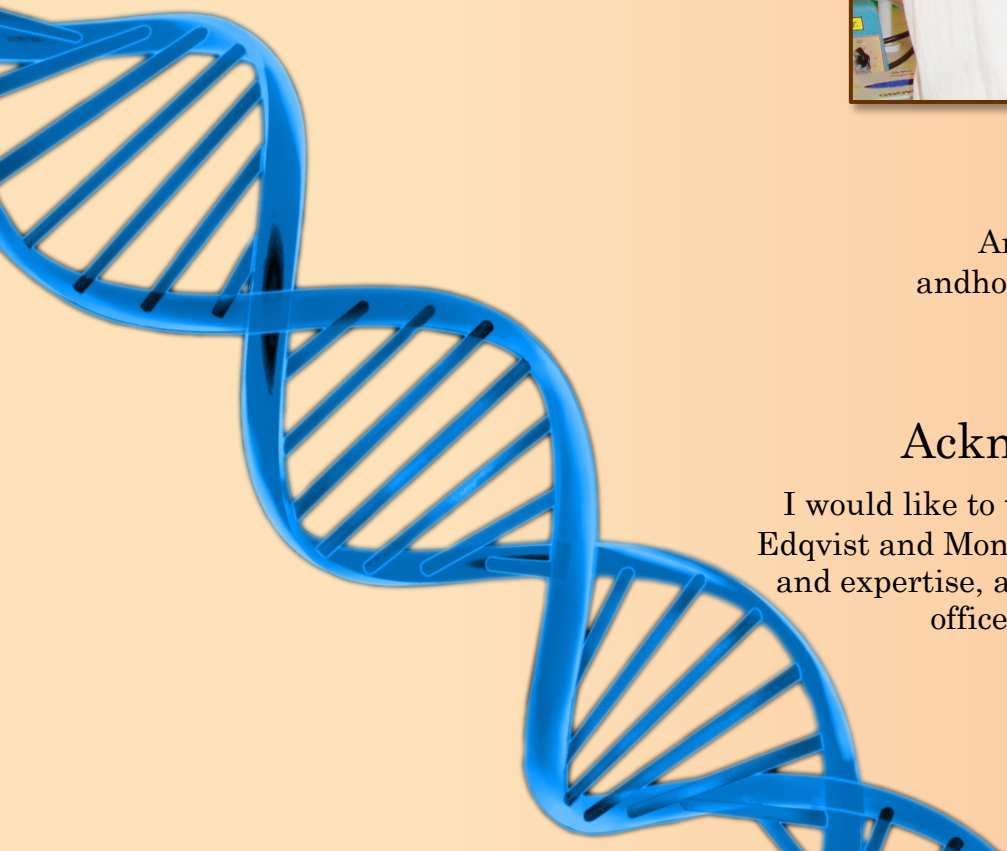
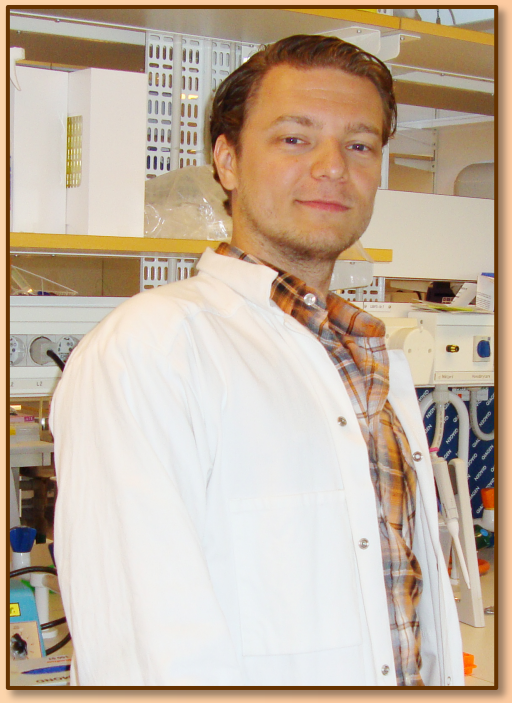
Aim

Investigate the expression pattern of GPI-anchored non-specific lipid transfer proteins (type G nsLTP) in *Physcomitrella patens* during abiotic stresses

Hypothesis

Since the type G nsLTPs are present in all plants except algae, the hypothesis is that nsLTP are involved in protection of the plant from one or multiple abiotic stresses





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Expression pattern of GPI-anchored non-specific lipid transfer proteins in *Physcomitrella patens*

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Master Thesis Project in Molecular Genetics and Physiology

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Background

When the first plants started to colonize the terrestrial habitat approximately 450 million years ago, they faced numerous novel stresses including UV-radiation, desiccation and temperature stresses.

Non-specific lipid transfer proteins (nsLTP) are present in all land plants but not in any algae. Possibly, nsLTP evolved during the water-to-land transition and have useful properties to cope with these stressful abiotic conditions.

