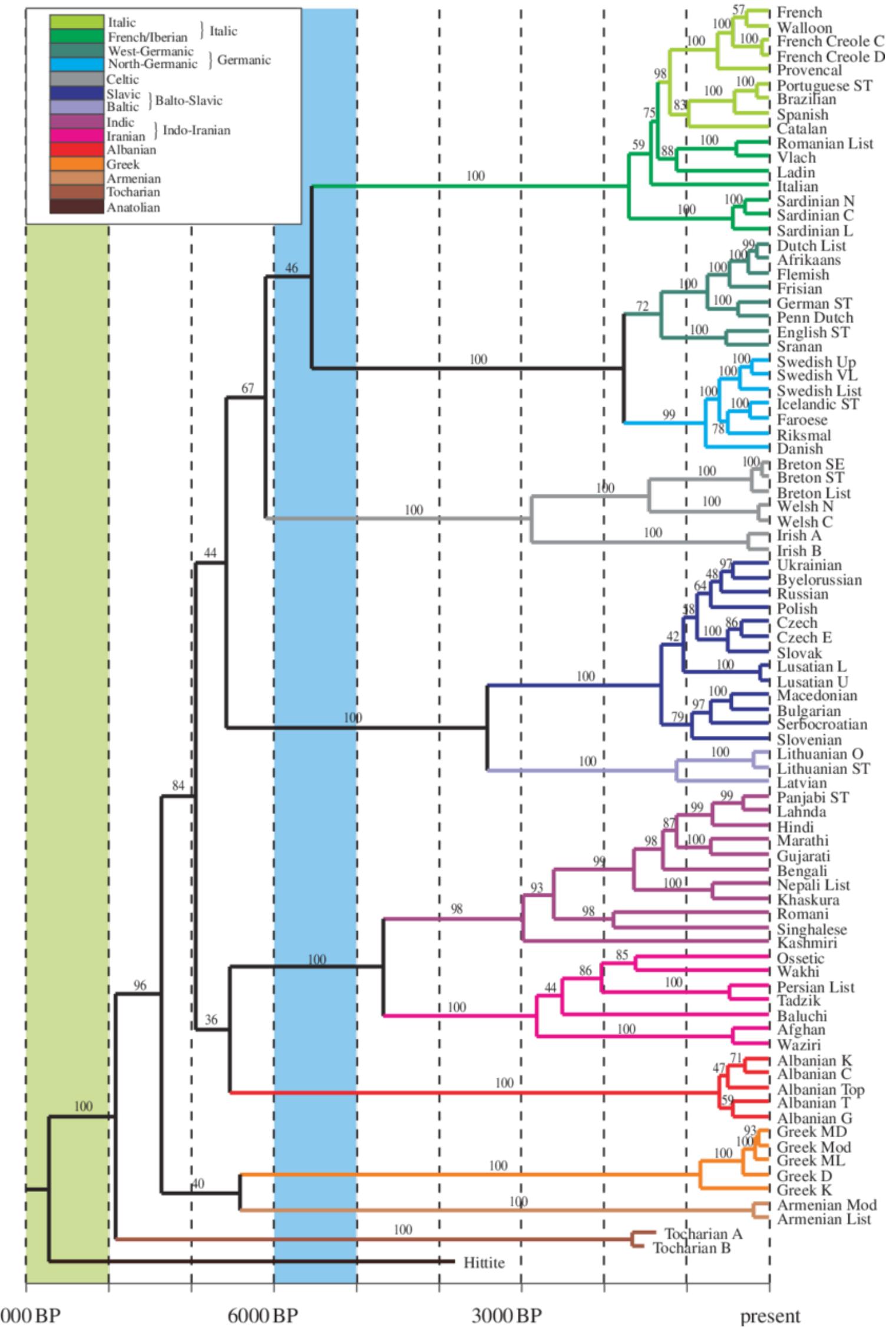


# Phylogenetics 101

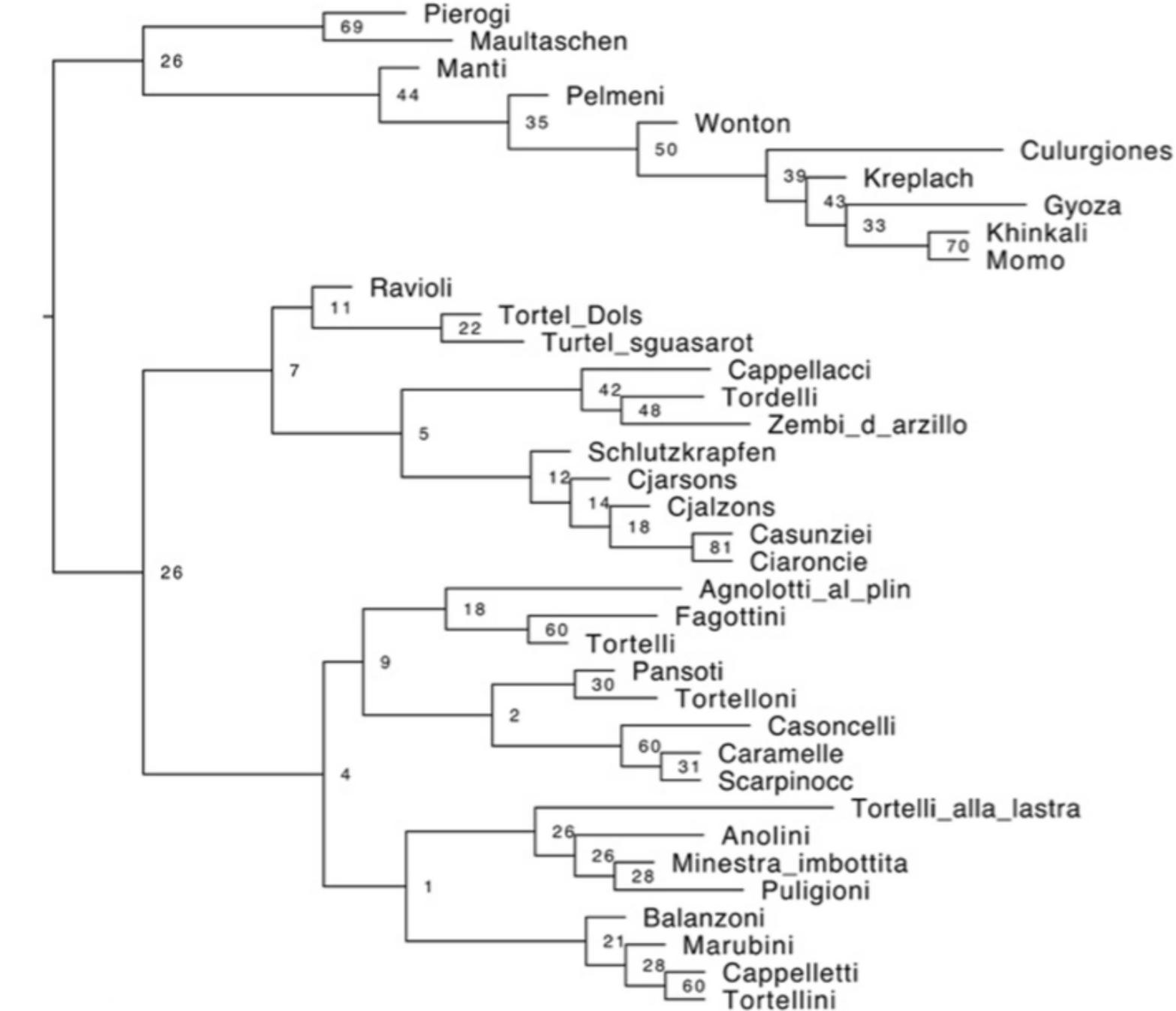
## part B

# Phylogenetics using any kind of character

- **Morphological characters:** bones, teeth, floral structures.
- **Molecular characters:** DNA, RNA, and protein sequences.
- **Behavioral traits:** mating behaviors, and ecological interactions.
- **Genomic structural features:** Gene order, synteny, and presence/absence of mobile elements
- **Cultural and linguistic data:** Used in disciplines like anthropological phylogenetics.  
... just to name a few ..



Nazari, et al. Evolution of the Italian pasta ripiena: the first steps toward a scientific classification. Discover Food (2004).



1	Provenance (0: foreign, 1: Italian)
2	Italian region (0: North, 1: Central, 2: South, 3: Sardinia)
3	Flour (0: soft wheat, 1: durum)
4	Pasta (0: no eggs, 1: eggs)
5	Pasta size (0: small, 1: medium, 2: large, 3: very large)
6	Flatness (0: more or less flat, 1: 3-dimensional)
7	Folding (0: folded over and edges pressed, 1: two separate layers, 2: oval bundle, 3: square bundle, 4: hat-shaped bundle, 5: hat-shaped with a hole, 6: folded upright, 7: rolled and press-shaped, 8: round bundle)
8	Shape (0: half-moon, 1: rectangular, 2: triangular, 3: round, 4: roll, 5: bundles, 6: hat shaped)
9	Filling: vegetables as the main ingredient (0: absent, 1: present)
10	Filling: dairy (0: absent, 1: present)
11	Filling: meat (0: absent, 1: present)
12	Cooking method (0: boiled, 1: fried, 2: roasted, 3: steamed)
13	Sauce (0: no sauce, 1: meat-based, 2: nonmeat-based, 3: served in broth)
14	Serving sauce (0: none, 1: oil-based, 2: butter-based)
15	Sweet filling (0: absent, 1: present)

Nazari, et al. Evolution of the Italian pasta ripiena: the first steps toward a scientific classification. Discover Food (2004).

# Which criteria should characters posses?

**Homologous:** Characters among taxa must be due to shared ancestry.

**Non-homoplasious:** While some level of homoplasy is often unavoidable, characters that are less prone to these phenomena are preferred because they better reflect true evolutionary relationships.

**Heritable:** The trait or character must be genetically or developmentally inherited. This heritability is essential so that the character's distribution reflects historical descent.

**Independent:** Each character should vary independently from others. If characters are correlated or redundant, they may overemphasize certain signals and bias the analysis.

**Informative:** A good phylogenetic character should be neither completely invariant (providing no discriminatory power) nor so variable that the signal is overwhelmed by noise.

**Clear:** The character should be defined in a way that allows for unambiguous coding into discrete states (e.g., “present”/“absent” or multiple clearly defined categories).

