

# THE FAT-CAT WEB SERVER

## QUICK-START GUIDE

Last revised 2/10/2013

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Look for this icon to find helpful hints on using FAT-CAT and interpreting results.

## 1.7 The FAT-CAT Pipeline

The FAT-CAT pipeline starts with the submission of a protein sequence and parameter selection and proceeds through family and subtree HMM scoring to ortholog identification and functional annotation. The FAST-CAT variant differs from the default FAT-CAT pipeline in stage 3 (indicated by red arrows).

In stage 1, the query is scored against family HMMs in the PhyloFacts database for proteins sharing the same multi-domain architecture (MDA, shown at top) and HMMs constructed for Pfam domains (shown at bottom). Families meeting stage 1 criteria are passed to stage 2. In this toy example, PhyloFacts trees for two Pfam domains and a tree for the multi-domain architecture meet stage 1 criteria and are passed to stage 2.

In stage 2, we score all the HMMs in the tree. The subtree node corresponding to the top-scoring HMM is examined to determine its suitability as a source of orthologs to the query. For each top-scoring node that meets these criteria we identify a (typically larger) enclosing clade supported by one or more orthology methods. Enclosing clades are passed to Stage 3 for ortholog identification.

In stage 3, sequences in the enclosing clades are retrieved and analyzed for agreement with pre-defined minimum sequence identity and overlap to the query. FAT-CAT (blue arrows) evaluates the pairwise alignment between the query and each sequence and identifies all supporting evidence supporting the orthology. FAST-CAT (red arrows) uses a fast k-tuple comparison to select the most similar sequences from the enclosing clade, constructs an MSA including the query, estimates a phylogenetic tree, and extracts a subtree of the phylogenetically closest sequences. Alignment analysis is then restricted to this smaller subset. Sequences meeting these criteria are passed to stage 4.

In stage 4, we derive a weighted consensus functional annotation for the query based on orthologs selected in stage 3. Annotations from close orthologs are given higher weight than those from more distant orthologs, and manually curated annotations are given higher weight than those that are derived computationally.

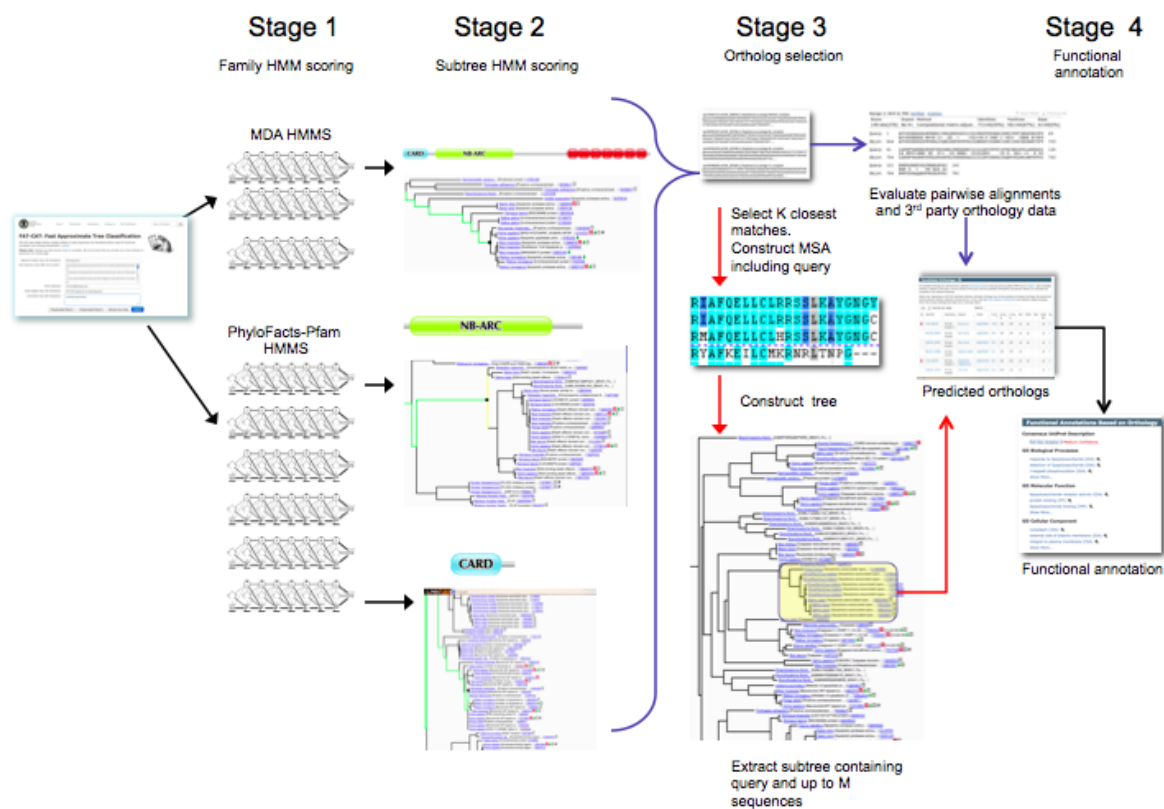


Figure 1. FAT-CAT pipeline. The FAST-CAT variant is shown in red.

