



Complete Genome Sequencing of *Campylobacter jejuni* Strain X Reveals the Presence of pVir- and pTet-like Plasmids

 Andrey V. Karlyshev^a

^aSchool of Life Sciences, Pharmacy, and Chemistry, Faculty of Science, Engineering, and Computing, Kingston University London, Kingston upon Thames, United Kingdom

ABSTRACT Here, I report the complete genome sequence of *Campylobacter jejuni* strain X, containing two plasmids similar to pVir and pTet, which were originally identified in strain 81-176. Scrutiny of complete genome sequences in GenBank revealed several other strains with similar plasmid contents. Comparative genome analysis suggested a common origin of these plasmids.

Campylobacter jejuni strain X (NCTC13357), which was isolated from a person with bloody diarrhea in London, United Kingdom, in 2001, is untypeable (1) but capable of producing a capsule (2, 3), the genetic origin of which was investigated (4, 5). A draft sequence of its genome published in 2014 (GenBank accession number [GCA_000466925.2](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/nuccore/GCA_000466925.2)) did not allow the identification of plasmids, which became possible via the complete genome sequencing reported here.

The strain was grown on brain heart infusion agar (Oxoid, USA) for 48 h at 37°C in a microaerobic atmosphere. Approximately 10⁸ CFU were suspended in 120 μL of Tris-EDTA (TE) buffer with lysozyme (0.1 mg/mL) and RNase A (0.1 mg/mL) and incubated for 25 min at 37°C, followed by the addition of proteinase K and SDS to 0.1 mg/mL and 0.5%, respectively, and incubation for 5 min at 65°C. Genomic DNA was purified using an equal volume of SPRI beads (Beckman, USA) and resuspended in elution buffer (EB) (Qiagen, Germany).

Preparation of the DNA sequencing library was performed using the Nextera XT library preparation kit (Illumina, San Diego, CA, USA). Paired short reads (2 × 279,287 reads) (average sizes of 235 bp and 245 bp per read) produced by the Illumina NovaSeq 6000 system (NovaSeq 6000 SP sequencing kit v1.5 [2 × 250 bp]) were assembled using SPAdes v3.7 into 16 contigs (1 to 380,853 kb, with an *N*₅₀ value of 226,489 bp) with 74.88× coverage. Long-read genomic DNA (unsheared) libraries were produced using the Oxford Nanopore Technologies (ONT) SQK-LSK109 kit with the native barcoding EXP-NBD104/114 kit. The bar-coded sequencing library was run in a FLO-MIN106 (R.9.4.1) flow cell on a GridION system (ONT). After adapter trimming with Trimmomatic v0.30 with a sliding window quality cutoff score of Q15 (6), 14,764 long reads (up to 164 kb, with an *N*₅₀ value of 14,211 bp) combined with short Illumina reads were used in a hybrid assembly by Unicycler v0.4.9b with default parameters (7). The assembly was polished using Illumina reads. The assembly coverage with Illumina and Nanopore reads was 74.34× and 116.22×, respectively.

The total genome assembly size was 1,805,220 bp, including a chromosome (1,723,526 bp) and two plasmids, i.e., pVir (35,898 bp) and pTet (45,796 bp), with a GC content of 30.33%. Genome sequence annotation was performed by NCBI Prokaryotic Genome Annotation Pipeline (PGAP) v5.1 (8), using the best-placed reference protein set and GeneMarkS-2+, which identified 1895 genes, including 1,775 protein-coding genes and 64 pseudogenes, in addition to 56 genes, encoding 44 tRNAs, 3 sets of rRNA (5S, 16S, and 23S), and 3 noncoding RNAs.

A detailed comparative sequence analysis of plasmids found in *Campylobacter* spp. was performed previously (9). For the purpose of this study, we selected only strains containing two plasmids with sizes similar to those of pVir and pTet plasmids originally detected in

Editor John J. Dennehy, Queens College CUNY

Copyright © 2022 Karlyshev. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

Address correspondence to a.karlyshev@kingston.ac.uk.

