Characterization of the virome of shallots affected by the shallot mild yellow stripe disease in France

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Short title: Novel Poty- and Carlavirus of Shallot

Abstract

To elucidate the etiology of a new disease ~~on~~ shallot in France, double-stranded RNAs from asymptomatic and symptomatic shallot plants were analyzed ~~by~~ high-throughput sequencing (HTS). ~~Contigs annotation~~, molecular characterization and phylogenetic analyses revealed the presence in symptomatic plants of a virus complex consisting of shallot virus X (ShVX, *Allexivirus*), shallot latent virus (SLV, *Carlavirus*) and two novel viruses belonging to the genera *Carlavirus* and *Potyvirus*, for which the names of shallot virus S (ShVS) and shallot mild yellow stripe associated virus (SMYSaV), are proposed. Complete or near complete genomic sequences were obtained for all these agents, revealing divergent isolates of ShVX and SLV. Trials to fulfill Koch's postulates were pursued but failed to reproduce the symptoms on inoculated shallots, even though the plants were proved to be infected by the four viruses detected by HTS. Replanting of bulbs from SMYSaV-inoculated shallot plants resulted in infected plants, showing that the virus can perpetuate the infection over seasons. A survey analyzing 351 shallot samples over a four years period strongly suggests an association of SMYSaV with the disease symptoms. An analysis of SMYSaV diversity indicates the existence of two clusters of isolates, one of which is largely predominant in the field over years.

Keywords: shallot, *Allium*, Potyvirus, Carlavirus, Allexivirus, high-throughput sequencing, etiology

The sequences reported in the present manuscript have been deposited in the GenBank database under accession numbers MG571549, MH292861, MH389247 to MH389255, and MG910501 to MG910598.

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Annotation of contigs

Introduction

Economically important cultivated *Allium* species are garlic (*Allium sativum*), leek (*Allium ampeloprasum* var. *porrum*), onion (*Allium cepa*), and its relative shallot (*Allium cepa* L. var. *aggregatum*) [1]. Shallot is mainly cultivated for culinary purposes, while onion and garlic are also used in traditional medicine. Viral infections are a significant problem for all *Allium* crops, even more so in the case of shallot and garlic which are exclusively vegetative propagated, leading to the accumulation of viruses in planting material [2]. Due to their prevalence and the damages they cause, the most economically important *Allium* viruses are members of the genus *Potyvirus*, particularly onion yellow dwarf virus (OYDV) and leek yellow stripe virus (LYSV). In the Mediterranean basin, shallot yellow stripe virus (SYSV) and turnip mosaic virus (TuMV) have also been described infecting *Allium* species, as well as four other potyviruses of lower incidence, even though TuMV has not been reported on shallot so far [2]. Potyviruses and carlaviruses are transmitted non persistently by aphids and frequently found on cultivated *Allium* species. The first described *Allium*-infecting carlavirus was shallot latent virus (SLV, synonym with garlic latent virus, GLV), which seems to be asymptomatic in garlic, onion and shallot when in single infection but can cause significant yield losses in the presence of potyviruses due to synergistic effects [3]. Another carlavirus (garlic common latent virus, GarCLV) is frequently detected on garlic, onion and leek, associated with symptomless infection. Eight viral species belonging to the genus *Allexivirus* in the family *Alphaflexiviridae* have also been described from *Allium* species. Only two of them, shallot virus X (ShVX) and shallot mite-borne latent virus (SMbLV) have been described in shallot, in which they cause latent infections. All allexiviruses are transmitted by mites and coinfections with potyviruses and carlaviruses are frequent, with potential synergistic effects that could

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lead to increased damages [2]. Besides the viruses belonging to the *Allexivirus*, *Potyvirus*, and *Carlavirus* genera, five other viruses infecting *Allium* species have been described, generally with limited incidence, including iris yellow spot virus (IYSV), a member of the genus *Orthotospovirus*, reported on shallot [4].

In 2012, a new disease was observed in the west of France in shallots. Symptoms consisted of yellow stripes on the leaves, associated with a loss of vigor, considered as moderate as compared to that caused by OYDV or LYSV (Fig 1). This gave its name to the disease, shallot mild yellow stripe disease (SMYSD). Early tests revealed that the new disease could be observed in plants that test negative for OYDV and LYSV, indicating that these two viruses were not involved. In parallel, meristem-tip culture from symptomatic plants led to the disappearance of the symptoms, reinforcing the hypothesis of a viral etiology. The present study was therefore initiated with the objective to identify the causal agent(s) of this new disease.

Fig 1. Symptoms associated with the shallot mild yellow stripe disease on shallot plant.