## 2. SUBMITTING A SEQUENCE TO THE FAT-CAT WEBSERVER

**FAT-CAT: Fast Approximate Tree Classification**

FAT-CAT is a server for functional annotation and ortholog identification of protein sequences. [About the FAT-CAT pipeline.](#) [Quickstart guide.](#) View precalculated results: [Result 1](#) [Result 2](#)

We recommend that you provide your email address or bookmark the results page, as some results may take minutes to hours to complete.

Sequence header (max 100 characters) **A**

Protein sequence (max 2000 amino acids, no header) \* **B**

Email (optional) **C**

Email subject (max 100 characters) **D**

Comments (max 200 characters) **E**

**F** Sample Input Data **G** Submit

**H** ☐ Run FAST-CAT

**I** Parameter presets: **High recall** High precision Remote homologs Partial sequence

Best option for most inputs: designed to retrieve most orthologs and very few non-orthologs.

**J** [+ View parameters/modify parameters manually](#)

Figure 2. FAT-CAT input form at <http://phylogenomics.berkeley.edu/phylofacts/fatcat/>.

### 2.1 The input form (figure 1).

**A:** Header line (optional). Recommended so that you can remember what sequence you submitted.

**B:** Protein sequence (required). Input your sequence in raw format – no header line, just the amino acids .

**C:** Email address (optional). If you'd like results to be sent to you by email, input your email address. Otherwise, bookmark the results page displayed after you click Submit.

**D:** Email subject (optional): If you enter your email address, you may optionally fill in the "Email subject" section, e.g., to include the sequence identifier; the default subject line will read "PhyloFacts FAT-CAT Job <number> has completed".

**E:** Comments (optional). Comments will be stored in the Job Summary section of the Results.

**F:** Sample Input Data. Clicking on this button populates the form so that you can see what kind of input is expected in each section.

**G:** Submit. Click on this when you're ready to launch the job. It will bring you to a progress page which you can bookmark and where you can track the progress of your job.

**H:** FAST-CAT. FAST-CAT is a beta version of FAT-CAT (in other words, we haven't debugged it completely) that is designed for speed.

**I:** Parameter presets. We provide four different combinations of parameters designed for different types of input sequences. If you click on each button you'll see a brief description of the types of inputs these settings are designed to handle. See the Decision Tree section of this guide for additional information.

**J:** View/Modify parameters. Click on this link to view and edit any individual parameters.

## 2.2 What types of sequences does FAT-CAT accept?

FAT-CAT expects raw amino acid sequence – no header line – in the input box. You can put the header line into the corresponding section of the input form (optional). Nucleotide data are NOT accepted. The maximum sequence length is 2000 amino acids.

Most bioinformatics web servers allow either FASTA input (in which the first line is a “header line” starting with a “>” symbol) or raw sequence, which omits the header line. These are shown below.

Example FASTA input:

```
>sp|Q9XT58|ADRB3_SHEEP Beta-3 adrenergic receptor OS=Ovis aries GN=ADRB3 PE=3 SV=2
MAPWPPGNSSLTPWPDITLAPNTANASGLPGVPAVALAGALLALAVLATVGGNLLVIV
AIARTPRLQTMTNVFVTSLATADLVVGLLVVPPGATLALTGHWPLGVTGCELWTSVDVLC
VTASIELTLCALAVDRYLAVTNPLRYGALVTKRRARAADVLVVWVSAVSAFAPIMSKWWRV
GADAEARCHSNPRCCTFASNMPYALLSSSVSFYLPPLVLMFVYARVFFVATRQLRLRR
ELGRFPPEESPPAPSRSGSPGAGPYASPAAGVPSYGRPARLLPLREHRALRTLGLIMGT
FTLCWLPFFVNVNVRALGGPSLVSGPTFLALNWLGYANSFNPFLIYCRSPDFRSFRRL
CRCPPEEHLAAASPPRAPSGAPTTLTSPAGPRQPSPLDGASCGLS
```

