

RNA Search and Motif Discovery

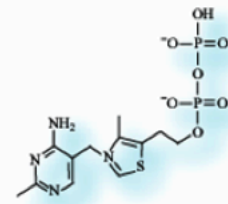
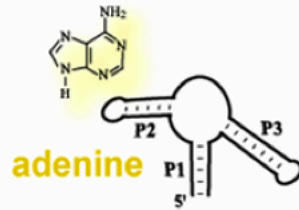
CSE 428
Computational Biology Capstone

Previous Lecture

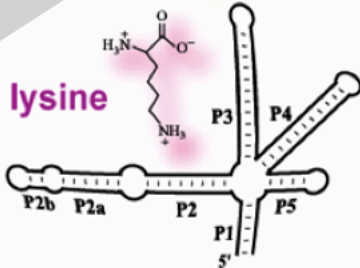
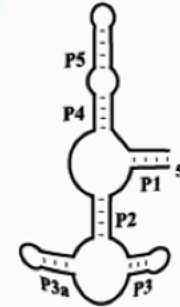
Many biologically interesting roles for RNA
RNA secondary structure prediction

Many interesting RNAs,
e.g. Riboswitches

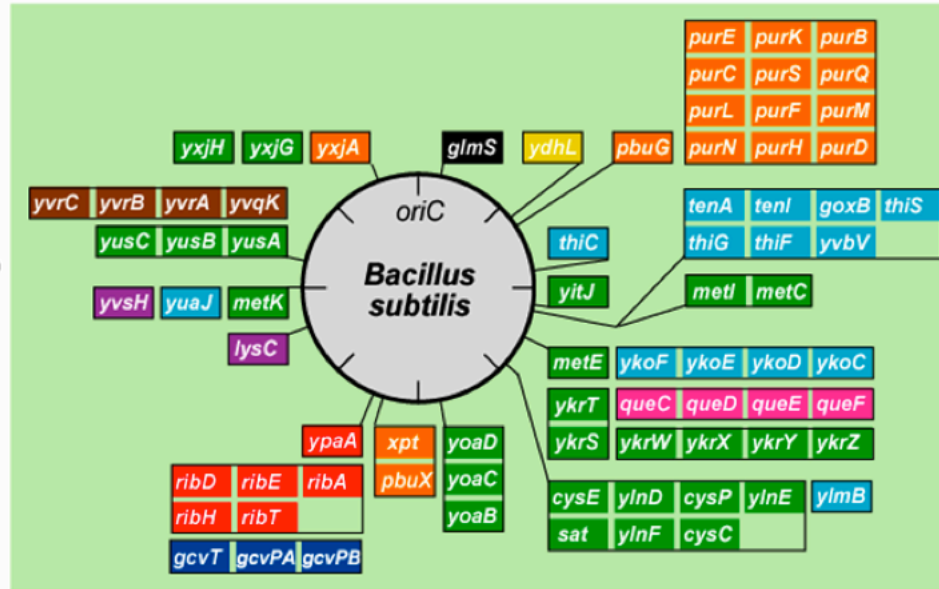
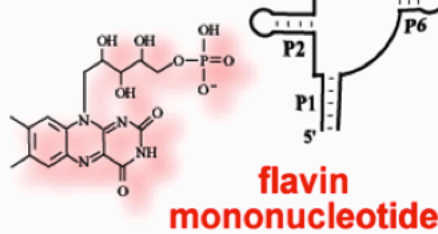
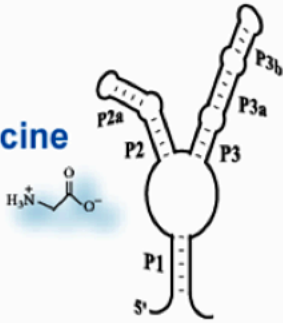
coenzyme B₁₂



thiamine pyrophosphate



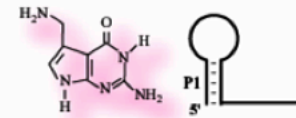
glycine



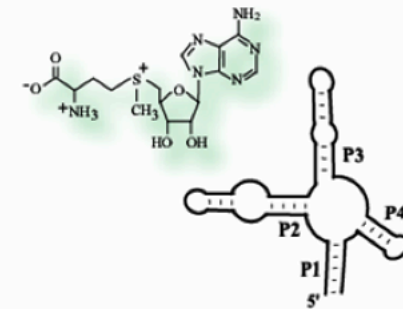
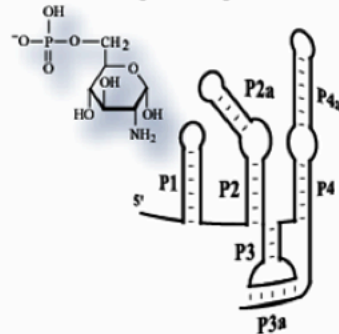
guanine



pre-queosine₁



glucosamine-6-phosphate



S-adenosyl-methionine

Approaches to Structure Prediction

Maximum Pairing

- + works on single sequences
- + simple
- too inaccurate

Minimum Energy

- + works on single sequences
- ignores pseudoknots
- only finds “optimal” fold

Partition Function

- + finds all folds
- ignores pseudoknots

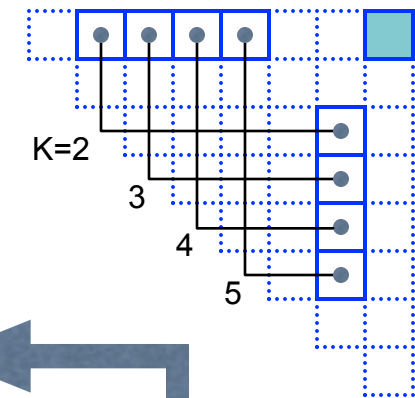
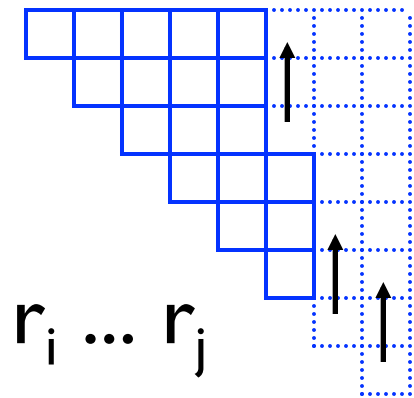
Computation Order

$B(i,j) = \# \text{ pairs}$ Or energy in optimal pairing of $r_i \dots r_j$

$B(i,j) = 0$ for all i, j with $i \geq j-4$; otherwise

$B(i,j) = \max$ of:

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} B(i,j-1) \\ \max \{ B(i,k-1) + 1 + B(k+1,j-1) \mid \\ \quad i \leq k < j-4 \text{ and } r_k - r_j \text{ may pair} \} \end{array} \right.$$



Time: $O(n^3)$

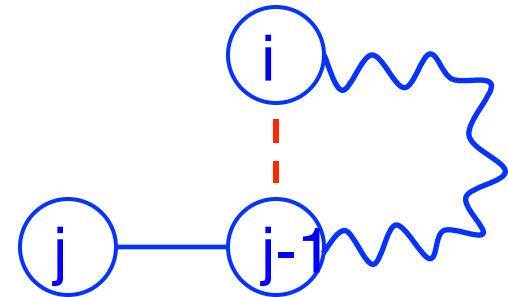
Loop-based energy version is better; recurrences similar, slightly messier

“Optimal pairing of $r_i \dots r_j$ ”

Two possibilities

j Unpaired:

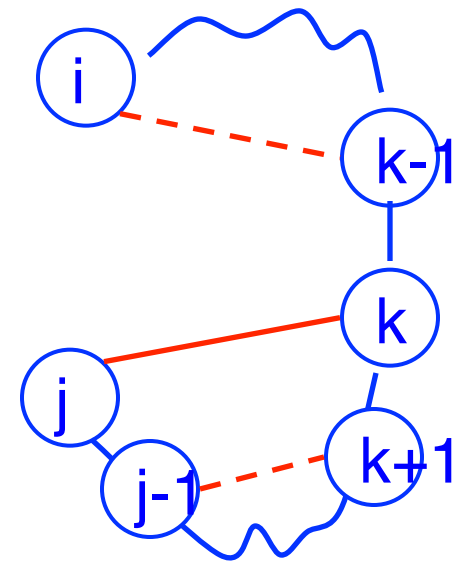
Find best pairing of $r_i \dots r_{j-1}$



j Paired (with some k):

Find best $r_i \dots r_{k-1}$ +

best $r_{k+1} \dots r_{j-1}$ **plus 1**



Why is it slow?

Why do pseudoknots matter?

Today

Structure prediction via comparative analysis

Covariance Models (CMs) represent
RNA sequence/structure motifs

Fast CM search

Motif Discovery

Applications in prokaryotes & vertebrates

Approaches, II

Comparative sequence analysis

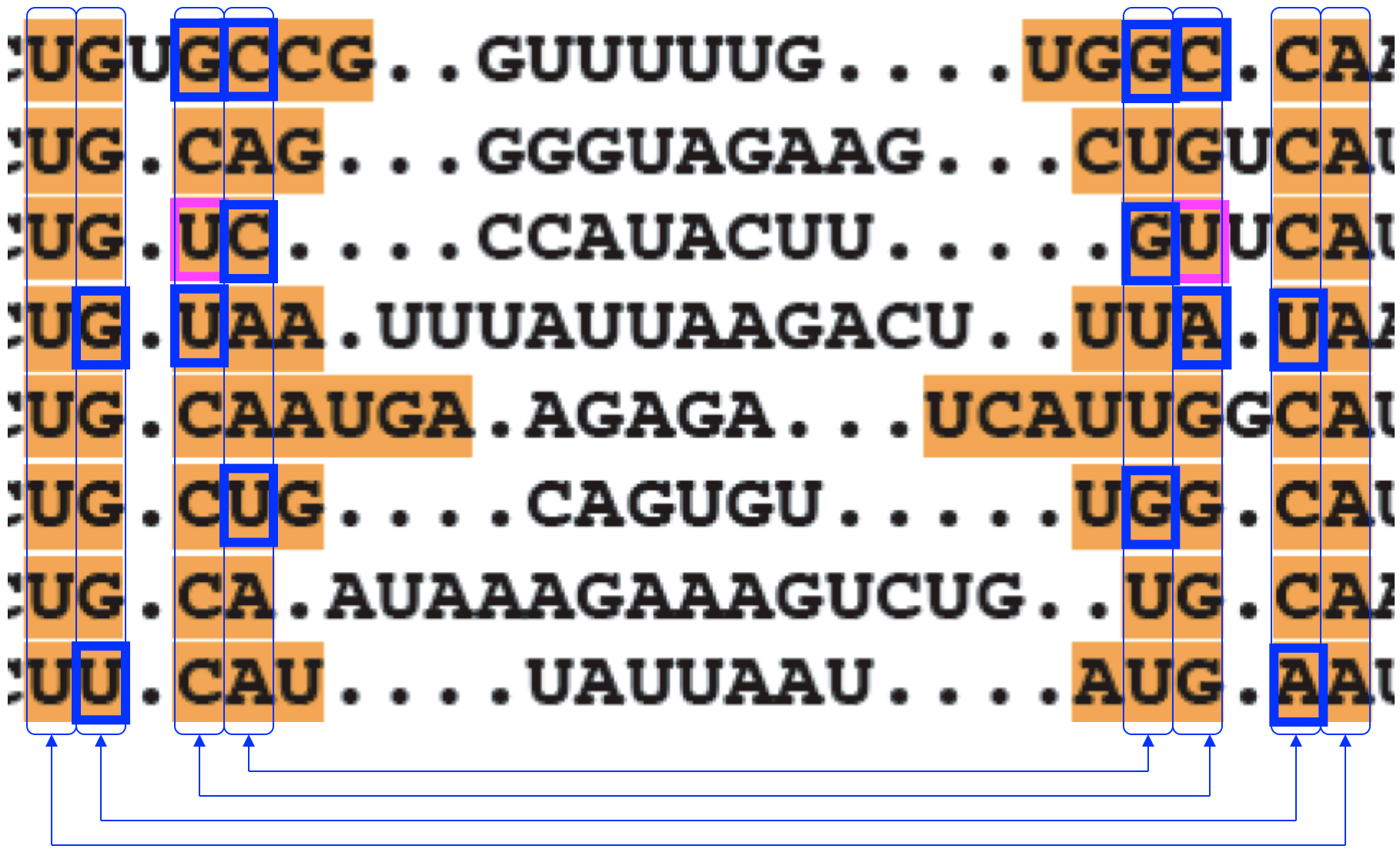
- + handles all pairings (potentially incl. pseudoknots)
- requires several (many?) aligned, appropriately diverged sequences

Stochastic Context-free Grammars

Roughly combines min energy & comparative, but no pseudoknots

Physical experiments (x-ray crystallography, NMR)

P2



Covariation is strong evidence for base pairing

Mutual Information

$$M_{ij} = \sum_{x_i, x_j} f_{x_i, x_j} \log_2 \frac{f_{x_i, x_j}}{f_{x_i} f_{x_j}}; \quad 0 \leq M_{ij} \leq 2$$

Max when *no* seq conservation but perfect pairing

MI = expected score gain from using a pair state (below)

Finding optimal MI, (i.e. opt pairing of cols) is hard(?)