Materials and methods

Plant samples

Six samples (13-01 to 13-06) of shallot (*Allium cepa* L. var. *aggregatum*) were collected in West France in 2013 and analyzed by high-throughput sequencing (HTS). Two of these samples were from asymptomatic plants while the other four showed symptoms of the novel SMYS disease. In addition to these samples analyzed by HTS, a total of 351 symptomatic or asymptomatic shallot samples was collected over a four-year period (2014 to 2017) and screened for the presence of OYDV, LYSV and for the novel viruses detected in the present study. The symptoms observed on these plants were recorded using a 0 to 3 notation scale for both leaf striping and loss of vigor. The "0" score is defined as no symptom, the "3" score is defined as a symptomatology equivalent to that observed on control plants infected by OYDV. The "1" and "2" scores are used for symptoms of intermediate intensity.

Illumina sequencing of double-stranded RNAs from shallot samples

Double-stranded RNAs (dsRNAs) were purified from the two asymptomatic plant samples (13-01 and 13-02) and the four symptomatic ones (13-03 to 13-06), following the protocol previously described [5]. After reverse transcription and random amplification, the obtained cDNAs were used for the preparation of libraries and sequenced in multiplex format (Illumina HiSeq 2000 in paired end 2x 100 nt reads). After quality trimming and demultiplexing steps [6], reads were assembled into contigs which were annotated by BlastN and BlastX comparisons [7] against the GenBank database using CLC Genomics Workbench 8. When needed, contigs corresponding

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to particular agents were further extended by several rounds of mapping of unassembled reads and/or assembled manually into scaffolds by alignment against reference viral genomes identified during the Blast analyses.

Total nucleic acids extraction and detection of selected viruses by RT-PCR

Total nucleic acids were extracted from shallot samples and from the test plants of the host range experiments using the silica-capture procedure 2 described by [8]. The viruses were detected by two-step RT-PCR assays, following the procedure already described [9] and using specific primers (Table S1). The amplified fragments were visualized on non-denaturing 1% agarose gels and, if needed, submitted to direct Sanger sequencing on both strands (GATC Biotech, Mulhouse, France).

Completion of the genome sequences of the novel viruses and of divergent isolates of shallot latent virus (SLV) and shallot virus X (ShVX)

The 5' ends of the viral genomes sequences were determined or confirmed using the 5' Rapid Amplification of cDNA Ends (RACE) strategy and internal primers designed from the genomic contigs (Table S1) following the kit supplier's recommendations (Takara Bio Europe/Clontech, Saint Germain-en-Laye, France). The 3' ends were amplified using forward internal and polyA-anchored LD primers (Table S1) as described [10]. Internal gaps and regions of low coverage were determined or confirmed by direct sequencing of RT-PCR fragments obtained using internal primers designed from the contigs (Table S1). All amplified fragments were

visualized on non-denaturing agarose gels and directly sequenced on both strands by Sanger sequencing (GATC Biotech).

Sequence analysis, comparisons, and phylogenetic analyses

Phylogenetic and molecular evolutionary analyses were conducted using MEGA version 6 [11]. Multiple ~~alignments of~~ nucleotide and amino acid sequences were performed using the ClustalW program [12] as implemented in MEGA6. Phylogenetic trees were reconstructed using the neighbor-joining method with strict nucleotide or amino acid distances and randomized bootstrapping for the evaluation of branching validity. Mean diversities and genetic distances (p-distances calculated on nucleotide or amino acid identity) were calculated using MEGA6.

Host range determination for both novel viruses

A mix of leaves from four plants identified as infected by the novel potyvirus but not by the novel carlavirus, OYDV or LYSV was used as the first inoculum. Similarly, a mix of leaves from four plants known to be infected by the new carlavirus but free of the new potyvirus, of OYDV or LYSV was used as the second inoculum. All pools of leaves were ground 1:4 (wt/vol) in a solution of 0.03 M Na_2HPO_4 containing 0.2% sodium diethyldithiocarbamate (DIECA), and 100 mg each of carborundum and activated charcoal were added before rub-inoculation. A total number of 59 *Nicotiana benthamiana* plants, 48 *Chenopodium quinoa*, 34 *C. amaranticolor*, 31 *N. occidentalis*, and 23 *N. tabacum* cv xanthi were evaluated as potential hosts for the novel potyvirus and 23 plants of each species were used for trials involving the new carlavirus. The

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appearance of symptoms was monitored over a three-week period. At the end of the experimentation, the presence of the virus(es) in non-inoculated parts of the test plants was assessed by specific RT-PCR assays.

Trials to fulfill Koch's postulates

Koch's postulates were evaluated separately for the two novel viruses and for a complex of four viruses (ShVX, SLV and the two novel viruses). A total of 21 virus-free shallots grown from seeds were inoculated with a mix of four plants shown to be co-infected by ShVX, SLV and the novel carlavirus and potyvirus. Plants were monitored for symptoms appearance over a five weeks period post inoculation. At the end of this period, the plants were tested by specific RT-PCR for the presence of the four inoculated viruses. In parallel, inoculation of shallot and onion plants was performed with an inoculum constituted of a pool of four plants known to be infected by the sole new potyvirus (63 and 40 plants of each *Allium* species, all grown from seeds) or infected only by the novel carlavirus (36 and 23 plants, respectively). A mix of leaves from two plants infected with the sole OYDV was used as a positive mechanical inoculation control. Bulbs from all inoculated shallot plants were replanted and the resulting plants observed over an eight months period and tested for the presence of inoculated viruses.

