

working title Compatibility system and stigma size are the main predictors of heterospecific pollen effect

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Pollinator sharing can have negative consequences for plant fitness with the arrival of foreign pollen. However, the costs of heterospecific pollen are not yet well understood. We conducted a glasshouse experiment to understand how phylogenetic relatedness and plant traits mediate the impacts of heterospecific pollen transfer. We conducted 4XXXX crosses by experimentally transferring pollen (50% and 100% ratio) with reciprocal crosses between 10 species belonging to three different families: Brassicaceae, Solanaceae and Convolvulaceae. Seed set was used as proxy of plant fitness. We found that for 65% of the treatments with 50% mix reduced seed set. Moreover, the reduction in seed set was dependent on the degree of relatedness and reproductive traits of the pollen recipient and not the pollen donor. Our results show that certain traits, particularly compatibility system, are critical in understanding the costs of heterospecific pollen.

Keywords: heterospecific pollen, plant reproduction, fitness, interspecific competition, phylogenetic distance.

INTRODUCTION

In most ecosystems, plant species normally coexist and share their floral visitors with other species Waser et al. (1996). From the plants' perspective, pollinator sharing can be positive for some plants Carvalheiro et al. (2014) or negative for others Pauw (2013), depending on the facilitation gradient. An increasing number of visits often correlates with higher chances of fertilization Engel and Irwin (2003). However this is not always the case, among these possible flower visitors there are also nectar robbers and pollen thieves Inouye (1980); Magrach et al. (2017). Receiving both sufficient quantity and quality deposited on the stigma is thus highly relevant to the pollination success of the plant Aizen and Harder (2007).

34 By visiting many plant species, many pollinators are responsible for conspecific pollen loss and the
35 transport of foreign pollen, both of which can have important detrimental effects on species fitness
36 Morales and Traveset (2008); Ashman and Arceo-Gómez (2013); Arceo-Gómez and Ashman (2016).
37 Foreign pollen arrival can play an important role in plant species fitness but outcomes are variable and
38 appear to be context dependent as there is not always a decrease in fitness Morales and Traveset (2008).
39 Some of this variation is likely due to the enormous variability of foreign pollen transferred across
40 systems ranging from 0 to 75 percent. However, most studies report ranges of heterospecific pollen
41 between 0 and 20 percent of the total pollen load Bartomeus et al. (2008) Montgomery and Rathcke
42 (2012); Ashman and Arceo-Gómez (2013); Fang and Huang (2013), yet even these relatively low
43 amounts of heterospecific pollen transferred can decrease fitness greatly Thomson et al. (1982). While
44 we now have some understanding of the impacts of heterospecific pollen quantity, we have less
45 understanding of other factors that could be driving the variation in impacts upon fitness. Ashman and
46 Arceo-Gómez (2013) postulated the first predictive framework that identifies a need to understand how
47 plant traits might mediate heterospecific pollen effect, whereby mating system and pollen size were
48 predicted to potentially mediate the impact of foreign pollen transfer on plant fitness. This concept is
49 supported by specific case studies, such as Tong and Huang (2016) that demonstrate an asymmetrical
50 effect in 6 species of *Pedicularis* whereby the pollen of long styled species was able to grow the full
51 length of the style on short styled species but not vice versa. While this suggests that the impacts of
52 heterospecific pollen may differ among pollen donor and recipient, few studies have been conducted to
53 ascertain whether this pattern is in fact a general trend or to identify the extent to which other plant
54 traits are critical to heterospecific pollen impacts.

