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## **A molecular phylogeny of Schizothoracinae (Teleostei: Cypriniformes: Cyprinidae) based on 12 protein-coding mitochondrial genes and RAG1 gene analysis**

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1 **A molecular phylogeny of Schizothoracinae**  
2 **(Teleostei: Cypriniformes: Cyprinidae) based on**  
3 **12 protein-coding mitochondrial genes and**  
4 **RAG1 gene analysis**

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19 **A molecular phylogeny of Schizothoracinae fishes based**  
20 **on 12 protein-coding mtDNA genes and RAG1 gene**

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55 **Abstract** The ever-increasing interest in the investigation of origin and speciation of  
56 schizothoracine fishes can be dated to 20th century. However, molecular phylogeny of  
57 Schizothoracinae and their phylogenetic relationships, as well as the divergence times  
58 still remain controversial. In this study, two DNA sets consisting of 12 protein-coding  
59 mitochondrial genes from 254 individuals and RAG1 gene from 106 individuals were  
60 used to reconstruct the phylogenetic relationships and calculate the divergence times  
61 among the subfamily schizothoracinae. Our results indicated that both of the data sets  
62 supported a non-monophyletic relationship due to involving of species of *Barbinae*.  
63 However, the phylogenetic relationships based on mtDNA genes were more reliable  
64 than that inferred from RAG1 gene. The highly specialized grade formed a  
65 monophyletic group, together with *Ptychobarbus* as a sister group of *Diptychus* and  
66 *Gymnodiptychus*, which was belonging to specialized grade, indicating that  
67 *Ptychobarbus* may be transition species to involve to highly specialized  
68 schizothoracinae. In addition, the primitive grade clustered with *Percocypris pingi*, a  
69 species of *Barbinae*. Based on mtDNA gene, the speciation time of Schizothoracinae  
70 was 66 Ma, and the divergence time of the primitive grade and *Percocypris pingi* was  
71 64 Ma. The speciation times of the three grades Schizothoracinae were 57 Ma, 51 Ma  
72 and 43 Ma, respectively; and the divergence time of specialized and highly  
73 specialized grade was 46 Ma. The divergence times of three grades were not  
74 consistent with the three stages of uplift of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, which is older than  
75 the times.

76 **Keywords** Schizothoracinae, protein-coding mtDNA, RAG1, phylogeny, divergence

77 Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, with an average altitude of 4000 meters, is the largest,  
78 youngest and highest Plateau in the world (Zhang Ti-Cao et al., 2013), which is called  
79 the roof of the world (Cao et al., 1981). The environment and climate of  
80 Qinghai-Tibet Plateau had changed drastically due to the intensive uplift of the  
81 Plateau since Quaternary. Its extreme environment (hypothermia and hypoxia) has  
82 been pregnant with rich and colorful life, making it to be one of the world's  
83 biodiversity hotspots. The uplift of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau had experienced three  
84 stages in the Eocene, the Oligocene-Miocene, and the Pliocene-Quaternary,  
85 respectively (Paul et al., 2001). The first stage of uplift, making Tibet Plateau reached  
86 3000m elevation, happened in late Eocene when India began to wedge into Eurasia  
87 (Dewey et al., 1989). From 30Ma to 10Ma, the second phase of uplift occurred.  
88 However, at this stage, the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau proceeded with pediplanation cycle  
89 (an equilibrium of gradual uplifting, faulting and erosion) as a plain (Dewey et al.,  
90 1989). In the late Miocene, pediplanation cycle was ended with faulting and uplifting  
91 of the Tibetan Plateau excessive erosion, and at the beginning of Pliocene, the Plateau  
92 resumed uplift until Quaternary. At present, there is no accurate time or process of the  
93 Qinghai-Tibet Plateau uplift because of the complexity of the process.

94 Schizothoracine fishes, commonly known as “mountain carps” and characterized  
95 by low growth rate, low fecundity and late sexual maturity (Chen Z.M. & Chen, 2001),  
96 belong to Cyprinidae, Cypriniformes, Teleostei and are endemic, typical to the  
97 Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and its circumjacent areas (Cao et al., 1981). The name of  
98 Schizothoracinae came from their characters of the two rows of large and ordered anal

99 scales, locating on both sides of the anus and anal fin that made the blank between the  
100 two rows of anal scales like a crack (Wu Y.F. & Wu, 1992). This subfamily includes  
101 15 genera and more than 100 species all over the world (Mirza, 1991), and most of  
102 Schizothoracine fishes, 11genera and at least 76 species and subspecies distribute in  
103 the whole of China (Chen Y.F. & Cao, 2000; Wu Yun-Fei & Tan, 1991). As their  
104 major habitat, nine genera and more than half of species and subspecies distribute in  
105 the main drainages of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau of China such as Yellow River, Yangtze  
106 River, Yarlung Zangbo River, Irrawaddy River and Qinghai Lake (Cao et al., 1981).

107 As the extreme environment of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, the mitochondrial genome  
108 is well suited for analysis the phylogenetic relationships for that energy metabolism,  
109 depending on the mitochondria, is the most apparent response to the adaption to  
110 hypothermia and hypoxia. And then, length of the sequence is necessary for maximum  
111 likelihood analysis to clarify interrelationships amongst long-diverged groups on  
112 account of that ML trees converge to the true tree as the number of sites approaches  
113 infinity (Rogers, 2001), and the general length of mitochondrial genomes is 1.6kb,  
114 which is sufficient for the phylogenetic tree. The problem of limitation in the number  
115 of sequence sites can be settled by the entire mitochondrial genomes (Inoue J.G. et al.,  
116 2003; Inoue Jun G. et al., 2004; Ioue et al., 2001; Ishiguro et al., 2003; Kawahara et  
117 al., 2008; Lavoue et al., 2008; Lavoue et al., 2005; Masaki et al., 2004; Minegishi et  
118 al., 2005; Miya Masaki & Nishida, 1999; Miya M. & Nishida, 2000; Miya Masaki et  
119 al., 2003; Saitoh et al., 2003; Saitoh et al., 2000; Saitoh et al., 2006). However, using  
120 mtDNA alone as the molecular marker can only reveal a single linkage group with

121 one history while the utilization of multiple nuclear sequences often shows a conflict  
122 among gene trees due to hybridization, lineage sorting, paralogy or selection (Graham  
123 et al., 2017). Hence, both the mitochondrial genome and the nuclear gene were used  
124 in this study to avoid the possible differences.

125 Their special living environment makes them form the characters which are  
126 highly adapted to hypothermia, hypoxia and high radiation. As for those characters,  
127 Schizothoracine fishes have become a good model of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau to study  
128 the mechanism adapting to the extreme environment. Based on the morphological  
129 characters, Cao (Cao et al., 1981) divided the schizothoracinae into three grades  
130 named morphological primitive schizothoracine fishes, morphological specialized  
131 schizothoracine fishes, and morphological highly specialized schizothoracine fishes.  
132 The primitive fishes, including *Racina*, *Schizothorax* and *Aspiorhynchus*, are covered  
133 by fine scales and these fishes have three rows of pharyngeal teeth and two pairs of  
134 barbell. Most of the specialized fishes' scales tend to degenerate and have two rows of  
135 pharyngeal teeth and one pair of barbell, and *Ptychobarbus*, *Diptychus*, and  
136 *Gymnodiptychus* are included in specialized grade. The highly specialized fishes'  
137 scales completely disappear and have only one row of pharyngeal teeth and have no  
138 barbell; highly specialized group consists of six genera named *Gymnocypris*,  
139 *Oxygymnocypris*, *Schizopygopsis*, *Platypharodon*, *Chuanchia*, and *Herzenstein*. The  
140 statistical studies showed a relationship between species richness and elevation that  
141 the primitive groups peaked in the low elevation areas of 1250m to 2500m; the  
142 specialized fishes mainly distributed in the elevation of 2750m to 3750m and highly

143 specialized grade fishes primary occupied the elevation zone of 3750m to 4750m  
144 (Cao et al., 1981). Some researches revealed that the speciation of three grades  
145 schizothoracine fishes resulted from the three stages of uplift of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau,  
146 which caused the branch of river basins.

147 By now, there are still many controversies on the phylogeny of Schizothoracinae  
148 and their close species. A large body of researches showing that Schizothoracinae  
149 originate from the primitive genera of Barbinae, such as *Barbodes*, *Varicorhinus*,  
150 *Barbus*, based on molecule or morphology (Cao et al., 1981; Chen Y.F. & Cao, 2000;  
151 Wu Xianwen et al., 1981), is widely accepted. Gaubert et al. (Gaubert et al., 2009)  
152 repute that Schizothoracinae's closest relatives to be the Barbinae fishes, which is  
153 consistent with He (He et al., 2004) and Qi (Qi et al., 2013; Qi et al., 2012), and the  
154 subfamily Schizothoracinae is not a monophyly with supertree from the Cyprinidae  
155 family level (Gaubert et al., 2009), which is the same to Li (Li Y.L. et al., 2013), but  
156 contradict the results of He (He et al., 2004) and Qi (Qi et al., 2012). In the study of  
157 Ruber in 2007 indicate that Barbine sensu stricto is closely related to  
158 Schizothoracinae, but it's an unresolved trifurcation between Barbine sensu stricto  
159 and two lineages of Schizothoracinae (Ruber et al., 2007). In the research of Li,  
160 however, *Barbus barbus* is embedded in Schizothoracinae that between the specialized  
161 group and the primitive group as the sister clade of specialized fishes with the method  
162 of mitochondrial genomes of three species of Schizothoracinae and single *cytb* gene  
163 (Li Y.L. et al., 2013). It's clear that *Percocypris pingi*, which belongs to *Percocypris*  
164 genus and Barbinae subfamily, cluster with the primitive clade in Wang's study (Wang



165 et al., 2013). Many reasons could explain the inconsistency between morphological  
166 phylogeny and molecular phylogeny. For example, He considers the morphological  
167 characters may don't follow the evolutionary trace of the groups but are shaped by  
168 adapting to their survival environmental condition (He & Chen, 2007), such as  
169 convergent evolution (Qi et al., 2012). In addition, the low level of sequence  
170 divergence and ancestral polymorphism will make it difficult to discriminate species  
171 (He & Chen, 2007). The number of samples and the length or quantity of genes also  
172 play an important role in the reconstruction of phylogeny. For above reasons, using  
173 the molecular method, sufficient samples and appropriate gene to analysis the  
174 phylogenetic relationships of Schizothoracinae is becoming more and more urgent.