Results

Illumina sequencing of double-stranded RNAs extracted from asymptomatic and symptomatic shallot samples

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After demultiplexing, quality trimming, and *de novo* assembly, BlastN and BlastX comparisons of the contigs obtained with the GenBank database showed that all sources but one (13-01) were infected by more than one viral species (Table 1). For the 13-01 asymptomatic sample, 174,381 reads were ~~integrated~~ into contigs with high homology to isolates of shallot virus X (ShVX, genus *Allexivirus*, family *Alphaflexiviridae*). Two variants of ShVX were identified and reassembled from that plant, differing by their level of nucleotide (nt) identity with known ShVX sequences. Most of the reads (151,580) were ~~integrated~~ into contigs (hereafter referred to as ShVX 13-01 variant 1) closely related to ShVX isolate JX310755 (97-98% of nt identity depending on the contigs). More divergent contigs (hereafter referred to as ShVX 13-01 variant 2) ~~integrating~~ 22,801 reads could also be assembled. They showed between 82 and 90% of nt identity with JX310755, depending on the contig (Table 1). In the other asymptomatic sample (13-02), two viruses were detected: a divergent isolate of shallot latent virus (SLV, genus *Carlavirus*, family *Betaflexiviridae*), integrating 249,097 reads and sharing around 83% of nt identity with reference SLV isolates, and a putative novel carlavirus. Indeed, a total of 27,786 reads (corresponding to 1.9% of the total reads) were ~~integrated~~ into contigs sharing relatively weak nt identities (71-75% depending on the contig) with various carlaviruses. In the four symptomatic samples (13-03 to 13-06), besides the presence of one or more of the above viruses (Table 1), contigs integrating between 43,683 and 105,209 reads depending on the sample and showing at most 74% of nt identity with leek yellow stripe virus (LYSV, genus *Potyvirus*, family *Potyviridae*) were detected, leading to the hypothesis of the presence of a novel potyvirus.

In the end, the complete genomic sequences of seven viral isolates were obtained (Table 1): ShVX variant 1 from samples 13-05 and 13-06, ShVX variant 2

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209 from sample 13-04, SLV from samples 13-02 and 13-06, the novel carlavirus from
210 sample 13-05 and the novel potyvirus from sample 13-06. Moreover, near complete
211 genome sequences of three additional ShVX isolates (two from sample 13-01, and one
212 from sample 13-04) and of one additional SLV isolate (from sample 13-03) were also
213 obtained during the assembly process (Table 1) but no specific effort was made to
214 complete their missing 5' and 3' genome ends.

215 Besides the whole genome sequence determined for the novel carlavirus,
216 scaffolds of 8,234-8,303 nt and having up to four short internal gaps and missing short
217 terminal sequences were also assembled from samples 13-02, 13-03, and 13-04. In
218 parallel, besides the determined complete genome sequence of the novel potyvirus,
219 scaffolds of 10,318-10,360 nt and containing up to four short internal gaps were also
220 assembled from the other infected samples (13-03, 13-04, 13-05).

221

222 **Table 1. Number and percentages of high-throughput sequencing reads (73 nucleotides average length) of shallot virus X**
223 **(variants 1 and 2), shallot latent virus, the novel carlavirus and the novel potyvirus in each sample analyzed by Illumina**
224 **sequencing.**

Sample [a]	Total reads [b]	Shallot virus X		Shallot latent virus	Novel carlavirus	Novel potyvirus
		Variant 1	Variant 2			
13-01 AS	328,460	151,580 (46%) MH389253 [c]	22,801 (6.9%) MH389254 [e]			
13-02 AS	1,412,128			249,097 (17.6%) MH389247	27,786 (1.9%)	
13-03 S	505,315			236,815 (46.9%) MH389249 [f]	13,684 (2.7%)	105,209 (20.8%)
13-04 S	438,574	60,019 (13.7%) MH389255 [d]	158,755 (36.2%) MH389250		86,627 (19.7%)	48,064 (11%)
13-05 S	360,248	139,070 (38.6%) MH389251			81,900 (22.7%) MH292861	43,683 (12.1%)