## Homoplasy:

Traits that appear similar but are not derived from a common ancestor are considered to result from homoplasy. This process attains similar outcomes **independent evolution**

- Convergent evolution: independent evolution of similar trait
- Evolutionary reversals: reversal back to an ancestral character state

## Impact on Phylogenetic Inference:

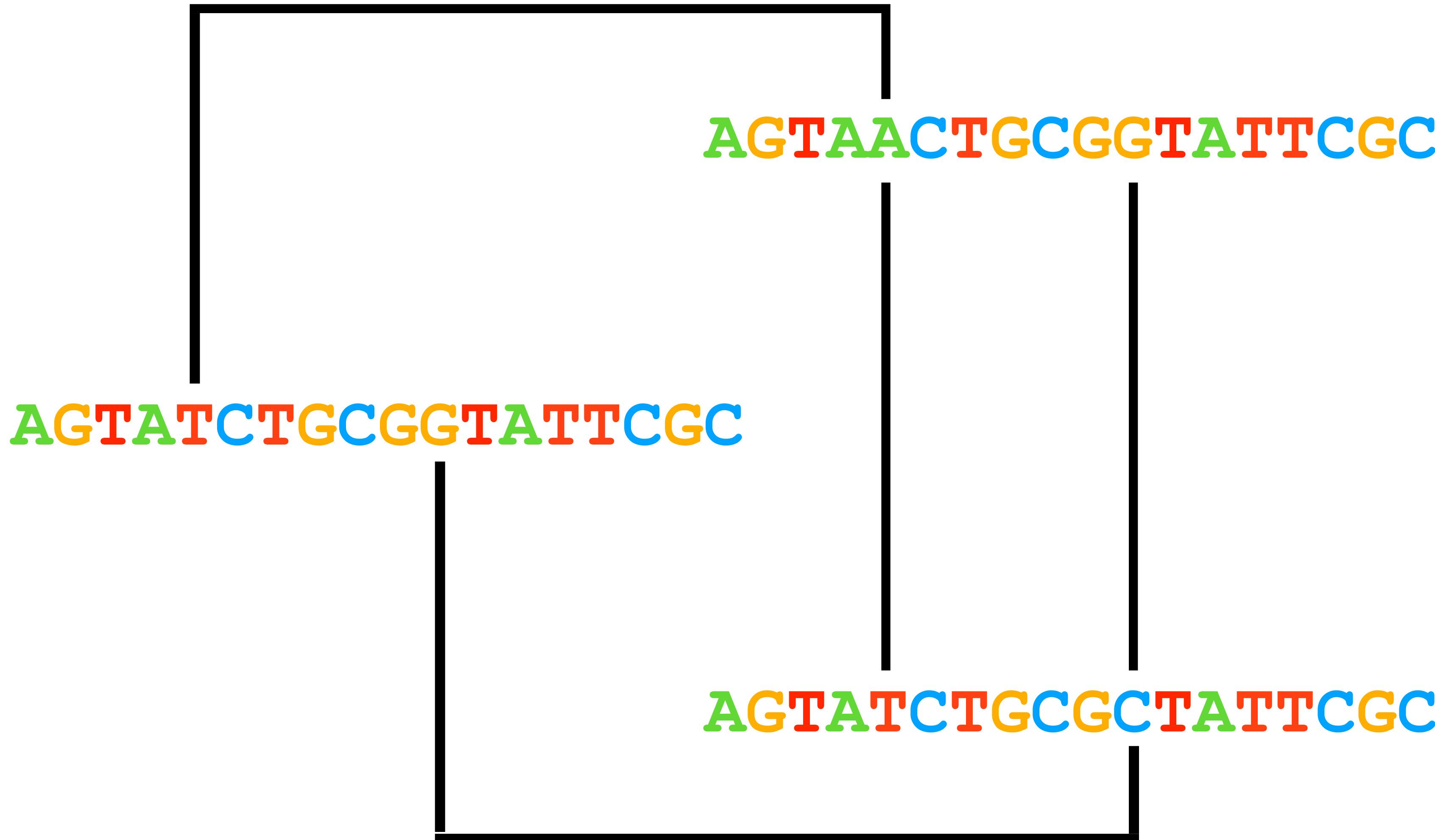
Homoplasious traits and usually, are incongruent with each another.

In the absence of homoplasy there would be no character conflict and inferring the phylogeny would be easy. Unluckily homoplasy can be common and mislead the reconstruction of phylogenies