The raw sequence for this entry is:

```
MAPWPPGNSSLTPWPDITLAPNTANASGLPGVPAVALAGALLALAVLATVGGNLLVIV
AIARTPRLQTMTNVFVTSLATADLVVGLLVVPPGATLALTGHWPLGVTGCELWTSVDVLC
VTASIELTLCALAVDRYLAVTNPLRYGALVTKRRARAADVLVVWVSAVSAFAPIMSKWWRV
GADAEARCHSNPRCCTFASNMPYALLSSSVSFYLPPLVLMFVYARVFFVATRQLRLRR
ELGRFPPEESPPAPSRSGSPGAGPYASPAAGVPSYGRPARLLPLREHRALRTLGLIMGT
FTLCWLPFFVNVNVRALGGPSLVSGPTFLALNWLGYANSFNPFLIYCRSPDFRSFRRL
CRCPPEEHLAAASPPRAPSGAPTTLTSPAGPRQPSPLDGASCGLS
```

The header line is: >sp|Q9XT58|ADRB3\_SHEEP Beta-3 adrenergic receptor OS=Ovis aries GN=ADRB3 PE=3

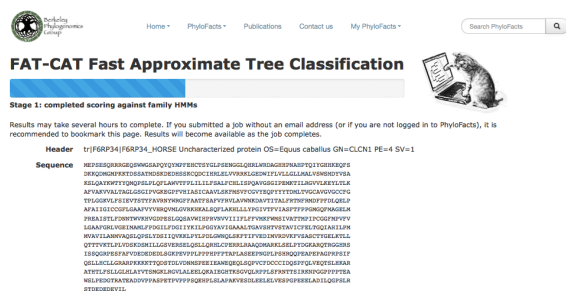
Figure 3. FASTA and raw sequence formats. FAST-CAT requires raw sequence input (amino acid only).

## 2.3 Submitting your email address or bookmarking the results page.

We encourage you to submit your email address, as many FAT-CAT jobs can take an hour or longer to return. If you don't want to give your email address, then bookmark the page that displays after you click Submit. Or copy the URL and save it for your records.

## 2.4 Tracking the progress of your job.

After you click Submit, you will be brought to a page where you can track the progress of your submitted job. You will be reminded to bookmark that page if you haven't submitted your email address.



## 3. Selecting and modifying FAT-CAT pipeline parameters

Pipeline parameters for stages 1 through 3 are designed to accommodate different types of input sequences.

## 3.1 A decision tree to guide parameter selection.

The decision tree shown in Figure 4 is included to help you choose among pre-set parameter settings.

High Recall settings – the FAT-CAT default – are designed to handle sequences that are full-length, contain no promiscuous domains and have no close paralogs (e.g., with high sequence identities).

High Precision settings are designed for cases where a sequence is known to contain a promiscuous domain or that is in a protein superfamily with close paralogs (e.g., with >70% identity).

Partial Sequence settings are designed to handle sequences missing a region that its close homologs (and presumed orthologs) contain. Some of these may represent splice variants or gene model errors.

By contrast, the Remote Homolog Detection settings handle cases where few or no homologs, or only matches that align over local regions, can be found by BLAST. In this last case, however, we remind users that results will represent distant homologs that may not have the same function and may not be actual orthologs.

### 3.2 What if you don't know anything about your query?

The decision tree shown in Figure 4 assumes you know something about your query. But what if you have no idea how to answer those questions? You have two options.

**Option 1:** Go ahead and submit your sequence to FAT-CAT and see what happens. If too many results are returned or if you see paralogs in the results, resubmit with the High Precision settings. If too few results are returned, resubmit with Remote Homolog detection settings, or modify individual program parameters to relax constraints.

**Option 2:** Use BLAST and Pfam to do a little bioinformatics analysis to get some information about your query.

**Is your sequence complete?** If your sequence is annotated as a partial sequence or fragment, it's not complete. But many sequences that are annotated as complete are actually incomplete. To figure out which is which, try running BLAST and see what kinds of results display. For instance, if BLAST matches include many sequences that are roughly the same length as your query and align well along their entire length, your sequence is probably complete.

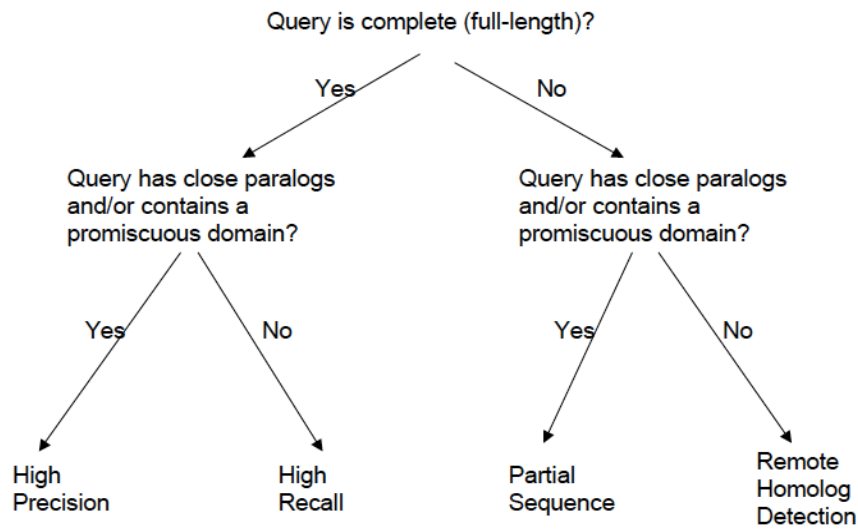
However, if BLAST detects close homologs with high sequence identity (e.g., >70% identity) but your sequence is shorter than these close homologs, your sequence may be partial due either to a gene model error, alternative splicing or some other cause.