Finding optimal MI *without pseudoknots* can be done by dynamic programming

M.I. Example (Artificial)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	A	G	A	U	A	A	U	C	U
A	A	G	A	U	C	A	U	C	U
A	A	G	A	C	G	U	U	C	U
A	A	G	A	U	U	U	U	C	U
A	A	G	C	C	A	G	G	C	U
A	A	G	C	G	C	G	G	C	U
A	A	G	C	U	G	C	G	C	U
A	A	G	C	A	U	C	G	C	U
A	A	G	G	U	A	G	C	C	U
A	A	G	G	G	C	G	C	C	U
A	A	G	G	U	G	U	C	C	U
A	A	G	G	C	U	U	C	C	U
A	A	G	U	A	A	A	A	C	U
A	A	G	U	C	C	A	A	C	U
A	A	G	U	U	G	C	A	C	U
A	A	G	U	U	U	C	A	C	U
A	16	0	4	2	4	4	4	0	0
C	0	0	4	4	4	4	4	16	0
G	0	16	4	2	4	4	4	0	0
U	0	0	4	8	4	4	4	0	16

MI:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
7	0	0	2	0.30	0	1			
6	0	0	1	0.55	1				
5	0	0	0	0.42					
4	0	0	0.30						
3	0	0							
2	0								
1									

Cols 1 & 9, 2 & 8: perfect conservation & *might* be base-paired, but unclear whether they are. M.I. = 0

Cols 3 & 7: No conservation, but always W-C pairs, so seems likely they do base-pair. M.I. = 2 bits.

Cols 7->6: unconserved, but each letter in 7 has only 2 possible mates in 6. M.I. = 1 bit.

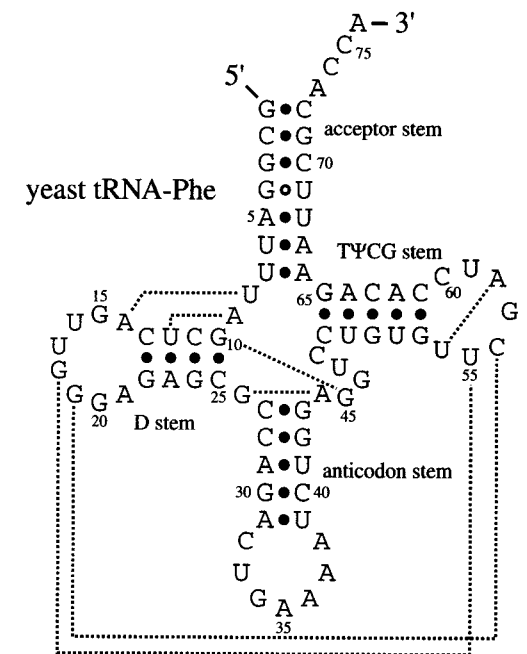
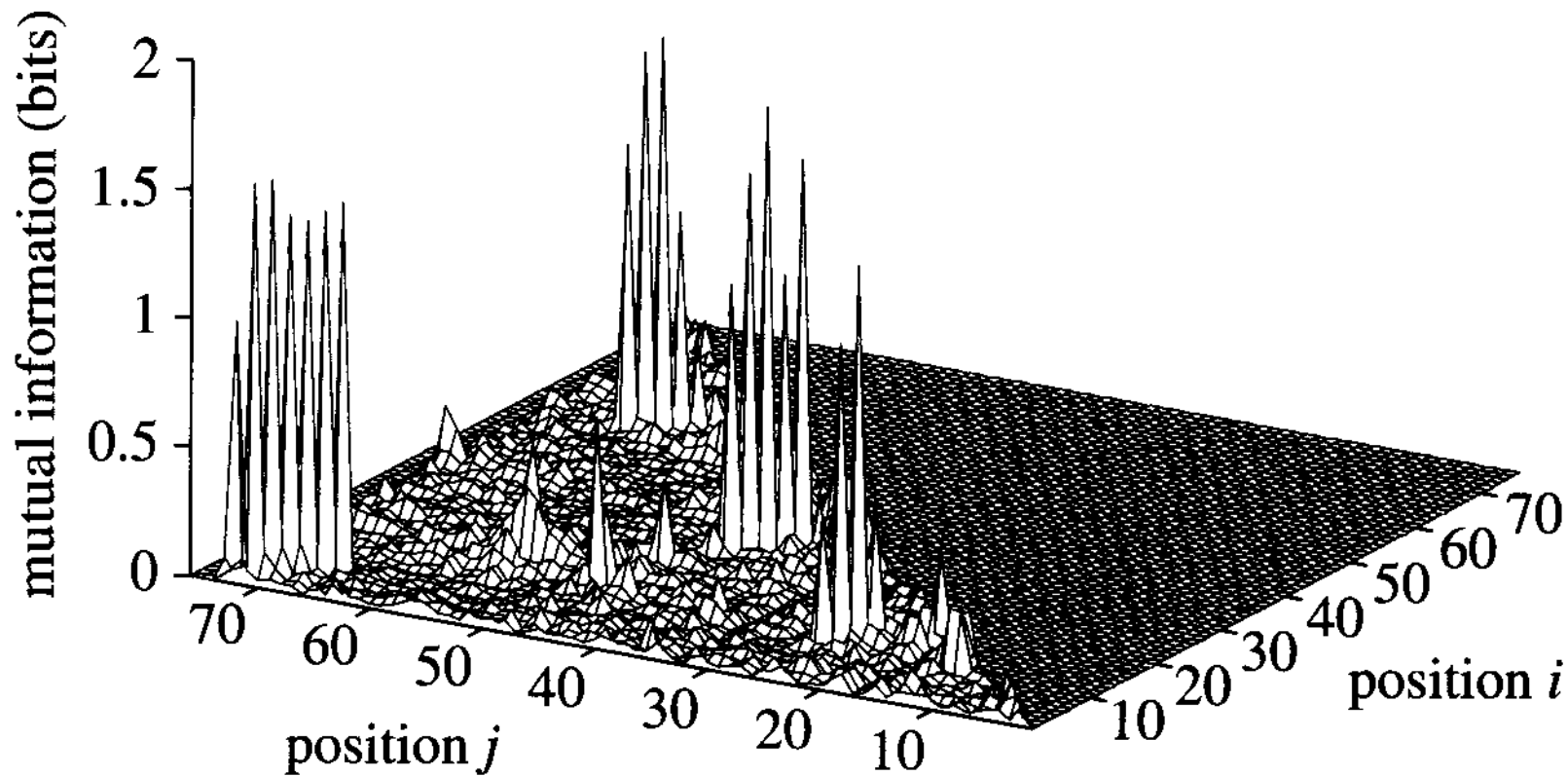


Figure 10.6 A mutual information plot of a tRNA alignment (top) shows four strong diagonals of covarying positions, corresponding to the four stems of the tRNA cloverleaf structure (bottom; the secondary structure of yeast phenylalanine tRNA is shown). Dashed lines indicate some of the additional tertiary contacts observed in the yeast tRNA-Phe crystal structure. Some of these tertiary contacts produce correlated pairs which can be seen weakly in the mutual information plot.

MI-Based Structure-Learning

Find best (max total MI) subset of column pairs among $i \dots j$, subject to absence of pseudo-knots

$$S_{i,j} = \max \begin{cases} S_{i,j-1} & \text{j unpaired} \\ \max_{i \leq k < j-4} S_{i,k-1} + M_{k,j} + S_{k+1,j-1} & \text{j paired} \end{cases}$$

“Just like Nussinov/Zucker folding”

BUT, need enough data---enough sequences at right phylogenetic distance

Computational Problems

~~How to predict secondary structure~~

How to model an RNA “motif”
(i.e., sequence/structure pattern)

Given a motif, how to search for instances

Given (unaligned) sequences, find motifs

How to score discovered motifs

How to leverage prior knowledge

Motif Description

RNA Motif Models

“Covariance Models” (Eddy & Durbin 1994)

aka profile stochastic context-free grammars

aka hidden Markov models on steroids

Model position-specific nucleotide preferences *and* base-pair preferences

Pro: accurate

Con: model building hard, search slow

Eddy & Durbin 1994: What

A probabilistic model for RNA families

The “Covariance Model”

≈ A Stochastic Context-Free Grammar

A generalization of a profile HMM

Algorithms for Training

From aligned or unaligned sequences

Automates “comparative analysis”

Complements Nussinov/Zucker RNA folding

Algorithms for searching

Main Results

Very accurate search for tRNA

(Precursor to tRNAscanSE - current favorite)

Given sufficient data, model construction comparable to, but not quite as good as, human experts

Some quantitative info on importance of pseudoknots and other tertiary features

Probabilistic Model Search

As with HMMs, given a sequence, you calculate likelihood ratio that the model could generate the sequence, vs a background model

You set a score threshold

Anything above threshold → a “hit”

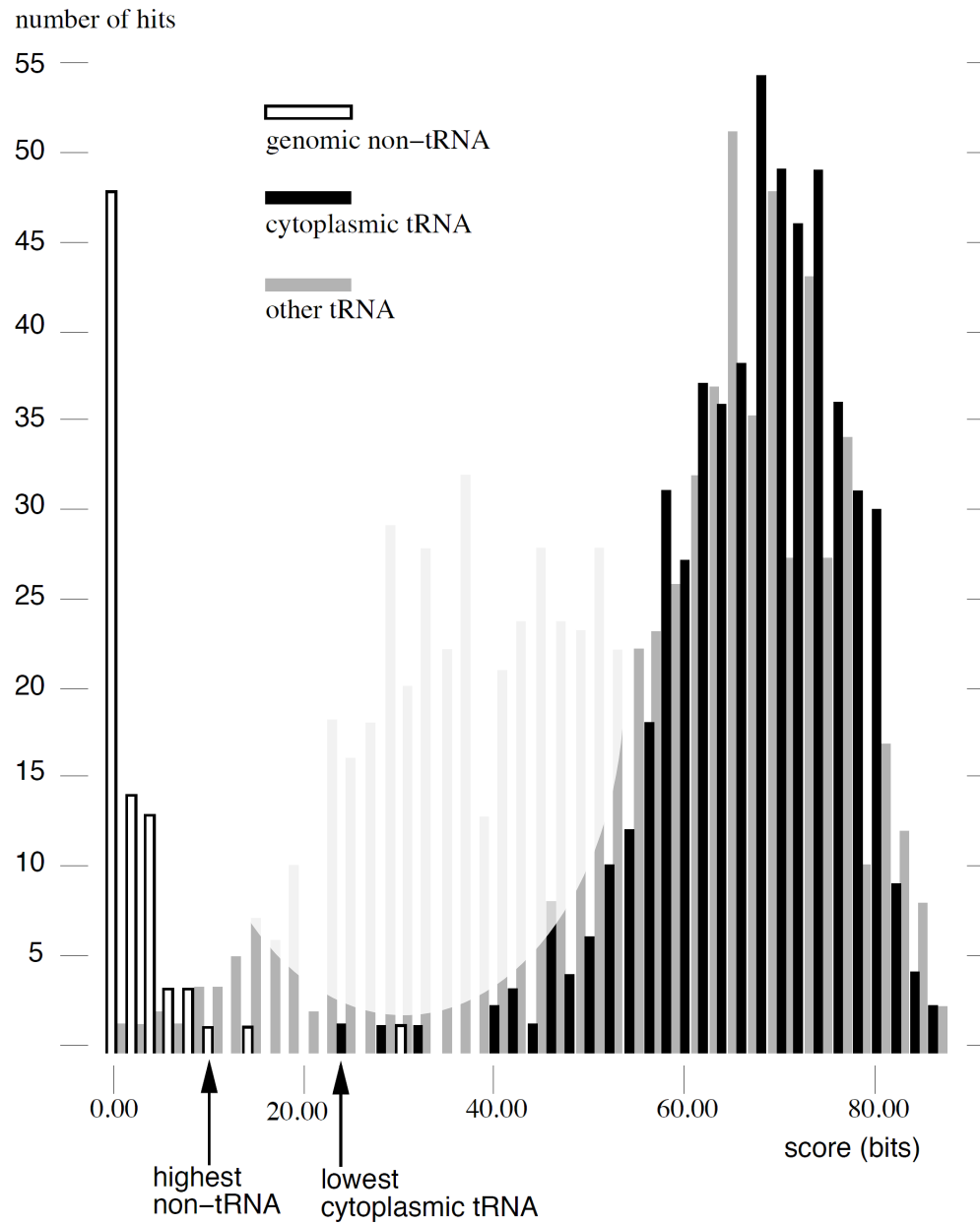
Scoring:

- “Forward” / “Inside” algorithm - sum over all paths

- Viterbi approximation - find single best path

- (Bonus: alignment & structure prediction)

