Evolution of dioecious/ monecious taxa in *Juniperus*, contrasted with *Cupressus*, *Hesperocyparis*, *Callitropsis* and *Xanthocyparis* (Cupressaceae)

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ABSTRACT

Dioecy and monoecy were mapped onto phylogenies of *Juniperus* and related genera. Related genera were uniformly monecious. In contrast, the direct ancestor of *Juniperus* appears to have been dioecious, because dioecy exhibits universal occurrence in sect. Caryocedrus (*J. drupacea*) and for all species of sect. Juniperus. Monoecy appears to have re-emerged in section Sabina. The re-emergence of monoecy appears to have occurred in 5 evolutionary events: in the *californica-grandis-occidentalis-osteosperma* species of the serrate leaf junipers of North America; almost universally in the smooth leaf, turbinate, 1-seeded cone, clade centered in eastern Mediterranean and central Asia; in the *excelsa* complex; in the *chinensis* complex of central Asia and China; and in the *phoenicea/ turbinata* clade of the Mediterranean region. The genus *Juniperus*, seems to run counter-current to other closely related genera (*Cupressus, Hesperocyparis, Callitropsis, Xanthocyparis*) which are uniformly monoecious. In contrast, *Juniperus*, perhaps the most recently evolved conifer, initially evolved the atypical dioecious sexual system, then later in its evolution has (re-)evolved monoecy among many phylogenetically advanced species. Published on-line www.phytologia.org *Phytologia 100(4): 248-255 (Dec 21, 2018)*. ISSN 030319430.

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Recently, Walas et al. (2018) reviewed the literature on sexual systems in gymnosperms. They reported about 65% of the gymnosperm taxa were dioecious. This is in stark contrast to angiosperms where dioecy is reported at about 6% (Renner, 2014; Renner and Ricklefs, 1995; Weiblen et al., 2000).

Dioecy has, potentially, some advantages over monoecy: complete exclusion of risk of selfpollination and optimization of resources for both male and female functions (Walas, et al., 2018). However, Walas et al. (2018) note that dioecy is not so well suited as an optimal system for fixed or sedentary taxa. Monoecy can be an advantage when no other breeding partner is nearby (Charnov, 1982; Munoz-Reinoso, 2018). In addition, because only female plants produce seeds in dioecious taxa, only half of the plants in a population are producing seed compared to monecious taxa. It does seem that monecious plants may offer an advantage in colonization of new habitats, especially by long distance dispersal, as in the cases of *Juniperus* colonization on distant, isolated islands such as Bermuda, the Caribbean Islands, the Azores, Canary Islands, etc. Among gymnosperm families (Table 1), some are almost exclusively monecious (Araucariaceae, 94.6%; Pinaceae, 100%; Sciadopityaceae, 100%) or twothirds monecious (Cupressaceae, 64.4%). However, most families (8) are almost exclusively dioecious (Table 1). The Cupressaceae has the largest number of mixed sexual systems (taxa with both monecious and dioecious plants within a species).

Two robust phylogenies of the *Callitropsis, Cupressus, Hesperocyparis, Juniperus, Xanthocyparis* complex have recently been published. One was based on 73 nuclear genes (Mao, et al. 2018) and the other utilized the complete chloroplast genome sequences (Zhu et al, 2018). This, along with the phylogeny of *Juniperus* (Adams and Schwarzbach 2013), make it now possible to place the sexual system onto phylogenetic trees to examine if the occurrences of dioecy and monoecy is correlated with phylogeny. The purpose of the present paper is to report on phylogenetic distribution of sexual

systems within *Juniperus* and in a closely related group of Cupressaceae genera (*Callitropsis, Cupressus, Hesperocyparis, Juniperus* and *Xanthocyparis*).