13-06 S	778,696	34,273 (4.4%) MH389252		257,193 (33%)		86,044 (11%) MG910502

225 Relevant GenBank accession numbers are indicated

226 [a] AS asymptomatic; S symptomatic

227 [b] After quality trimming

228 [c] genome sequence lacks 53 nt at the 5' end and 443 nt at the 3' end

229 [d] genome sequence lacks 7 nt at the 5' end and 111 nt at the 3' end

230 [e] genome sequence lacks 53 nt at the 5' end and 330 nt at the 3' end

231 [f] genome sequence lacks 84 nt at 5' end and 34 nt at 3' end

Genomic organization and phylogenetic relationships of the novel potyvirus

The potyviral genome determined from sample 13-06 is 10,540 nt excluding the poly (A) tail and encodes a polyprotein of 3,210 amino acids (aa) (Fig 2A). The 5' non coding region (NCR) is 159 nt long, whereas the 3' NCR is 751 nt long, which is significantly longer than for most potyviruses [13]. Based on the conserved cleavage sites in the polyprotein sequence [14], the ten typical mature potyviral proteins could be identified with estimated sizes of 422 aa (P1), 456 aa (HC-Pro, helper component proteinase), 359 aa (P3), 52 aa (6K1), 635 aa (CI, cylindrical inclusion protein), 53 aa (6K2), 192 aa (VPg, viral genome-linked protein), 242 aa (NIa, nuclear inclusion a), 513 aa (NIb, nuclear inclusion b), and 286 aa (CP, coat protein). The observed cleavage sites in the polyprotein sequence were consistent with the known sites of potyviruses (Fig 2A). In addition, a PIPO ORF (69 aa) was identified downstream of the conserved slippage motif GAAAAAA (nt position 3283). All expected potyviral conserved motifs were identified in the polyprotein, including in the HC-Pro the KITC (aa position 472 to aa 475) and PTK (730 to 732) and in the CP the conserved DAG that are all necessary for aphid transmission [15].

Fig 2. Shematic representation of the genomic organization of the novel potyvirus (A) and the novel carlavirus (B). The open reading frames are depicted by large boxes, and the ~~Non Coding Regions~~ (5' and 3' NCR) by horizontal lines. $(A)_n$: PolyA tail. (A) The nine putative cleavage sites of the polyprotein are indicated, as well as the predicted amino acid position for each mature protein in the polyprotein. P1, helper component proteinase (HCPro), P3, 6K1, cylindrical inclusion (CI) protein, 6K2,

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non coding regions

257 viral genome-linked protein (VPg), nuclear inclusion a (NIa), nuclear inclusion b (NIb),
258 and coat protein (CP). The position of PIPO (Pretty Interesting Potyviridae ORF) is also
259 indicated. The black ellipse represents the VPg attached to the 5' end of the genome.
260 (B) Conserved motifs for viral methyltransferase (pfam 1660, Met), 2OG-Fe(II)
261 oxygenase (pfam 03171, 2OG), peptidase C23 (pfam 05379, Pep), viral helicase 1
262 (pfam 01443, Hel), and RNA-dependent RNA polymerase 2 (pfam 00978, RdRp)
263 domains are shown within replicase. TGB 1, 2, 3, Triple gene block proteins 1, 2, and
264 3. CP, coat protein. NABP, nucleic acid binding protein.
265
266 In order to determine the taxonomic relationships of this virus, a phylogenetic
267 tree was reconstructed using the genomic sequences of representative members of
268 the family *Potyviridae* (from P3 to CP genes, corresponding to the RNA1 of
269 bymoviruses, Fig 3A). Sequence comparisons were then performed with the
270 polyprotein, the coat protein, and the NIa-Pro-NIb genomic region and corresponding
271 proteins of members of the genus *Potyvirus* (Table S2). The accepted molecular
272 species demarcation criteria for the family *Potyviridae* are less than 76% nt identity or
273 82% aa identity in the large ORF or its protein product [16]. By all the criteria, the
274 detected potyvirus appears to be a distinct species, with clearly more distant identity
275 levels with its closest fully sequenced relative, LYSV [at the best 68.8% nt identity in
276 the large ORF (73.6% aa); (Table S2)]. The name of shallot mild yellow stripe
277 associated virus (SMYSaV) is therefore proposed for this novel potyvirus.
278
279 **Fig 3. Unrooted phylogenetic trees based on the codon-aligned nucleotide**
280 **sequences of the 3' part (from P3 to coat protein) of the polyproteins of**
281 **representative *Potyviridae* family members (A) and on the coat protein**

sequences of representative members of the genus *Potyvirus* (B). The trees were constructed using the neighbor-joining method and statistical significance of branches was evaluated by bootstrap analysis (1,000 replicates). Only bootstrap values above 70% are shown. The scale bar represents 5% nucleotide divergence (A) or 5% amino acid divergence (B). The genus to which each virus belongs is indicated at the right of the panel A. The novel potyvirus shallot mild yellow stripe associated virus is indicated by a black star.