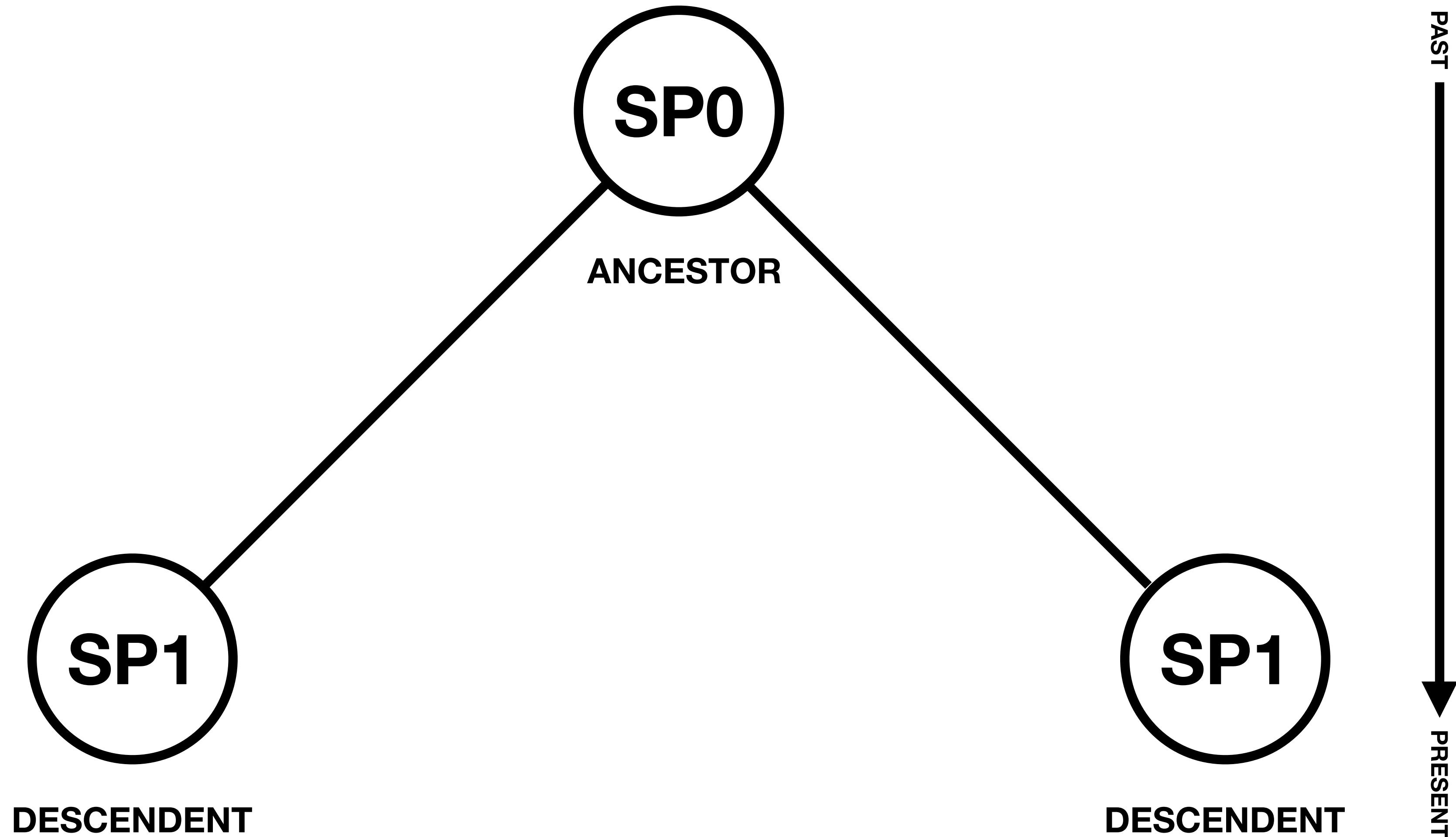
# Homoplasious traits can be misleading in reconstruction of phylogenies.

- **Wings:** Birds, bats, and insects all have wings for flight, yet these structures evolved independently. While they serve the same function, the underlying anatomy and developmental origins differ.
- **Body streamlining in aquatic lifestyle:** Sharks (cartilaginous fish), dolphins (mammals) exhibit similar streamlined body shapes that help reduce drag in water. These similarities are convergent adaptations to an aquatic lifestyle.
- **Camera-Type Eyes:** Both cephalopods (like octopuses) and vertebrates have complex, image-forming eyes. Nonetheless these eyes have different anatomical structures.
- **Echolocation:** Although both bats and whales use echolocation for navigation and hunting, they evolved this ability independently.

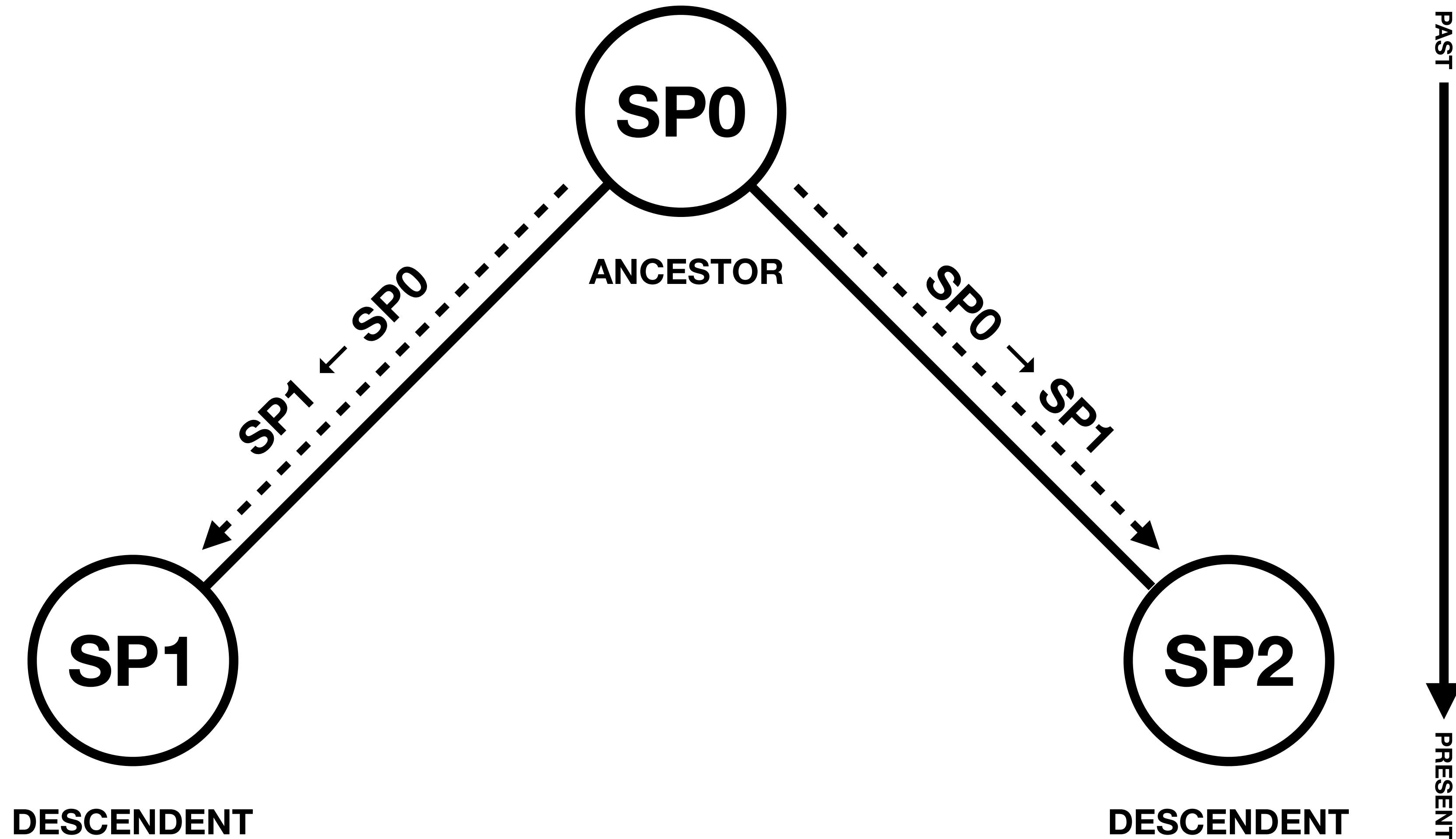
## How to define the genetic distance between two taxa?