**Does your sequence contain a promiscuous domain?** Try submitting your query to Pfam (e.g., at <http://pfam.sanger.ac.uk/>) to see what Pfam domains are present. For each Pfam domain found, check the Domain Arrangements tab – if any Pfam domains in your query are found in many different domain arrangements, your query has a promiscuous domain.

**Does your sequence have close paralogs?** If BLAST analysis lists many proteins with high sequence identity (e.g., >70%) and obviously different functions, your query may be in a superfamily with recent duplication events. Examples of this type include different ion channels, G-protein coupled receptors, toll-like receptors, globins, and defensins.



**Tip:** You can submit your sequence to FAT-CAT using the default settings, set for high recall. If too many results are returned or paralogs are included in the candidate orthologs, resubmit using the High Precision settings. If too few results are returned or you see orthologs are included in the “Other Sequence Matches” tab, modify parameters manually to relax sequence identity or alignment overlap requirements. You can also try the Remote Homolog Detection settings.



**Figure 4. Decision Tree for selection from the four parameter setting presets.**

High Recall settings are designed to handle sequences that are full-length, contain no promiscuous domains and have no close paralogs.

High Precision settings are designed to handle sequences containing a promiscuous domain (e.g., a kinase domain, leucine-rich repeat, or other commonly found structural domain) or having closely related paralogs.

The Partial Sequence settings are designed to handle sequences that have a gene model error or that are splice variants but where closely related homologs can be detected by BLAST.

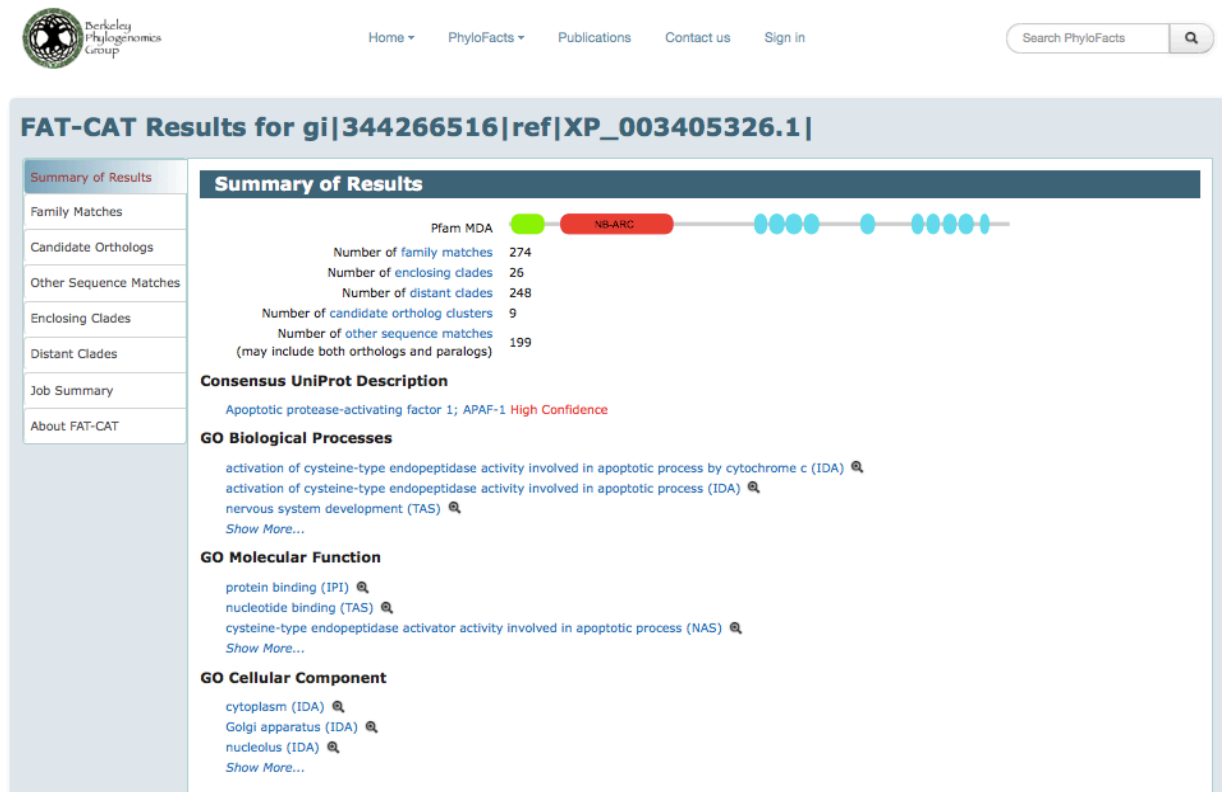
The Remote Homolog Detection settings handle cases where few or no homologs can be found by BLAST. In this last case, however, we remind users that results will represent distant homologs that may not have the same function and may not be actual orthologs.