In a phylogenetic analysis of the CP amino acid sequences, SMYSaV forms a small bootstrap-supported cluster with garlic virus 2, leek yellow stripe virus, and garlic mosaic virus (Fig 3B), forming a small group of agents of similar host specificity as observed for other potyviruses. The closest sequence to SMYSaV identified through GenBank Blast searches is a partial, 2,525 nt genome fragment (GenBank accession number L28079) corresponding to the partial protease (NIa-Pro) and RNA-dependent RNA polymerase (NIb) genes of a viral isolate from shallot (unpublished GenBank sequence). Over this region, the two agents show 92.3% nt (94.3% aa) identity (Table S2), indicating that they belong to the same species. Remarkably the L28079 sequence was described in GenBank database as “shallot potyvirus (probably Onion yellow dwarf virus)” indicating that SMYSaV had been observed previously in shallot in Russia but that its originality and distinctness had not been recognized at the time.

The four symptomatic samples analyzed by HTS in the present study were all found to be infected by SMYSaV (Table 1), allowing the reconstruction of long scaffolds for each isolate. Comparison of these four sequences provides nt identity values ranging from 97.1% and 99.7% (data not shown), giving a first vision of the diversity of this novel virus.

Genomic organization and phylogenetic affinities of the novel carlavirus

Widely different amounts of carlaviral reads were detected in four of the six samples analyzed by HTS (one asymptomatic and three symptomatic, Table 1). The genomic sequence was completed for the sample showing the deepest coverage (sample 13-05, representing 22.7% of the total reads). A unique contig, 8,343 nt-long and only missing a short region at the 3' end (as judged by comparison with SLV), was reconstructed. The 5' end was confirmed and the 3' end was determined by RACE experiments. The genome organization is typical of members of the genus *Carlavirus*, with six ORFs encoding from 5' to 3' the viral replicase (REP), the triple gene block proteins (TGB1, 2, 3) involved in viral movement, the coat protein and, finally, a nucleic acid binding protein, whose role is still unclear (Fig 2B). The sizes of the deduced proteins are identical to those of the most closely related carlavirus (SLV), with the exception of the replicase which is slightly larger than in SLV (1,926 aa *vs* 1,924 aa) with 12 indels located in the first part of the deduced protein (data not shown). The conserved motives typical for carlaviral REPs [17] were identified, including a viral methyltransferase domain (pfam 1660, aa 42-352), an AlkB (2OG-FeII-Oxy-2) domain (pfam 03171, aa 681-769), a peptidase C23 (carla endopeptidase) domain (aa 930-1015), a viral helicase 1 domain (pfam 01443, aa 1108-1380) and a RNA-dependent RNA polymerase 2 domain (pfam 1505-1913, aa 1505-1913).

The taxonomical position of the novel carlavirus was confirmed by phylogenetic analyses performed with complete genome sequences of representative members of the families *Alphaflexiviridae* and *Betaflexiviridae* (Fig 4) and with replicase and coat protein sequences from a range of carlaviruses (data not shown). As shown in Fig 4, the carlavirus unambiguously clusters with related members in the family

333 *Betaflexiviridae*. In this and in the other two trees (not shown), it clusters together with
334 SLV with 100% bootstrap support, making SLV its closest relative in the genus.
335 However, the level of identity between SLV and the novel carlavirus in replicase and
336 coat protein genes (and deduced proteins) is clearly below the species demarcation
337 threshold accepted for the family *Betaflexiviridae* (72% nt or 80% aa identities in
338 replicase or CP genes) [18]. Indeed, it shares at the best 76.5% of aa identity in the
339 CP with SLV (69.6% nt identity, Table S3), demonstrating that it represents a novel
340 species in the genus *Carlavirus*, for which the name of shallot virus S (ShVS) is
341 proposed.
342
343 **Fig 4. Neighbor-joining phylogenetic tree reconstructed from the alignment of**
344 **complete genome sequence of representative members of the families**
345 ***Alphaflexiviridae* and *Betaflexiviridae*.** Statistical significance of branches was
346 evaluated by bootstrap analysis (1,000 replicates) and only values above 70% are
347 indicated. The scale represents 5% nucleotide divergence. The genus and the family
348 to which each virus belongs are indicated at the right of the figure. The sequences of
349 shallot virus X and shallot latent virus determined in this work are underlined, and the
350 novel carlavirus shallot virus S is indicated by a black triangle.
351