Family	Total species	Monecious	mixed	Dioecious	% Dioecious
	reported on		(M&D)		
Araucariaceae	37	35	0	2	5.4%
Cupressaceae	135	87	8	40	29.6
Cycadaceae	107	0	0	107	100.0
Ephedraceae	54	0	0	54	100.0
Ginkgoaceae		0	0	1	100.0
Gnetaceae	39	0	0	39	100.0
Pinaceae	224	222	2	0	0.0
Podocarpaceae	178	6	3	169	94.9
Sciadopityaceae	1	1	0	0	0.0
Taxaceae	32	1	1	30	93.7
Welwitschiaceae	1	0	0	1	100.0
Zamiaceae	224	0	0	224	100.0
Total	1033	352 (34.1%)	14 (1.36%)	667 (64.56%)	

Table 1. Distributions of monoecious, dioecious and mixed (monoecious and dioecious plants within a taxon) species in various gymnosperm families (adapted from Walas, et al. 2018).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Information on dioecy or monoecy was obtained from Adams' monograph of *Juniperus* (Adams 2014; Farjon 2005). For *Callitropsis, Cupressus, Hesperocyparis* and *Xanthocyparis,* information was from Walas et al. 2018 and Farjon 2005.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 shows the classification of 119 *Juniperus* taxa as to their sexual system with 88 taxa dioecious (73.9%) and 31 taxa (26.1%) having some degree of monoecy as: 12 taxa monoecious (10.2%); 13 taxa dioecious & monoecious (10.9%); 6 taxa mostly dioecious but rarely monoecious (5.0%). Vasek (1966) made a very detailed study of thousands of specimens and natural plants to determine the frequency of dioecious vs. monecious plants within a population and taxon. So, we do have quantitative data of monoecy in *J. californica* (1.9% monecious), *J. grandis* (Vasey treated as *J. occidentalis* subsp. *australis*) (5.1%), *J. occidentalis* (47.6%) and *J. osteosperma* (89.2%).

In addition, Jordano (1991) conducted a detailed study of monoecy and sex expression in *J. phoenicea* in Spain and Morocco. He found although *J. phoenicea* is considered monoecious, in reality, most trees in a population are 'mostly with pollen cones and few seed cones' ('male plants') or 'mostly with seed cones and a few pollen cones' ('female plants') with a few plants that produced numerous pollen cones and seed cones ('true monecious' plants). This situation he called a 'functionally subdioecious breeding system'. Just in this issue of Phytologia, Munoz-Reinoso (2018) reported finding 1 monecious tree in a population of dioecious *J. oxycedrus* var. *badia* trees. For a more detailed review of sex expression in *Juniperus*, the reader is referred to Adams (2014, chapter 9). It should be noted that I have examined thousands of juniper trees in the field over the past 50 years and have encountered a few 'monecious' trees (with a few male cones, and many female cones, or many male cones and a few female seed cones) in 'dioecious' taxa of most species.

Table 2. Classification of all *Juniperus* species and varieties (119) by sexual system (dioecious, monecious or both, within a taxon). Data from Adams (2014) and Vasek (1966) for percentage monecious data for *J. californica, J. grandis* (*J. occidentalis* subsp. *australis*), *J. occidentalis* and *J. osteosperma*.