## 4. Interpreting FAT-CAT results: A case study.

The figure below presents FAT-CAT results for gi|344266516|ref|XP\_003405326.1, a predicted apoptotic protease-activating factor 1 isoform 1 from *Loxodonta africana* (African elephant). This result corresponds to PhyloFacts job 2570, and is available at <http://makana.berkeley.edu/phylofacts/fatcat/2570/>.

In this example, we used the FAT-CAT program defaults (as of 2/8/13), designed for high recall.

### 4.1 Summary of results



**Figure 5. Summary of Results:** overview of results, including the Pfam multi-domain architecture for the query produced by scanning Pfam-A HMMs.

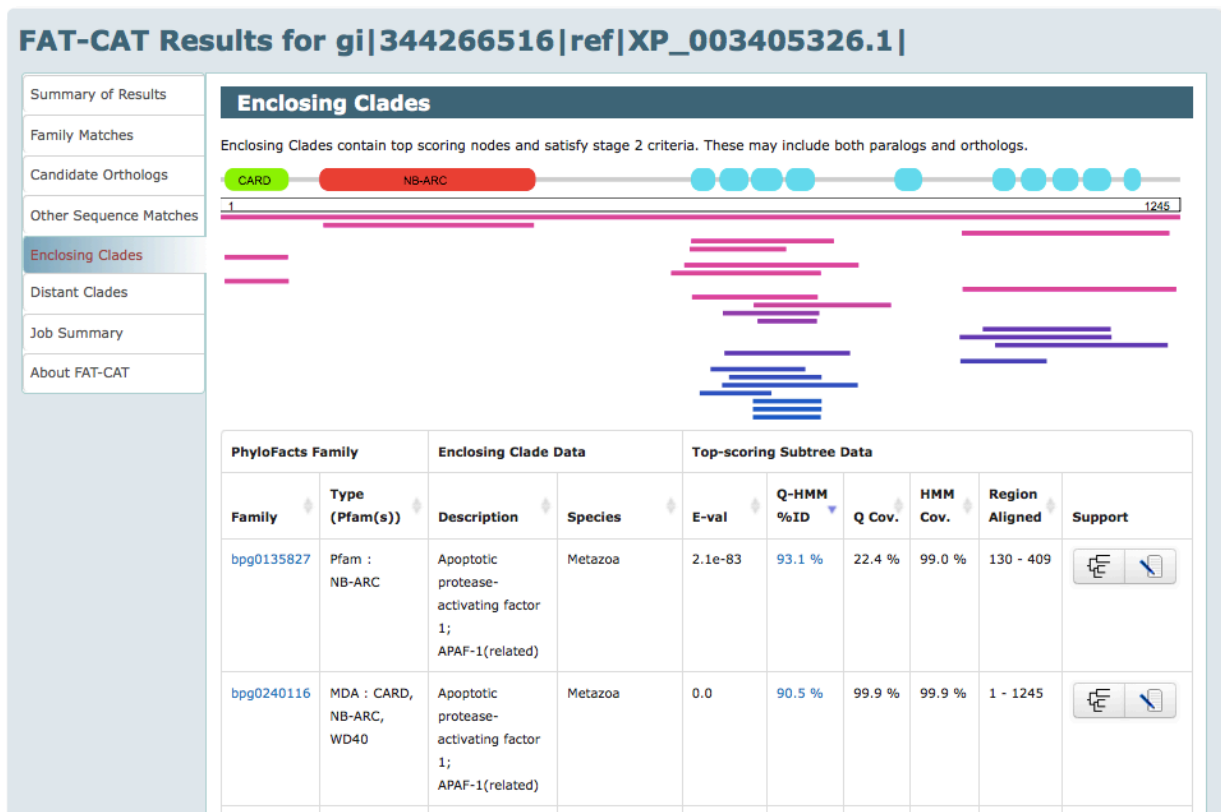
The FAT-CAT pipeline identified 274 families matching Stage 1 criteria, orthologs from nine different genomes (candidate ortholog clusters), and 199 additional homologs that failed one or more criteria for orthology.

Predicted functional annotations for the query derived from orthologs satisfying stage 3 criteria are displayed.

