Handling genomic data using Bioconductor II: GenomicRanges and GenomicFeatures

Motivating examples

- Genomic "Features" (e.g., genes, exons, CpG islands) on the genome are often represented as intervals, e.g., chromosome, start, end, strand.
 - A common task is to explore the overlaps of two types of features, for example, How CpG islands overlap promoters.
 - Sometimes one wants to obtain the intersect/union of two sets of intervals.
- To obtain a list of genes/exons for an organism.

Without Bioconductor you have to rely on your own scripts for these operations.

Today's topics

- GenomicRanges: package dealing with genomic intervals (genes, CpG islands, binding sites, etc.)
 - Built on more general package IRanges for range data.
 - Provide a rich collection of functions for genomic interval operations.
- GenomicFeatures: package for transcript centric genomic annotations.

IRanges package

- "The IRanges package is designed to represent sequences, ranges representing indices along those sequences, and data related to those ranges".
 - sequence: ordered finite collection of elements, such as a vector of integers. Not necessarily DNA sequence.
 - Consecutive indices can be represented as a range to save memory and computation, for example, instead of saving c(1,2,3,4,5), just save 1 and 5.

Construct an object of IRanges

Provide start and end indices:

Or provide start and width of each range:

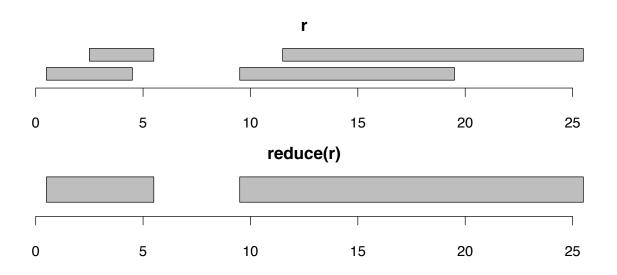
Simple operations of an IRanges object

```
> length(r)
[1] 4
> start(r)
[1] 1 3 12 10
> end(r)
[1] 4 5 25 19
> width(r)
[1] 4 3 14 10
> r[1:2]
IRanges of length 2
   start end width
[1] 1 4
       3 5
                3
[2]
> range(r)
IRanges of length 1
   start end width
[1]
       1 25
               25
```

reduce

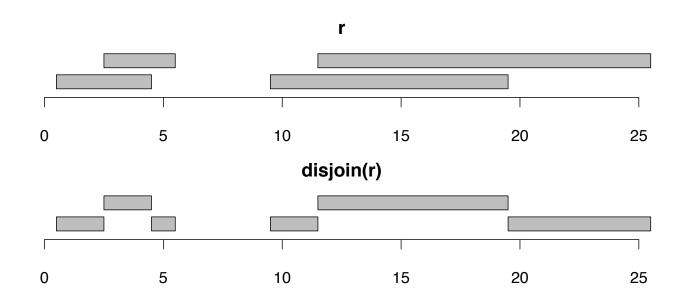
 Merge redundant ranges, and return the minimum non-overlapping ranges covering all the input ranges.

```
> reduce(r)
IRanges of length 2
    start end width
[1]    1    5    5
[2]    10    25    16
```



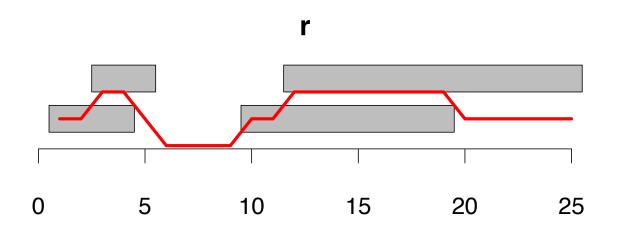
disjoin

- Return a set of non-overlapping ranges satisfying:
 - the union of results is the same as the union of the inputs.
 - for every range in the result, it overlapping pattern with the input is constant.