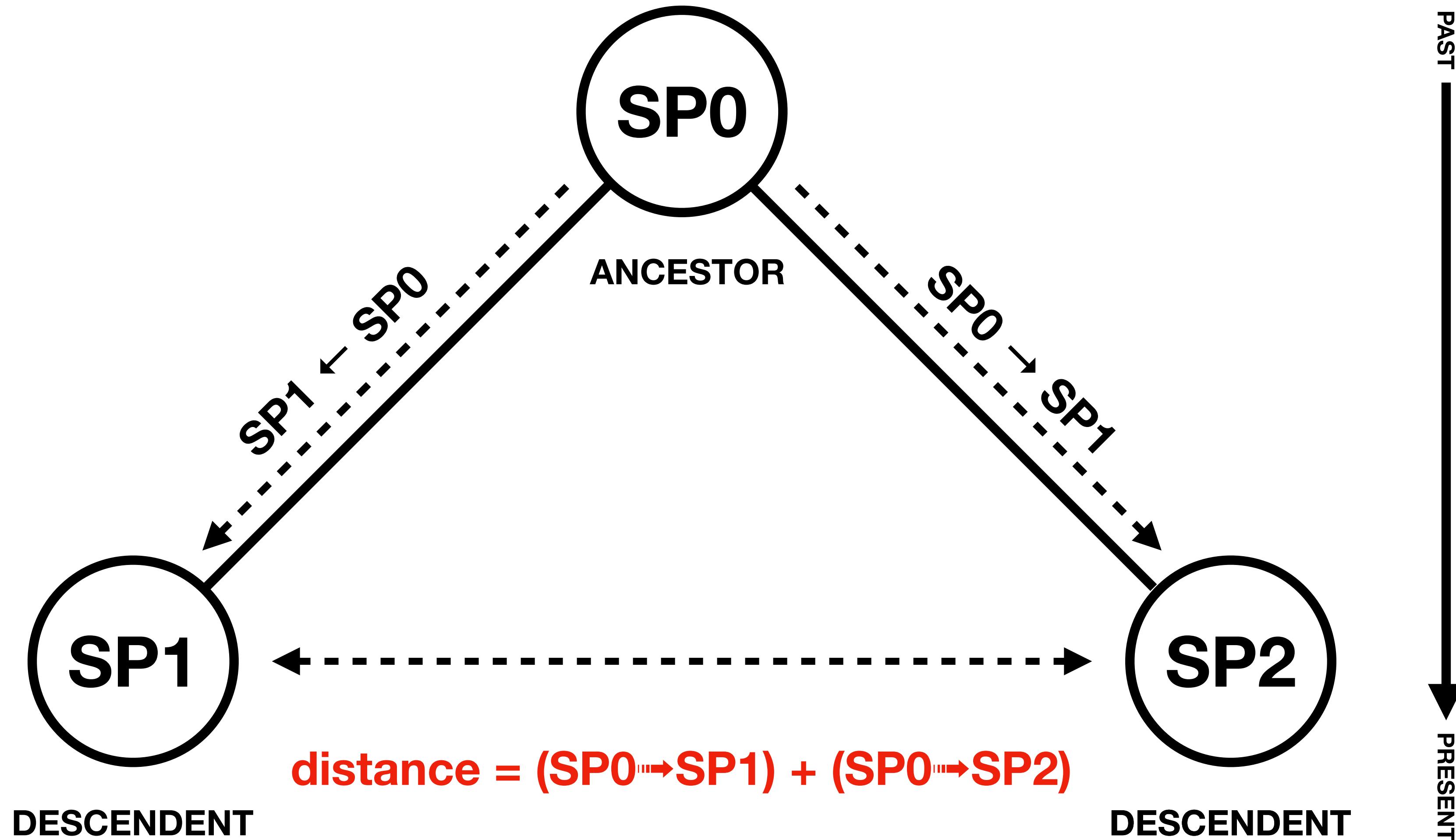
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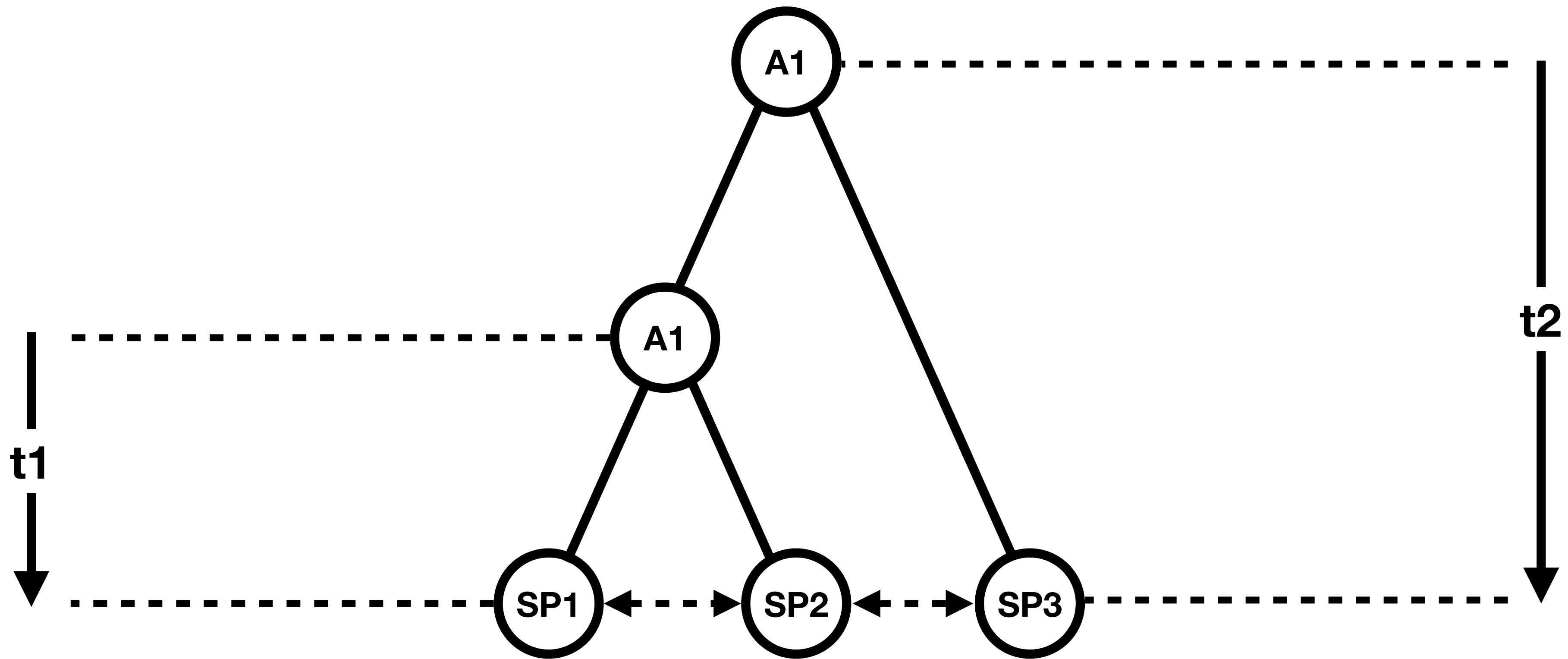
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