Example: searching for tRNAs



Profile HMM Structure

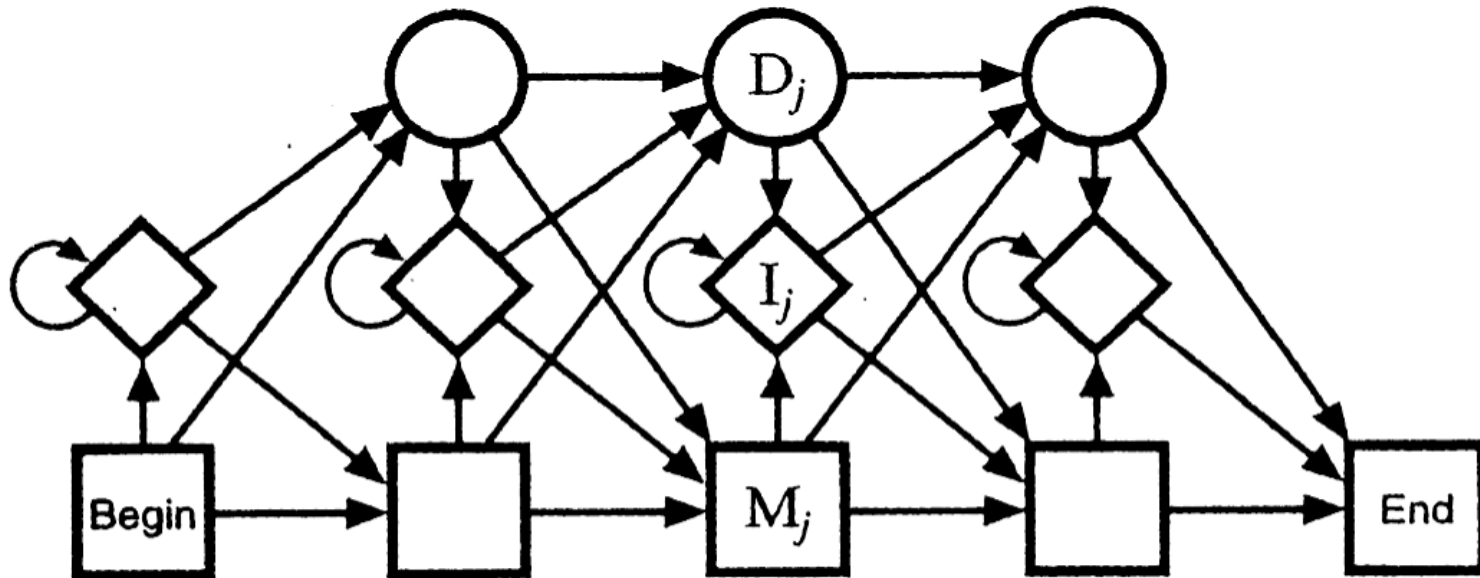


Figure 5.2 *The transition structure of a profile HMM.*

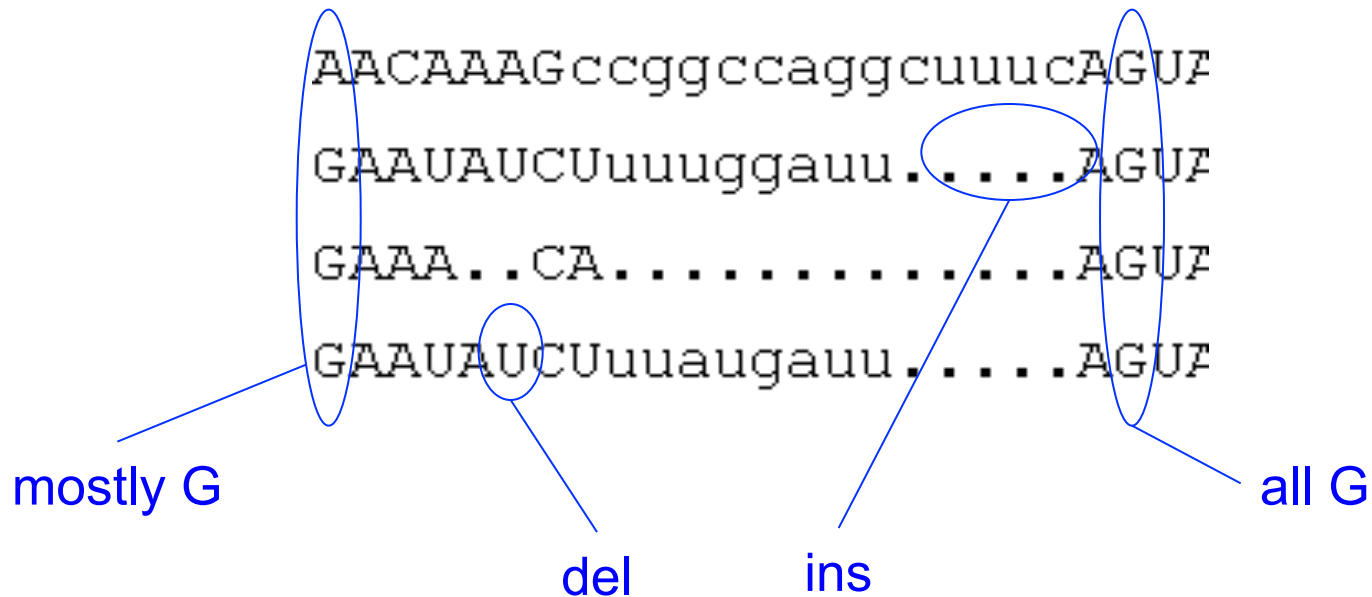
- M_j: Match states (20 emission probabilities)
- I_j: Insert states (Background emission probabilities)
- D_j: Delete states (silent - no emission)

How to model an RNA “Motif”?

Conceptually, start with a profile HMM:

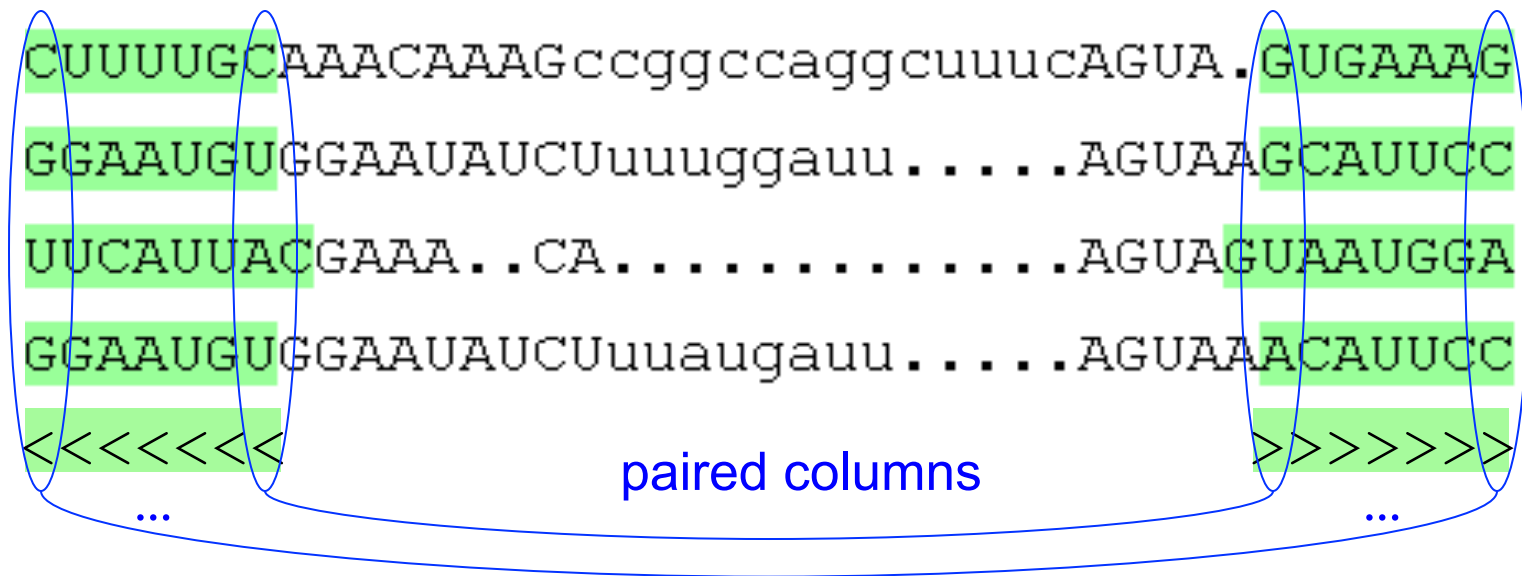
from a multiple alignment, estimate nucleotide/ insert/delete preferences for each position

given a new seq, estimate likelihood that it could be generated by the model, & align it to the model



How to model an RNA “Motif”?

Add “column pairs” and pair emission probabilities for base-paired regions



Profile HMM Structure

Does not handle "paired columns" above

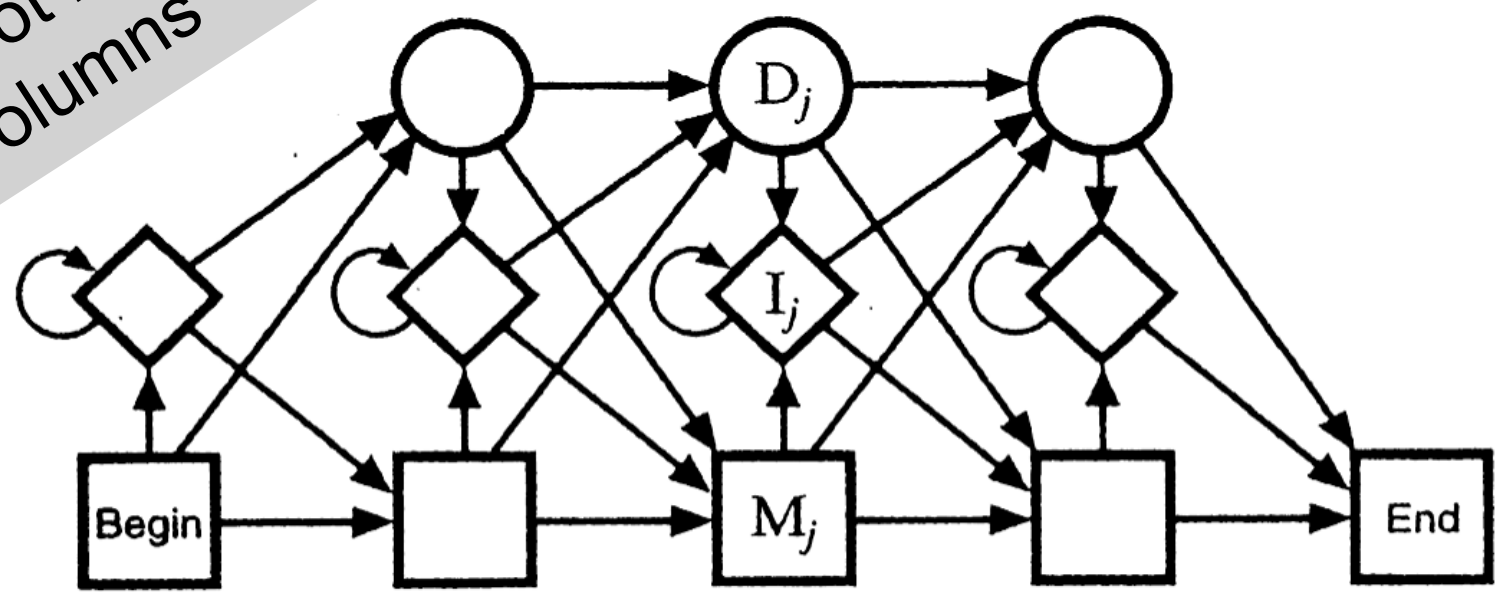


Figure 5.2 *The transition structure of a profile HMM.*

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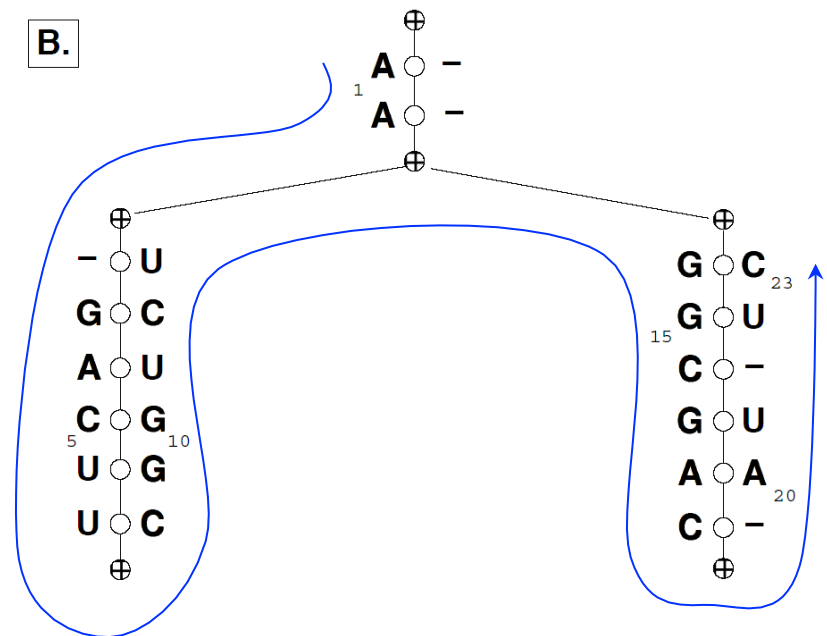
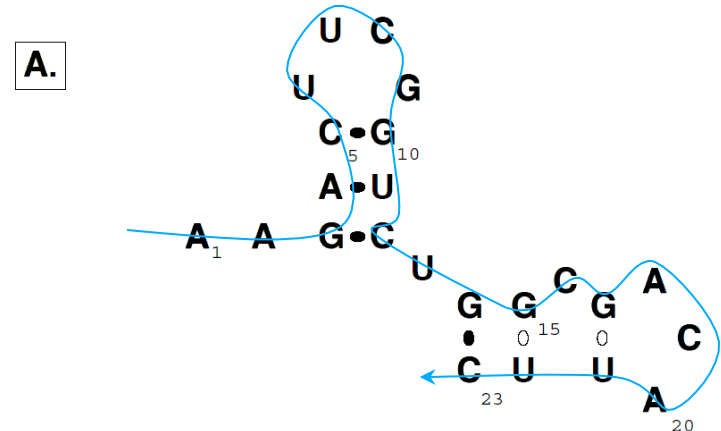
CM Structure