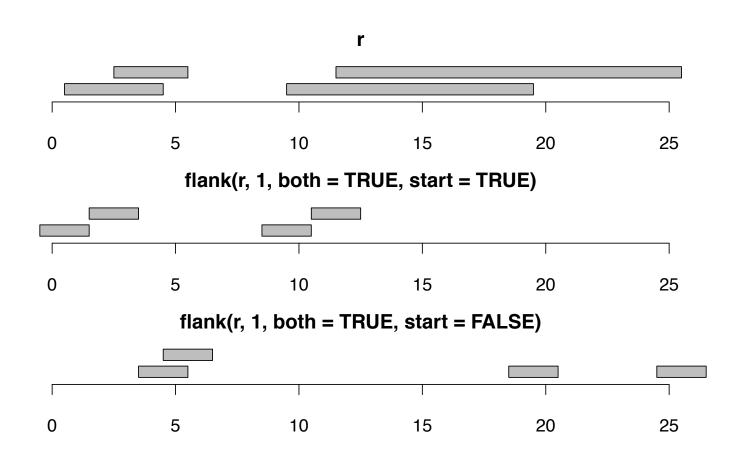
coverage

• Compute the coverage depth by the input ranges of each position.



flank

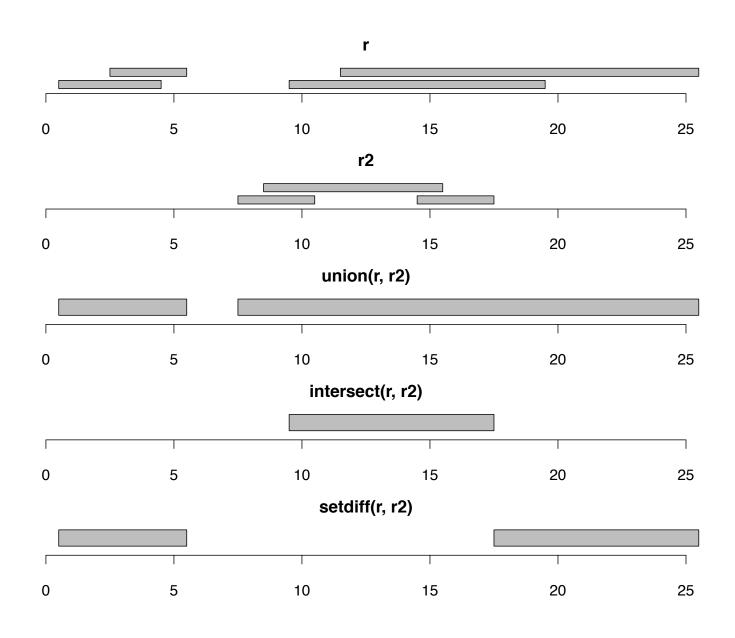
Create flanking ranges for each input range.



Operations on two IRanges objects

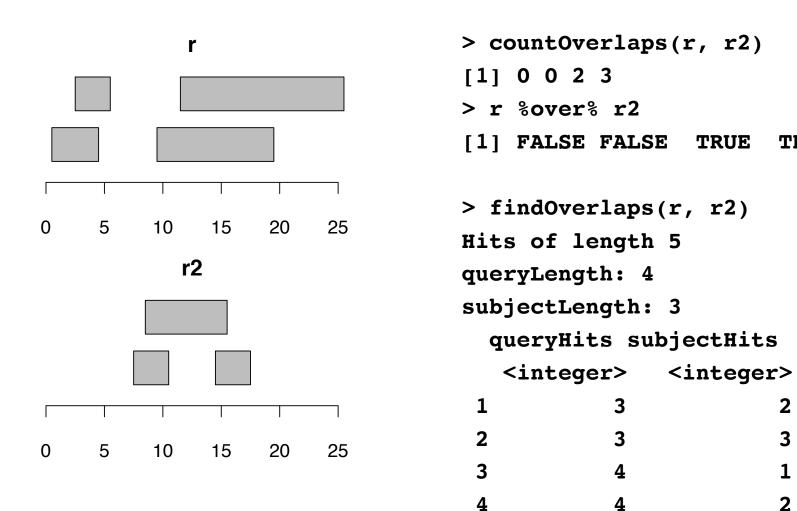
- Functions for different set operations of two lists of ranges:
 - union/intersect/setdiff.
 - countOverlaps: for a "query" and a "reference", count the number of ranges in reference overlapping each range in query.
 - findOverlaps: locating the overlapping ranges in reference for each range in query.