175 The overwhelming majority of experts agree with that the speciation of three  
176 grades Schizothoracinae fishes results from the uplift of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau that  
177 causing the branch of those watersheds. At the middle Tertiary-Dingqing group(late  
178 Miocene or early Pliocene) , with the movement of the Himalayas, Barbinae, being  
179 adapted to the warm climate, gradually tend to adapted to cold weather, which lead to  
180 speciate the *Plesioschizothorax macrocephalus*, which is the only fossil of  
181 Schizothoracinae in the world (Wu Y.F. & Wu, 1992). Based on geology and  
182 paleontology, Wu deduced that in the first phase of the Himalaya movement, as the  
183 early stage of Schizohtoracinae, *Plesioschizothorax macrocephalus* occurred. In the  
184 second phase of the Himalaya movement, the environment was so suitable for  
185 freshwater that *Plesioschizothorax macrocephalus* became the main fishes of those  
186 lakes, making this phase to be boom period. However, in the third phase of Himalaya

187 movement, in which the crust began to lift and lakes began to shrink and separate,  
188 radical changes of environment resulted in the Plesioschizothorax macrocephalus'  
189 differentiation, migration and extinction. Except Li used the partial mitochondrial  
190 genome of *Cytb* gene to declare that the primitive clade divided in the late Eocene and  
191 the Rapid speciation events of each clade from the Late Miocene to the Pliocene,  
192 corresponding to the time of the geologic acceleration of the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau  
193 (Li Y.L. et al., 2013), there is no researches about the divergence time of  
194 Schizothoracine fishes from the subfamily level. Hence it's essential to deduce the  
195 divergence time of three grades of Schizothoracinae on the subfamily level to make  
196 up the blank of this area.

197 In order to better resolve the problems of phylogenetic relationships of  
198 Schizothoracinae and calculate the divergence times of these genera, we used 12  
199 protein-coding mitochondrial genes from 254 individuals, which were belonging to  
200 115 species, 11 genera, and RAG1 genes from 106 individuals, which were belonging  
201 to 42 species, 8 genera, to reconstruct the phylogenetic tree of the subfamily  
202 Schizothoracinae, and inferred the divergence times among Schizothoracine fishes,  
203 and analyzed the relationships between the differentiation of Schizothoracinae and the  
204 uplift of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau.

## 205 Materials and methods

### 206 ***Taxon sampling and DNA extraction***

207 We employed 254 mtDNA sequences (table 1) belonging to 11 genera of subfamily

208 Cyprinidae, 32 sequences among which were previous work of our team (GenBank  
209 accession number: KT833082-KT833113). 4 sequences of *Ictiobus* were selected as  
210 outgroups. The other mitochondrial genomes were downloaded in NCBI  
211 (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>) and the Genbank accession numbers were shown in  
212 Supplementary Material S1.

213 For the RAG1 gene, 38 individuals were collected by ourselves from the rivers  
214 of Qinghai Province and their tributary. We took the muscles or fins and then  
215 immediately preserved in 95% ethanol stored at  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$  for DNA extraction. Total  
216 genomic DNA was isolated by using phenol-chloroform extraction (Sambrook et al.,  
217 1989) and adjusted to 100ng/mL after testing its concentration on a NanoDrop 2000  
218 supermicro spectrophotometer (Thermo Fisher Scientific Inc., USA). Meanwhile, 68  
219 sequences of RAG1 gene were obtained from GenBank (Accession numbers and  
220 species name were showed in Supplementary Material S2).

### 221 ***PCR Amplification and Sequencing***

222 The RAG1 gene was amplified using the pair of primers RF (5'-CTG AGC TGC AGT  
223 CAG TAC CAT AAG ATG T-3') and RR (5'-TGA GCC TCC ATG AAC TTC TGA  
224 AGR TAY TT-3') (Saitoh & Chen, 2008). The PCR (polymerase chain reaction)  
225 reacted at 50uL total volume as follows: 15uL H<sub>2</sub>O, 25uL 2 × PCR Master Mix buffer  
226 (Novoprotein Science and Technology Ltd., Shanghai, China), 2.5uL each primer  
227 (10mM), and 5uL genomic DNA. And the PCR reaction performed at initial  
228 denaturation step at  $94^{\circ}\text{C}$  for 4 min followed by 35 cycles at  $94^{\circ}\text{C}$  for 40s,  $59^{\circ}\text{C}$  for  
229 40s, and  $72^{\circ}\text{C}$  for 90s; with a final extension at  $72^{\circ}\text{C}$  for 10min. 2  $\mu\text{l}$  of amplified

230 DNA was fractionated by electrophoresis through 1% agrose gels. And those PCR  
231 products with clear single band were sent to sequence in both directions in Beijing  
232 Biomed Company (Beijing, China).

### 233 ***Sequence editing and analysis***

234 The RAG1 gene sequences were assembled using Contigexpression v9.1.0 software  
235 and aligned by online MAFFT version 7 (<http://mafft.cbrc.jp/alignment/server/>), and  
236 then carefully checked by eye and edited manually in MAGE 6.0.

237 We used 12 protein-coding regions of mtDNA for sequence analysis, which the  
238 genes were encoded on the heavy-strand. Then the indices of substitution saturation  
239 for these sequences were estimated using DAMBE 5 software with the GTR model  
240 (<http://dambe.bio.uottawa.ca/software.asp>).

### 241 ***Phylogenetic analysis***

242 There were 254 sequences of mitochondrial genomes using in phylogenetic analysis  
243 and 4 common sucker mitochondrial genomes were designed as outgroups (Saitoh et  
244 al., 2011b) (Supplementary Material S1) . Meanwhile, a total of 106 sequences of  
245 RAG1 gene was used and 1 common sucker RAG1 sequence was designed as the  
246 outgroup (Supplementary Material S2).

247 We used 12 protein coding regions to phylogenetic analysis, which the genes  
248 were encoded on the heavy-strand. The ND6 wasn't included in the analysis because  
249 this gene was encoded on the light-strand that was different from the 12 genes. All of  
250 these sequences were aligned by online MAFFT version 7, and corrected by eyes. A  
251 few parts were ambiguous that were excluded. We also removed start codons, stop

252 codons and the overlapping regions between the coding genes ATP6-ATP8,  
253 ATP6-COXIII, ND4L-ND4, and ND5-ND6 (Li Y.L. et al., 2013).

254 The model selection was implemented in Modeltest v3.7. GTR+I+G, as the best  
255 model of mtDNA sequences, was used to construct the phylogenetic trees, while  
256 SYM+I+G was selected as the best model of RAG1 sequences. GTR+I+G was used  
257 as the best model of RAG1 for subsequent analysis because there was no SYM+I+G  
258 model in the analysis software. We reconstructed the phylogenetic trees with  
259 maximum likelihood (ML) method and Bayesian inference (BI) method. The ML  
260 analysis was accomplished by RAxML v7.2.8 (Stamatakis et al., 2008), with  
261 GTRGAMMA and GTRCAT models. The BI method was used MrBayes v3.2.4  
262 (Huelsenbeck & Ronquist, 2005; Ronquist & Huelsenbeck, 2003). We used the GTR  
263 model to run 2,000,000 generations of 4 simultaneous Monte Carlo Markov chains  
264 (MCMC). The sampling frequency and print frequency were set 100, the diagnostic  
265 frequency was set 1000, and the genes were divided into 12 partitions and the  
266 likelihood scores lower than those at saturation (burn-in = 500) trees were discarded  
267 from the analysis. The posterior probabilities (BBP) of nodes were estimated based on  
268 the 50% majority rule consensus of the trees.

### 269 ***Divergence time estimation***

270 Based on mtDNA genes, we used Beast v2.3.0 (Bouckaert et al., 2014) to calculate  
271 the divergence times of three grades of Schizothoracinae with the lognormal incorrect  
272 relaxed clock and GTR+G+I model. We used “Speciation: Yule Process” to run  
273 500,000,000 chains. The calibrated nodes and constraint were as followed: basal to

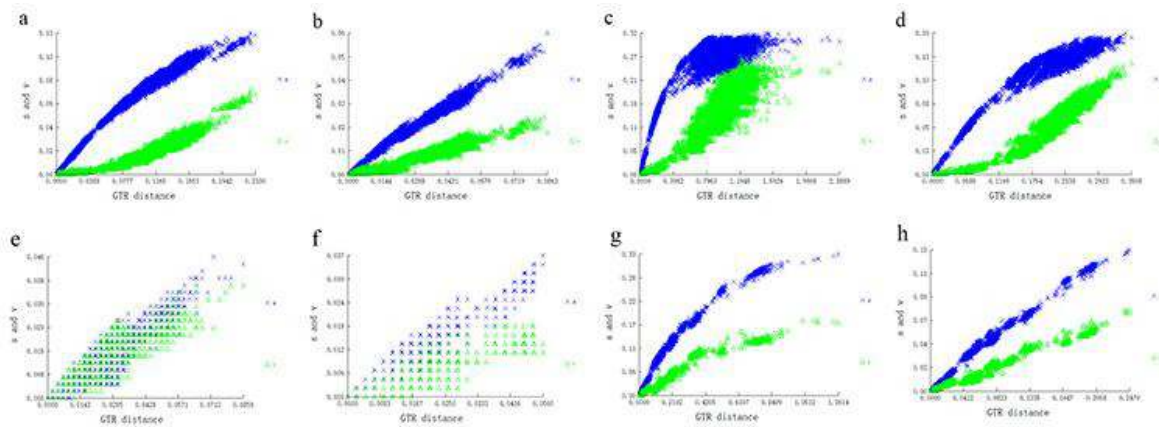
274 *Cyprinus* (33.9Ma) (Saitoh et al., 2011a), and *Labeo bata* / *Labeo senegalensis* (49.1  
275 Ma – 75.1 Ma) (Li Y.L. et al., 2013). And then convergence diagnostics were  
276 examined with Tracer v1.6 (<http://tree.bio.ed.ac.uk/software/tracer/>).