352 Analysis of the shallot virus X isolates identified by HTS

353 Six ShVX isolates were identified from four samples, three for which full genome
354 sequences were obtained and three for which very long contigs, lacking only genome
355 ends, were reconstructed (Table 1). The phylogenetic analysis based on the alignment
356 of the complete genome sequences of *Alphaflexiviridae* members clearly shows that
357 all the sequences reported here belong to the *Shallot virus X* species, forming a cluster

supported by a high bootstrap value (Fig 4). The phylogenetic analysis based on the CP sequences of allexivirus members and of the available ShVX isolates retrieved from GenBank confirmed this conclusion (Fig S1). Moreover, the sequences reported here shared between 79.9% and 97.5% of nt identity (87% to 98.9% aa identity) in the CP gene with reference isolates (data not shown), levels of identity which are within the molecular species demarcation criteria accepted for the family *Alphaflexiviridae* [18]. This conclusion is confirmed by similar analyses performed with polymerase sequences (data not shown). In the CP tree (Fig S1), four isolates (13-01 variant 1, 13-04 variant 1, 13-05, and 13-06) belong to a cluster comprising six already known ShVX isolates including the only available shallot mite-borne latent virus sequence, which should probably be considered a synonym of ShVX [19]. On the other hand, the two other isolates (13-01 and 13-04 variant 2) form a divergent cluster, away from other known ShVX isolates and from the isolates found in co-infection in the same original plants (Fig S1). These two isolates are very closely related (99.9% nt identity in the CP gene) and more distant from other isolates (83.5% to 85.5% nt identity, depending on the isolate considered), including the highly divergent Dindugal isolate GQ268322, 80.2% nt identity).

Analysis of the shallot latent virus isolates identified by HTS

SLV was identified in three samples. Complete genome sequences were determined from two of them (SLV 13-02 and 13-06) while for the remaining isolate (SLV 13-03), a very long contig missing only 84 nt and 34 nt at the 5’ and 3’ ends, respectively was obtained. The isolates analyzed here clearly cluster in the *Shallot latent virus* species (Fig 4) but form a distinct and novel cluster well separated from other known isolates of the virus. For the CP gene, the diversity between them and

other SLV isolates ranges between 17.6 and 24.3% in nt (between 5.1 and 10.1% in aa). Although significant, these values are well within the species demarcation criteria for the *Betaflexiviridae* family [17]. The three isolates of SLV analyzed here are very closely related to each other with nt identity levels comprised between 93.7 and 100% in the CP gene (99 to 100% in aa for deduced proteins, data not shown). Similar values are observed in the REP gene (90.9 to 99.8% in nt, 96.1 to 99.8% in aa).

Host range of both novel viruses and Koch's postulates

Trials to mechanically transmit ShVS to herbaceous dicot plants (*N. benthamiana*, *N. occidentalis*, *C. quinoa* and *C. amaranticolor*) were unsuccessful. Similar negative results were obtained with SMYSaV: no symptoms were visible on any of the SMYSaV-inoculated plants and no virus could be detected by a specific RT-PCR assay in any of the inoculated dicot hosts.

We then tried to fulfill Koch's postulates, either using each novel virus alone or using a viral complex composed of ShVX, SLV and the two novel viruses. A pool of four plants known to harbor this complex was used to inoculate a total of 21 shallot plants. Most of the inoculated plants (14/21) were found to be co-infected by the four viruses, but no symptoms could be observed in any of the inoculated plants. Concerning the inoculation of the novel viruses alone, ShVS was detected in 100% of the inoculated onion plants and in 29/36 of the inoculated shallots. After five weeks of observation, no symptoms were recorded on inoculated plants, an observation in line with the finding of ShVS in one of the asymptomatic plants analyzed by HTS (Table 1). Similarly, SMYSaV was detected in 75% of the inoculated shallots and in 100% of the inoculated onion plants. However, no symptoms could be observed in the infected plants. As a positive control, leaves from OYDV-infected shallots, but free of SMYSaV,

were used to inoculate shallot and onion plants. Five weeks after inoculation, typical yellow mosaic symptoms were observed on both hosts and OYDV was detected in the symptomatic plants by specific RT-PCR (data not shown). Bulbs from all SMYSaV-inoculated shallot plants were replanted and most of the resulting (19/20) plants were found to be infected by SMYSaV, showing that the virus accumulates in the bulbs and can perpetuate the infection over seasons. However, neither the first generation nor second generation plants displayed symptoms under our greenhouse conditions, even after eight months of observation.

Correlation between virus presence and the symptoms associated with the shallot mild yellow stripe disease

Despite the negative results of the Koch's postulate trials, which do not allow to conclude about a causal role of SMYSaV, the results of the HTS analyses strongly suggest its involvement in the disease, since it is the only virus that was specifically associated with the four symptomatic plants analyzed (Table 1). In order to try to confirm an association between SMYSaV and the SMYS disease symptoms, a correlative analysis involving a large number of plants was performed. Over a period of four years, a total of 351 shallot samples originating from the same region of France were analyzed for the presence of SMYSaV, LYSV and OYDV using specific RT-PCR assays (Table S1). Twenty-two samples were found to be infected by OYDV or/and LYSV, with a mean of striping score of 2.43 ± 1.03 and a mean score of 1.5 ± 1.46 for the loss of vigor. In the remaining samples, the incidence of SMYSaV was found to be quite high (27.2%) and was highly correlated with the presence of striping symptoms. Indeed, 92.9% of the samples with stripes (score between 1 and 3) were infected by SMYSaV (78/84), whereas 95.9% of the asymptomatic samples were SMYSaV-free