55 Plant traits are crucial to understand heterospecific pollen effect but the multifactorial nature of the
56 traits that are involve in the pollen-pistil interaction make difficult to unravel what are the main traits
57 in driving the effect. These traits can be seen from a male perspective of both donor and recipient
58 where pollen size, pollen aperture number and pollen allelopathy are key components to understand the
59 outcome of foreign pollen arrival Murphy and Aarssen (1995); Ashman and Arceo-Gómez (2013). In
60 Ashman and Arceo-Gómez (2013) small pollen is predicted to cause a greater fitness decrease, although
61 this can be true there are also other possibilities to consider which can obscure a predictive framework
62 like big pollen can clogg small stigmas with fewer pollen grains, bigger stigmas are less likely to be

63 clogged by small pollen grains and bigger pollen can outcompete smaller pollen grains due to faster
64 pollen tube growth rate Williams and Rouse (1990). Moreover, to understand the different mechanical
65 or chemical effects of pollen also the female traits of the pollen recipient have to be considered, from
66 the literature these main traits are: stigma size, style length, number of ovules, incompatibility system
67 and also a structural trait such as flower morphology Montgomery and Rathcke (2012); Ashman and
68 Arceo-Gómez (2013); Tong and Huang (2016). For example, greater stigmatic area is positively
69 correlated with greater heterospecific pollen deposition Montgomery and Rathcke (2012) and therefore
70 possibly with an increase in negative effect. For species that are self-incompatible the barriers towards
71 heterospecific pollen are stronger than self-compatible species Ashman and Arceo-Gómez (2013).
72 Nonetheless, an effect of foreign pollen is a bit obscured by the variability within species, however
73 species that are strong selfers or strong outcrossers have less variability in mating systems and
74 predictions of effect could be more realistic (see figure 1 from Whitehead et al. (2018)). Although past
75 research has progress in the understanding of what traits can mediate the effect as we have shown here,
76 there are multiple traits involved and multiple possible scenarios still to be explored empirically for a
77 full understanding of the importance of heterospecific pollen effect in nature.

78 For the understanding at what level or intensity the interference of pollen can occur is important to
79 consider the relatedness of the interacting species. Closely related species are more likely to have similar
80 traits Letten and Cornwell (2015). The similarity in traits between closely related species can lead to
81 higher chances of ovule usurpation/abortion Arceo-Gómez and Ashman (2011) and therefore studies
82 predict and show a greater negative effect of closely related species Ashman and Arceo-Gómez (2013);
83 Arceo-Gómez and Ashman (2016). Few studies however, have focused on the impacts of heterospecific
84 pollen on fitness of distantly related species Galen and Gregory (1989); Neiland and Wilcock (1999).
85 Yet, most insects and most stigmas have been found to carry multiple species of foreign pollen with
86 little attention to degree of relatedness (Arceo-Gómez and Ashman (2016); Fang and Huang (2013)).
87 The relative amounts of closely/far related pollen that arrives to a stigma gives a first snapshot where
88 pollen competition can occur and improves the understanding of how important the reduction of fitness
89 can be. With that said, Arceo-Gómez and Ashman (2016) is the only work which has tested the effect
90 of far and close related pollen with published data with low sample sizes and lack of significance.

91 Further, a majority of plant species are generalist and thus receive visits from multiple different

92 pollinators. Given these are generally the ones that receive greater loads of heterospecific pollen Fang
 93 and Huang (2013) and unrelated species are more likely to coexist with other species due to less niche
 94 overlap (Ref), understanding the role of foreign pollen from distantly related species thus deserves
 95 greater attention in understanding coexistence blah blahXXXXX refs.. Notwithstanding, the effect of
 96 heterospecific pollen of far and close related species at community level remains to be explored beyond
 97 single pairwise interactions. Moreover, heterospecific pollen studies in nature have the complexity
 98 added great environmental variability which can lead to confounding interpretations and diverse floral
 99 structures and some of them complex such as Asteraceae species, which involve tedious work to be able
 100 to study foreign pollen effect. For this reason, we investigated how floral reproductive traits and
 101 relatedness mediate the impact of heterospecific transfer by asking the following research questions : To
 102 what extent do (i) floral reproductive traits and (ii) relatedness, mediate the impacts of heterospecific
 103 pollen on seed set. We do this by creating an artificial co-flowering community with 10 species
 104 belonging to three different families with different traits.