## 277 Results

### 278 ***Mitochondrial genomes features***

279 A total of 254 mtDNA and 106 RAG1 sequences were obtained after manually editing,  
280 which were 10791bp and 1314bp in length, respectively. The average base  
281 composition of 12 protein-coding genes was A=28.0%, T=27.8%, G=16.4% and  
282 C=27.8%. The base composition of schizothoracinae showed the same characters with  
283 teleost fishes that A+T content is significantly higher than the G+C content with an  
284 obvious anti-G bias (Jiang et al., 2009; Jondeung et al., 2007; Tzeng et al., 1992).  
285 Additionally, the average base composition of RAG1 gene was A=25.3%, T=24.3%,  
286 G=26.5% and C=23.9%. There was no obvious base bias among RAG1 gene  
287 sequences.

288 Saturation analyses showed that neither of the mtDNA sequences nor RAG1  
289 sequences was saturated and variable sites of RAG1 sequences were obviously  
290 distributed at codon 3 (Figure 1.). Thus, all sequences could be used in reconstructing  
291 phylogenetic trees for schizothoracine fishes.



292

293 **Figure 1** The saturation analysis of both the mitochondrial protein-coding genes (excluding ND6 and  
294 12SrRNA) sequences and RAG1 gene sequences based on the GTR model. Figure a, b, c, and d  
295 represent saturation of codon1, codon2 codon3 and complete codon of 12 protein-coding genes,  
296 respectively; Figure e, f, g, and h represent saturation of the same part of RAG1 gene.

### 297 **Phylogenetic analysis**

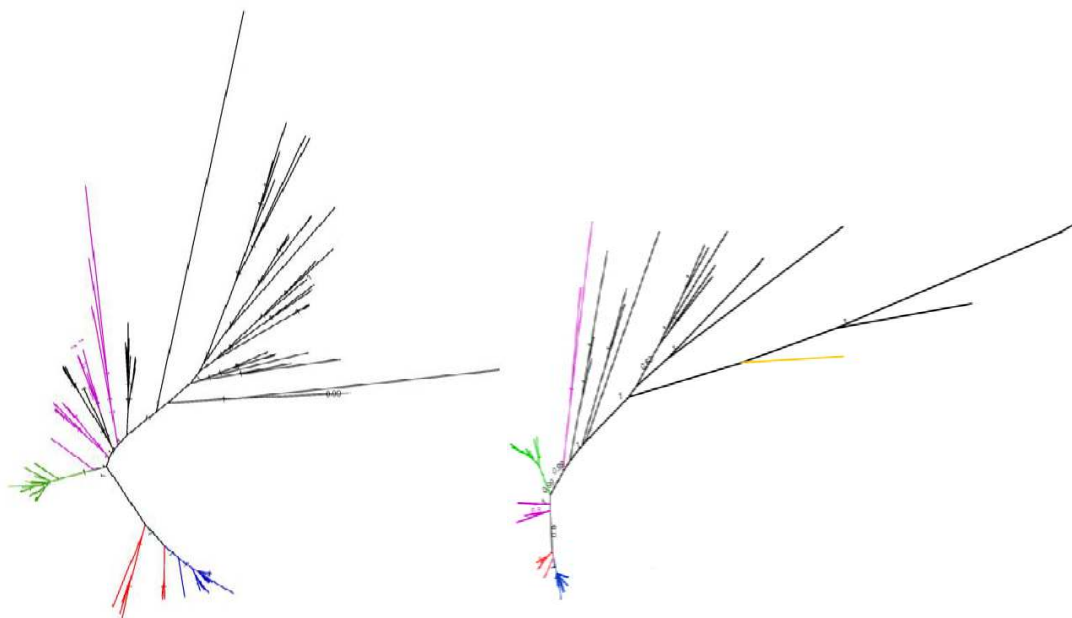
298 The maximum likelihood trees inferred from mitochondrial genomes of Cyprinidae  
299 were almost the same, only ML tree based on GTRCAT model was shown in Fig 2  
300 (C), which was consistent with the Bayes tree Fig 2 (A). Similarly, the ML trees of  
301 RAG1 gene were almost the same, ML tree based on GTRCAT model showed in  
302 Fig 2 (D) was also consistent with BI tree(Fig 2 B). The trees based on RAG1 gene  
303 indicated that the Schizothoracinae was not a monophyletic groups, which the  
304 primitive grade clustered into a big branch with node support ratio of 98 and clade  
305 that include *Barbus barbuis* and *Scaphiodonichthys acanthopterus* clustered with  
306 specialized and highly specialized clade with node support ratio of 37, indicating that  
307 the specialized and highly specialized schizothoracinae, as well as the species of  
308 Barbinae, as well as the species of *Barbinae* had most recent common ancestor, which

309 was clearly shown in Fig 3 F, that consistent with Wang (Wang et al., 2013) and Li (Li  
310 Y.L. et al., 2013). However, slightly different results were obtained from trees based  
311 on 12 protein-coding mtDNA genes. The fact that the subfamily schizothoracinae was  
312 not a monophyletic group only resulted from that the *Percocypris pingi* as the sister  
313 clade of the primitive grade (100). The clade of specialized grade schizothoracine  
314 fishes were separated from the clade that included primitive grade schizothoracine  
315 fishes and *Percocypris pingi* with strong support (96), and then the highly specialized  
316 schizothoracine fishes were differentiated from the specialized grade with stronger  
317 support (100).