Taxon, nomenclature of Adams, 2014	Plants: dioecious, monecious or both
J. angosturana R. P. Adams	dioecious
J. arizonica (R. P. Adams) R. P. Adams	dioecious
J. ashei Buchholz	dioecious
J. barbadensis L.	dioecious
J. barbadensis var. lucayana (Britton) R. P. Adams	dioecious
J. bermudiana L.	dioecious
J. blancoi var. huehuentensis R. P. Adams, S. Gonzalez, and M. G.	dioecious
Elizondo	
J. blancoi var. mucronata (R. P. Adams) Farjon	dioecious
J. blancoi Martinez var. blancoi	dioecious
J. brevifolia (Seub.) Ant.	dioecious
J. californica Carriere	dioecious, rarely monecious (1.9%)
J. californica f. lutheyana J. T. Howell & Twisselm.	dioecious
J. carinata (Y. K. Yu & L. K. Fu) R. P. Adams	dioecious
J. cedrus Webb & Berthol.	dioecious
J. chinensis var. procumbens Sieb.ex Endl.	monecious
J. chinensis var. sargentii Henry	dioecious, rarely monecious
J. chinensis L. var. chinensis	dioecious
J. coahuilensis (Martinez) Gaussen ex R. P. Adams	dioecious
J. comitana Martinez	dioecious
J. communis L. var. communis	dioecious
J. communis var. charlottensis R. P. Adams	dioecious
J. communis var. depressa Pursh	dioecious
J. communis var. hemisphaerica (J. & C. Presl) Parl.	dioecious
J. communis var. kamchatkensis R. P. Adams	dioecious
J. communis var. kelleyi R. P. Adams	dioecious
J. communis var. megistocarpa Fernald & H. St. John	dioecious
J. communis var. nipponica (Maxim.) E. H. Wilson	dioecious
J. communis var. saxatilis Pall. (only in eastern hemisphere)	dioecious
J. convallium f. pendula (Cheng & L. K. Fu) R. P. Adams	dioecious & monecious
J. convallium Rehder & Wilson	dioecious & monecious
J. coxii A.B. Jacks	dioecious
J. davurica var. arenaria (E. H. Wilson) R. P. Adams	dioecious
J. davurica var. mongolensis (R. P. Adams) R. P. Adams	dioecious
J. davurica Pall.	dioecious
J. deltoides R. P. Adams	dioecious
J. deltoides var. spilinanus (Yalt., Elicin & Terzioglu) Terzioglu	dioecious
J. deppeana var. patoniana (Martinez) Zanoni	dioecious
J. deppeana var. robusta Martinez	dioecious
J. deppeana forma elongata R. P. Adams	dioecious
J. deppeana forma sperryi (Correll) R. P. Adams	dioecious
J. deppeana forma zacatacensis (Mart.) R. P. Adams	dioecious
J. deppeana Steudel var. deppeana	dioecious
J. deppeana var. gamboana (Mart.) R. P. Adams	dioecious, rarely monecious
J. drupacea Labill.	dioecious
J. durangensis var. topiensis R. P. Adams & S. Gonzalez	dioecious

J. durangensis Martinez	dioecious	
J. erectopatens (Cheng & L. K. Fu) R. P. Adams	dioecious	
J. excelsa MBieb. var. excelsa	dioecious & monecious	
J. fargesii (Rehder & Wils.) Kom.	dioecious	
J. flaccida Schlecht.	dioecious	
J. foetidissima Willd.	dioecious & monecious	
J. formosana Hayata	dioecious	
J. gracilior Pilger	dioecious	
J. gracilior var. ekmanii (Florin) R. P. Adams	dioecious	
J. gracilior var. saxicola (Britton & P. Wilson) R. P. Adams	dioecious	
J. gracilior var. urbaniana (Pilger & Ekman) R .P. Adams	dioecious	
J. grandis R. P. Adams	dioecious, 5.1% monecious	
J. horizontalis Moench	dioecious	
J. indica var. caespitosa Farjon	dioecious & monecious	
J. indica Bertol.	dioecious & monecious	
J. jackii (Rehder) R. P. Adams	dioecious	
J. jaliscana Martinez	dioecious	
J komarovii Florin	dioecious & monecious	
I macrocarna Sibth & Sm	dioecious	
I maderensis (Menezes) R P Adams	dioecious	
I mairei I emee & I ev	dioecious	
J. maritima P. P. Adams	diaecious	
J. martingrij Deroz de la Dece	diaggious	
J. multinezit i cicz de la Rosa	dioccious & monocious	
J. microspermu (Cheng & L. K. Fu) K. F. Adams		
J. monosperma (Engenn.) Sarg.		
J. monticola forma compacta Martinez		
J. monticola forma orizabensis Martinez		
J. monticola Martinez forma monticola		
J. morrisonicola Hayata	dioecious & monecious	
J. navicularis Gand.	dioecious	
J. occidentalis f. corbetii R. P. Adams	dioecious & monecious	
J. occidentalis Hook.	dioecious, 52.4% & monecious, 47.6%	
J. osteosperma (Torr.) Little	monecious, 89.2%, seldom dioecious, 10.8%	
J. ovata (R. P. Adams) R. P. Adams	dioecious	
J. oxycedrus L.	dioecious	
J. phoenicea L.	monecious, rarely dioecious	
J. pinchotii Sudworth	dioecious	
J. pingii Cheng & Ferre.	monecious	
J. pingii var. miehei Farjon	monecious	
J. poblana (Martinez) R. P. Adams	dioecious	
J. poblana var. decurrens R. P. Adams	dioecious	
J. polycarpos K. Koch	dioecious	
J. polycarpos var. turcomanica (B. Fedtsch.) R. P. Adams	dioecious	
J. procera Hochst. ex. Endl.	dioecious & monecious	
J. przewalsku Kom.	monectous	
J. pseudosabina Fisch., Mey. & Ave-Lall.	dioecious, rarely monecious	
J. recurva BuchHam. ex D. Don.	monecious, rarely dioecious	
J. rigida var. conferta (Parl.) Patschka	dioecious	
J. rigida Mig. in Sieb. var. rigida	dioecious	
J. rushforthiana (R. P. Adams) R. P. Adams	monecious	
J. sabina L.	dioecious, rarely monecious	
J. sabina var. balkanensis R. P. Adams & A. N. Tashev	dioecious, rarely monecious	