105 METHODS

106 The study was conducted in a glasshouse at University of New England (Armidale, Australia) from
 107 November 2017 to March 2018. Rooms were temperature controlled depending on the requirements of
 108 the species with day and night temperature differences. The species selected (**Table 1**) belonged to
 109 three different families, Solanaceae, Brassicaceae and Convolvulaceae. The criteria of species/family
 110 selection was based on close/distant related species (see phylogenetic tree for relatedness fig 1)I would
 111 explain more the baauty of our nested dessign to ensure close and far distance simultaneously,
 112 heterogeneous traits, low structural flower complexity and fast life cycle. For the purpose of the
 113 experiment all the species where considered as pollen recipient and as pollen donor (see interaction
 114 matrix, fig 2). Species were watered once or twice per day and fertilized weekly (NPK 23: 3.95: 14).

115 **Table 1**

Family	Genus	Species
Brassicaceae	Brassica	Brassica rapa

Family	Genus	Species
Brassicaceae	Brassica	Brassica oleracea
Brassicaceae	Eruca	Eruca versicaria
Brassicaceae	Sinapis	Sinapis alba
Convolvulaceae	Ipomoea	Ipomoea aquatica
Convolvulaceae	Ipomoea	Ipomoea purpurea
Solanaceae	Capsicum	Capsicum annuum
Solanaceae	Petunia	Petunia integrifolia
Solanaceae	Solanum	Solanum lycopersicum
Solanaceae	Solanum	Solanum melongena

116 Hand-pollination

117 Foreign pollen effect was studied through two different treatments, one with 50% conspecific pollen and
118 50% heterospecific pollen and a second one with 100% foreign pollen (N=10) this second I don't get,
119 maybe explain it's utility.. Therefore, 180 different combinations were performed with N=10 per
120 combination. Seed set was the proxy of effect for all our treatments. Moreover, hand cross pollination
121 (between individuals of the same species), hand self pollination, apomixis (bagged emasculated flowers)
122 and natural selfing were tested for each species (N=10). For the treatments with foreign pollen and
123 hand cross pollination, flowers were emasculated the day prior anthesis and hand pollinated next day
124 with a toothpick. Hand-pollination was conducted with 3-4 gentle touches on the stigma surface. The
125 mixes of pollen were realized on an eppendorf based on the pollen counts made with Neubauer chamber
126 (each anther was counted 4 times for 20 different anthers per species)-IB explain better and give a bit
127 more of detail. In order to confirm that the treatments applied were 50-50 percent pollen, for each focal
128 species the total stigmatic load of pollen was counted from one donor of each family (N=3).

129 Traits and evolutive distance

130 The traits measured for each species were pollen per anther, number of ovules, stigma width and length
131 and stigmatic area, style width and length, ovary width and length. Moreover stigma type explain was

132 tested. Pollen was counted for 20 anthers of each species with 4 replicates per sample with an
133 hemocytometer. Previously, anthers were squashed on a known solution with the pipette tip and
134 homogenized with a vortex for 30 seconds. Ovule number was counted with the help of an
135 stereomicroscope and a small grid over a petri dish from 15 randomly selected flowers. The different
136 morphometrical traits were measured with a digital stereomicroscope. Levels of self incompatibility were
137 estimated by dividing the fruit set of hand self pollination by hand cross pollination Lloyd and Schoen
138 (1992).