Set operations



overlaps

TRUE



Rle: Run length encoding

- A simple data compression method to represent a long sequence in which consecutive elements often take the same value.
- Instead of saving the whole sequence, it stores the consecutive elements with the same value as a single value and count.

Create Rle object

```
> x < - Rle(c(1,1,2,2,2))
> x
'numeric' Rle of length 5 with 2 runs
 Lengths: 2 3
 Values: 12
> x <- Rle(values=c(1,2), lengths=c(2,3))
> x
'numeric' Rle of length 5 with 2 runs
 Lengths: 2 3
 Values: 12
> as.numeric(x)
[1] 1 1 2 2 2
> x <- Rle(values=c("a","b","c"), lengths=c(2,3,4))
> x
'character' Rle of length 9 with 3 runs
 Lengths: 2 3 4
 Values : "a" "b" "c"
> as.character(x)
[1] "a" "a" "b" "b" "c" "c" "c" "c"
```

Simple operations of Rle object

```
> x <- Rle(c(1,1,2,2,2))
> length(x)
[1] 5
> start(x)
[1] 1 3
> end(x)
[1] 2 5
> width(x)
[1] 2 3
> nrun(x)
[1] 2
> runLength(x)
[1] 2 3
```

GenomicRanges package

- Designed to represent genomic intervals (genes, CpG islands, binding sites, etc.)
- Based on IRanges package and provide support for BSgenome, GenomicFeatures, etc.
- Contain three major classes:
 - GRanges: single interval range features: a set of genomic features that each has a single start and end locations.
 - GRangesList: multiple interval range features: each feature has multiple start/end locations. Ex: a transcript has multiple exons.
 - GappedAlignments: gapped alignments.

Create a *GRanges* object

Required fields:

- seqnames: Rle object for sequence name, e.g., the chromosome number.
- ranges: IRanges object for locations.

Other fields: strand, elementMetadata for other information.

```
> gr <- GRanges(seqnames = Rle(c("chr1", "chr2"), c(2, 3)),
             ranges = IRanges(1:5, end = 6:10),
+
             strand = Rle(strand(c("-", "+", "+", "-")), c(1,1,2,1)),
+
            score = 1:5, GC = seq(1, 0, length = 5))
+
> gr
GRanges with 5 ranges and 2 elementMetadata values
   segnames ranges strand |
                             score
                                        GC
     <Rle> <IRanges> <Rle> | <integer> <numeric>
      chr1 [1, 6] - |
                                      1.00
[1]
[2] chr1 [2, 7] + | 2
                                      0.75
[3] chr2 [3, 8] + | 3 0.50
[4] chr2 [4, 9] + | 4 0.25
[5] chr2 [5, 10] - | 5
                                      0.00
```

```
seqlengths
chr1 chr2
NA NA
```

Operate on a GRanges object

```
> length(gr)
[1] 5
> seqnames(gr)
'factor' Rle of length 5 with 2 runs
 Lengths:
             2
 Values : chr1 chr2
Levels(2): chr1 chr2
> start(gr)
[1] 1 2 3 4 5
> end(gr)
[1] 6 7 8 9 10
> ranges(gr)
IRanges of length 5
   start end width
[1]
       1 6
                 6
[2]
       2 7
                 6
       3 8
[3]
                 6
       4 9
                 6
[4]
       5 10
                 6
[5]
```

```
> strand(qr)
'factor' Rle of length 5 with 3 runs
  Lengths: 1 3 1
 Values : - + -
Levels(3): + - *
> elementMetadata(gr)
DataFrame with 5 rows and 2 columns
                   GC
      score
  <integer> <numeric>
          1
                 1.00
1
                 0.75
         3 0.50
              0.25
                 0.00
5
```

All other fields (besides sequames, range and strands) need to be accessed by elementMetadata function, which returns other fields as a data frame.