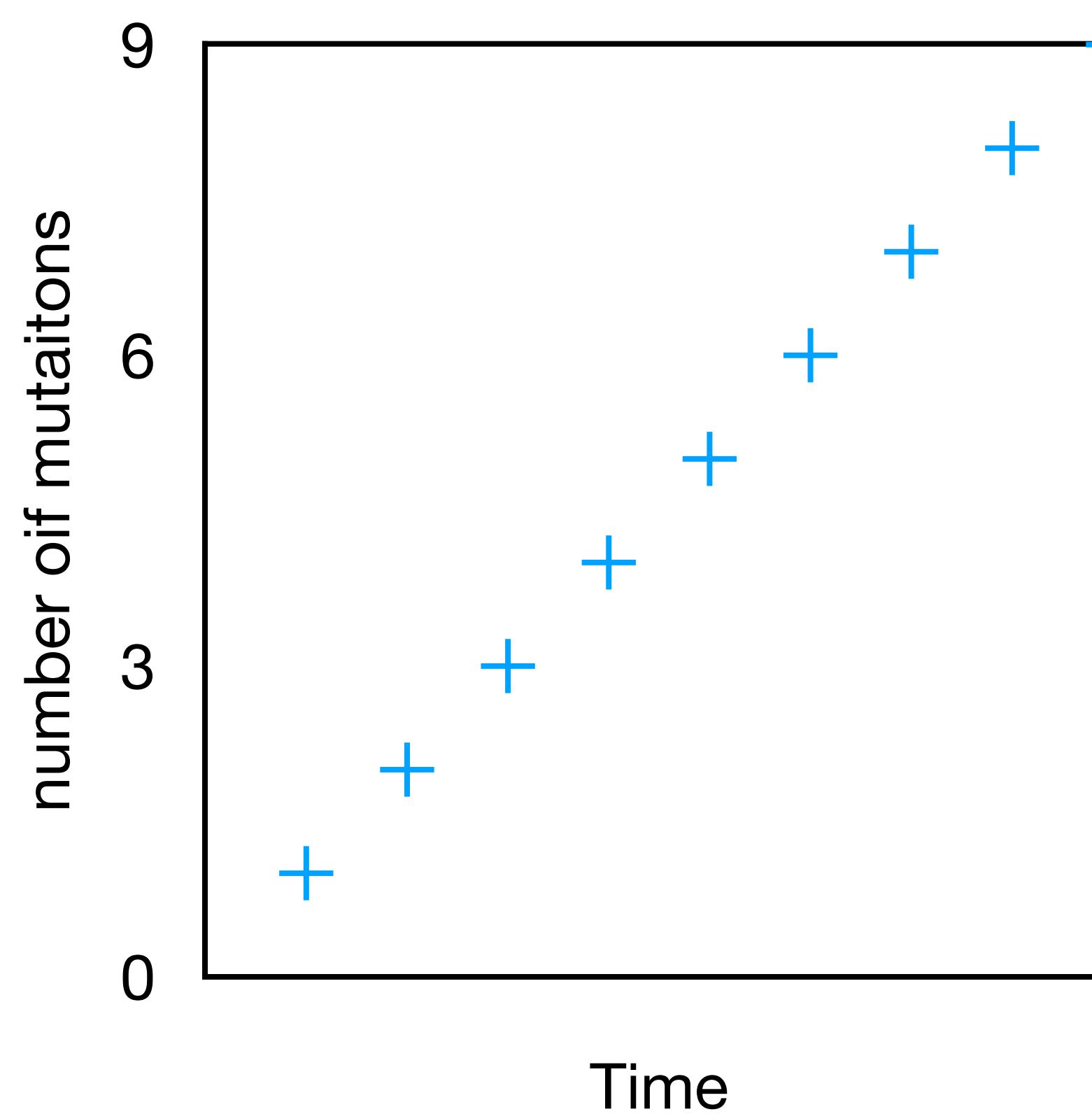
AGTATCTGCGGTATT CGC  
↓  
AGCATCTGCGGTATT CGC  
↓  
AGTATTGCGGTATT CGC  
↓  
AGTATCTGCGGTATT AGC  
↓  
AGTATCTGCCGTATT CGC