433 (235/245). The mean score of stripe symptoms for the SMYSaV-infected samples
434 (2.39 ± 0.98) was not significantly different from that of OYDV/LYSV-infected samples
435 (2.43 ± 1.03) (Fig 5), indicating that SYMSaV could have the same impact on infected
436 plants in terms of striping severity than the two other potyviruses OYDV and LYSV. In
437 contrast, the effect of SYMSaV infection regarding the loss of vigor is significantly lower
438 ($p = 0.0004$) than that of OYDV/LYSV infection (Fig 5), strongly suggesting that the
439 symptoms of the SMYSD consisting of yellow stripes on leaves and moderate loss of
440 vigor are associated with SMYSaV.

441 On a smaller number of analyzed plants (45), the potential contribution of ShVS
442 to the symptomatology was also assessed. The prevalence of this virus was found to
443 be high in the analyzed samples (53.3%) but the infection was not correlated with
444 symptomatology. Indeed, the same proportion of symptomatic or asymptomatic
445 samples from the correlative study were found to be infected by ShVS (48.8% *vs* 50%,
446 respectively).

447

448 **Fig 5. Comparison of the mean of symptom score (striping and loss of vigor) in**
449 **two populations of shallot plants.** OYDV+/LYSV+/SMYSaV-: plants infected by
450 onion yellow dwarf virus and/or leek yellow stripe virus and free of shallot mild yellow
451 stripe associated virus. OYDV-/LYSV-/SMYSaV+: plants infected by shallot mild yellow
452 stripe associated virus and free of onion dwarf virus and leek yellow stripe virus.
453 Whiskers indicate the standard error of the mean. The significance (p) was tested by
454 the Mann-Whitney-Wilcoxon non parametric test [20-21].

455

456 The diversity of SMYSaV was also analyzed, using the nucleotide sequence of
457 a short fragment of the CP gene targeted by the RT-PCR diagnostic assay. The

458 average pairwise nucleotide divergence was 1.4% between isolates in this region.
459 More interestingly, the diversity could be structured into two distinct clusters, as
460 illustrated by the neighbor-joining tree shown in Fig S2. Beside the major group (cluster
461 1) which contains 91% of the isolates, an additional group (cluster 2) could be defined
462 with high bootstrap support (99%). The intra-group average nucleotide divergence is
463 very low (0.7% and 0.5% for clusters 1 and 2, respectively), in comparison with the
464 inter-group average divergence (5.2%). Due to the small number of isolates in the
465 cluster 2, no conclusion could be drawn in terms of correlation between a particular
466 SMYSaV cluster and the severity of the induced symptoms.
467

468 Discussion

469 The present study was motivated by reports of a yellow stripe disease on shallot
470 varieties regenerated from OYDV- and LYSV-free bulbs. Subsequent meristem-tip
471 cultures resulted in the clearance of the symptoms, suggesting a viral etiology. The
472 objective of this work was therefore to identify the virus(es) involved in this newly
473 described disease by a combination of HTS-based and classical approaches. Analysis
474 of six shallot samples (two asymptomatic and four symptomatic) by HTS of purified
475 dsRNAs revealed the presence of two viruses already known to give asymptomatic
476 infections in shallot (SLV and ShVX) and of two novel viruses: a carlavirus named
477 ShVS and a potyvirus named SMYSaV. A partial sequence was already available in
478 GenBank (L28079) for the potyvirus, reported with an uncertain taxonomy as probably
479 belonging to the *Onion yellow dwarf virus* species. The determination of the complete
480 genome sequence and phylogenetic analyses clearly show that this potyvirus is a
481 novel species distinct from OYDV. The genomic organization of ShVS and SMYSaV
482 are similar to those of *Carlavirus* and *Potyvirus* genera members, respectively.

Interestingly, the 3' NCR of SMYSaV with a size of 751 nt is significantly longer than reported for potyviruses (around 220 nt, Adams et al. 2012c). Other potyviruses belonging to the same phylogenetic cluster (Fig 3B) share this property, with a 3' NCR size of 592 nt for LYSV and 598 nt for garlic virus 2 (no data available for garlic mosaic virus). The biological significance of this observation remains unclear, if any. Nevertheless, the role of the 3' NCR as a determinant of symptom induction has been proposed in a few examples [22], without any hypothesis about the mechanism(s) involved [23].

The six ShVX genome sequences (including three near-complete ones lacking only some nucleotides at both extremities) determined in the present study provide new insights into the diversity of ShVX. Besides five isolates clustering into a phylogenetic group comprising all the known ShVX isolates, two isolates (ShVX 13-04 variant 2 and ShVX 13-01 variant 2, very closely related to each other) were found to be significantly more distant from "classical" isolates, and define a new phylogenetic cluster, providing evidence for a wider diversity than previously known [24]. Similarly, three complete genome sequences (near-complete for one) of SLV were determined through this study, representing isolates from a new phylogenetic cluster and extending the known diversity range of this virus.