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Received 2 May 2022

Accepted 13 June 2022

Published 28 June 2022

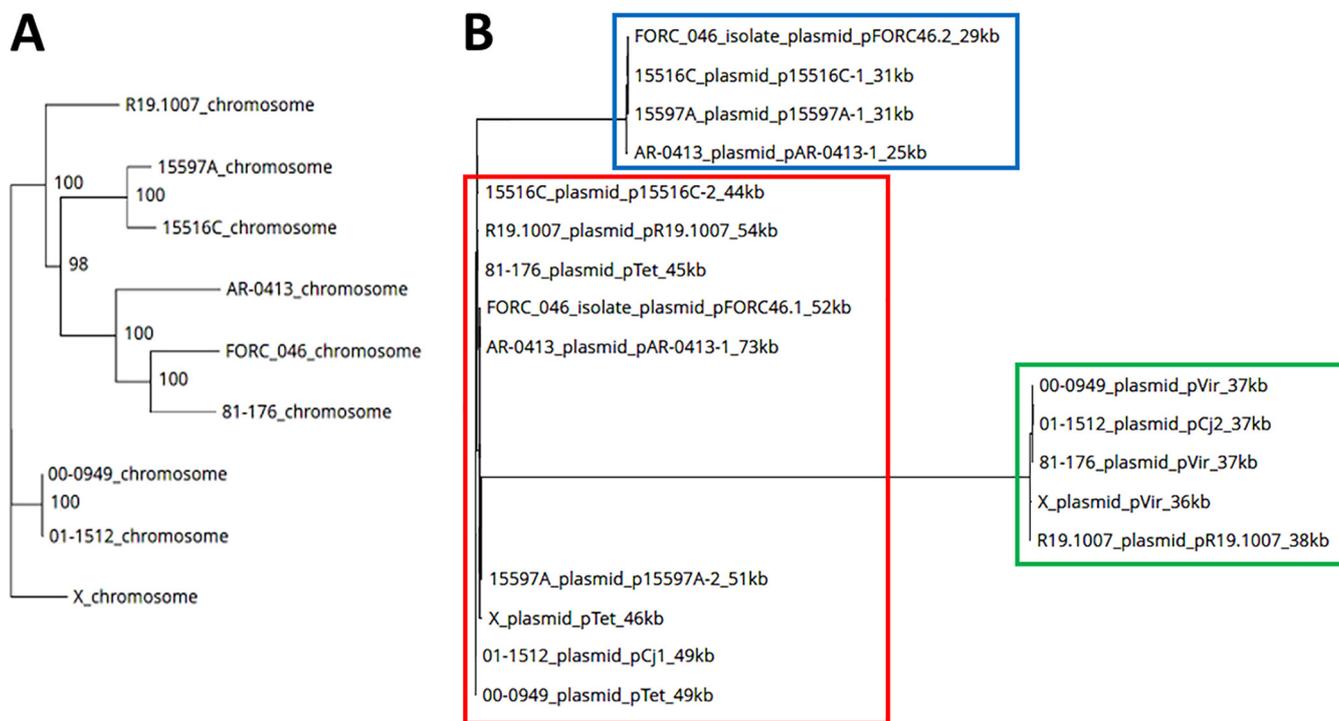


FIG 1 Core genome analysis of chromosomes (A) and plasmids (B) of selected strains of *C. jejuni*, i.e., R19.1007 (GenBank accession number [GCA_019056455.1](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/GenBank/ accession/GCA_019056455.1)), AR-0413 (GenBank accession number [GCA_008727455.1](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/GenBank/ accession/GCA_008727455.1)), FORC_046 (GenBank accession number [GCA_002214785.1](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/GenBank/ accession/GCA_002214785.1)), 15516C (GenBank accession number [GCA_022220425.1](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/GenBank/ accession/GCA_022220425.1)), 00-949 (GenBank accession number [GCA_000835365.1](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/GenBank/ accession/GCA_000835365.1)), 01-1512 (GenBank accession number [GCA_000835345.1](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/GenBank/ accession/GCA_000835345.1)), 15597A (GenBank accession number [GCA_022220325.1](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/GenBank/ accession/GCA_022220325.1)), 81-176 (GenBank accession number [GCA_000015525.1](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/GenBank/ accession/GCA_000015525.1)), and X (GenBank accession number [GCA_000466925.3](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/GenBank/ accession/GCA_000466925.3)). Red, green, and blue boxes in panel B represent clades of sequences related to pTet, pVir, and cryptic plasmids, respectively. Settings were as follows: maximum E value cutoff, 0.01; identity minimum percentage cutoff, 40%; minimum percentage for core, 50%; 100 bootstrap iterations applied. An overview of the M1CR0B1AL1Z3R algorithm (11) is available at <https://microbializer.tau.ac.il/overview.html>.

strain 81-176 (10). Scrutiny of complete genome sequences in GenBank revealed nine strains containing such plasmids. Core genome analysis using the M1CR0B1AL1Z3R tool (11), which was conducted separately for chromosomes (Fig. 1A) and plasmids (Fig. 1B), revealed clustering of the latter into several clades, suggesting their common origin. Remarkably, while all strains contain pTet-like plasmids, pVir-like plasmids are present in only five of them, with the remaining clades containing cryptic plasmids of relatively small sizes. Much greater variation in the sizes of pTet-like plasmids, compared with pVir-like plasmids (44 to 73 kb and 36 to 38 kb, respectively), may also suggest an earlier origin of the former. This hypothesis requires further investigation.