139 **Analysis**

140 We used the statistical language R (R Core Team 2018) for all our analyses. Differences of seed set
141 between treatments and hand cross pollination for each species was tested through mixed linear models.
142 For the following analysis we scaled the values of seed production for all the species with mean 0 and sd
143 of 1. To test the effect of heterospecific pollen, we subtracted to the seed set of hand cross pollination
144 the seed set of heterospecific pollen treatments. In order to see correlations between heterospecific
145 pollen effect and traits we performed Mantel test between the matrix of heterospecific pollen effect and
146 the distance matrix of each trait (euclidean distances). Moreover, Mantel test was also conducted
147 between heterospecific pollen effect and the square root of the matrix of phylogenetic distance due to
148 improvement in the statistical power (Letten & Cornwell 2014). all is here, but I would break it by
149 questions and give a bit more detail, to avoid overwhelm the reader We explored also the relations
150 between traits and heterospecific pollen effect through generalized mixed models where the response
151 variable was heterospecific pollen effect, the independent variable the different traits and the random
152 effects the different treatments per species [Here I think you should think if this controls for the non
153 independency of donors and recipients. I think not. Maybe look onto matrix regressions?). Moreover,
154 pairwise evolutive distances were calculated with MEGA7 for two kinds of markers: 1) Internal
155 transcribed spacer (ITS) and 2) ribulose-bisphosphate carboxylase (RBCL). The sequences of interest
156 were downloaded from NCBI GenBank and the phylogenetic tree constructed by maximum likelihood
157 with MEGA7. Make a section on how you constructed phylogeny.

158 I would explain three test. 0) treatment effects with GLM's, 1) Mantels: relative effects, 2) GLM's or
159 matrix models: Absolute effects and explain them in three independent paragraphs including a

160 rationale of why

161 [Phylogenetic signal of traits?](#)

162 RESULTS

163 Results of hand cross pollination, self hand pollination, natural selfing and apomixis are presented in
164 **Table 2.** Heterospecific pollen reduced seed set significantly with the 50-50% heterospecific pollen
165 treatments for 65% of the pairwise interactions $p < 0.05$. Across families we found a very similar effect
166 but when species were looked at species level they respond differently even within the same family
167 rephrase and maybe test statistically?, for instance for two species of the Brassicaceae family *Brassica*
168 *oleracea* and *Eruca versicaria* we found very contrasting effects of foreign pollen where for the first one,
169 all donors reduce seed set significantly and for the second, just two species did out of nine. The 100%
170 foreign pollen treatments barely produced seeds or fruits and just for *Sinapis alba* we did not find
171 significant differences between the hand cross pollination and one treatment with pollen from a
172 confamilial- IB Unclear. Solanaceae species with berry fruit type developed small fruits or even normal
173 fruits in some cases under which treatment. *S. lycopersicum* seems to produce small fruits (35% of the
174 treatments) independently of pollen and pollen donor due to also apomictic treatments did, never
175 normal size. *C. annuum* produced some fruits (9%) of both small and normal size and finally *S.*
176 *melongena* produced seedless normal fruits with just confamilial pollen (3%), for both species seems
177 that fruit formation was induced by pollen on the stigma because of lack of fruit production with
178 treatments that tested for apomixis. clarify this descriptive statistics part- Also a figure with a summary
179 of the treatments effect would be cool, or at least in the appendices

180 **Table 2.** Percentage of seeds produced per ovule for the ten species used in the experiment. The
181 treatments presented are hand cross pollination, hand self pollination, natural selfing and apomixis
182 (emasculated flowers). turn into a figure somehow?

Species	Cross	Self	Natural_selfing	Apomixis
Brassica oleracea	32.06897	0.0000000	0.00000	0
Brassica rapa	44.97041	0.0000000	0.00000	0
Eruca versicaria	23.75000	0.4166667	0.00000	0
Sinapis alba	43.33333	48.3333333	5.00000	15
Ipomoea aquatica	40.00000	30.0000000	20.00000	0
Ipomoea purpurea	31.66667	86.6666667	31.66667	0
Capsicum annuum	100.00000	66.2240664	23.48548	0
Petunia integrifolia	100.00000	24.7727273	0.00000	0
Solanum lycopersicum	90.38043	43.4782609	70.00000	0
Solanum melongena	60.47525	87.9702970	21.56436	0