$$\Delta(t_0, t_2) > \Delta(t_1, t_2)$$

$$d_1 > d_2$$

The molecular clock hypothesis suggests that **genetic changes** tend to accumulate at a relatively **constant rate** over long periods, which can help estimate divergence times between species.



## Molecular clock is not constant:

- **Variable Mutation Rates:**

Mutation rates can differ among genes, species, and even different parts of the genome due to factors like generation time, metabolic rate, and DNA repair mechanisms.

- **Variable Strength of Selection:**

Some changes are subject to strong selective pressures and may be removed (purifying selection) or favored (positive selection), altering the apparent rate of accumulation.

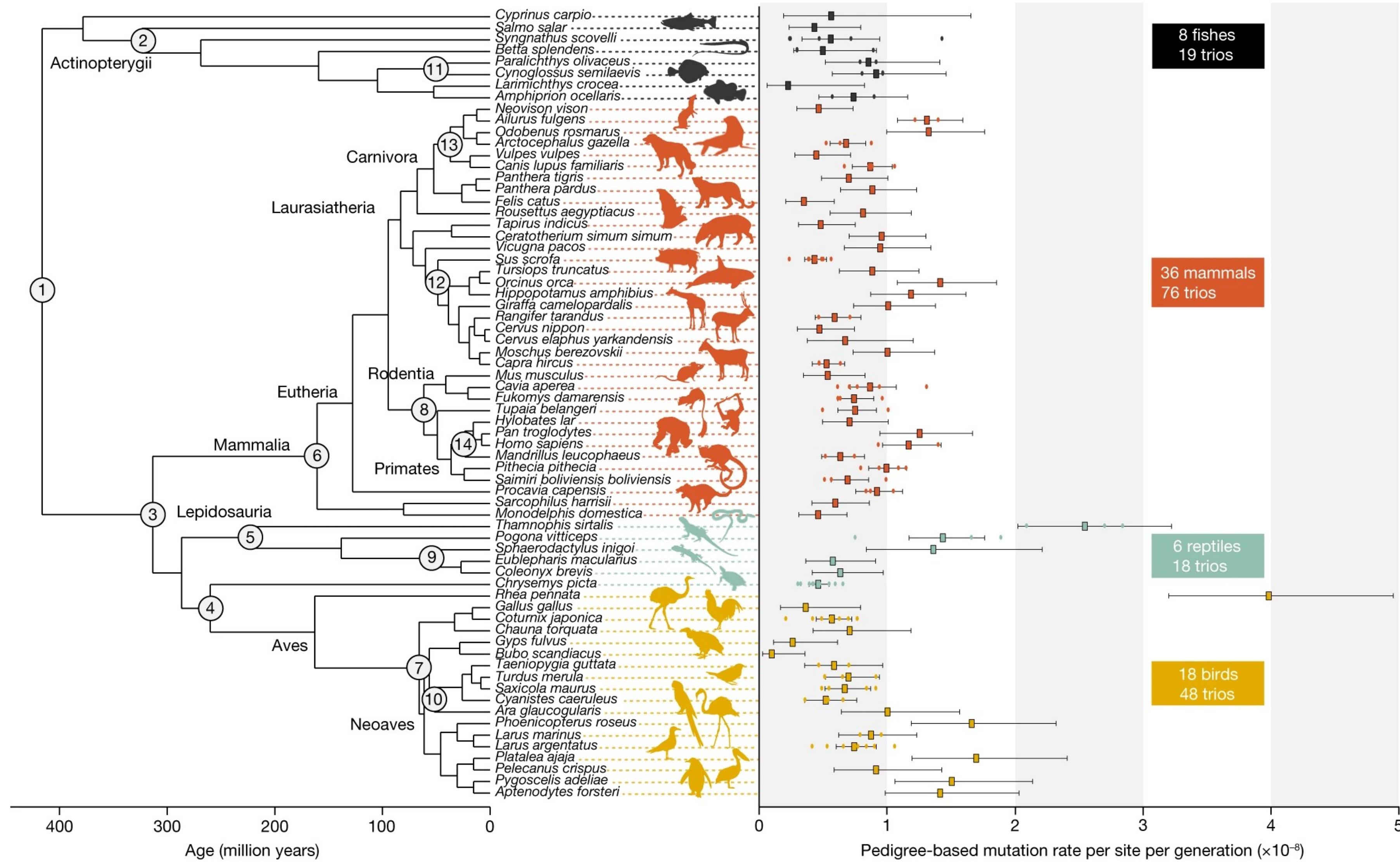
- **Environmental and Life-History Factors:**

Organisms with shorter generation times or higher metabolic rates may accumulate mutations more quickly than those with longer generation times.