Data availability. This whole-genome project has been deposited in DDBJ/EMBL/GenBank under the assembly accession number [GCA_000466925.3](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/GenBank/ accession/GCA_000466925.3) (chromosome, GenBank accession number [CP076835.1](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/GenBank/ accession/CP076835.1); pTet, GenBank accession number [CP076836.1](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/GenBank/ accession/CP076836.1); pVir, GenBank accession number [CP076837.1](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/GenBank/ accession/CP076837.1)), BioProject accession number [PRJNA213994](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/BioProject/ accession/PRJNA213994), and BioSample accession number [SAMN02298816](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/BioSample/ accession/SAMN02298816). Raw sequences have been deposited under SRA accession numbers [SRR18942393](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/SRA/ accession/SRR18942393) (long reads) and [SRR18942394](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/SRA/ accession/SRR18942394) (short reads).

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Genome sequencing was provided by MicrobesNG (<http://www.microbesng.uk>).

REFERENCES

- Dorrell N, Mangan JA, Laing KG, Hinds J, Linton D, Al-Ghusein H, Barrell BG, Parkhill J, Stoker NG, Karlyshev AV, Butcher PD, Wren BW. 2001. Whole genome comparison of *Campylobacter jejuni* human isolates using a low-cost microarray reveals extensive genetic diversity. *Genome Res* 11:1706–1715. <https://doi.org/10.1101/gr.185801>.
- Karlyshev AV, McCrossan MV, Wren BW. 2001. Demonstration of polysaccharide capsule in *Campylobacter jejuni* using electron microscopy. *Infect Immun* 69:5921–5924. <https://doi.org/10.1128/IAI.69.9.5921-5924.2001>.
- Karlyshev AV, Wren BW. 2001. Detection and initial characterization of novel capsular polysaccharide among diverse *Campylobacter jejuni* strains using alcian blue dye. *J Clin Microbiol* 39:279–284. <https://doi.org/10.1128/JCM.39.1.279-284.2001>.
- Karlyshev AV, Quail MA, Parkhill J, Wren BW. 2013. Unusual features in

- organisation of capsular polysaccharide-related genes of *C. jejuni* strain X. *Gene* 522:37–45. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gene.2013.03.087>.
5. Karlyshev AV, Champion OL, Churcher C, Brisson JR, Jarrell HC, Gilbert M, Brochu D, St Michael F, Li J, Wakarchuk WW, Goodhead I, Sanders M, Stevens K, White B, Parkhill J, Wren BW, Szymanski CM. 2005. Analysis of *Campylobacter jejuni* capsular loci reveals multiple mechanisms for the generation of structural diversity and the ability to form complex heptoses. *Mol Microbiol* 55: 90–103. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2958.2004.04374.x>.
 6. Bolger AM, Lohse M, Usadel B. 2014. Trimmomatic: a flexible trimmer for Illumina sequence data. *Bioinformatics* 30:2114–2120. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bioinformatics/btu170>.
 7. Wick RR, Judd LM, Gorrie CL, Holt KE. 2017. Unicycler: resolving bacterial genome assemblies from short and long sequencing reads. *PLoS Comput Biol* 13:e1005595. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pcbi.1005595>.
 8. Tatusova T, DiCuccio M, Badretdin A, Chetverin V, Nawrocki EP, Zaslavsky L, Lomsadze A, Pruitt K, Borodovsky M, Ostell J. 2016. NCBI Prokaryotic Genome Annotation Pipeline. *Nucleic Acids Res* 44:6614–6624. <https://doi.org/10.1093/nar/gkw569>.
 9. Marasini D, Karki AB, Buchheim MA, Fakhr MK. 2018. Phylogenetic relatedness among plasmids harbored by *Campylobacter jejuni* and *Campylobacter coli* isolated from retail meats. *Front Microbiol* 9:2167. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmicb.2018.02167>.
 10. Larsen JC, Guerry P. 2005. Plasmids of *Campylobacter jejuni* 81-176. *EurekaMag.com* <https://eurekamag.com/research/004/273/004273089.php>.
 11. Avram O, Rapoport D, Portugez S, Pupko T. 2019. M1CR0B1AL1Z3R—a user-friendly web server for the analysis of large-scale microbial genomics data. *Nucleic Acids Res* 47:W88–W92. <https://doi.org/10.1093/nar/gkz423>.