318

319 A

B



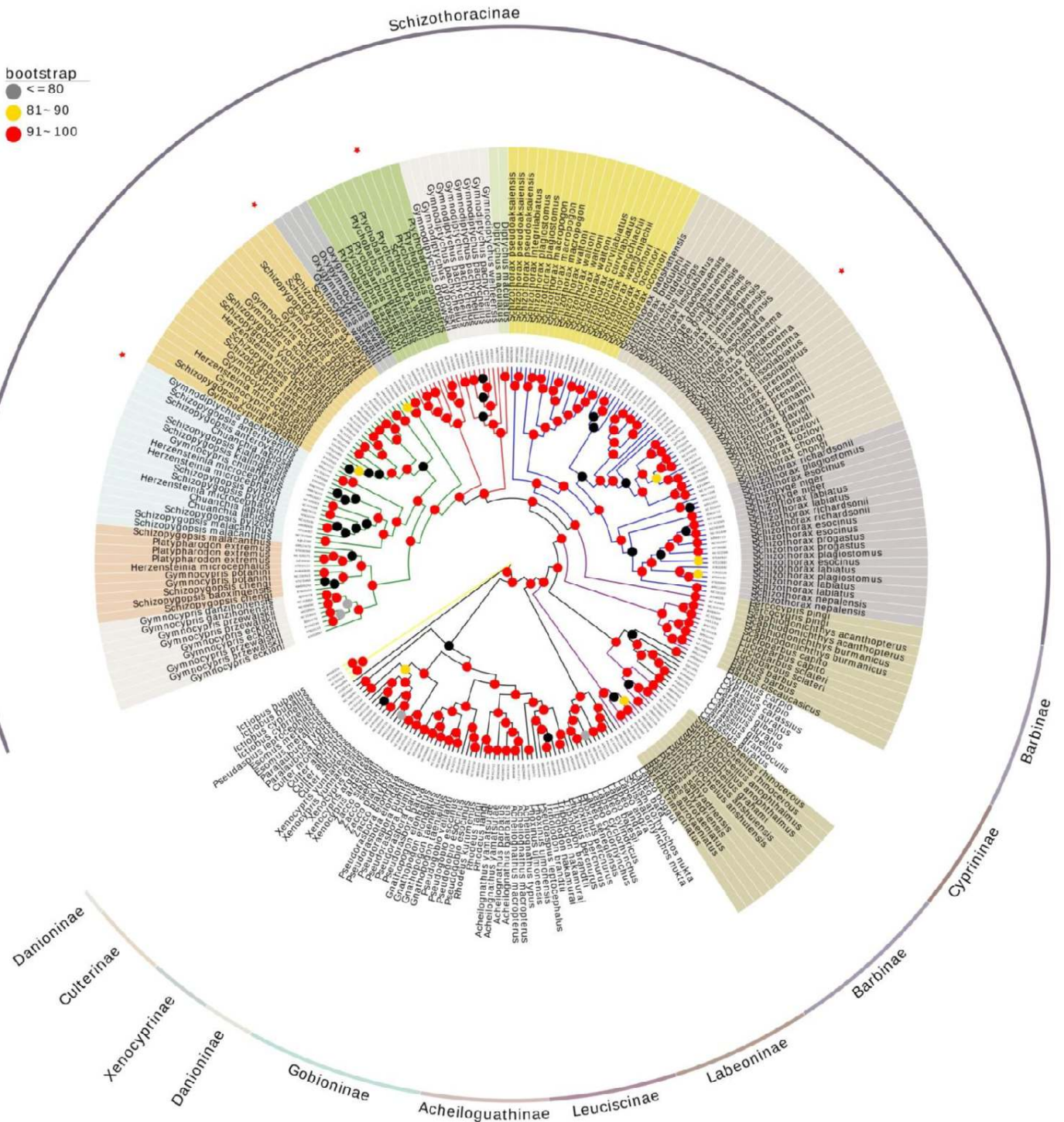
320

321

322

323 C



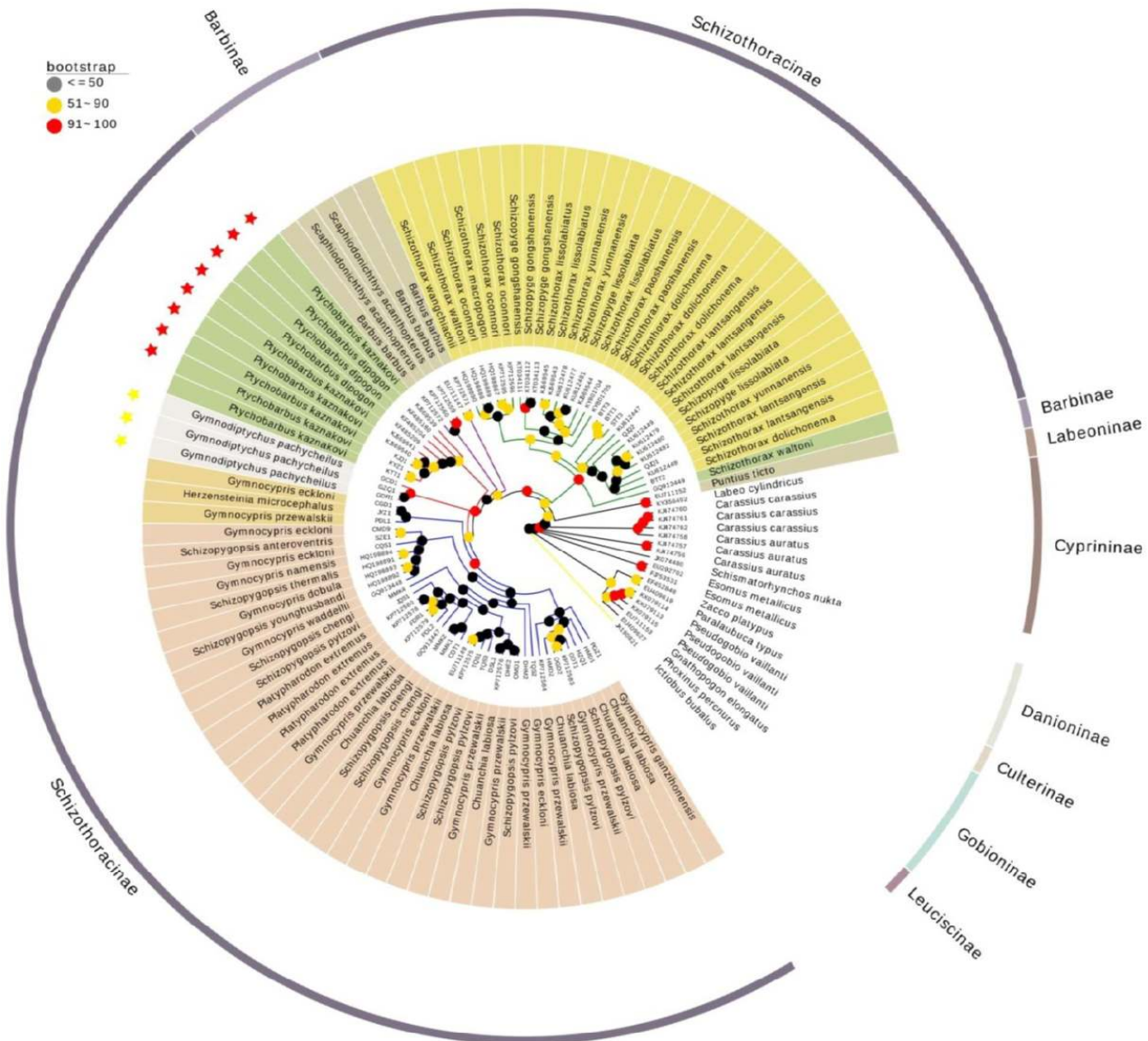


325

326

327

328 D



330 **Figure 2** The phylogenetic tree of Cypriniformes as inferred from the mitochondrial protein-coding genes  
 331 (excluding ND6 and 12SrRNA). Yellow branch represents the outgroup species, green branches  
 332 represent the primitive grade of schizothoracinae, red branches represent the specialized grade of  
 333 schizothoracinae and blue branches represent the highly specialized grade of schizothoracinae.  
 334 A The Bayes Inferred Tree of 12 protein-coding genes based on the GTR+I+G model, *Ictiobus cyprinellus*  
 335 was used as the outgroup. The nodal numbers indicated Bayesian posterior probability with the mcmc  
 336 ngen = 2000000.  
 337 B The Bayes Inferred Tree of RAG1 gene based on the GTR+I+G model, only the *Ictiobus cyprinellus*

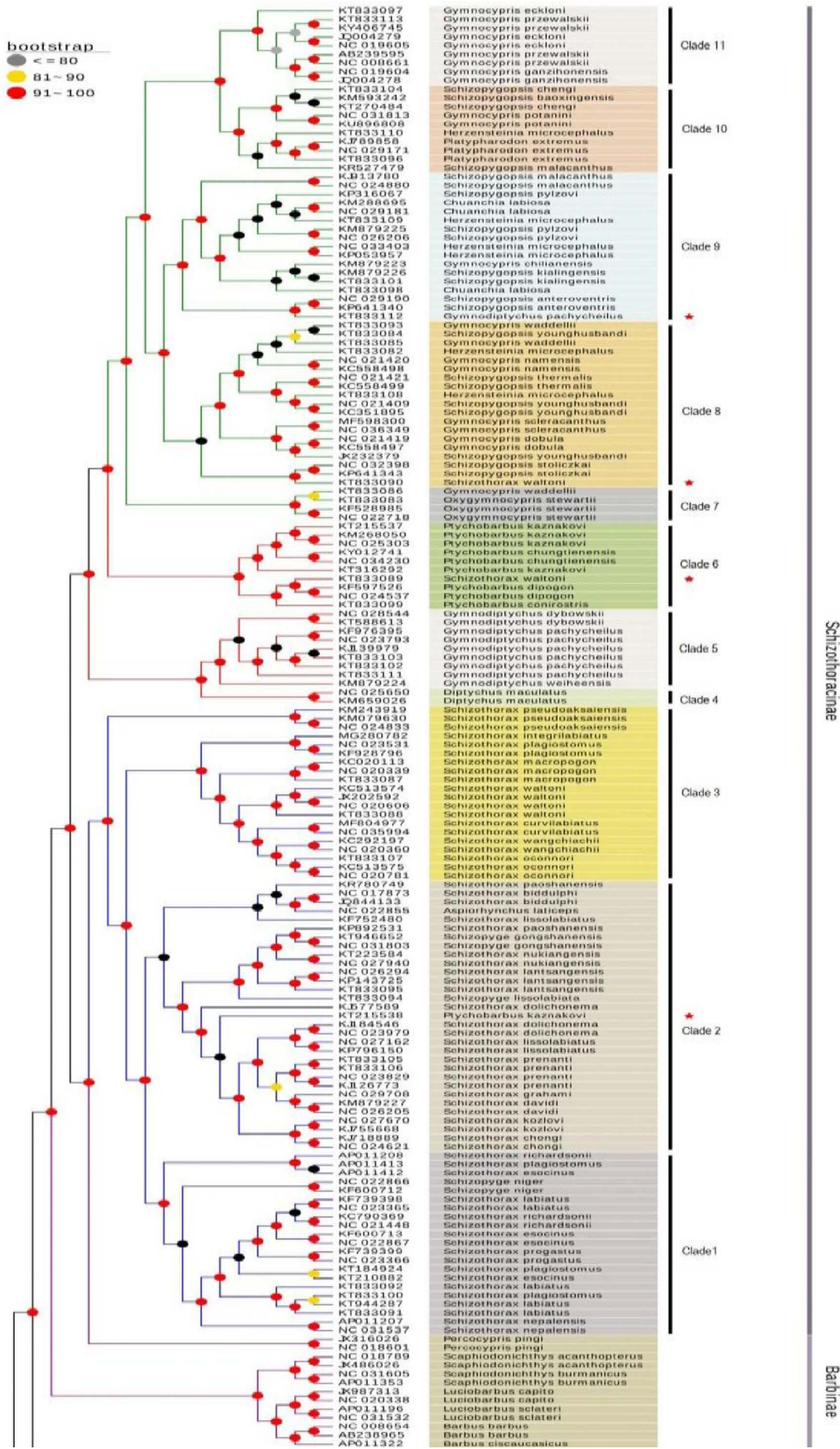
338 was used as the outgroup. The nodal numbers indicated Bayesian posterior probability with the mcmc  
339 ngen = 2000000.

340 C The overview of Maximum Likelihood Tree based on 12 protein-coding genes with the GTRCAT model,  
341 Ictiobus were used as outgroups. The branch label numbers indicated the bootstrap probabilities (rapid  
342 bootstrap set as 1000 replications).

343 D The overview of Maximum Likelihood Tree based on RAG1 gene with the GTRCAT model, Ictiobus  
344 were used as outgroups. The branch label numbers indicated the bootstrap probabilities (rapid bootstrap  
345 set as 1000 replications).