The novel potyvirus described here is the sole detected virus associated with the symptoms of the SMYSD. Firstly, SMYSaV was found in the four symptomatic samples and not in the asymptomatic ones, which is not the case for any of the other viruses detected. Secondly, the correlative study conducted over a four-year period showed a strong association of SMYSaV with the symptoms observed. In particular, SMYSaV infection is strongly associated with striping symptoms, with a severity comparable to those caused by OYDV and/or LYSV infection; on the other hand, the

508 impact of SMYSaV infection in terms of loss of vigor is moderate, as reported for the
509 SMYSD, and quite different from the more severe loss of vigor associated with OYDV
510 and/or LYSV infection (Fig 5). The four symptomatic samples analyzed by HTS were
511 infected with a complex of viruses, which is coherent with the strictly vegetative mode
512 of propagation of shallot. Depending on the sample, various combinations of agents
513 were found, involving SMYSaV and ShVS, ShVX and/or SLV (Table 1). On this basis,
514 trials to fulfill Koch's postulates were pursued involving either SMYSaV alone, ShVS
515 alone or a complex of the four viruses found in symptomatic shallots. However, even
516 over a long period of observation, no symptoms were observed on any of the
517 inoculated shallot, even if most of them were found to be infected by the virus(es) they
518 had been inoculated with. Two hypotheses can be proposed to explain the failure to
519 observe symptoms on the inoculated plants, one is that the greenhouse conditions
520 used would not allow the development of such symptoms. The other is that the shallot
521 variety used in these experiments (a seed-propagated variety, different from the bulb-
522 propagated ones in which the disease is described) may not be conducive to
523 symptoms.

524 In the HTS analysis, the novel carlavirus ShVS was detected in three
525 symptomatic samples as well as in an asymptomatic one, suggesting that as for other
526 shallot infecting carlaviruses, its infection is latent. This hypothesis is confirmed by the
527 finding that the virus was equally distributed between symptomatic and asymptomatic
528 plants in the correlation study. Our results do not allow us to conclude regarding a
529 potential synergistic effect of ShVS with SMYSaV infection, as shown for SLV and
530 GarCLV with potyviruses [2]. Overall, the very tight correlation between SMYSaV
531 infection and the SMYSD symptoms support the notion of an association if not a causal
532 role for SMYSaV, but further experiments are necessary to unambiguously

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533 demonstrate it and to explore potential synergistic effects with other co-infecting
534 viruses.
535

536 Acknowledgements

537 The authors would like to thank the GenomEast platform (Institut de Génétique
538 et de Biologie Moléculaire et Cellulaire, CNRS/INSERM/Université de Strasbourg,
539 Illkirch, France) for the Illumina sequencing, and T. Mauduit and C. Chesseron for
540 taking care of experimental plants.
541

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Supporting information

S1 Fig. Neighbor-joining tree reconstructed from the alignment of amino acid sequences of the coat protein of allexivirus members and shallot virus X isolates. Validity of branches was evaluated by bootstrap analysis (1,000 replicates). Only bootstrap values above 70% are shown. The scale bar represents 5% amino acid divergence. The sequences of ShVX determined in this work are underlined. Potato virus X (NC011620, genus *Potexvirus*) was used as outgroup.

S2 Fig. Neighbor-joining tree reconstructed from the alignment of nucleotide sequences of a partial fragment (247 nt) of the coat protein gene obtained from a range of shallot mild yellow stripe associated virus isolates. Statistical significance of the branches was evaluated by bootstrap analysis (1,000 replicates). Only bootstrap values higher than 70% are indicated. The scale bar represents 5% nucleotide divergence. The primer pair used for the RT-PCR (ShMYSV-F1/ShMYSV-R1) is indicated in Table S1. Relevant nucleotide sequences were deposited in the GenBank database under accession numbers MG910501 to MG910598. Isolates found in co-infection with onion yellow dwarf virus or leek yellow stripe virus are indicated in italics. The scores of leaves striping (S) and loss of vigor (V) are indicated

629 (scale of notation from 0 to 3). The two identified phylogenetic clusters are indicated
630 on the right of the figure.

631

632 **S1 Table. Oligonucleotides used in the present study for the completion of the**
633 **seven viral genomes and the detection of onion dwarf virus and leek yellow**
634 **stripe virus**

635

636 **S2 Table. Percentages of identities in nucleotides (nt) and in amino acids (aa)**
637 **between shallot mild yellow stripe associated virus and members of the genus**
638 ***Potyvirus*** **over the large ORF and in two genomic regions**

639

640 **S3 Table. Percentage of identity in the replicase and coat protein genes and**
641 **deduced proteins between shallot virus S and closest relative carlaviruses [a].**