A: Sequence + structure

B: the CM “guide tree”

C: probabilities of letters/ pairs & of indels

Think of each branch being an HMM emitting both sides of a helix (but 3' side emitted in reverse order)

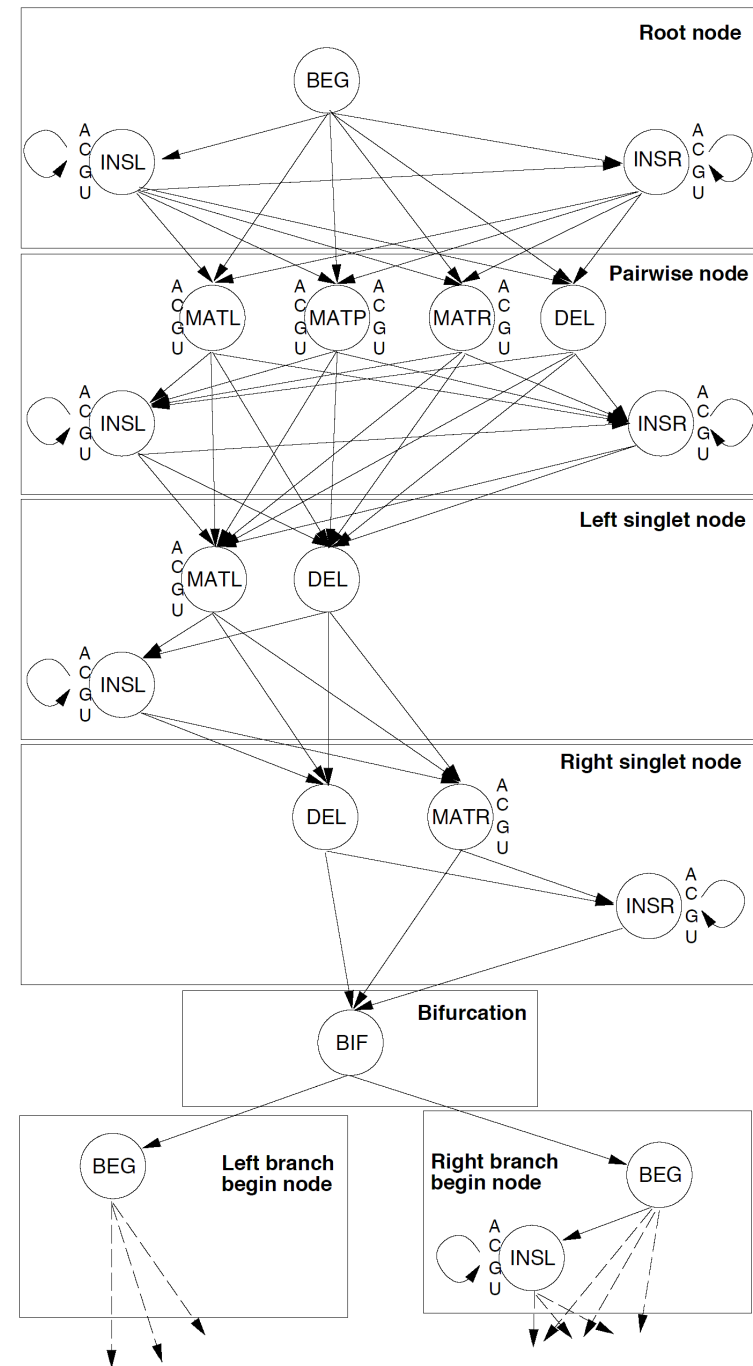


Overall CM Architecture

One box (“node”) per node of guide tree

BEG/MATL/INS/DEL just like an HMM

MATP & BIF are the key additions: MATP emits *pairs* of symbols, modeling base-pairs; BIF allows multiple helices



CM Viterbi Alignment

(the “inside” algorithm)

x_i = i^{th} letter of input

x_{ij} = substring i, \dots, j of input

T_{yz} = $P(\text{transition } y \rightarrow z)$

E_{x_i, x_j}^y = $P(\text{emission of } x_i, x_j \text{ from state } y)$

S_{ij}^y = $\max_{\pi} \log P(x_{ij} \text{ gen'd starting in state } y \text{ via path } \pi)$

CM Viterbi Alignment

(the “inside” algorithm)

$$S_{ij}^y = \max_{\pi} \log P(x_{ij} \text{ generated starting in state } y \text{ via path } \pi)$$

$$S_{ij}^y = \begin{cases} \max_z [S_{i+1,j-1}^z + \log T_{yz} + \log E_{x_i, x_j}^y] & \text{match pair} \\ \max_z [S_{i+1,j}^z + \log T_{yz} + \log E_{x_i}^y] & \text{match/insert left} \\ \max_z [S_{i,j-1}^z + \log T_{yz} + \log E_{x_j}^y] & \text{match/insert right} \\ \max_z [S_{i,j}^z + \log T_{yz}] & \text{delete} \\ \max_{i < k \leq j} [S_{i,k}^{y_{\text{left}}} + S_{k+1,j}^{y_{\text{right}}}] & \text{bifurcation} \end{cases}$$



Time $O(qn^3)$, q states, seq len n
 compare: $O(qn)$ for profile HMM

An Important Application: Rfam

Rfam – an RNA family DB

Griffiths-Jones, et al., NAR '03, '05, '08

Was biggest scientific comp user in Europe -
1000 cpu cluster for a month per release

Rapidly growing:

Rel 1.0, 1/03: 25 families, 55k instances

Rel 7.0, 3/05: 503 families, 363k instances

Rel 9.0, 7/08: 603 families, 636k instances

Rel 9.1, 1/09: 1372 families, 1148k instances

Rel 10.0, 1/10: 1446 families, 3193k instances

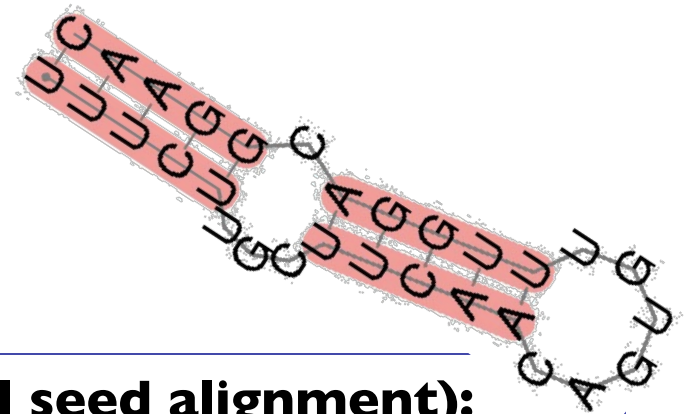
DB size:

~8GB

~160GB

RF00037:

Example Rfam Family



Input (hand-curated):

MSA “seed alignment”

SS_cons

Score Thresh T

Window Len W

Output:

CM

scan results & “full alignment”

phylogeny, etc.

IRE (partial seed alignment):

Hom. sap.	GUUCCUGCUUCAACAGUGUUUGGAUGGAAC
Hom. sap.	UUUCUUC.UUCAACAGUGUUUGGAUGGAAC
Hom. sap.	UUUCCUGUUUCAACAGUGCUUGGA.GGAAC
Hom. sap.	UUUAUC..AGUGACAGAGUUCACU.AUAAA
Hom. sap.	UCUCUUGCUUCAACAGUGUUUGGAUGGAAC
Hom. sap.	AUUAUC..GGGAACAGUGUUUCCC.AUAAU
Hom. sap.	UCUUGC..UUCAACAGUGUUUGGACGGAAG
Hom. sap.	UGUAUC..GGAGACAGUGAUCUCC.AUAUG
Hom. sap.	AUUAUC..GGAAGCAGUGCCUCC.AUAAU
Cav. por.	UCUCCUGCUUCAACAGUGCUUGGACGGAGC
Mus. mus.	UAUAUC..GGAGACAGUGAUCUCC.AUAUG
Mus. mus.	UUUCCUGCUUCAACAGUGCUUGAACGGAAC
Mus. mus.	GUACUUGCUUCAACAGUGUUUGAACGGAAC
Rat. nor.	UAUAUC..GGAGACAGUGACCUCC.AUAUG
Rat. nor.	UAUCUUGCUUCAACAGUGUUUGGACGGAAC
SS_cons	<<<<...<<<<.....>>>>.>>>>

Motif Discovery

RNA Motif Discovery

Would be great if: given 100 complete genomes from diverse species, we could automatically find all the RNAs.

State of the art: that's hopeless

Hope: can we exploit biological knowledge to narrow the search space?

RNA Motif Discovery

More promising problem: given a 10-20 unaligned sequences of a few kb, most of which contain instances of one RNA motif of 100-200bp -- find it.

Example: 5' UTRs of orthologous glycine cleavage genes from γ -proteobacteria

Example: corresponding introns of orthologous vertebrate genes

Orthologs =
counterparts in
different species

Approaches

Align-First: Align sequences, then look for common structure

Fold-First: Predict structures, then try to align them

Joint: Do both together

Pitfall for sequence-alignment-first approach

Structural conservation \neq Sequence conservation
Alignment without structure information is unreliable

CLUSTALW alignment of SECIS elements with flanking regions

```
-----CCCCCCCAGGCTCCTGGTGCCCGG--ATGATGACGACCTGGGTG-GAA-A---CCTACCCTGTGGCCACCC-ATGTCGA-GCCCCCTGGCATT
GGGATCATTGCAAGAGCAGCGTG--ACTGACATTA--TGAAGGCCTGTACTGAAGAAGCAA--GCTGTTAGTACAGACC---AGATG---CTTCTTGGCAGGCCTCGTTGTACCTCTTGGAAAACCTCAAT
AGGTTTGCATTAATGAGGATTACACAGAAAACCTTT-GTTAAGGTTTGTGTGATCTGCTAA--TTGGCAAATTTTTATTTTTAAAAT---ATTCTACAGAAGAGTTCATTTAAGAATGTTTCGTATAGG
AGTGTGCGGATGATAACTACTGACGAAAGAGTCATCGACTCAGTTAGTGGTTGGATGTAGTCACATTAGTTCCTCTCCCCATCTTTG---TCTCCCTGGCAAGGAGAATATGCGGACATGATGCTAAGAG
TGGACTGATAGGTA-GCCATGGC--TTCATCTGTC--ATG--TCTGCTCTTTTTATATTG--TGTATGATGGTCACAGTGTAAG-G---TTCCACAGCTGTGACTTGATTTTTAA-AAATGTGCGAAGA
TAAACTCGAACTCGAGCGGGCAATTGCTGATTACGA-TTAAACCACTGATTCTGGGTCGCTGC--TTCGTGGCCGTCGTCGGTTCCA-----TTTATCAACTATTAGCTCCAATACATAGCTACAGGTTTTT
AAATTCTCGCTATATGACGATGGCAATCTCAAATGT-TCATTGGTTGCCATTIGATGAAATCAGTTTTGTGTGCACCTGATTGCAGAATTTTGTTTACCTTGCTCATTTTTTTTCATTGAA-ACCACTTCTCAGA
GGGGCGGAGTACAAGGTGCGTGTGACTGGAGCCA--CCCCTCCGACTCTGCAGGTGTTG--CAAATGACGACCGATTTTGAAATG---GTCACAGGCCAAAACTCGTGTCCGACATCAACCCCTTC
TTCTCCAGTGTCTAGTTACATTGATGAGAACAGAA-ACATAAACTATGACCTAGGGGTTTCT--GTTGGATAGCTCGTAATTAAGAACGGAGAAAGAACAAAGACATATTTCCAGTTTTTTTTCTTTAC
CAAACCTGATGGATA-GCCATTGGTATTTCATCTATT--TTAACTCTGTGCTTTACATATTG--TTTATGATGGCCACAGCCTAAG-G---TACACAGGCTGTGACTTGATTCAAAA-GAAA-----
TGAGCAACTTGTCT-GATGACTGGGAAAGGAGGAC--CTGCAACCATCTGACTTGGTCTCTG--TTAATGACGCTCTCCCCCTAA-A---CCC-CATTAAGGACTGGGAGAGGCAGA-GCAAGCCTCAGAG
GATTACTGGCTGCACCTCTGGGGGGCGGTTCTTCCA--TGATGGTGTTCCTTAAATTTGCA--CGGAGAAACACCTGATTTCCAGGAAA-ATCCCTCAGATGGGCGCTGGTCCCATCCATTCCCGATGCCT
AGACCAGGCAAGACAACCTGTGAGC-GCGATGGCCG--TGTACCCAGGTGAGGGGTTGGTGTG--TCTATGAAGGAGGGGCCGAAG-----CCCTTGTGGGCGGGCCTCCCTGAGCCCGTCTGTGGTGCCAG
CACTTCAGAAGGCT-TCTGAATGGAACCATCTCTT--GACA-TTTGTTTCTATA-ATATTG--T-CATGACAGTACAGCATAAAA-G---CGCAGACGGCTGTGACTGATTTTAGA-AAATATTTTTAGA
```