Subsetting and combining

```
> qr[1:2]
GRanges with 2 ranges and 2 elementMetadata values
              ranges strand |
   segnames
                                 score
                                             GC
      <Rle> <IRanges> <Rle> | <integer> <numeric>
[1]
       chr1
               [1, 6]
                                           1.00
                                    1
       chr1 [2, 7] + |
[2]
                                           0.75
seglengths
chr1 chr2
  NA
       NA
> c(gr[1], gr[3])
GRanges with 2 ranges and 2 elementMetadata values
              ranges strand |
   segnames
                                 score
                                             GC
      <Rle> <IRanges> <Rle> | <integer> <numeric>
[1]
       chr1
               [1, 6]
                                            1.0
       chr2 [3, 8] + |
                                            0.5
[2]
seglengths
chr1 chr2
  NA
       NA
```

Other utility functions

- Inherited from IRanges package. Most of the functions working for IRanges also works for GRanges:
 - single range functions: reduce/disjoin/flank/coverage/etc.
 - set operation: intersect/union/setdiff/gap.
 - overlap functions: findOverlap, countOverlap, match, etc.
- The results take into account the chromosome number and strand directions.

```
> coverage(gr)
SimpleRleList of length 2
$chr1
'integer' Rle of length 7 with 3 runs
 Lengths: 1 5 1
 Values : 1 2 1
$chr2
'integer' Rle of length 10 with 6 runs
 Lengths: 2 1 1 4 1 1
 Values : 0 1 2 3 2 1
> reduce(gr)
GRanges with 4 ranges and 0 elementMetadata values
   segnames ranges strand |
      <Rle> <IRanges> <Rle> |
[1] chr1 [2, 7]
                         + |
[2] chr1 [1, 6] - |
[3] chr2 [3, 9] + |
[4] chr2 [5, 10] - |
```

> flank(gr, 2)

[6] chr2 [5, 10]

GRanges with 5 ranges and 2 elementMetadata values segnames ranges strand | GC score <Rle> <IRanges> <Rle> | <integer> <numeric> 1.00 [1] chr1 [7, 8] 1 [2] chr1 [0, 1] + | 2 0.75 [3] chr2 [1, 2] 3 0.50 + | [4] chr2 [2, 3] 0.25 4 + | [5] chr2 [11, 12] 5 0.00

```
> gr1 <- GRanges(segnames = Rle("chr1", 2),</pre>
                ranges=IRanges(start=c(1,10), end = c(5,15)))
> gr2 <- GRanges(segnames = Rle("chr1", 1),</pre>
                ranges = IRanges(start=3, end = 12))
+
> union(gr1, gr2)
GRanges with 1 range and 0 elementMetadata values
   segnames
            ranges strand |
      <Rle> <IRanges> <Rle> |
       chr1 [1, 15]
[1]
                          * |
> intersect(gr1, gr2)
GRanges with 2 ranges and 0 elementMetadata values
   segnames ranges strand |
      <Rle> <IRanges> <Rle> |
[1] chr1 [3, 5]
[2] chr1 [10, 12] * |
> setdiff(qr1, qr2)
GRanges with 2 ranges and 0 elementMetadata values
              ranges strand |
   segnames
      <Rle> <IRanges> <Rle> |
[1] chr1 [1, 2]
                          * |
[2] chr1 [13, 15]
                          * |
```

Overlapping between two GRanges object

findOverlaps: overlap queries.

 %over%: return TRUE/FALSE to indicate if each interval in object 1 overlaps any interval in object 2.

```
> gr1 %over% gr2
[1] TRUE TRUE
```

GRangesList: multiple interval range features

Basically a list of GRanges objects:

```
> GRangesList(gr1, gr2)
GRangesList of length 2
[[1]]
GRanges with 2 ranges and 0 elementMetadata values
              ranges strand |
   segnames
      <Rle> <IRanges> <Rle> |
[1]
    chr1 [ 1, 5]
[2] chr1 [10, 15] * |
[[2]]
GRanges with 1 range and 0 elementMetadata values
              ranges strand |
   segnames
      <Rle> <IRanges> <Rle> |
[1]
       chr1 [3, 12]
```

- Subsetting by [[]].
- Support sapply/lapply.