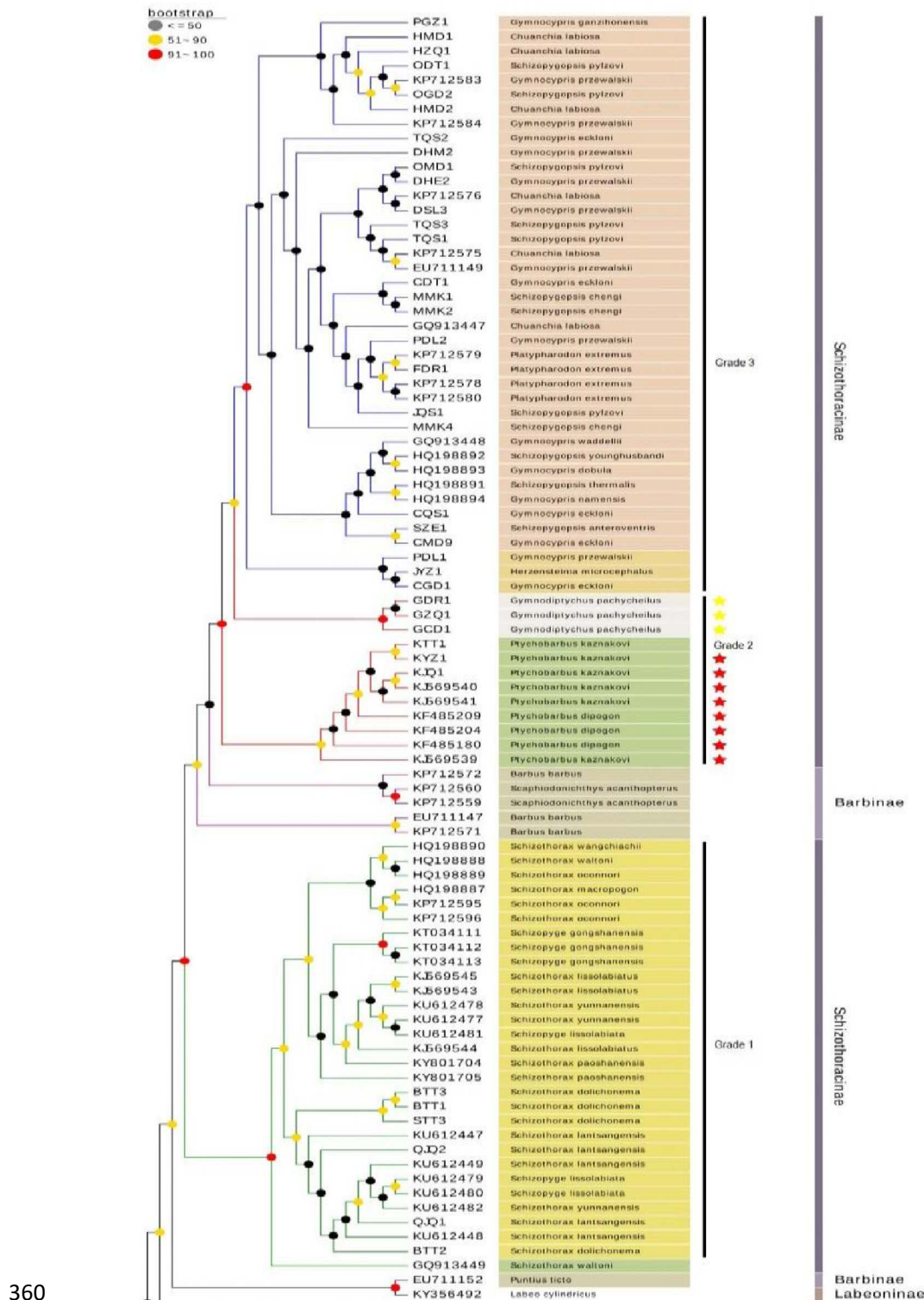
346 Both two molecular datasets were inconsistent with the conclusion of morphology,  
347 which indicated that the specialized grade originated from the primitive  
348 schizothoracinae, and the highly specialized schizothoracinae originated from the  
349 specialized schizothoracinae. Meanwhile, in phylogenetic trees based on both genes,  
350 the Schizothoracinae was divided into two major clades, indicating the subfamily  
351 schizothoracinae might have two different origins. Specialized and highly specialized  
352 Schizothoracine fishes form one clade while primitive Schizothoracine fishes made up  
353 the other major clade that indicated primitive clade was single origin and specialized  
354 and highly specialized originated from another ancestor. The primitive clade located  
355 at the bottom of the tree and the highly specialized grade lay at the top of the tree,  
356 which was in accordance with the result of He (He et al., 2004).

357 E



358

359 F



360

361 **Figure 3** The partial enlargement of Maximum Likelihood Tree only included the subfamily

362 schizothoracinae based on 12 protein-coding genes (E) and RAG1 gene (F). Green branches represent

363 the primitive grade of schizothoracinae, red branches represent the specialized grade of

364 schizothoracinae, blue braches represents the highly specialized grade of schizothoracinae, and purple

365 branches represent the species of Barbinae. Shadows with the different color indicated different clades.  
366 Red stars in figure E represented individuals that might be incorrectly classified, while in figure F red  
367 stars and yellow stars represented genera *Ptychobarbus* and *Gymnodiptychus*.

368 The Schizothoracinae was comprised of 11 clades based on 12 protein-coding  
369 genes, showing in Fig 3 E, each with strong support. Clade 1 to 3 was included in  
370 primitive schizothoracinae and clade 4, 6 was the part of specialized schizothoracinae,  
371 clade 7 to 11 was involved in highly specialized schizothoracinae. It was noteworthy  
372 that the clade 6 (*Ptychobarbus*) which belonged to specialized schizothoracinae  
373 clustered with highly specialized schizothoracinae with strong support (100) that  
374 might lead us to speculate that *Ptychobarbus* was the transitional taxa that the  
375 specialized schizothoracinae evolved to highly specialized schizothoracinae and  
376 making the result be inconsistent with the monophyly of specialized schizothoracinae  
377 (Chen Z.M. & Chen, 2001), and *Diptychus* was the basal clade as monophyly.  
378 *Gymnodiptychus* clustered together as monophyly that originated from *Diptychus*.  
379 Primitive schizothoracinae was monophyletic group whereas these species of three  
380 genera tangled up with each other that strongly supposed that genus *Racoma* and  
381 genus *Schizopyge* should be merged into genus *Schizothorax*. Highly specialized  
382 schizothoracinae, Clade 7 to 11, was monophyly clustered with *Ptychobarbus* as the  
383 sister group, and *Oxygymnocypris* was the primordial genus, and phylogenetic  
384 relationships among the other genera including *Schizopygopsis*, *Platypharodon*,  
385 *Gymnocypris*, *Chuanchia*, and *Herzensteinia* were ambiguous. *Gymnocypris* possibly  
386 originated from *Oxygymnocypris*. *Platypharodon* clustered together as the sister group

387 of *Gymnocypris przewalskii*. The other species of *Gymnocypris* and species of  
388 *Chuanchia* and *Herzensteinia* were embedded in genus *Schizopygopsis*. The results  
389 above were highly in line with the conclusion that members of the specialized  
390 schizothoracine group and the genera *Schizothorax*, *Schizopygopsis*, and *Gymnocypris*  
391 were paraphyletic based on complete mitochondrial genomes (Zhang J. et al., 2016).  
392 On the other hand, based on RAG1 gene (Fig 3 F), genera in highly specialized grade  
393 schizothoracinae were clustered together as a monophy clade that strongly supported  
394 (96), while genera in primitive grade and specialized grade schizothoracinae could  
395 distinguish each other clearly with unreasonable topology, which was obviously  
396 different from the results based on mtDNA genes.

#### 397 *Divergence times*

398 Our estimated divergence times of schizothoracinae based on the mitochondrial genes  
399 were much older than the estimates of He (He et al., 2004) and Ruber (Ruber et al.,  
400 2007), but was consistent with Yang (Li Y.L. et al., 2013). The divergence times of  
401 three grades Schizothoracinae were not completely consistent with three stages of the  
402 uplift of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. The speciation time of Schizothoracinae is 66 Ma,  
403 which is consistent with the first stage of the uplift of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. The  
404 divergence time of the primitive grade and *Percocypris pingi* was 64 Ma, while the  
405 speciation time of the primitive grade was 57 Ma. And the divergence time of  
406 specialized and highly specialized Schizothoracinae is 46 Ma, which is much older  
407 than the second stage of uplift of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. The speciation times of

408 specialized and highly specialized Schizothoracinae are 51 Ma and 43 Ma,  
409 respectively.