The Job Summary tab displays the input sequence, all pipeline parameters and any comments in the Input Form.



## 4.2 Enclosing clades



**Figure 6. Enclosing clades:** Enclosing clade data passing stage 2 criteria, displaying the top two matches sorted by the sequence identity between the query and the top-scoring subtree HMM.

The top-scoring HMM matches the PhyloFacts-Pfam NB-ARC domain HMM.

The second top-ranked HMM matches along the entire multi-domain architecture (MDA).

Clicking on the Q-HMM %ID will display the alignment between the query and HMM.

**Viewing the tree for an enclosing clade.** Clicking on the tree icon at the far right of the enclosing clade data table launches the PhyloScope viewer, displaying the enclosing clade and highlighting a path to the top-scoring node (based on stage 2 HMM scoring). In many cases this phylogenetic placement provides an approximate taxonomic classification as well as a functional classification, as shown in this case study.



Tree icons on FAT-CAT pages are linked to the PhyloScope tree viewer. Click on these icons to view trees for enclosing clades.



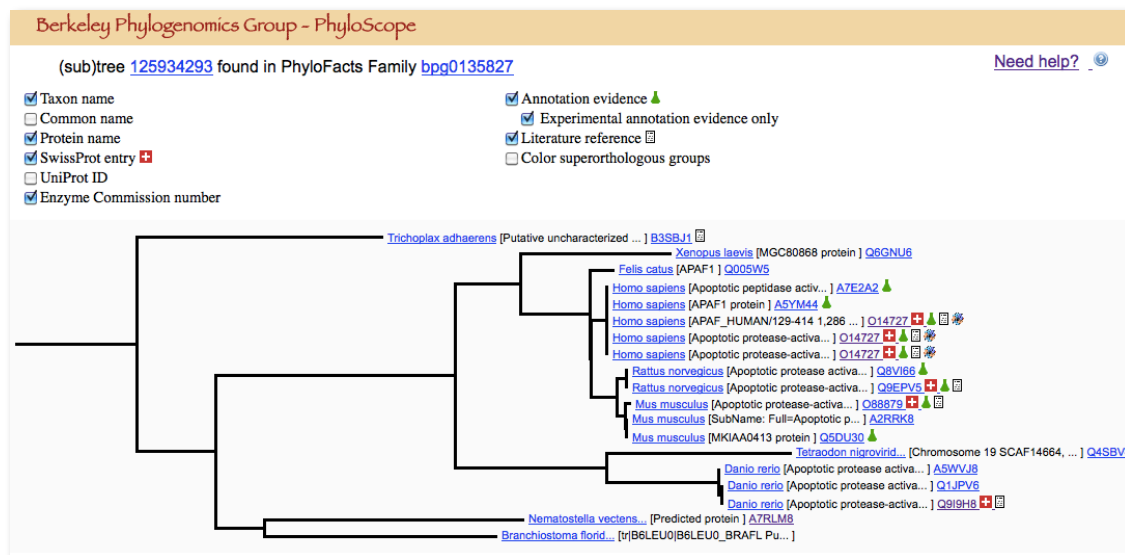


Figure 7. PhyloScope viewer



Trees displayed in PhyloScope are decorated with icons indicating experimental support for GO annotations, PDB structures and biological literature; icons are linked to the databases providing these data. A link to the PhyloScope online help is provided in the upper right corner of the PhyloScope viewer.

## 4.4 Candidate orthologs

**FAT-CAT Results for gi|344266516|ref|XP\_003405326.1|**

Summary of Results  
Family Matches  
**Candidate Orthologs**  
Other Sequence Matches  
Enclosing Clades  
Distant Clades  
Job Summary  
About FAT-CAT

**Candidate Orthologs: 9**

We show for each genome the sequence with the highest percent identity to the query that makes stage 3 criteria. If multiple sequences from a genome meet the criteria, we select one as the representative.

100 records per page      Search:

| SP | Identifier                   | Description   | Species                                | Family                     | % ID | Q-Cov. % | H-Cov. % | Kerf | PHOG | OMA | Ortho MCL | No. |
|----|------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------|------|----------|----------|------|------|-----|-----------|-----|
| +  | <a href="#">APAF_HUMAN</a>   | Apoptotic protease-activating factor 1; APAF-1          | <a href="#">Homo sapiens</a>           | <a href="#">bpg0240116</a> | 91.2 | 100      | 99.8     | ✓    | ✓    | ✓   | ✓         | 4   |
|    | <a href="#">D2HE46_AILME</a> | Putative uncharacterized protein                        | <a href="#">Ailuropoda melanoleuca</a> | <a href="#">bpg0240116</a> | 90.6 | 100      | 99.6     | ✓    | ✓    | ✓   | ✓         | 1   |
| +  | <a href="#">APAF_RAT</a>     | Apoptotic protease-activating factor 1; APAF-1          | <a href="#">Rattus norvegicus</a>      | <a href="#">bpg0240116</a> | 87.1 | 100      | 99.7     | ✓    | ✓    | ✓   | ✓         | 2   |
| +  | <a href="#">APAF_MOUSE</a>   | Apoptotic protease-activating factor 1; APAF-1          | <a href="#">Mus musculus</a>           | <a href="#">bpg0240116</a> | 87.1 | 100      | 99.7     | ✓    | ✓    | ✓   | ✓         | 3   |
|    | <a href="#">Q005W5_FELCA</a> | APAF1   | <a href="#">Felis catus</a>            | <a href="#">bpg0135827</a> | 82.2 | 92.4     | 99.6     | ✓    | ✓    | ✓   | ✓         | 1   |
|    | <a href="#">E1BR73_CHICK</a> | Uncharacterized protein                                 | <a href="#">Gallus gallus</a>          | <a href="#">bpg0240116</a> | 69.8 | 99.8     | 99.4     | ✓    | ✓    | ✓   | ✓         | 2   |
|    | <a href="#">Q6GNU6_XENLA</a> | MGC80868 protein  | <a href="#">Xenopus laevis</a>         | <a href="#">bpg0240116</a> | 62.0 | 99.7     | 99.4     | ✓    | ✓    | ✓   | ✓         | 1   |
| +  | <a href="#">APAF_DANRE</a>   | Apoptotic protease-activating factor 1; APAF-1          | <a href="#">Danio rerio</a>            | <a href="#">bpg0240116</a> | 56.1 | 99.5     | 98.3     | ✓    | ✓    | ✓   | ✓         | 2   |
|    | <a href="#">Q4SBV4_TETNG</a> | Chromosome 19 SCAF14664, whole genome shotgun sequence. | <a href="#">Tetraodon nigroviridis</a> | <a href="#">bpg0135827</a> | 53.4 | 91.8     | 95.3     | ✓    | ✓    | ✓   | ✓         | 1   |

Showing 1 to 9 of 9 entries

← Previous    1    Next →

**Figure 8. Candidate Orthologs.** In this example, nine candidate orthologs are identified; all are supported by all four orthology methods used. If multiple sequences are found from the same genome with the same sequence identity to the query, we pick one as the representative; if one of the cluster is in the SwissProt database, we use that as the representative, else we pick the one with the highest sequence identity.



The Candidate Orthologs data table includes data to help you evaluate the support for each proposed ortholog, and to explore data associated with that ortholog:

- Alignment statistics are provided, including the percent identity, query coverage and hit coverage. Clicking on the value in the %ID column will display the alignment between the query and candidate ortholog.
- Tool-tipping the species will display the common name for that species; clicking will bring you to the NCBI taxonomy.
- Clicking on the sequence identifier will bring you to the UniProt page for that sequence. SwissProt sequences are indicated by the red flag at far left.
- The bpg accession is linked to the family containing the enclosing clade in which the candidate ortholog was found.

## 4.5 Other Sequence Matches

| FAT-CAT Results for gi 344266516 ref XP_003405326.1   |  |              |   |  |            |      |          |          |      |      |     |           |     |
|---|--|--------------|---|--|------------|------|----------|----------|------|------|-----|-----------|-----|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summary of Results</li> <li>Family Matches</li> <li>Candidate Orthologs</li> <li>Other Sequence Matches</li> <li>Enclosing Clades</li> <li>Distant Clades</li> <li>Job Summary</li> <li>About FAT-CAT</li> </ul> | Other Sequence Matches: 199  |              |   |  |            |      |          |          |      |      |     |           |     |
|   | Sequences on this page are drawn from the <a href="#">Enclosing Clades</a> of candidate orthologs but fail one or more criteria for orthology. |              |   |  |            |      |          |          |      |      |     |           |     |
|   | 100 records per page   |              | Search: <input type="text"/>  |  |            |      |          |          |      |      |     |           |     |
|   | SP   | Identifier   | Description   | Species                                  | Family     | % ID | Q-Cov, % | H-Cov, % | Kerf | PHOG | OMA | Ortho MCL | No. |
|   |  | Q80VR5_MOUSE | Apaf1 protein; Apoptotic protease-activating factor 1                                       | Mus musculus                             | bpg0175819 | 82.6 | 20.7     | 100      | ✓    | ✓    | ✓   | ✓         | 1   |
|   |  | D3ZA56_RAT   | Uncharacterized protein   | Rattus norvegicus                        | bpg0240116 | 81.2 | 99.7     | 99.4     | ✓    | ✓    | ✓   | ✓         | 1   |
|   |  | Q8HXQ8_HORSE | Apoptotic protease activating factor 1  | Equus caballus                           | bpg0175819 | 75.0 | 6.7      | 100      | ✓    | ✓    | ✓   | ✓         | 1   |
|   |  | A8WH04_XENTR | LOC100127738 protein  | Xenopus tropicalis                       | bpg0175819 | 66.7 | 26.5     | 100      | ✓    | ✓    | ✓   |           | 1   |
|   |  | Q1JPV6_DANRE | Apoptotic protease activating factor 1  | Danio rerio                              | bpg0135827 | 60.0 | 37.1     | 99.6     | ✓    | ✓    | ✓   | ✓         | 1   |
|   |  | Q10BZ9_ORYSJ | Transducin family protein, putative, expressed; cDNA clone:J023024A21, full insert sequence | Oryza sativa subsp. japonica             | bpg0218243 | 45.3 | 20.6     | 95.9     | ✓    |      |     |           | 1   |
|   |  | D5G214_PODAS | HET-R   | Podospira anserina                       | bpg0237571 | 44.2 | 20       | 98.8     | ✓    |      |     |           | 1   |
|   |  | D5G224_PODAS | NWD1  | Podospira anserina                       | bpg0224070 | 42.9 | 23.6     | 100      | ✓    | ✓    |     |           | 1   |
|   |  | Q8Z054_NOSS1 | WD-40 repeat protein  | Nostoc sp. (strain PCC 7120 / UTEX 2576) | bpg0211459 | 42.6 | 23.4     | 95.7     | ✓    | ✓    |     |           | 1   |