J. saltillensis M. T. Hall	dioecious	
J. saltuaria Rehder & Wils.	monecious	
J. scopulorum Sarg.	dioecious	
J. semiglobosa Regel var. semiglobosa	dioecious	
J. semiglobosa var. jarkendensis (Kom.) R. P. Adams	dioecious	
J. semiglobosa var. talassica (Lipsky) Silba	dioecious	
J. seravschanica Kom.	dioecious	
J. squamata var. wilsonii (Rehder) R. P. Adams	dioecious	
J. squamata BuchHam. ex D. Don in Lambert	monecious, rarely dioecious	
J. standleyi Steyermark	dioecious	
J. taxifolia Hook. & Arn.	dioecious	
J. taxifolia var. lutchuensis (Koidz.) Satake	dioecious	
J. thurifera L. var. thurifera	dioecious	
J. thurifera var. africana Maire	dioecious	
J. tibetica Kom.	monecious	
J. tsukusiensis var. taiwanensis (R. P. Adams & C-F. Hsieh) R. P.	dioecious	
Adams		
J. tsukusiensis var. tsukusiensis Masam.	dioecious	
J. turbinata Guss.	dioecious & monecious	
J. uncinata (R. P. Adams) R. P. Adams	monecious, rarely dioecious	
J. virginiana L. var. virginiana	dioecious	
J. virginiana var. silicicola (Small) E. Murray	dioecious	
J. zanonii R. P. Adams	dioecious	
Summary: completely 88 dioecious (74.8%);		
Not completely dioecious 31 (25.2%):		
12 monoecious (10.2%); 13 dioecious & monoecious (10.9%);		
6 mostly dioecious, rarely monoecious (5.0%)		

To examine the phylogenetic distribution of dioecious and monoecious taxa, these traits were mapped onto a phylogenetic tree (Adams, 2014; Adams and Schwarzbach, 2013) shown in figure 1. The incidence of dioecy groups by clades (Fig. 1): all of sect. Carvocedrus and sect. Juniperus are dioecious; monoecy is only found in sect. Sabina, and even there, monoecy is grouped by clades. The serrate leaf margined junipers of the western hemisphere (percent data from Vasek, 1966) have 4 taxa with monoecy: J. californica (rarely monecious, 1.9%), J. grandis (5.1% monecious), J. occidentalis, 47.6% monecious) and J. osteosperma (89.2% monecious). This appears to be an isolated case of monoecy among the dioecious taxa of the serrate Juniperus of the western hemisphere (Fig. 1). The clade of smooth leaf, turbinate, 1-seeded cones, junipers of the eastern hemisphere (India to western China to Taiwan), contain only 3 taxa that appear to be dioecious: J. fargesii, J. carinata, and J. coxii and these are uncertain, because of limited observations of plants in the field by the author. They may be partially monecious. Fifteen (15) of the 18 taxa in this clade are monecious or partially monecious (Fig. 1). The third case of monoecy is in the excelsa group, smooth leaves, ovoid, multi-seeded cones, eastern hemisphere (eastern Mediterranean to western China, and Japan). This clade is composed a sub-clade of the virginiana group in the western hemisphere, that are all dioecious and a loose assemblage of junipers, of which approximately half are monoecious taxa (Fig. 1).