## 410 Discussion

### 411 *Phylogeny analysis*

412 The phylogeny of schizothoracinae is controversial all the time. Our phylogeny  
413 relationships of schizothoracinae, based on RAG1 gene, showed that the primitive  
414 grade schizothoracinae fishes clustered into a single branch that strongly supported  
415 and the specialized and highly specialized schizothoracinae clustered with some  
416 species of *Barbinae*, while phylogenetic of schizothoracinae based on 12  
417 protein-coding mtDNA genes indicated that the specialized and highly specialized  
418 schizothoracinae as a sister clade directly clustered with clade that included the  
419 primitive grade schizothoracinae and *Percocyoris* rather than clustered with *Barbinae*.  
420 Subfamily schizothoracinae split into two clades into both molecular data, indicating  
421 that Schizothoracine fishes have two different origins, as the same as other molecular  
422 data (He et al., 2004; Li Y.L. et al., 2013; Qi et al., 2015), were inconsistent with  
423 morphological phylogenies that the schizothoracinae was monophyly and the  
424 specialized and highly specialized schizothoracinae was originated from primitive  
425 Schizothoracine fishes. In morphological phylogenies of schizothoracinaea, the  
426 trophic morphologies mainly were selected as criterions of taxonomy, such as the  
427 rows of pharyngeal teeth, lower jaws horn, pharyngeal bone, and the skull. To some  
428 extent, those morphological characters were determined by their habits and foraging  
429 ways. Convergent evolution, the same environment prompt to form the similar



430 morphologies, enforces the different species to cluster together, making the traditional  
431 taxonomy of the schizothoracinae was different with the molecular results (Qi et al.,  
432 2012). The convergent evolution is a common phenomenon such as the lower lip of  
433 *Labeoninae* (Li Jun-bing et al., 2005), eye and pigment degeneration and well  
434 developed projection of frontal bones of the cave species (Xiao et al., 2005), the  
435 morphological similarities of ground tits and ground jays result from convergent  
436 evolution (Qu et al., 2013). Those characters of morphologies are non-homologous  
437 but are similar that are meaningless to phylogenies. And then the low level of  
438 sequence divergence make the molecular mutations don't have enough time to  
439 stabilize and accumulate that result in the rapid differentiation of morphology don't  
440 synchronously reflect on the molecular variations. And ancestral polymorphism, rapid  
441 evolution, expansion and diversification process, mitochondrial introgressive  
442 hybridization may also are the main factors to the inconsistency between molecular  
443 phylogenies and morphological phylogenies (He & Chen, 2007). RAG1 gene, related  
444 to immune system, has the common disadvantages of nuclear genes as molecular  
445 markers, such as heterozygous ambiguity and paralogy, few available variable sites  
446 resulting from sequences conservation (Chen W.J. et al., 2008; Li Chenghong et al.,  
447 2007; Saitoh & Chen, 2008). Therefore, the phylogenetic trees reconstructed based on  
448 the two molecular data were different, and we speculated that the phylogenetic  
449 relationships of subfamily schizothoracinae based on 12 protein-coding genes were  
450 more reliable.

451 Our analysis of phylogeny of schizothoracinae was also different from other

452 some molecular phylogeny. The most prominent was that the closest relative species  
453 of schizothoracinae is *Percocypris pingi*, which was consistent with Yang (Yang et al.,  
454 2015). The genera of specialized grade are different from the other phylogeny. The  
455 *Diptychus* as the basal clade of specialized grade schizothoracinae that  
456 *Gymnodiptychus* was evolved from genus *Diptychus*, but *Ptychobarbus* was advanced  
457 genus which was clustered together with highly specialized grade schizothoracinae  
458 that were inconsistent with the result that *Gymnodiptychus* was advanced genus that  
459 evolved from *Ptychobarbus* based on Cyt *b* (Chen Z.M. & Chen, 2001). Maybe they  
460 sampled only minority species and individuals or only used Cyt *b* mitochondrial gene  
461 resulting in different conclusions. In the resolution of interrelationships amongst  
462 long-diverged groups, the length of the sequence was particularly important (Rogers,  
463 2001). Therefore, just using the Cyt *b* gene may be inappropriate to speculate the  
464 phylogeny of schizothoracinae. Sampling as well plays a speculate role in reconstruct  
465 phylogenetic relationships that we need to choose sufficient species and individuals.

#### 466 *Divergence times of schizothoracinae*

467 The divergence times of three grades of Schizothoracinae were not completely  
468 consistent with the three stages of uplift of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, which was  
469 contradicted with the morphology results. In our data, the speciation of  
470 Schizothoracinae was 66 Ma, which was the time of the first stage of uplift of  
471 Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, but the speciation times of primitive Schizothoracinae and the  
472 specialized Schizothoracinae and highly specialized Schizothoracinae was much older  
473 than the second and third stage of uplift of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. The speciation time

474 of primitive clade and the specialized - highly specialized clade was very close. So the  
475 result of the divergence times was consistent with the phylogeny result, supporting  
476 that Schizothoracinae has two independent origins. The primitive clade was originated  
477 from the original genus of *Barbinae*, while the specialized and highly specialized  
478 clade, as a sister group with the clade consist of the primitive clade and *Percocypris*  
479 *pingi*, originated from the other genus of genus of *Barbinae*.

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491 Zhonghao Liu assisted with the experiments. Songchang Guo edited the paper. The  
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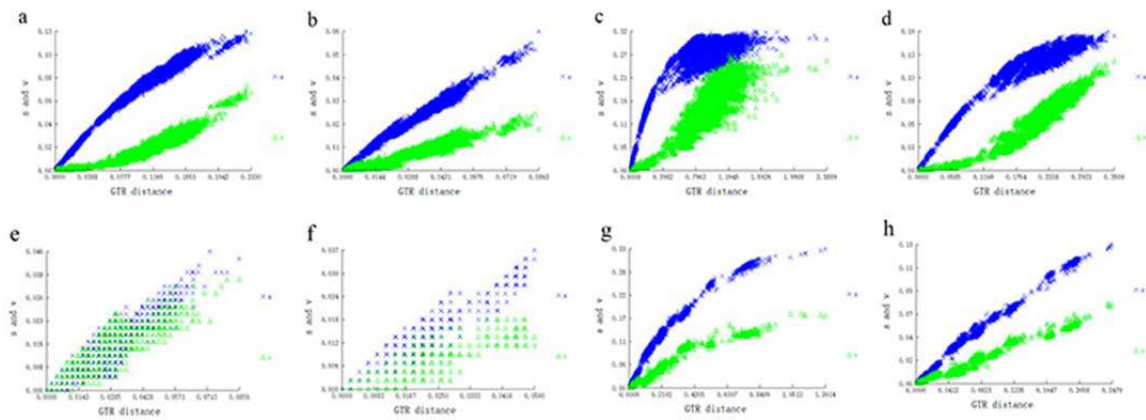
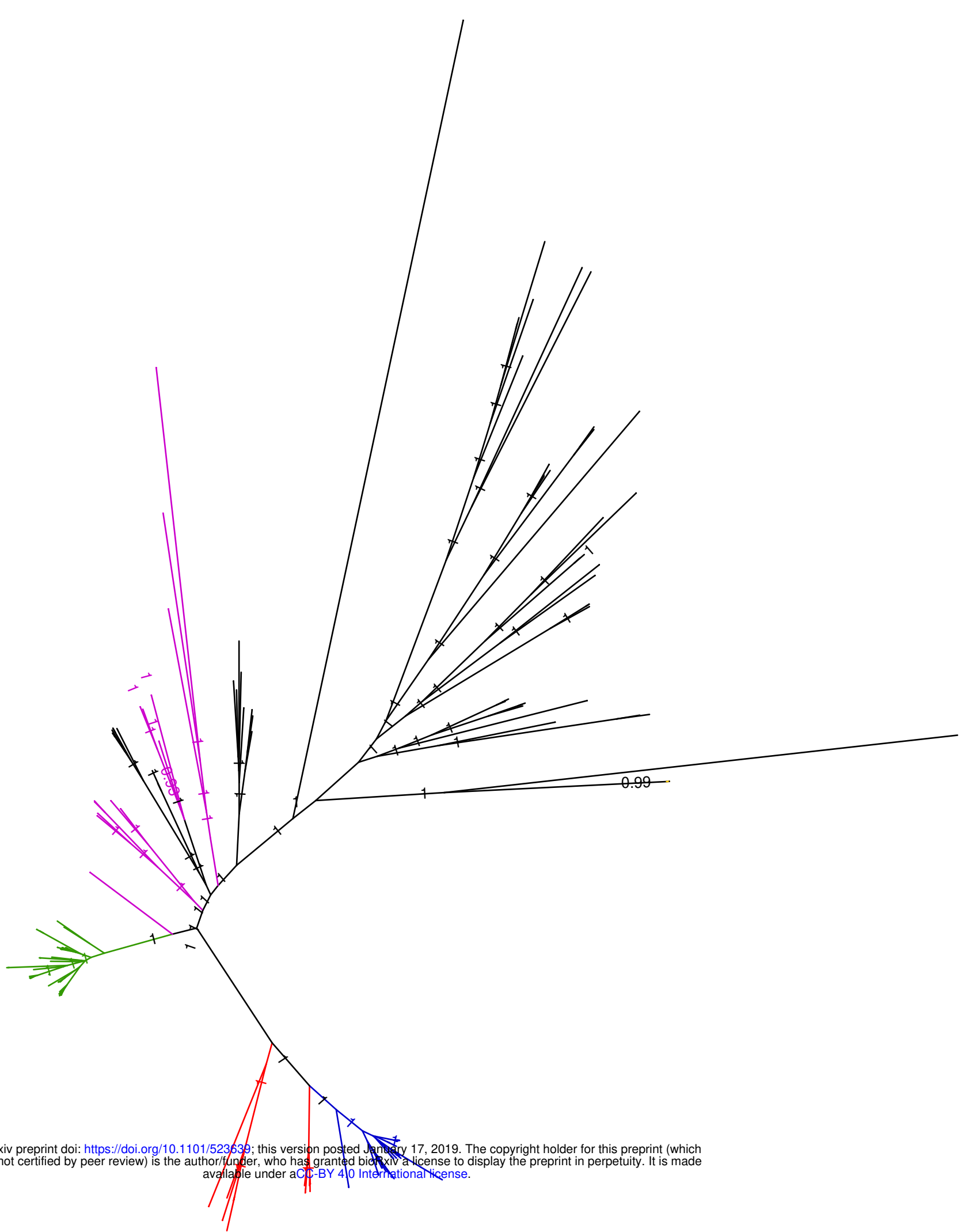
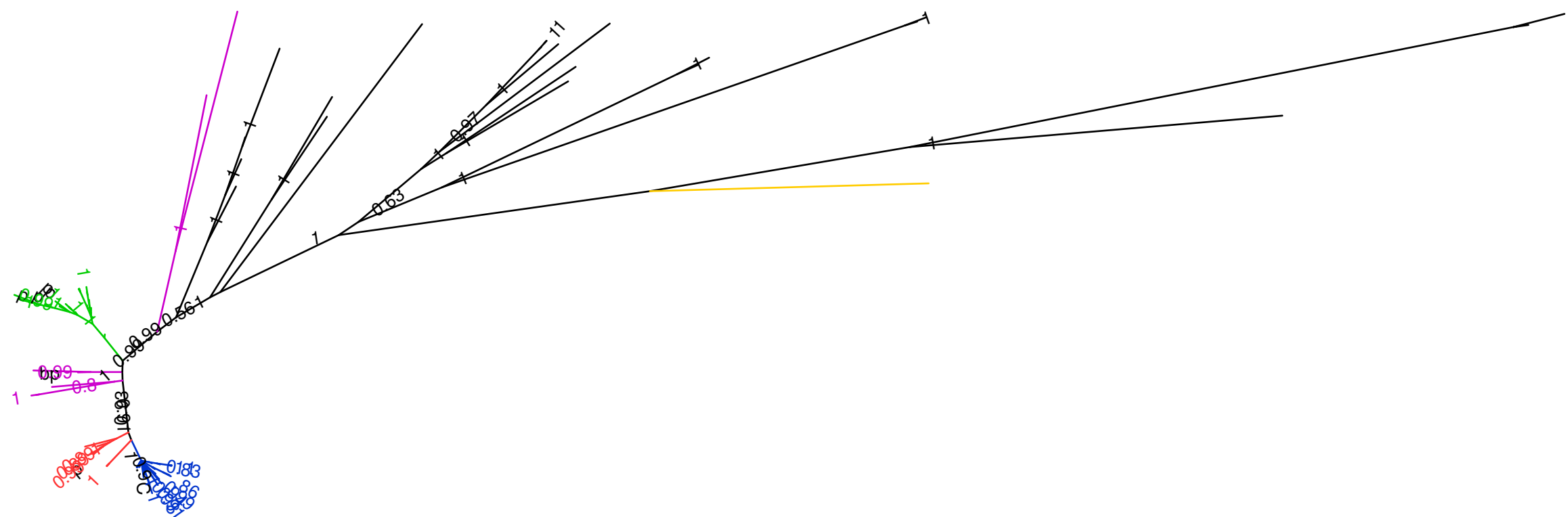