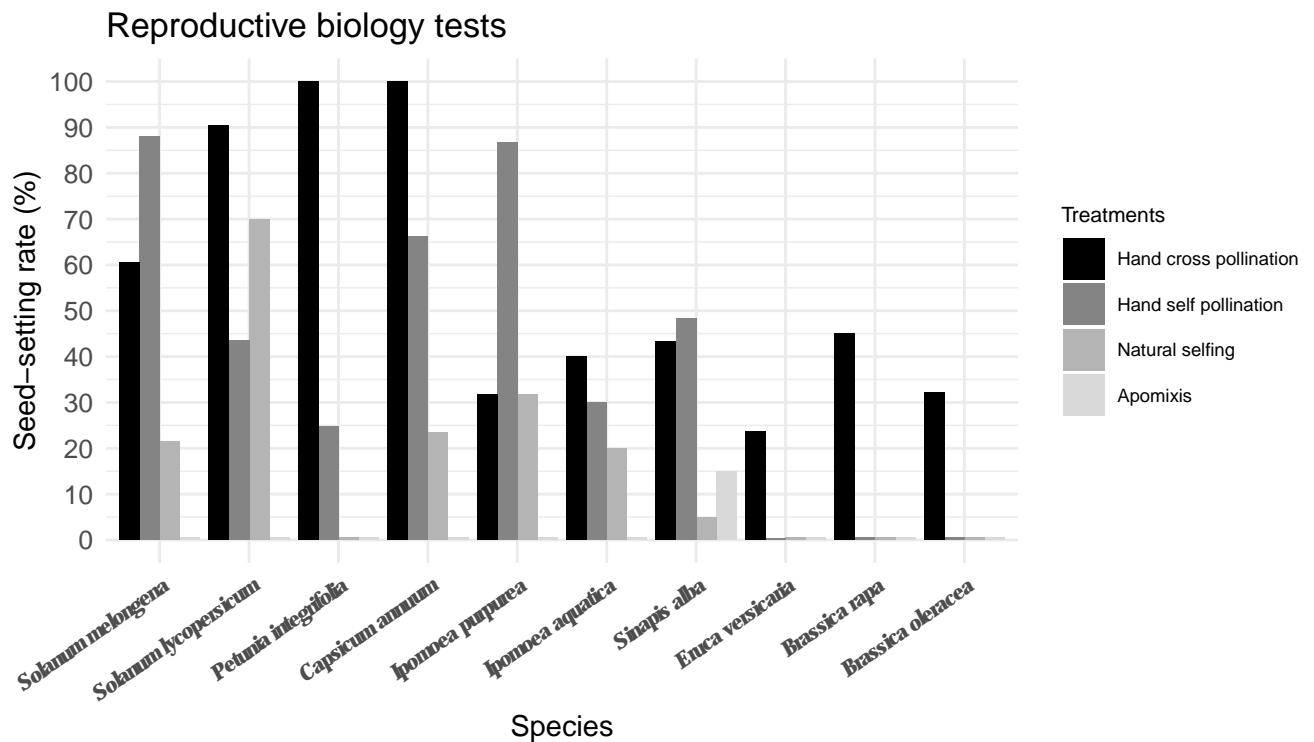


Figure 1: Barplot with the different treatments that provide information of the reproductive biology of the ten species. The y axis is the proportion of ovules converted to seed in percentage. The different treatments (N=10) which are presented in the legend are, hand cross pollination, hand self pollination, natural selfing and apomixis. More information about these treatments can be found in Methods and Appendices.

Mantel test indicates that a possible?? It exists! correlation exist between heterospecific pollen effect and the evolutive relative distances, for ITS and RBCL markers we had r coefficients of 0.29 and 0.25 respectively $p < 0.05$ think on a figure - maybe using NMDS. Moreover, Mantel test indicates that also a possible?? correlation between stigma width and stigma type exist (stats??). Trait correlations were also explored with GLMM

I have done it at the moment just for Compatibility system Also I have to fix from mixed linear model to GLMM, just realize that