**Figure 9. Other sequence matches.** Sequences displayed on this page have been rejected as candidate orthologs due to failing one or more orthology criteria.

### Why are some sequences rejected as orthologs despite having high sequence identity?

Sequences in an enclosing clade that are listed in Other Sequence Matches are typically rejected as orthologs due to not meeting alignment criteria. In this example, four of the top five fail the query coverage requirements, i.e., they align along only a subregion. The second sequence listed, from *Rattus norvegicus*, has 81% sequence identity and near-perfect overlap (for both the query and hit). However, another sequence from the rat genome was selected as the correct ortholog due to having higher sequence identity (87%).

#### 4.6 How are functional annotations derived?

The **Functional Annotations** section of the Summary of Results displays predicted functions for the query derived from putative orthologs.


We derive a weighted consensus over the UniProt description of the protein's function, weighting close orthologs and manually curated annotations more than distant orthologs and annotations derived automatically. We also display the union over all Gene Ontology annotations (biological process, molecular function and cellular location) along with the best Evidence Code available for that annotation; clicking on the annotation will bring up a list of orthologs having that annotation.

**Consensus UniProt Description**  
Apoptotic protease-activating factor 1; APAF-1 **High Confidence**

**GO Biological Processes**  
activation of cysteine-type endopeptidase activity involved in apoptotic process by cytochrome c (IDA) 🔍  
activation of cysteine-type endopeptidase activity involved in apoptotic process (IDA) 🔍  
nervous system development (TAS) 🔍  
[Show More...](#)

**GO Molecular Function**  
protein binding (IPI) 🔍  
nucleotide binding (TAS) 🔍  
cysteine-type endopeptidase activator activity involved in apoptotic process (NAS) 🔍  
[Show More...](#)

**GO Cellular Component**  
cytoplasm (IDA) 🔍  
Golgi apparatus (IDA) 🔍  
nucleolus (IDA) 🔍  
[Show More...](#)



Magnifying glass icons on PhyloFacts pages allow you to dig down to examine additional data. On the GO annotations section of the Summary of Results, click on the icon to view orthologs having a GO annotation and their evidence codes.

Figure 10. Functional annotations and GO annotations derived for the query from orthologs identified by FAT-CAT.

#### GO Biological Processes

activation of cysteine-type endopeptidase activity involved in apoptotic process by cytochrome c (IDA) 🔍

| Uniprot ID   | Description                                    | Species                | Evidence                                 |
|--------------|--|------------------------|--|
| APAF_HUMAN   | Apoptotic protease-activating factor 1; APAF-1 | Homo sapiens           | IDA: Inferred from Direct Assay          |
| APAF_HUMAN   | Apoptotic protease-activating factor 1; APAF-1 | Homo sapiens           | TAS: Traceable Author Statement          |
| D2HE46_AILME | Putative uncharacterized protein               | Ailuropoda melanoleuca | IEA: Inferred from Electronic Annotation |
| E1BS49_CHICK | Uncharacterized protein                        | Gallus gallus          | IEA: Inferred from Electronic Annotation |

activation of cysteine-type endopeptidase activity involved in apoptotic process (IDA) 🔍

nervous system development (TAS) 🔍

[Show More...](#)

Clicking on the magnifying glass next to a GO annotation shows the orthologs having that annotation along with the evidence codes.