Summary of GenomicRanges

- Provides flexible and efficient functions to operate on the intervals.
- Genomic interval are represented as GRanges object, which contains chromosome name in Rle, start/end positions as IRanges object.
- For second generation sequencing data (will be taught later), each sequence read can be represented as an interval, which makes many operations easier.

GenomicFeatures

- Retrieves and manages different genomic features from public databases (UCSC genome browser and BioMart).
- Provides convenient access for genomic features, compared to manually download and read in text files.

TxDb object

- Stores transcript annotations.
- Backed by a SQLite database.
- Three methods to create a new TxDb object:
 - makeTxDbFromUCSC to download from UCSC Genome browser.
 - makeTxDbFromBiomart to download from BioMart.
 - Use a GFF3 or GTF file containing transcript information with makeTxDbFromGFF.
 - makeTxDbPackageFromUCSC and makeTxDbPackageFromBiomart to make annotation packages for later use.

makeTxDbFromUCSC

> supportedUCSCtables()

tablenam	e trad	ck		suk	otrack	C	
1	knownGene	τ	UCSC	Genes			<na></na>
2	knownGeneOld8	Old T	UCSC	Genes			<na></na>
3	knownGeneOld7	Old T	UCSC	Genes			<na></na>
4	knownGeneOld6	Old T	UCSC	Genes			<na></na>
5	knownGeneOld4	Old T	UCSC	Genes			<na></na>
6	knownGeneOld3	Old T	UCSC	Genes			<na></na>
7	ccdsGene			CCDS			<na></na>
8	xenoRefGene	Otl	her F	RefSeq			<na></na>
9	vegaGene	7	Vega	Genes	Vega	Protein	Genes
10	vegaPseudoGene	7	Vega	Genes	Veg	ga Pseudo	ogenes
11	ensGene	Ense	embl	Genes			<na></na>

. . .

Creating, saving and loading

```
> txdb
TxDb object:
# Db type: TxDb
# Supporting package: GenomicFeatures
# Data source: UCSC
# Genome: hg19
# Organism: Homo sapiens
# Taxonomy ID: 9606
# UCSC Table: knownGene
# UCSC Track: UCSC Genes
# transcript nrow: 82960
# exon nrow: 289969
# cds nrow: 237533
# Db created by: GenomicFeatures package from Bioconductor
. . .
> saveDb(txdb, file="hg19 knownGenes.sqlite")
> txdb = loadDb("hg19_knownGenes.sqlite")
```

makeTxDbPackageFromUCSC

- Directly make a package for the TxDb
- Need to provide some basic information for R package building (maintainer, author, version, etc.)
- Result is an R package in current directory.
- Need to install the package and then it can be used.

```
> makeTxDbPackageFromUCSC(
          maintainer="Hao Wu <hao.wu@emory.edu>",
          author="Hao Wu",
          version="1.0",
          genome="hq19",
          tablename="knownGene")
Download the knownGene table ... OK
Download the knownToLocusLink table ... OK
Extract the 'transcripts' data frame ... OK
Extract the 'splicings' data frame ... OK
Download and preprocess the 'chrominfo' data frame ... OK
Prepare the 'metadata' data frame ... OK
Make the TxDb object ... OK
Creating package in ./TxDb.Hsapiens.UCSC.hg19.knownGene
```

Retrieving features

• Retrieve basic features: transcripts, exons.

