* (0.0128), *trnG^{UCC}-trnS^{GCU}* (0.0125), *psbI-trnS^{GCU}* (0.0124) (Fig. 3c and Appendix: Supplementary material 3). In addition, the *ycf1* gene had the highest nucleotide diversity among all protein coding genes. It is worth determining whether these sites can be used as potential molecular markers to clarify close relationships between species and populations in Dialioideae.

Previous work suggested that the subfamily Dialioideae was strongly supported (LPWG, 2017; Zhang et al., 2020). Our study confirms strong support for this subfamily. However, intergeneric relationships within Dialioideae have been poorly resolved or not well supported in previous studies that relied on a few plastid loci and/or morphological characters (Bruneau et al., 2001; Herendeen et al., 2003; Bruneau et al., 2008; LPWG, 2017; Zimmerman et al., 2017). Our study fully resolves most intergeneric relationships with strong support (BS = 100%) except those among *Labichea*, *Petalostylis* and *Storchiella*. Previous studies have also failed to resolve the relationships among *Labichea*, *Petalostylis* and *Storchiella*. Bruneau et al. (2001) reconstructed a phylogeny with a weakly supported relationship of (*Storchiella*, *Petalostylis*); however, Zimmerman et al. (2017) supported a relationship of (*Storchiella*, (*Labichea*, *Petalostylis*)), among them, the bootstrap support for a relationship (*Labichea*, *Petalostylis*) was less than 85%. Our analysis, which supports the same topology as Zimmerman et al. (2017), indicates that the relationship between *Labichea* and *Petalostylis* is weakly supported. Although further studies are needed to clarify the relationships among *Labichea*, *Storchiella* and *Petalostylis*, this study shows that chloroplast phylogenomics offers an efficient approach to build a robust tree of Dialioideae.

Author contributions

T-SY, RZ and H-RB designed this research, RZ checked plastome annotation, reconstructed the phylogenetic tree; H-RB and OO conducted other analyses, H-RB and T-SY wrote the manuscript, H-RB, RZ and T-SY revised the manuscript.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pld.2020.06.008>.

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