same-colored boxes *should* be aligned

Our Approach: CMfinder

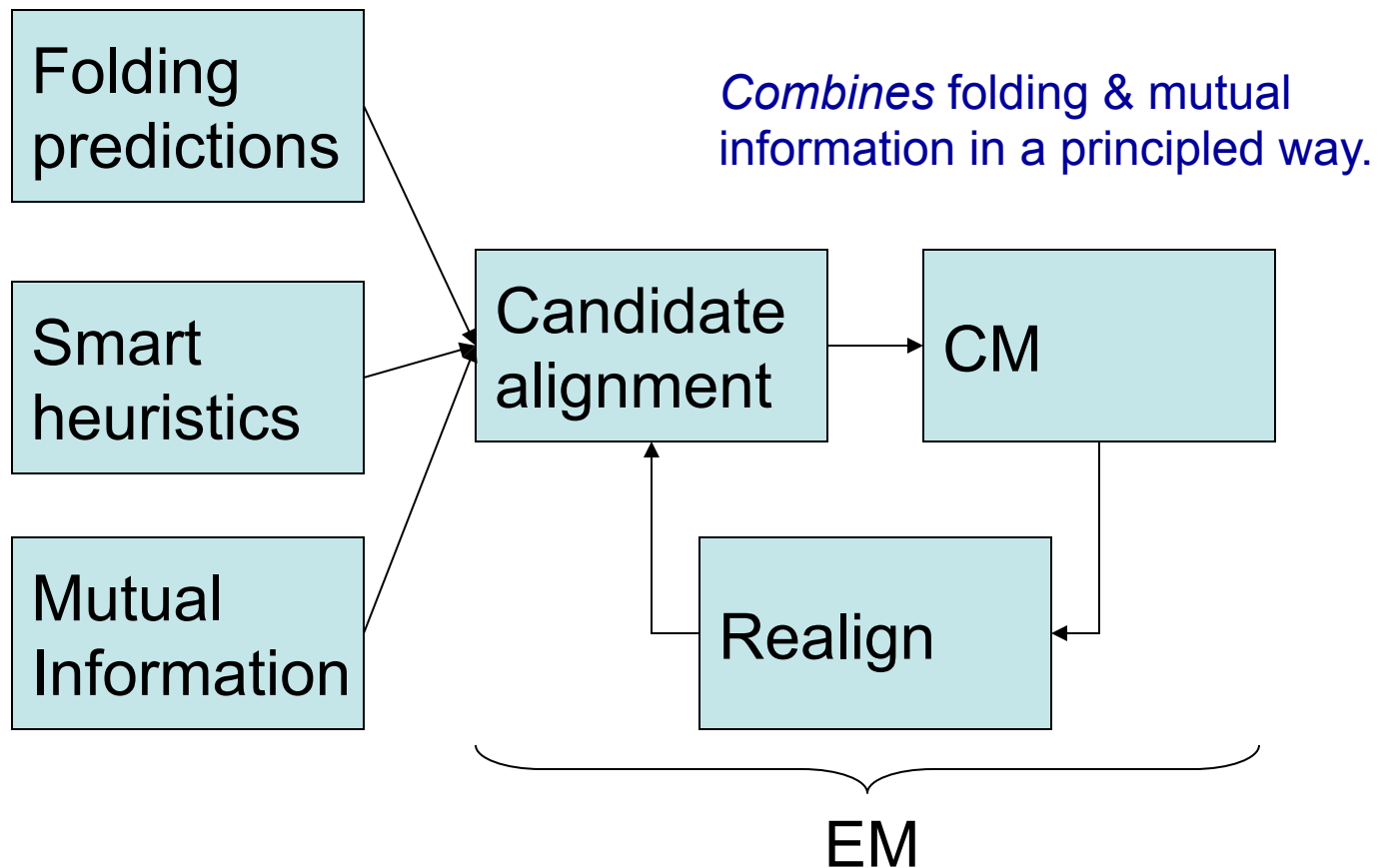
Simultaneous *local* alignment, folding and CM-based motif description using an EM-style learning procedure

Yao, Weinberg & Ruzzo, *Bioinformatics*, 2006

CMFinder

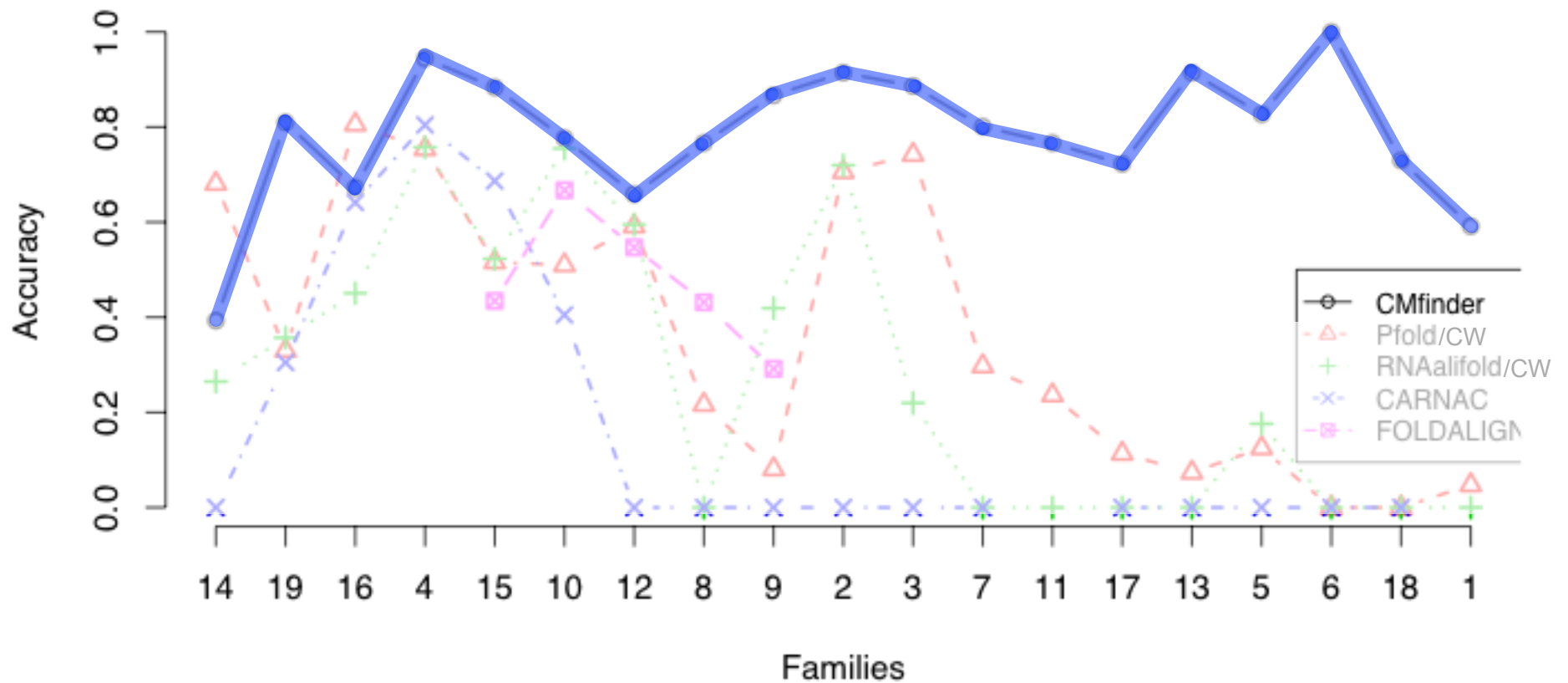
Simultaneous alignment, folding & motif description

Yao, Weinberg & Ruzzo, *Bioinformatics*, 2006



CMfinder Accuracy

(on Rfam families *with* flanking sequence)



Discovery in Bacteria

OPEN ACCESS Freely available online

PLOS COMPUTATIONAL BIOLOGY

A Computational Pipeline for High-Throughput Discovery of *cis*-Regulatory Noncoding RNA in Prokaryotes

Zizhen Yao^{1*}, Jeffrey Barrick^{2a}, Zasha Weinberg³, Shane Neph^{1,4}, Ronald Breaker^{2,3,5}, Martin Tompa^{1,4},
Walter L. Ruzzo^{1,4}

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Identification of 22 candidate structured RNAs in bacteria using the CMfinder comparative genomics pipeline

Zasha Weinberg^{1,*}, Jeffrey E. Barrick^{2,3}, Zizhen Yao⁴, Adam Roth², Jane N. Kim¹,
Jeremy Gore¹, Joy Xin Wang^{1,2}, Elaine R. Lee¹, Kirsten F. Block¹, Narasimhan Sudarsan¹,
Shane Neph⁵, Martin Tompa^{4,5}, Walter L. Ruzzo^{4,5} and Ronald R. Breaker^{1,2,3}

Right Data: Why/How

We can recognize, say, 5-10 good examples amidst 20 extraneous ones (but not 5 in 200 or 2000) of length 1k or 10k (but not 100k)

Regulators often near regulatees (protein coding genes), which are usually recognizable cross-species

So, look near similar genes (“homologs”)

Many riboswitches, e.g., are present in ~5 copies per genome

(Not strategy used in vertebrates - 1000x larger genomes)

Processing Times

Input from ~70 complete Firmicute genomes available in late 2005-early 2006, totaling ~200 megabases

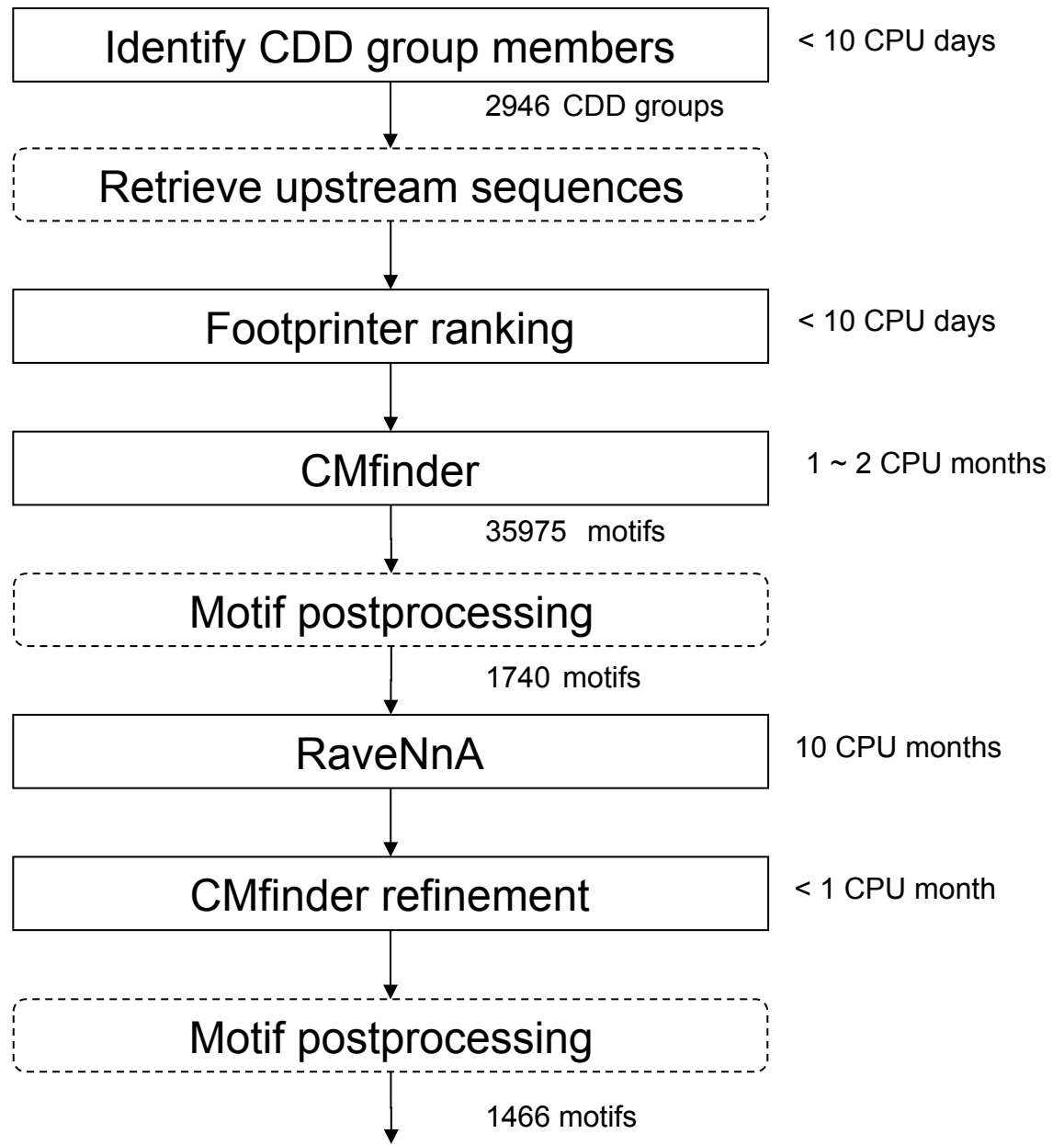


Table I: Motifs that correspond to Rfam families

Rank			Score	#		CDD			Rfam
RAV	CMF	FP		RAV	CMF	ID	Gene	Description	
0	43	107	3400	367	11	9904	IlvB	Thiamine pyrophosphate-requiring enzymes	RF00230 T-box
1	10	344	3115	96	22	13174	COG3859	Predicted membrane protein	RF00059 THI
2	77	1284	2376	112	6	11125	MetH	Methionine synthase I specific DNA methylase	RF00162 S_box
3	0	5	2327	30	26	9991	COG0116	Predicted N6-adenine-specific DNA methylase	RF00011 RNaseP_bact_b
4	6	66	2228	49	18	4383	DHBP	3,4-dihydroxy-2-butanone 4-phosphate synthase	RF00050 RFN
7	145	952	1429	51	7	10390	GuaA	GMP synthase	RF00167 Purine
8	17	108	1322	29	13	10732	GcvP	Glycine cleavage system protein P	RF00504 Glycine
9	37	749	1235	28	7	24631	DUF149	Uncharacterised BCR, YbaB family COG0718	RF00169 SRP_bact
10	123	1358	1222	36	6	10986	CbiB	Cobalamin biosynthesis protein CobD/CbiB	RF00174 Cobalamin
20	137	1133	899	32	7	9895	LysA	Diaminopimelate decarboxylase	RF00168 Lysine
21	36	141	896	22	10	10727	TerC	Membrane protein TerC	RF00080 yybP-ykoY
39	202	684	664	25	5	11945	MgtE	Mg/Co/Ni transporter MgtE	RF00380 ykoK
40	26	74	645	19	18	10323	GlmS	Glucosamine 6-phosphate synthetase	RF00234 glmS
53	208	192	561	21	5	10892	OpuBB	ABC-type proline/glycine betaine transport systems	RF00005 tRNA ¹
122	99	239	413	10	7	11784	EmrE	Membrane transporters of cations and cationic drug	RF00442 ykkC-yxkD
255	392	281	268	8	6	10272	COG0398	Uncharacterized conserved protein	RF00023 tmRNA