> transcripts(txdb)

GRanges object with 82960 ranges and 2 metadata columns:

	seqnames	ranges	strand	tx_id	tx_name
	<rle></rle>	Ranges	<rle></rle>	<integer></integer>	<character></character>
[1]	chr1	[11874, 14409]	+	1	uc001aaa.3
[2]	chr1	[11874, 14409]	+	2	uc010nxq.1
[3]	chr1	[11874, 14409]	+] 3	uc010nxr.1
[4]	chr1	[69091, 70008]	+	4	uc001aal.1
[5]	chr1	[321084, 321115]	+	J 5	uc001aaq.2
		• • •	• • •		
[82956]	chrUn_g1000237	[1, 2686]	-	82956	$\mathtt{uc011mgu.1}$
[82957]	chrUn_gl000241	[20433, 36875]	-	82957	uc011mgv.2
[82958]	chrUn_g1000243	[11501, 11530]	+	82958	uc011mgw.1
[82959]	chrUn_g1000243	[13608, 13637]	+	82959	uc022brq.1
[82960]	chrUn_g1000247	[5787, 5816]	_	82960	uc022brr.1

> transcripts(txdb, filter=list(tx_chrom="chr1"))
GRanges object with 7967 ranges and 2 metadata columns:

	seqnames		ranges	strand	1	tx_id	tx_name
	<rle></rle>	<	(IRanges>	<rle></rle>	١	<integer></integer>	<character></character>
[1]	chr1	[11874,	14409]	+	١	1	uc001aaa.3
[2]	chr1	[11874,	14409]	+	١	2	uc010nxq.1
[3]	chr1	[11874,	14409]	+	١	3	uc010nxr.1
[4]	chr1	[69091,	70008]	+	١	4	uc001aal.1
[5]	chr1	[321084,	321115]	+	١	5	uc001aaq.2
						• • •	• • •
[7963]	chr1	[249144203, 24	19152264]	-	١	7963	uc031pta.1
[7964]	chr1	[249144203, 24	19152912]	_	١	7964	uc001ifb.2
[7965]	chr1	[249144203, 24	19153125]	-	١	7965	uc010pzr.2
[7966]	chr1	[249144203, 24	19153315]	_	١	7966	uc001ifc.2
[7967]	chr1	[249144203, 24	19153315]	_	١	7967	uc001iff.2

> exons(txdb)

GRanges object with 289969 ranges and 1 metadata column:

	seqnames		ranges	strand	١	exon_id
	<rle></rle>	<ii< td=""><td>Ranges></td><td><rle></rle></td><td>١</td><td><integer></integer></td></ii<>	Ranges>	<rle></rle>	١	<integer></integer>
[1]	chr1	[11874,	12227]	+	I	1
[2]	chr1	[12595,	12721]	+	I	2
[3]	chr1	[12613,	12721]	+	١	3
[4]	chr1	[12646,	12697]	+	I	4
[5]	chr1	[13221,	14409]	+	I	5
	• • •					
[289965]	chrUn_gl000241	[35706,	35859]	_	I	289965
[289966]	chrUn_gl000241	[36711,	36875]	_	١	289966
[289967]	chrUn_g1000243	[11501,	11530]	+	١	289967
[289968]	chrUn_g1000243	[13608,	13637]	+	١	289968
[289969]	chrUn_g1000247	[5787,	5816]	-	I	289969

Retrieve by group

- Grouped features functions retrieve features grouped by other features (e.g., genes):
 - transcriptsBy, exonsBy, cdsBy, intronsByTranscript, fiveUTRsByTranscript, threeUTRsByTranscript.

```
> transcriptsBy(txdb, by="gene")
GRangesList object of length 23459:
$1
GRanges object with 2 ranges and 2 metadata columns:
     segnames
                         ranges strand | tx id tx name
       <Rle>
              <IRanges> <Rle> | <integer> <character>
 [1] chr19 [58858172, 58864865] - | 70455 uc002qsd.4
 [2] chr19 [58859832, 58874214] - | 70456 uc002qsf.2
$10
GRanges object with 1 range and 2 metadata columns:
     segnames
                         [1] chr8 [18248755, 18258723] + | 31944 uc003wyw.1
$100
GRanges object with 1 range and 2 metadata columns:
     segnames
                         ranges strand | tx id tx name
 [1] chr20 [43248163, 43280376] - | 72132 uc002xmj.3
<23456 more elements>
seginfo: 93 sequences (1 circular) from hg19 genome
```

```
> exonsBy(txdb, by="gene")
GRangesList object of length 23459:
$1
```