In the moss *Physcomitrella patens* a nsLTP subfamily is called type G, and contains 10 genes. They are characterized by addition of a glycosyl-phosphatidylinositol (GPI) anchor, as a post-transcriptional modification. The GPI-anchor allows the protein to attach to the plasma membrane and face the connected protein outward to the extracellular side.

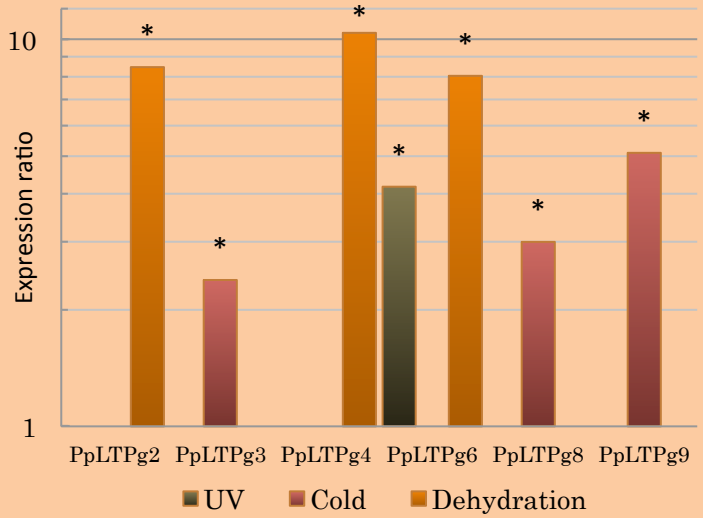

Figure 1: *An upregulation of the PpLTPg genes during various abiotic stresses. The values are normalized and compared to the control sample. The asterix (*) represent significance of p<0.05.*

Results

An up-regulation was seen in of the gene *PpLTPg6* during UV-radiation stress, in *PpLTPg3*, *PpLTPg8* and *PpLTPg9* during cold stress, and in *PpLTPg2*, *PpLTPg4* and *PpLTPg6* during dehydration stress (figure 1). Additionally, a phylogenetic tree shows the relationship between the up-regulated genes (figure 2).

Conclusion

The up-regulated genes indicate that they might be important for the plants survival during the stressful conditions. Additional studies should aim to knock-out the up-regulated genes and compare the phenotypes with the wild-type.

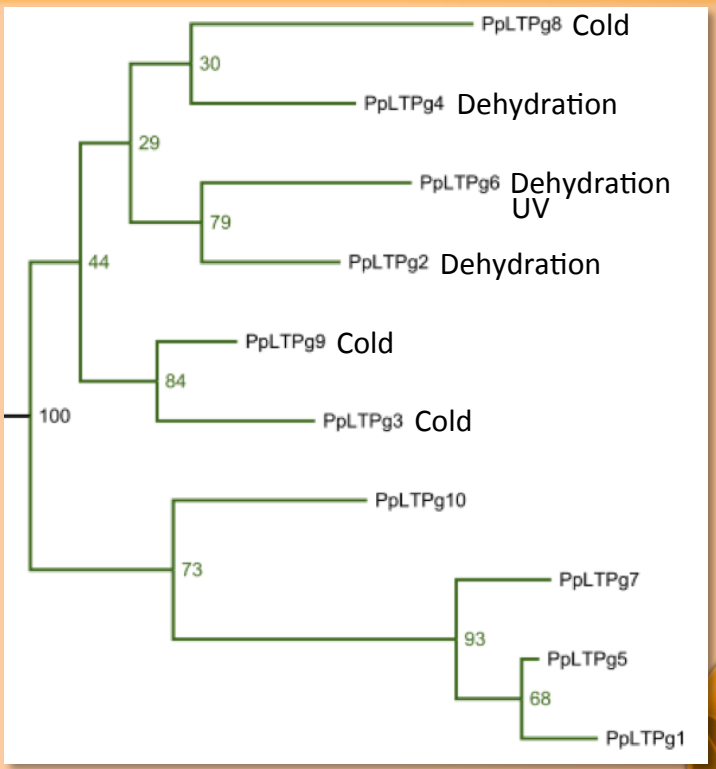

Figure 2: *: A phylogenetic tree of the PpLTPg genes, constructed with the maximum likelihood method. The stresses that up-regulated the genes are indicated.*

Method

- The experiments were carried out on three to four weeks old gametophytes (*Physcomitrella patens* stain Gransden 2004).
- The moss was stressed with either;
  - NaCl
  - cold (on ice)
  - mannitol (osmotic stress)
  - UV radiation
  - drought
  - copper (heavy metal)
  - abscisic acid (plant hormone)
- After the stresses RNA was extracted from which cDNA was synthesized. The cDNA was used as template for the qRT-PCR.
- The results were analyzed with the software REST.