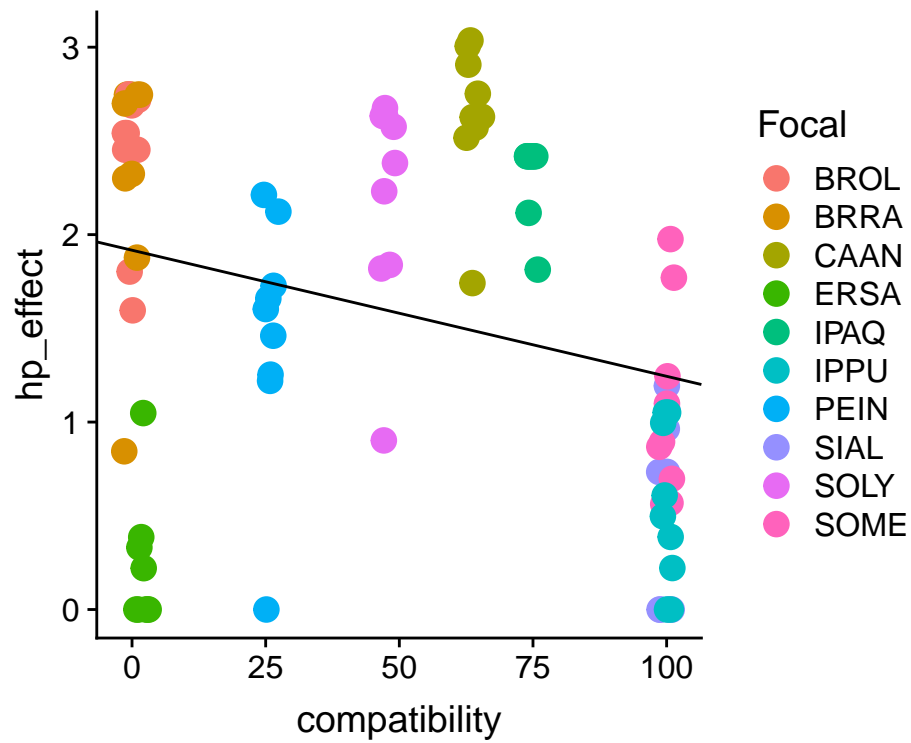


Figure 2: The effect of heterospecific pollen (scaled see set) is represented in function of the compatibility system (self/cross*100) for the the different species. Each coulored dot represents the interaction of a focal species with a different pollen donor.

190 [Compatibility index don't multiply per 100 from Lloyd](#)

191 DISCUSSION

192 Discussion

193 Herbs vs trees, annual vs perennial... Many flowers vs few flowered species; structural composition on
194 a system

195 What are the implications of the findings?

196 Ideas about pollen size in heterospecific pollen effect. (still have to develop it more...)

197 Let's classify pollen size in three groups in order to understand the interaction between pollen donor
198 and recipient: 1) Donor pollen size < Recipient pollen size 2) Donor pollen size = Recipient pollen size
199 3) Donor pollen size > Recipient pollen size

200 Now I try to develop each part

201 1) Donor pollen size < Recipient pollen size

202 Effect:

- 203 • Donor's pollen could clog the stigma
- 204 • Chemical inhibition

205 Traits associated with bigger pollen of the recipient:

- 206 • Recipient's pollen have faster pollen tube growth (example with my data)
- 207 • Reduction in number of ovules (Also with my species)
- 208 • Big differences in pollen size can be translated in low relatedness therefore less likely of pollen
209 germination on a far related stigma.

210 2) Donor pollen size = Recipient pollen size

- 211 • Very relatedness dependant this point

212 • Similar probabilities of taken space on the stigma

213 3) Donor pollen size > Recipient pollen size

214 Effect:

215 -In small stigmas big pollen grains can occupy great part of the stigmatic area.

216 -small pollen grains can get embedded

217 IB: Think also on using tree analysis to test if hp effect depends on complex trait combinations. Tree
218 analysis are great when two different strategies lead to the same outcome. This would never been pick
219 up by GLMs. The r package is `party`. You can see an example applied to birds is Sol et al 2010
220 Science. Ask me if you want more details or code examples.

221 CONCLUSIONS

222 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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