## Cooperation of Selfish Genetic Elements in Stalk-Eyed Flies

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## Abstract

SGEs are selfish genetic elements that increase the likelihood of their own transmission regardless of the host's best interest. Transposable elements (TEs) and meiotic drivers are both types of SGEs. SGEs subsequently result in genetic conflict as they disrupt functional elements in the genome. We are working to better understand the cooperation of selfish genetic elements in Stalk-Eyed files. Transposable elements are counteracted by small non-coding RNA molecules called piRNA. These RNA molecules work by reducing the expression of TEs by degrading TE RNA transcripts. Prior work in stalk-eyed files has shown that TEs are expressed at a higher rate in male carriers of meiotic drive (SR males). We are comparing the expression of piRNA in SR and wild-type males using small RNA sequencing analysis software (proTRAC, PILFER) designed for this type of data. If meiotic drive and TEs cooperate, we would expect to see increased expression of piRNA stargeting TEs in SR males.

## Introduction

- Our goal is to understand how the expression of small RNAs that regulate TEs (piRNAs) may change due to the presence of meiotic drive
- > piRNAs produce RNAi which degrade the expression if TEs







Reinhardt, Baker, Zimin, Ladias, Paczolt, Werren, Hayashi, and Gerald Wilkinson. 2020.

Transposable element control disrupted by meiotic drive in stalk-eved fly genome.

Rosenkranz, David. 2019. ProTRAC.

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