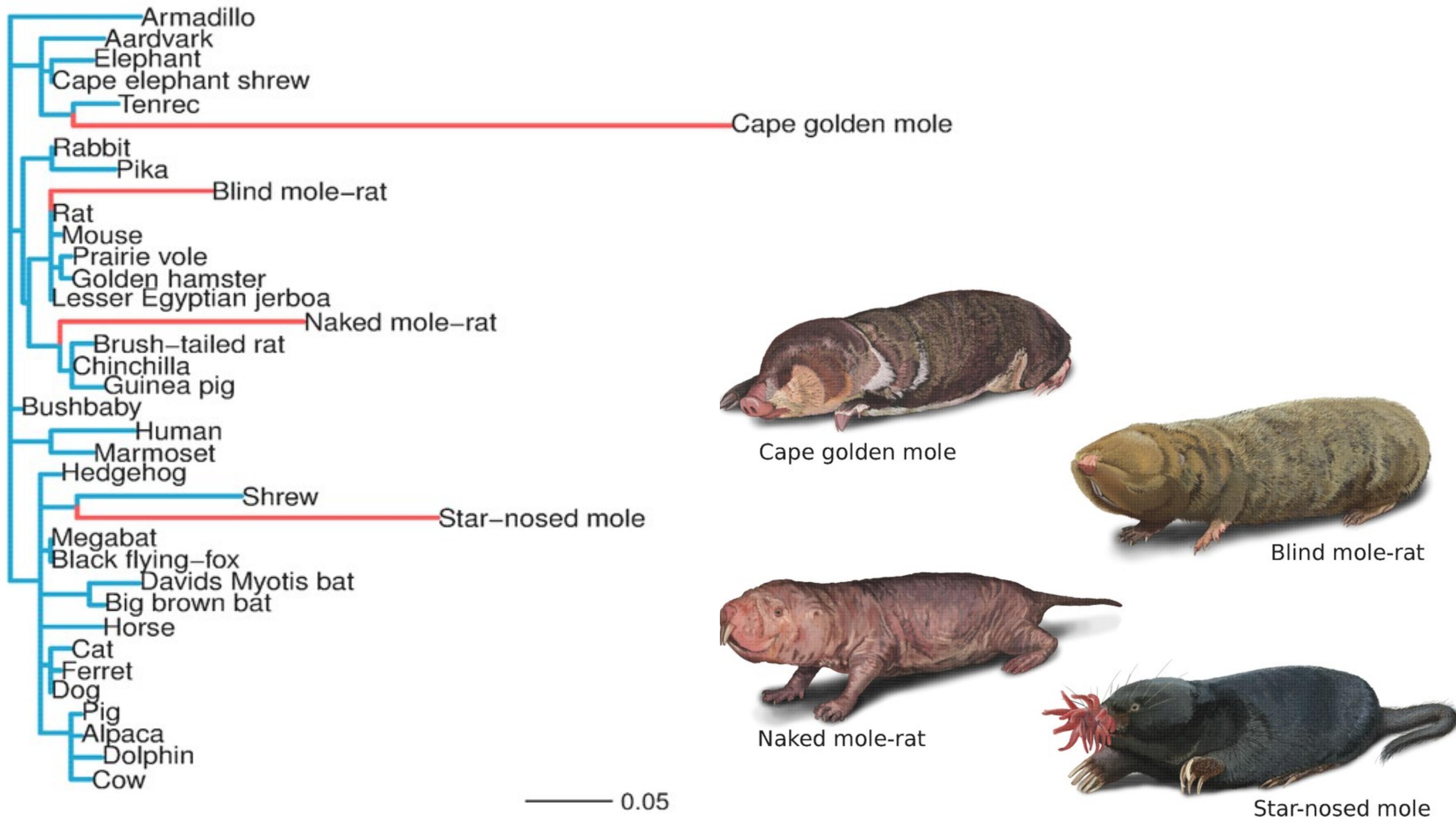
- **Practical Implications:**

While the molecular clock provides a useful approximation for dating evolutionary events, calibrations using fossil records or known divergence times are essential to account for rate variability.

In summary, although genetic change can approximate a constant rate over evolutionary time, many factors cause deviations from a perfect molecular clock.



## Lens intrinsic membrane 2 (Lim2) protein tree



# neutral theory & phylogenetics

Most molecular changes and within-species variability arise from random drift of neutral - or nearly neutral - mutant alleles, not from natural selection. Proposed by **Motoo Kimura**, this theory applies primarily to molecular evolution, while phenotypic traits are still shaped by natural selection (as per Darwin).

## Implications for Phylogenetics:

- Since many molecular changes are neutral, they allow us to reconstruct evolutionary relationships.
- Since neutral mutations accumulate at a - relatively - constant rate over time, they allow us to estimate divergence times.