Table 1: Motifs that correspond to Rfam families. “Rank”: the three columns show ranks for refined motif clusters after genome scans (“RAV”), CMfinder motifs before genome scans (“CMF”), and FootPrinter results (“FP”). We used the same ranking scheme for RAV and CMF. “Score”

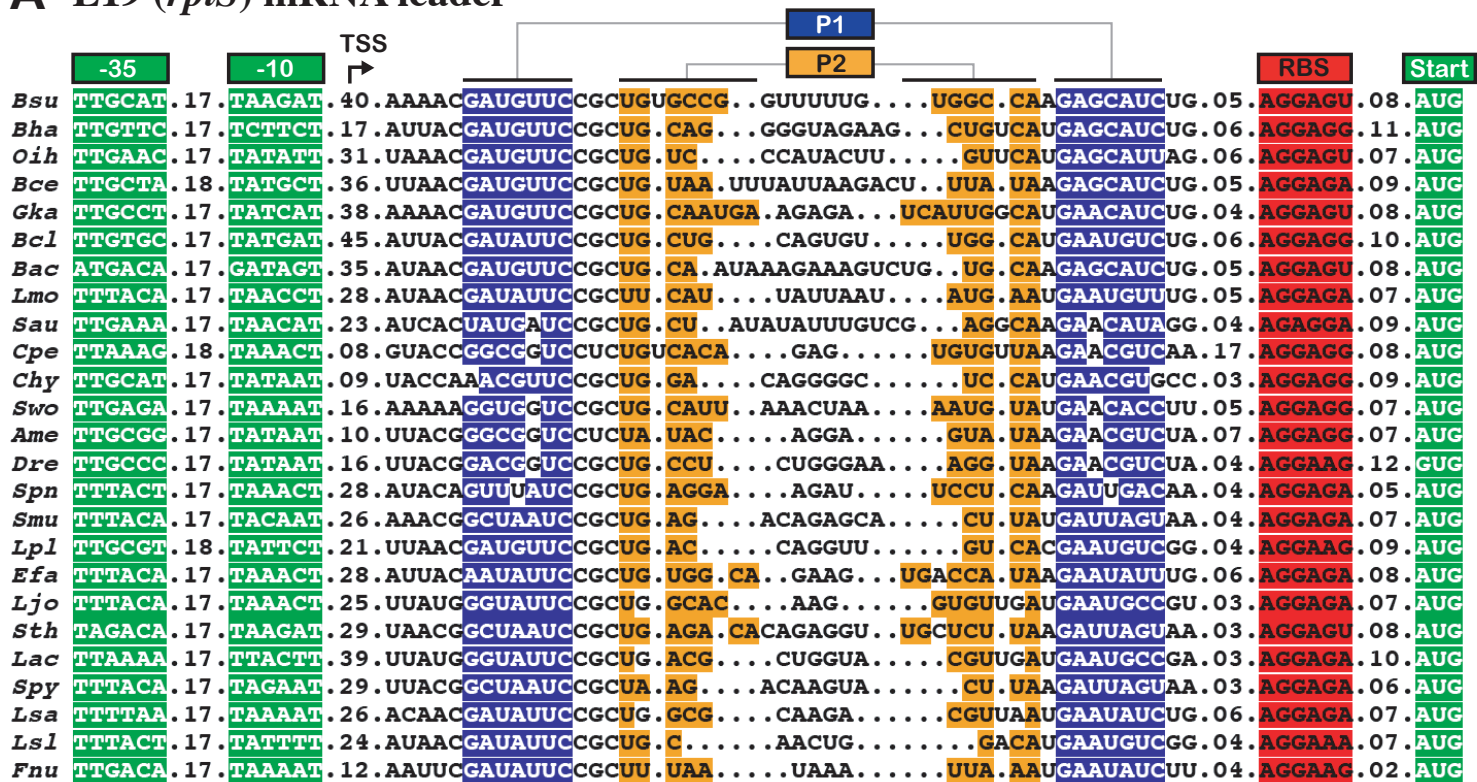
Rfam		Membership			Overlap			Structure		
		#	Sn	Sp	nt	Sn	Sp	bp	Sn	Sp
RF00174	Cobalamin	183	0.74 ¹	0.97	152	0.75	0.85	20	0.60	0.77
RF00504	Glycine	92	0.56 ¹	0.96	94	0.94	0.68	17	0.84	0.82
RF00234	glmS	34	0.92	1.00	100	0.54	1.00	27	0.96	0.97
RF00168	Lysine	80	0.82	0.98	111	0.61	0.68	26	0.76	0.87
RF00167	Purine	86	0.86	0.93	83	0.83	0.55	17	0.90	0.95
RF00050	RFN	133	0.98	0.99	139	0.96	1.00	12	0.66	0.65
RF00011	RNaseP_bact_b	144	0.99	0.99	194	0.53	1.00	38	0.72	0.78
RF00162	S_box	208	0.95	0.97	110	1.00	0.69	23	0.91	0.78
RF00169	SRP_bact	177	0.92	0.95	99	1.00	0.65	25	0.89	0.81
RF00230	T-box	453	0.96	0.61	187	0.77	1.00	5	0.32	0.38
RF00059	THI	326	0.89	1.00	99	0.91	0.69	13	0.56	0.74
RF00442	ykkC-yxkD	19	0.90	0.53	99	0.94	0.81	18	0.94	0.68
RF00380	ykoK	49	0.92	1.00	125	0.75	1.00	27	0.80	0.95
RF00080	yybP-ykoY	41	0.32	0.89	100	0.78	0.90	18	0.63	0.66
mean		145	0.84	0.91	121	0.81	0.82	21	0.75	0.77
median		113	0.91	0.97	105	0.81	0.83	19	0.78	0.78

Tbl 2: Prediction accuracy compared to prokaryotic subset of Rfam full alignments.

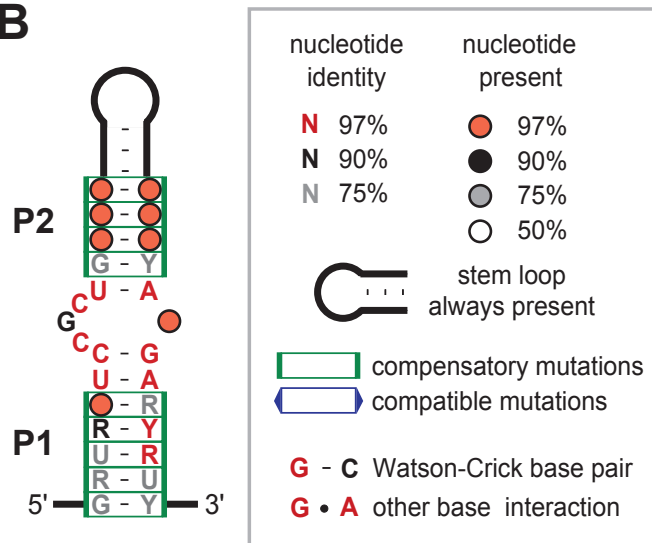
Membership: # of seqs in overlap between our predictions and Rfam's, the sensitivity (Sn) and specificity (Sp) of our membership predictions. Overlap: the avg len of overlap between our predictions and Rfam's (nt), the fractional lengths of the overlapped region in Rfam's predictions (Sn) and in ours (Sp). Structure: the avg # of correctly predicted canonical base pairs (in overlapped regions) in the secondary structure (bp), and sensitivity and specificity of our predictions. ¹After 2nd RaveNnA scan, membership Sn of Glycine, Cobalamin increased to 76% and 98% resp., Glycine Sp unchanged, but Cobalamin Sp dropped to 84%.

Example: Ribosomal Autoregulation: Excess L19 represses L19 (RF00556; 555-559 similar)