Fig 1 The saturation analysis of both the mitochondrial protein coding genes (excluding ND6 and 12SrRNA) sequences and RAG1 gene sequences based on GTR model. Blue part represent the , green part represent the . Fig a, b, c, and d represent saturation of codon1, codon2 codon3 and complete codon of 12 protein-coding genes, respectively; Fig e, f, g, and h represent saturation of the same part of RAG1 gene.



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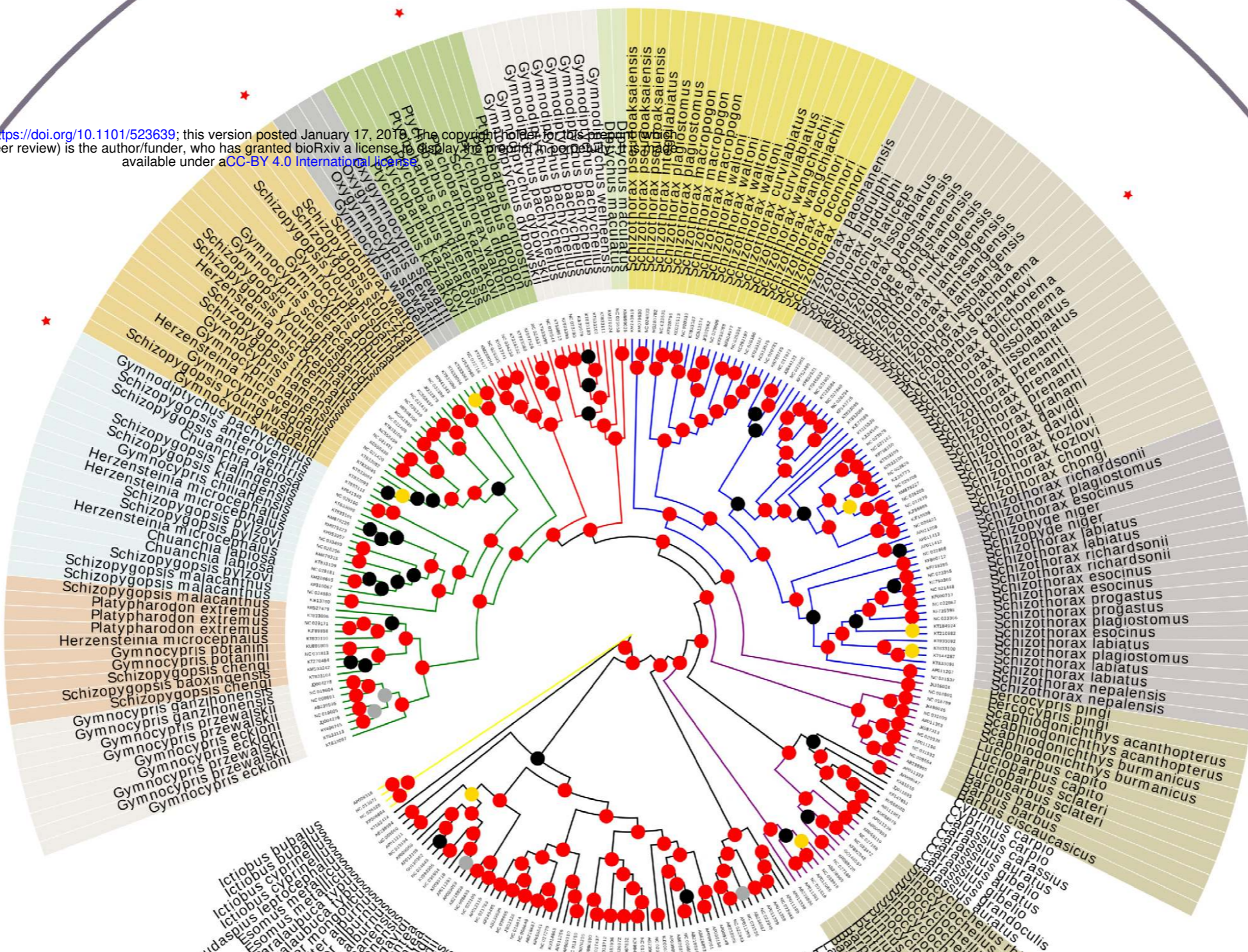