GRanges object with 15 ranges and 2 metadata columns:

	seqnames		ranges	strand	I	exon_id	exon_name
	<rle></rle>		Ranges	<rle></rle>	١	<integer></integer>	<character></character>
[1]	chr19	[58858172,	58858395]	-	١	250809	<na></na>
[2]	chr19	[58858719,	58859006]	-	١	250810	<na></na>
[3]	chr19	[58859832,	58860494]	-	I	250811	<na></na>
[4]	chr19	[58860934,	58862017]	_	I	250812	<na></na>
[5]	chr19	[58861736,	58862017]	_	I	250813	<na></na>
							•••

\$10

GRanges object with 2 ranges and 2 metadata columns:

	seqnames		ranges	strand	I	exon_id	exon	_name
[1]	chr8	[18248755,	18248855]	+	١	113603		<na></na>
[2]	chr8	[18257508,	18258723]	+	١	113604		<na></na>

. . .

<23457 more elements>

```
> intronsByTranscript(txdb)
GRangesList object of length 82960:
$1
GRanges object with 2 ranges and 0 metadata columns:
     segnames ranges strand
       <Rle> <IRanges> <Rle>
 [1] chr1 [12228, 12612] +
 [2] chr1 [12722, 13220] +
$2
GRanges object with 2 ranges and 0 metadata columns:
             ranges strand
     segnames
 [1] chr1 [12228, 12594] +
 [2] chr1 [12722, 13402] +
$3
GRanges object with 2 ranges and 0 metadata columns:
     seqnames ranges strand
 [1] chr1 [12228, 12645] +
 [2] chr1 [12698, 13220] +
. . .
<82957 more elements>
seginfo: 93 sequences (1 circular) from hg19 genome
```

Retriving by overlaps

- transcriptsByOverlaps,
 exonsByOverlaps, cdsByOverlaps:
 - return a GRangesList object containing data about transcripts, exons, or coding sequences that overlap genomic coordinates specified by a GRanges object.
 - Useful for, for example, obtain a list of genes overlapping the binding sites of a TF.

> transcriptsByOverlaps(txdb, gr)

GRanges object with 5 ranges and 2 metadata columns:

eqnames	ranges	strand		tx_id	tx_name
<rle></rle>	Ranges	<rle></rle>	1	<integer></integer>	<character></character>
chr1	[568844, 568913]	+	1	13	uc001abb.3
chr1	[134773, 140566]	-	1	4095	uc021oeg.2
chr1	[566093, 566115]	-	1	4096	uc021oej.1
chr1	[566135, 566155]	-	1	4097	uc021oek.1
chr1	[566240, 566263]	-	1	4098	uc021oel.1
	<rle> chr1 chr1 chr1 chr1</rle>	-	<pre><rle></rle></pre>	<pre><rle></rle></pre>	<pre> <rle></rle></pre>

A practical example

- Assume I have a list of TF binding sites in human genome hg19, How to obtain:
 - GC content (%G+%C) of each site.
 - percentage of gene promoters covered by the binding sites.

Steps:

- 1. Load in BSgenome. Hsapiens. UCSC. hg19.
- 2. For each site, retrieve its DNA sequence (use Views to speed up).
- 3. Use alphabetFrequency to compute GC content.
- 4. Create GRanges object to represent the binding sites.
- 5. Retrieve gene locations using GenomicFeatures.
- 6. Create GRanges to represent all the gene promoters.
- 7. Use countOverlaps to analyze the overlap.

biomaRt

- R interface to the BioMart databases (http://www.biomart.org).
- Examples of BioMart databases are Ensembl, Uniprot and HapMap.
- Works similarly to GenomicFeatues, but slower since everything has to be retrieved from internet.
- More flexible: have connections with affy ID and GO annotation, etc.

Review

- We have introduced following useful Bioconductor package: GenomicRanges, GenomicFeatures.
- Use a combination of these and
 Biostrings/BSgenome, you can easily achieve most
 routine analysis works for bioinformatician.

After class:

- Review slides and rerun the R codes (on the class webpage).
- Install GenomicRanges and GenomicFeatures.