Finally, the fourth clade with monoecy is the *phoenicea/ turbinata* clade in the Mediterranean (Fig. 1). Both taxa in this clade have considerable monoecy. It might be noted *Hesperocyparis arizonica* and *H. bakeri* (outgroup) are both monecious.



Figure 1. Bayesian phylogenetic tree of Juniperus with sexual system imposed.

All of the closely related relatives of *Juniperus* (Mao, et al. 2018; Zhu et al, 2018) are monecious (Table 2). This is also true (Fig. 2) for distant relatives (*Calocedrus, Microbiota, Platycladus, Thuja*).

Table 2. Sexual systems in cypresses (data ex Farjon, 2005; Rushforth, pers. comm.; Walas et al. 2018).

Taxon	Plants: dioecious, monecious or both; ex
	Farjon, 2005; Walas et al. 2018.
Callitropsis nootkatensis	monecious
Cupressus cashmeriana	monecious
Cupressus chengiana	monecious
Cupressus duclouxiana	monecious
Cupressus dupreziana	monecious
Cupressus funebris	monecious
Cupressus gigantea	monecious
Cupressus sempervirens	monecious
Cupressus tonkinensis	monecious
Cupressus torulosa	monecious
Hesperocyparis arizonica	monecious
Hesperocyparis bakeri	monecious
Hesperocyparis benthamii	monecious
Hesperocyparis glabra	monecious
Hesperocyparis goveniana	monecious
Hesperocyparis guadalupensis	monecious
Hesperocyparis lusitanica	monecious
Hesperocyparis macnabiana	monecious
Hesperocyparis macrocarpa	monecious
Hesperocyparis sargentii	monecious
Xanthocyparis vietnamensis	monecious

Plotting the sexual systems onto phylogenies of Mao, et al. 2018 and Zhu et al, 2018, clearly suggests that ancestors of *Juniperus* were monecious (yellow boxes, Figs.1,2). However, the direct ancestor of *Juniperus* appears to have been dioecious (green boxes, Figs. 1,2), because dioecy exhibits



Figure 2. (left) Phylogeny of cypress-juniper clade based on 73 nuclear genes (Mao et al. 2018) with dioecy (green) and monoecy (yellow) included. (right) Phylogeny based on complete chloroplast genome sequencing (Zhu, et al. 2018) with dioecy and monoecy included. See text for discussion.

universal occurrence in sect. Caryocedrus (*J. drupacea*) and for all species of sect. Juniperus (*J. communis* and related species, Figs. 1, 2). Section Sabina is considered the most advanced section of *Juniperus*, and it is there, that one finds the re-emergence of monoecy.

The re-emergence of monoecy appears to have occurred in 5 events: in the *californica-grandis-occidentalis-osteosperma* species of the serrate leaf junipers of North America; almost universally in the smooth leaf, turbinate, 1-seeded cone, clade centered in eastern Mediterranean and central Asia; in the *excelsa* and *chinensis* complexes of central Asia and China; and in the *phoenicea/ turbinata* clade of the Mediterranean region.

Walas et al. (Table 3, 2018) reported that dioecy was more common in tropical gymnosperms whereas monoecy was more common colder climate gymnosperms. This does not appear to be the case in *Juniperus* in which cold-tolerant species are mostly dioecious.

In summary, the genus *Juniperus*, seems to run counter-current to other closely related genera (*Cupressus, Hesperocyparis, Callitropsis, Xanthocyparis*) which are uniformly monoecious. In contrast, *Juniperus*, perhaps the most recently evolved conifer, with the evolution of nutritious, small cones that are easily dispersed by birds over long distances, initially evolved the atypical dioecious sexual system, then later in its evolution has (re-) evolved monoecy among many phylogenetically advanced species.

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