Schizothoracinae

bootstrap

- ≤ 80
- 81~90
- 91~100

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Danioninae

Culterinae

Xenocyprinae

Danioninae

Gobioninae

Acheilognathinae

Leuciscinae

Labeoninae

Barbinae

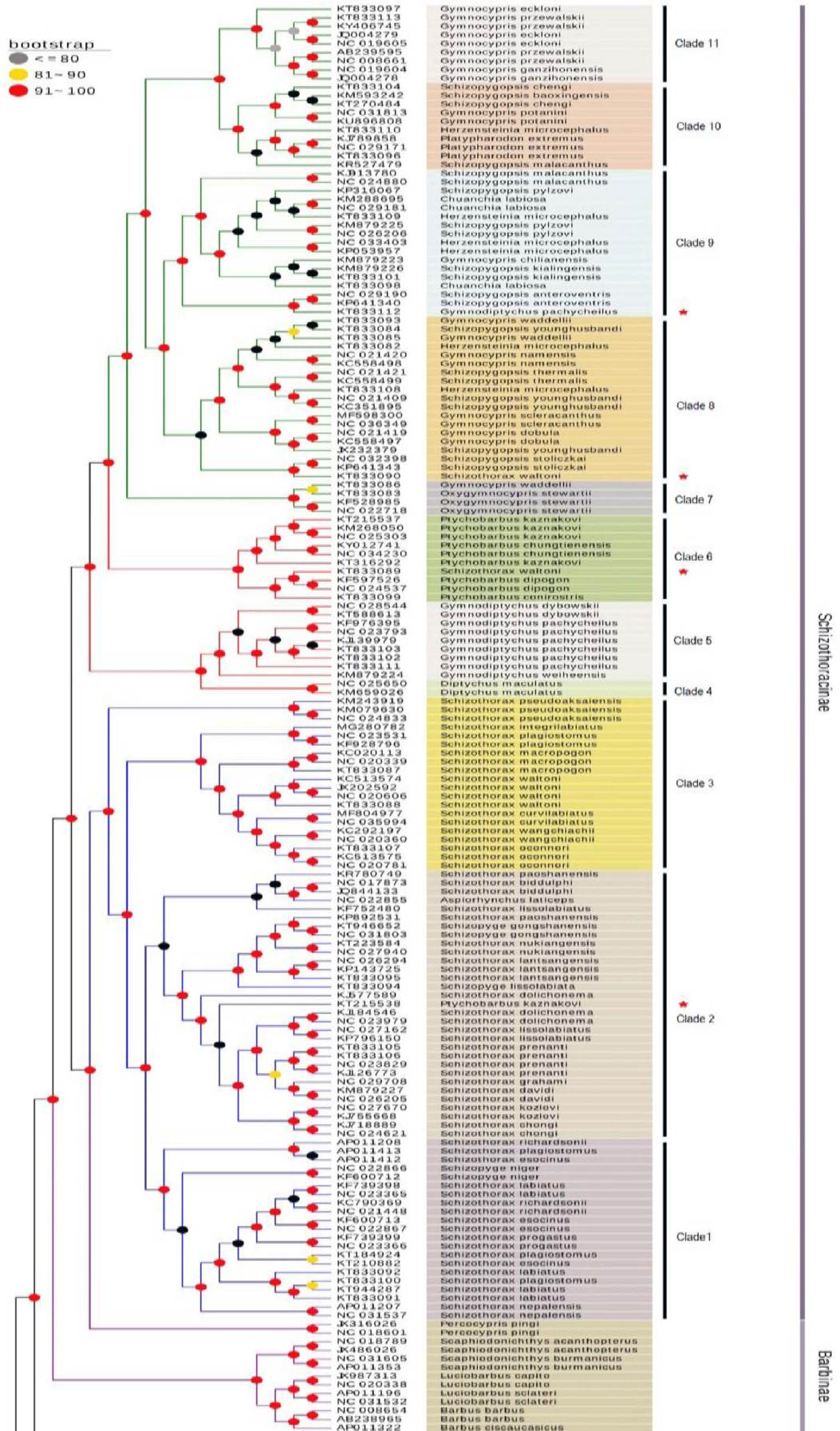
Cyprininae

Barbinae



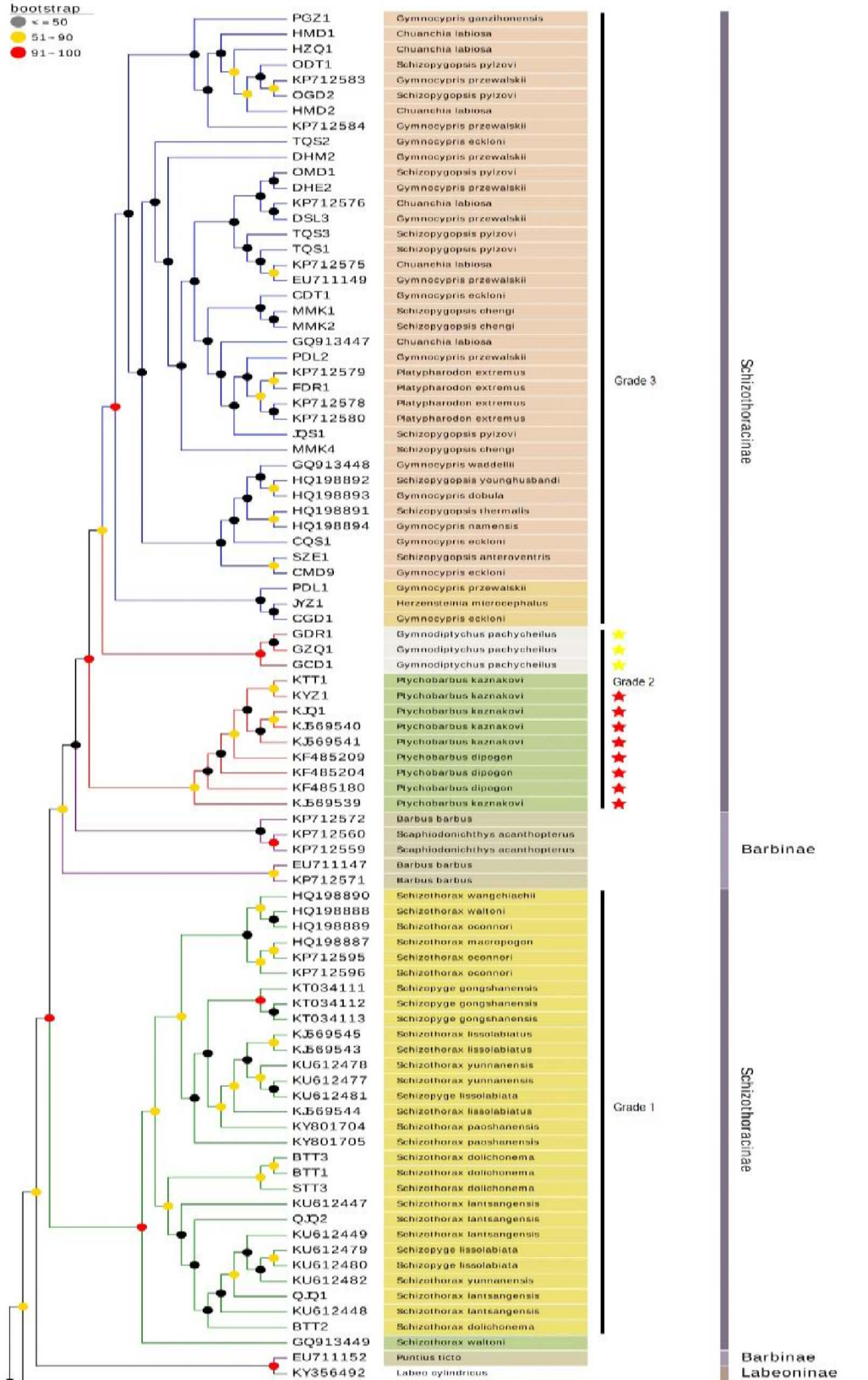


bootstrap  
 ● ≤ 80  
 ● 81-90  
 ● 91-100



Schizothoracinae

Barinae



PQZ1  
HMD1  
HZQ1  
ODT1  
KP712583  
OGD2  
HMD2  
KP712584  
TQ52  
DHM2  
OMD1  
DHE2  
KP712576  
DSL3  
TQ53  
TQ51  
KP712575  
EU711149  
CDT1  
MMK1  
MMK2  
GQ913447  
PDL2  
KP712579  
FDR1  
KP712578  
KP712580  
JQS1  
MMK4  
GQ913448  
HQ198892  
HQ198893  
HQ198891  
HQ198894  
CQS1  
SZE1  
CMD9  
PDL1  
JYZ1  
CGD1  
GDR1  
GZQ1  
GCD1  
KTT1  
KYZ1  
KJQ1  
K.B69540  
K.B69541  
KF485209  
KF485204  
KF485180  
K.B69539  
KP712572  
KP712560  
KP712559  
EU711147  
KP712571  
HQ198890  
HQ198888  
HQ198889  
HQ198887  
KP712595  
KP712596  
KT034111  
KT034112  
KT034113  
K.B69545  
K.B69543  
KU612478  
KU612477  
KU612481  
K.B69544  
KY801704  
KY801705  
BTT3  
BTT1  
STT3  
STT1  
KU612447  
Q.Q2  
KU612449  
KU612479  
KU612480  
KU612482  
Q.Q1  
KU612448  
BTT2  
GQ913449  
EU711152  
KY356492

*Gymnocypris ganzihoensis*  
*Chuanchia labiosa*  
*Chuanchia labiosa*  
*Schizopygopsis pylzovi*  
*Gymnocypris przewalskii*  
*Schizopygopsis pylzovi*  
*Chuanchia labiosa*  
*Gymnocypris przewalskii*  
*Gymnocypris eckloni*  
*Gymnocypris przewalskii*  
*Schizopygopsis pylzovi*  
*Gymnocypris przewalskii*  
*Chuanchia labiosa*  
*Gymnocypris przewalskii*  
*Schizopygopsis chengi*  
*Schizopygopsis chengi*  
*Chuanchia labiosa*  
*Gymnocypris przewalskii*  
*Schizopygopsis chengi*  
*Schizopygopsis chengi*  
*Chuanchia labiosa*  
*Gymnocypris przewalskii*  
*Platypharodon extremus*  
*Platypharodon extremus*  
*Platypharodon extremus*  
*Schizopygopsis pylzovi*  
*Schizopygopsis chengi*  
*Schizopygopsis waddellii*  
*Schizopygopsis younghusbandi*  
*Gymnocypris dobla*  
*Schizopygopsis thermalis*  
*Gymnocypris namensis*  
*Gymnocypris eckloni*  
*Schizopygopsis anterovertris*  
*Gymnocypris eckloni*  
*Gymnocypris przewalskii*  
*Herzensteinia mironcephalus*  
*Gymnocypris eckloni*  
*Gymnodiptychus pachycheilus*  
*Gymnodiptychus pachycheilus*  
*Gymnodiptychus pachycheilus*  
*Psychobarbus kaznakovi*  
*Psychobarbus kaznakovi*  
*Psychobarbus kaznakovi*  
*Psychobarbus kaznakovi*  
*Psychobarbus dipogon*  
*Psychobarbus dipogon*  
*Psychobarbus dipogon*  
*Psychobarbus kaznakovi*  
*Barbus barbus*  
*Scaphiodonichthys acanthopterus*  
*Scaphiodonichthys acanthopterus*  
*Barbus barbus*  
*Barbus barbus*  
*Schizothorax wanghaiichii*  
*Schizothorax waltoni*  
*Schizothorax oconneri*  
*Schizothorax macropegon*  
*Schizothorax oconneri*  
*Schizothorax oconneri*  
*Schizopyge gongshanensis*  
*Schizopyge gongshanensis*  
*Schizopyge gongshanensis*  
*Schizothorax lissolabiatus*  
*Schizothorax lissolabiatus*  
*Schizothorax yunnanensis*  
*Schizothorax yunnanensis*  
*Schizopyge lissolabiata*  
*Schizothorax lissolabiatus*  
*Schizothorax paoshanensis*  
*Schizothorax paoshanensis*  
*Schizothorax dolichonema*  
*Schizothorax dolichonema*  
*Schizothorax dolichonema*  
*Schizothorax lantsangensis*  
*Schizothorax lantsangensis*  
*Schizothorax lantsangensis*  
*Schizopyge lissolabiata*  
*Schizopyge lissolabiata*  
*Schizothorax yunnanensis*  
*Schizothorax lantsangensis*  
*Schizothorax lantsangensis*  
*Schizothorax dolichonema*  
*Schizothorax waltoni*  
*Puntius ticto*  
*Labeo cylindricus*

Grade 3  
Grade 2  
Grade 1

Schizothoracinae  
Barbinae  
Schizothoracinae  
Barbinae  
Labeoninae