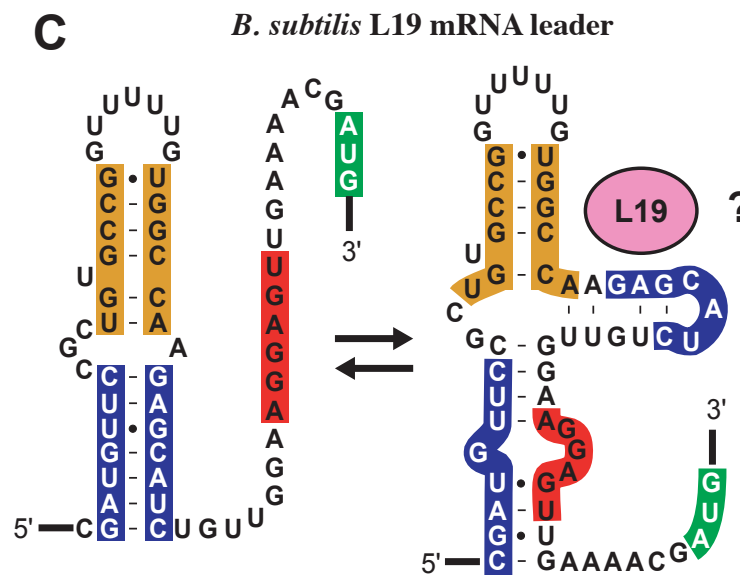
A L19 (*rplS*) mRNA leader



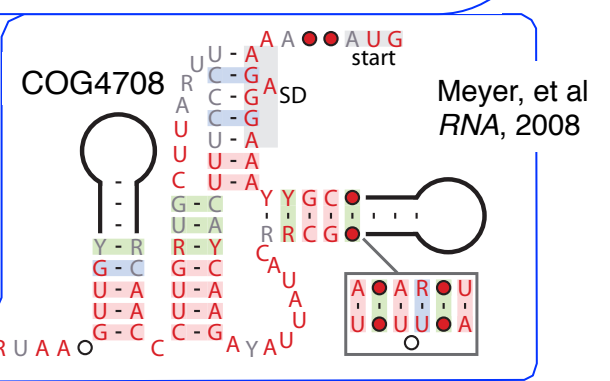
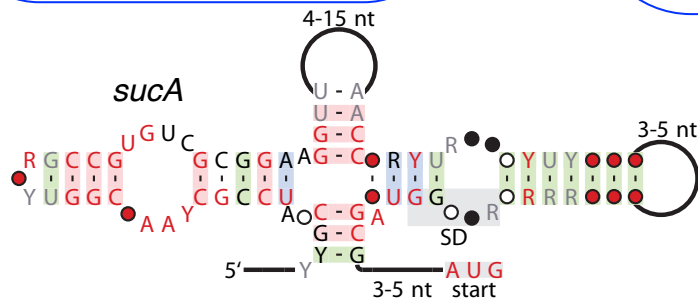
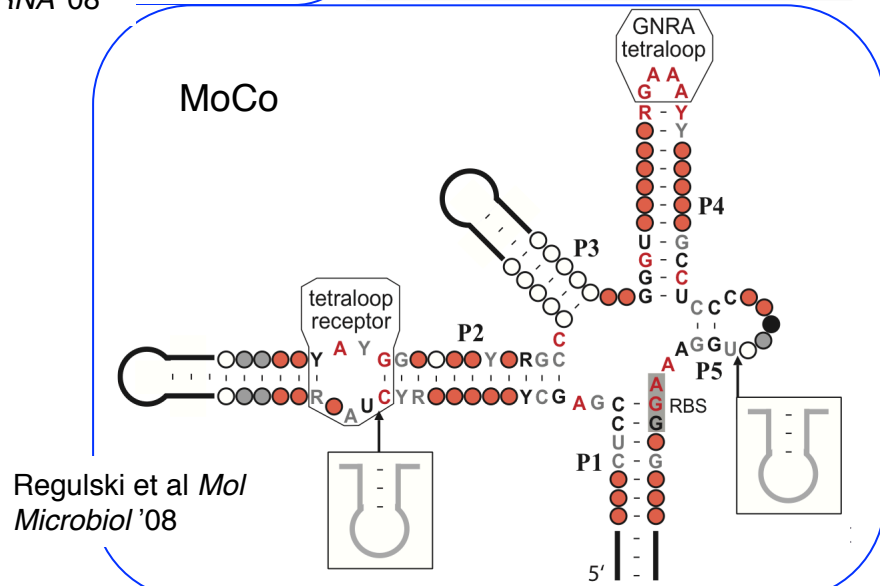
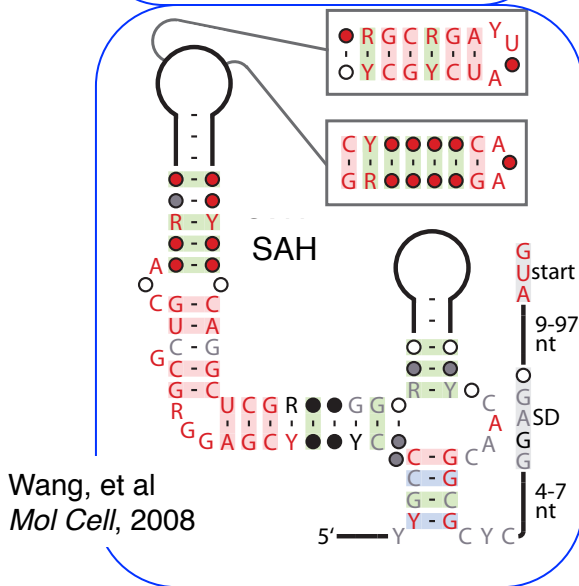
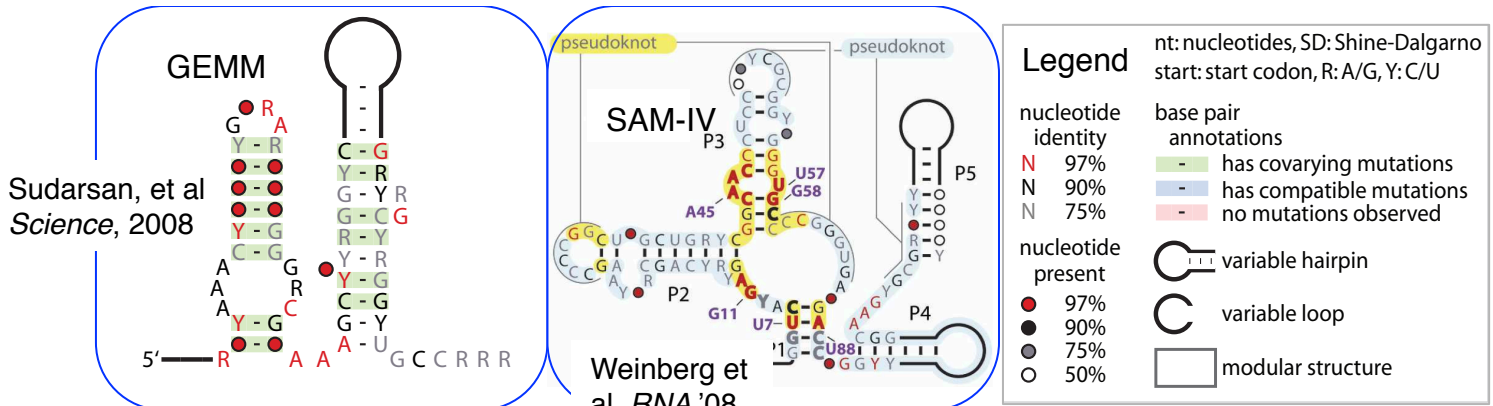
B



C



Examples: 6 (of 22) Representative motifs



boxed = confirmed riboswitch

5'—U R U G Y U A U A C U O R R U A A O C A Y A U

Vertebrate ncRNAs

Some Results

Human Predictions

EvoFold

S Pedersen, G Bejerano, A Siepel, K Rosenbloom, K Lindblad-Toh, ES Lander, J Kent, W Miller, D Haussler, "Identification and classification of conserved RNA secondary structures in the human genome."

[PLoS Comput. Biol., 2, #4 \(2006\) e33.](#)

48,479 candidates (~70% FDR?)

RNAz

S Washietl, IL Hofacker, M Lukasser, A Huttenhofer, PF Stadler, "Mapping of conserved RNA secondary structures predicts thousands of functional noncoding RNAs in the human genome."

[Nat. Biotechnol., 23, #11 \(2005\) 1383-90.](#)

36,000 structured RNA elements

1,000 conserved across *all* vertebrates.

~1/3 in introns of known genes, ~1/6 in UTRs

~1/2 located far from any known gene

FOLDALIGN

E Torarinsson, M Sawada, JH Havgaard, M Fredholm, J Gorodkin, "Thousands of corresponding human and mouse genomic regions unalignable in primary sequence contain common RNA structure."

[Genome Res., 16, #7 \(2006\) 885-9.](#)

1800 candidates from 36970 (of 100,000) pairs

CMfinder

Torarinsson, Yao, Wiklund, Bramsen, Hansen, Kjems, Tommerup, Ruzzo and Gorodkin. Comparative genomics beyond sequence based alignments: RNA structures in the ENCODE regions.

[Genome Research, Feb 2008, 18\(2\):242-251 PMID: 18096747](#)

6500 candidates in ENCODE alone (better FDR, but still high)

Some details below

Thousands of Predictions

CMfinder Search in Vertebrates

Extract ENCODE* Multiz alignments

Remove exons, most conserved elements.

56017 blocks, 8.7M bps.

Apply CMfinder to both strands.

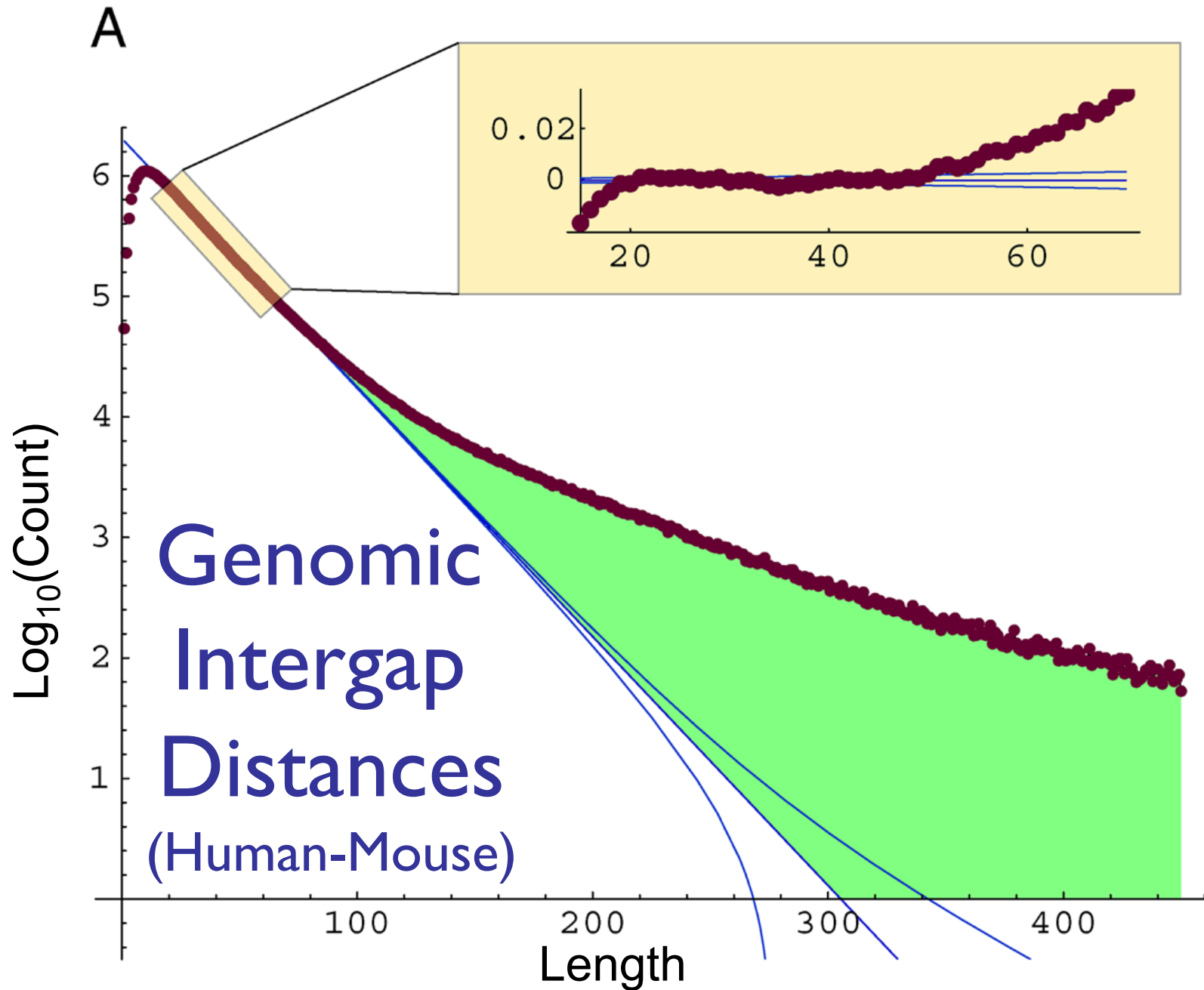
10,106 predictions, 6,587 clusters.

High false positive rate, but still suggests 1000's of RNAs.

(We've applied CMfinder to whole human genome:
many 100's of CPU years. Analysis in progress.)

Trust 17-way
alignment for
orthology, not for
detailed
alignment

* ENCODE: deeply annotated 1% of human genome



Genome-Wide Identification of Human Functional DNA Using a Neutral Indel Model
 Gerton Lunter, Chris P. Ponting, Jotun Hein, PLoS Comput Biol 2006, 2(1): e5.

Overlap w/ Indel Purified Segments

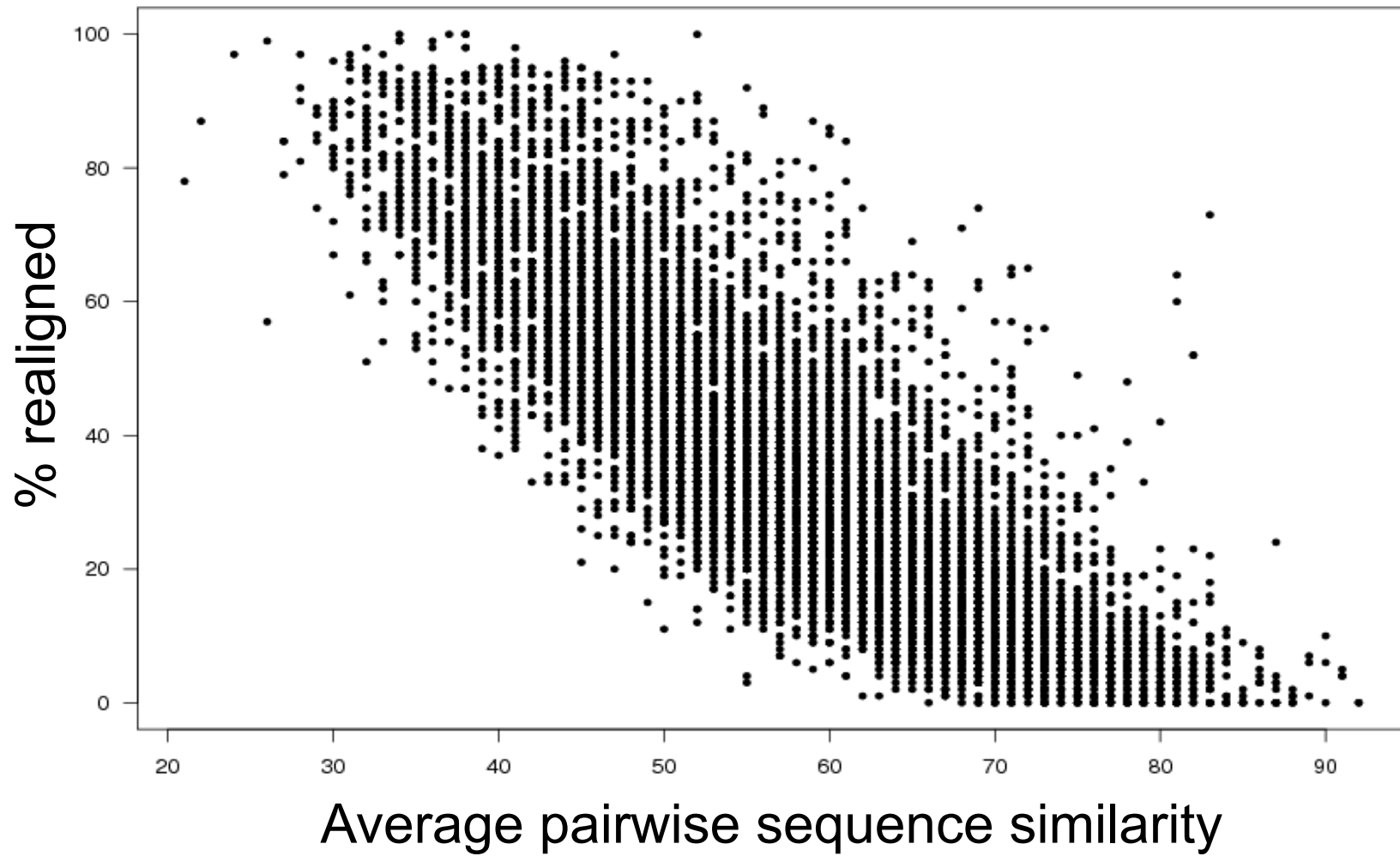
IPS presumed to signal purifying selection

Majority (64%) of candidates have >45% G+C

Strong P-value for their overlap w/ IPS

G+C	data	P	N	Expected	Observed	P-value	%
0-35	igs	0.062	380	23	24.5	0.430	5.8%
35-40	igs	0.082	742	61	70.5	0.103	11.3%
40-45	igs	0.082	1216	99	129.5	0.00079	18.5%
45-50	igs	0.079	1377	109	162.5	5.16E-08	20.9%
50-100	igs	0.070	2866	200	358.5	2.70E-31	43.5%
all	igs	0.075	6581	491	747.5	1.54E-33	100.0%

Realignment



Alignment Matters

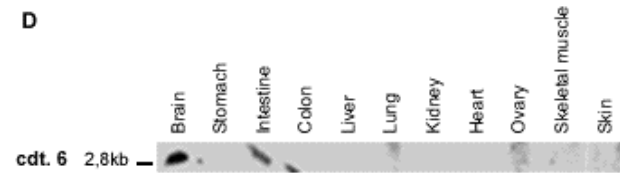
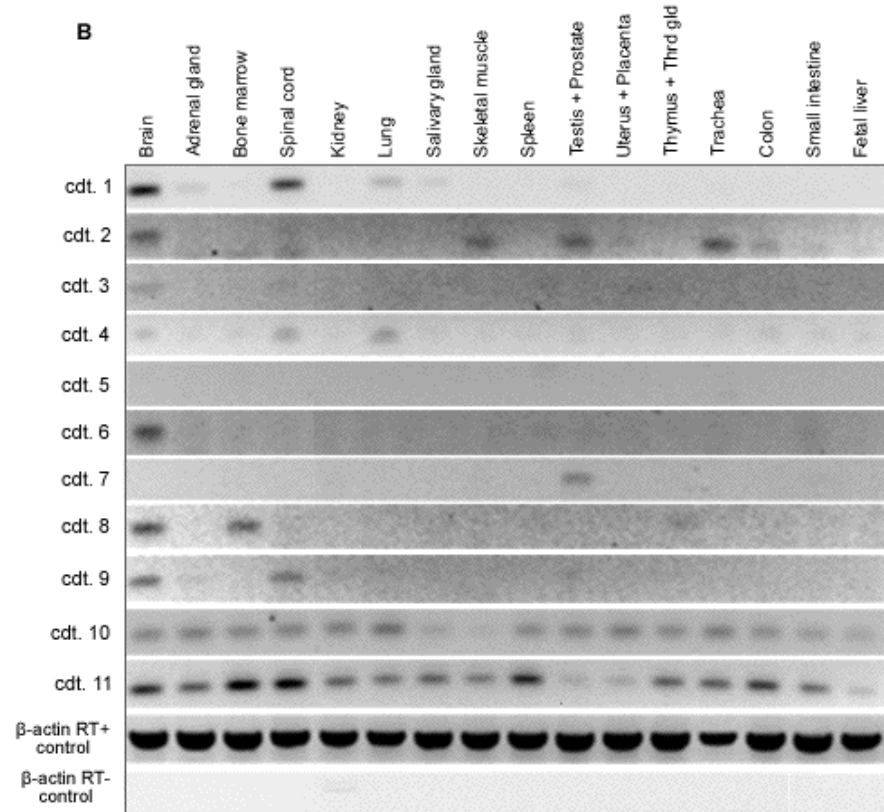
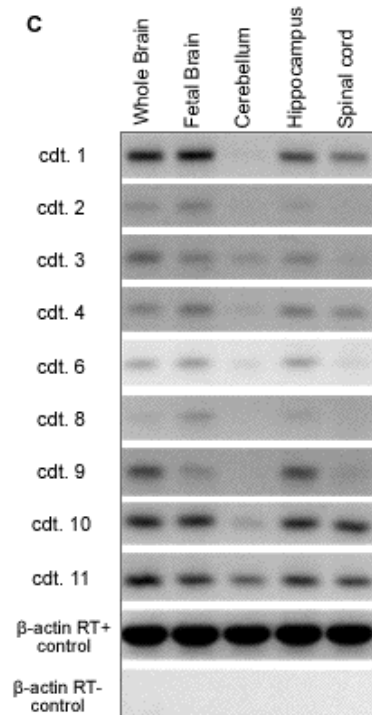
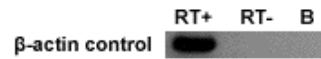
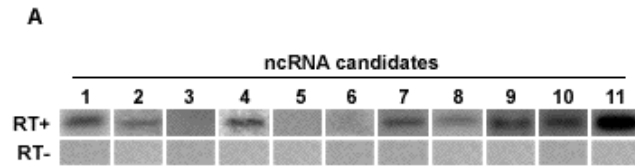
The original MULTIZ alignment without flanking regions. **RNAz Score: 0.132 (no RNA)**

```
Human  GGTCACTTCAAAGAGGGCTT-GTGGGGCTGTGAAACCAAGAGGT----CTTAACAGTATGACCAAAAAGTGAAGTT
Chimp  GGACATTTCAATGCGGGCTC-ATGGGGCTGTGAAGCCAAGAGCT----ATTAACTATGACCAAGGACTGAAATTT
Cow    GGTCATTTCAAAGAGGGCTT-ATGAGACCA--AAACCGGGAGCT----CTTAATGCTGTGACCAAGATTGAAGTT
Dog    GGTCATTTCAAAGAGGGCTTTGTGGAACCTA--AAACCAAGGGCT----CTTAACTCTGTGACCAAATATTAGAGTT
Rabbit GATCATTTCAAAGAGGGTTT-GTGGTGCTGTGAAGTCAAGAACT----CTTAACTGTATGCCCAAAGATTAAAGTT
Rhesus GGTCACTTCAAAGAGGGCTT-GTGGGGCTGTGAAACCAAGAGGTAGGTCTTAACAGTATAACCAAAGACTGAAGTT
Str    ((((((.....(((((((.....(((.....)))))).....)))))).....)))))).....)))))).....
```

The local CMfinder re-alignment of the MULTIZ block. **RNAz Score: 0.709 (RNA)**

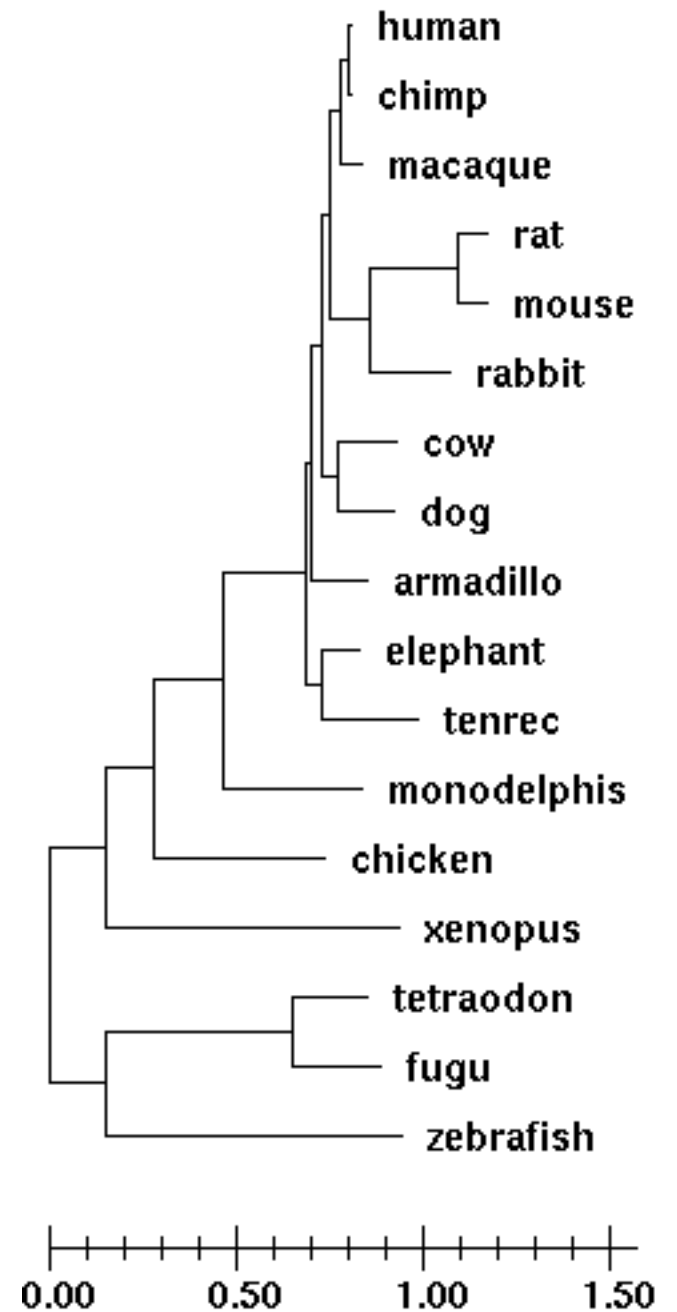
```
Human  GGTCACTTCAAAGAGGGCTT-GTGGGGCTGTGAAA-CCA-----AGAGGTCTTAAACAGTATGACCAAAAAGTGAAG
Chimp  GGACATTTCAATGCGGGCTC-ATGGGGCTGT-GAAGCCA-----AGAGCTATTAACTATGACCAAGGACTGAAAT
Cow    GGTCATTTCAAAGAGGGCTT-ATGAGACCA--AAA-CCG-----GGAGCTCTTAATGCTGTGACCAAGATTGAAG
Dog    GGTCATTTCAAAGAGGGCTTTGTGGAACCTA--AAA-CCA-----AGGGCTCTTAACTCTGTGACCAAATATTAGAC
Rabbit GATCATTTCAAAGAGGGTTT-GTGGTGCTGT-GAAGTCA-----AGAACTCTTAACTGTATGCCCAAAGATTAAAG
Rhesus GGTCACTTCAAAGAGGGCTT-GTGGGGCTGTGAAA-CCAAGAGG-TAGGTCTTAAACAGTATAACCAAAGACTGAAG
Str    ((((((.....(((((((.....(((.....)))))).....)))))).....)))))).....)))))).....
```

10 of 11 top (differentially) expressed



Scoring

An Evolutionary Tree (Phylogeny)



How to Score a Motif

evolutionary tree (phylogeny)

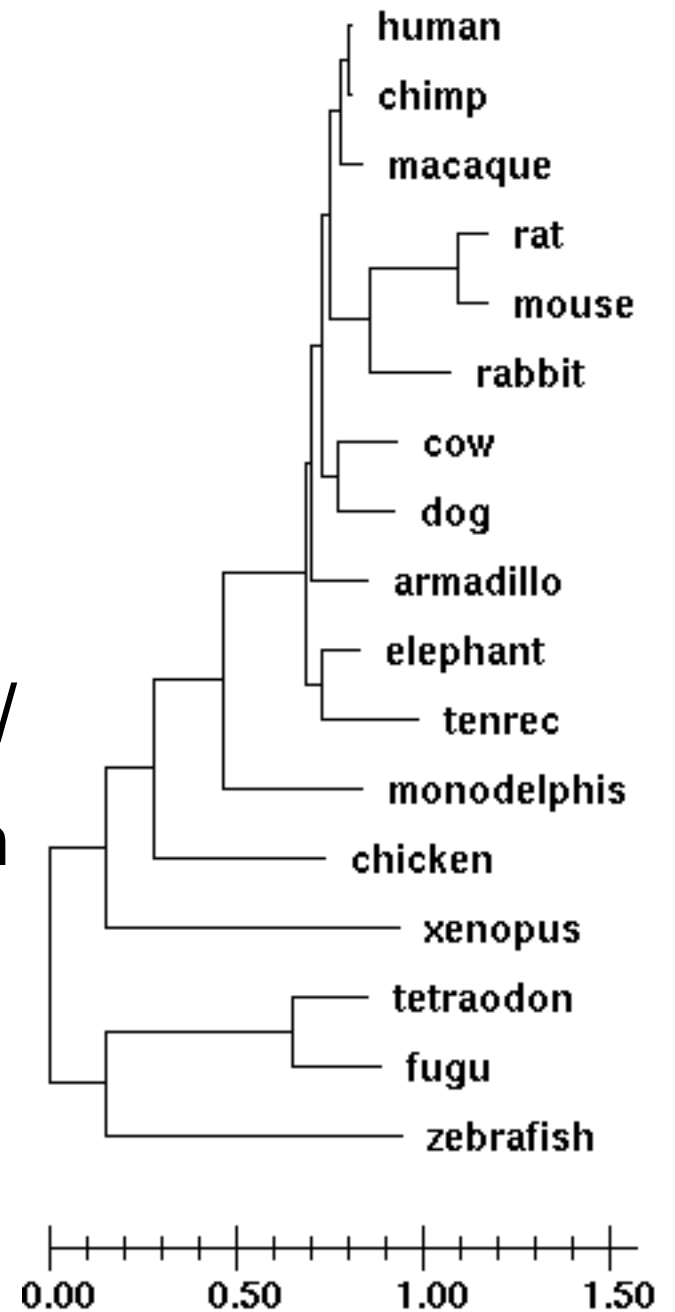
estimated branch lengths

estimated rates of various base/
pair substitutions per unit len

alignment/structure

what is

$\Pr(\text{alignment given model})?$



ncRNA Summary

ncRNA is a “hot” topic

For family homology modeling: CMs

Training & search like HMM (but slower)

Dramatic acceleration possible

Automated model construction possible

New computational methods yield new discoveries

Many open problems