

Mar 02, 2024

Version 2

qPCR assay for *Aquarickettsia* spp. V.2

DOI

dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.14egn2n6pg5d/v2

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.14egn2n6pg5d/v2>

External link: <http://quantitative PCR>

Protocol Citation: Sterling R Butler, Stephanie Rosales 2024. qPCR assay for *Aquarickettsia* spp.. **protocols.io** <https://dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.14egn2n6pg5d/v2> Version created by **Ana M Palacio-Castro**

**Manuscript citation:**

J Grace Klinges, Shalvi H Patel, William C Duke, Erinn M Muller, Rebecca L Vega Thurber, Phosphate enrichment induces increased dominance of the parasite *Aquarickettsia* in the coral *Acropora cervicornis*, *FEMS Microbiology Ecology*, Volume 98, Issue 2, February 2022, fiac013, <https://doi.org/10.1093/femsec/fiac013>

Palacio-Castro, A.M., Dennison, C.E., Rosales, S.M. *et al.* Variation in susceptibility among three Caribbean coral species and their algal symbionts indicates the threatened staghorn coral, *Acropora cervicornis*, is particularly susceptible to elevated nutrients and heat stress. *Coral Reefs* **40**, 1601–1613 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00338-021-02159-x>

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Protocol status: Working

We use this protocol and it's working

Created: February 16, 2023

Last Modified: March 02, 2024

Protocol Integer ID: 77144

Keywords: aquarickettsia spp, qpcr for the quantification, qpcr, putative parasite

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Abstract

qPCR for the quantification of *Aquarickettsia* spp. (Klinges et al., 2022) a putative parasite found in the coral *A. cervicornis*. This protocol has been altered by incorporating a recently published *A. cervicornis* CAM control gene (Palacio-Castro et al., 2021) targeted to detect differences across *A. cervicornis* genotypes because it is a single-copy gene in *A. cervicornis*.



Guidelines

- PrimeTime MM - (keep in -20 for long storage)
- Forward coral host primer (Acropora) at 10 uM (keep in -20 for long storage) - Primer sequences from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00338-021-02159-x>
- Reverse coral host primer (Acropora) at 10 uM (keep in -20 for long storage) - Primer sequences from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00338-021-02159-x>
- Forward Aquarickettsia primer at 10 uM (keep in -20 for long storage) - Primer sequences from
- Reverse Aquarickettsia primer at 10 uM (keep in -20 for long storage) - Primer sequences from

Materials

Reagents

1. Primers of *tlc1* gene of *A. rohwerii*

- 10 µM Forward : 5' - AGGAGTTTGGAAAGCACAAG - 3',
- 10 µM Reverse : 5' - GCTACCAAATAACATAGCAGAC - 3'
- 10 µM Probe : TGCAAACCTTATACTGGCCTTGCAAGT

2. Primers of Calmodulin (CaM) in the Caribbean *Acropora* spp. (adpated from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00338-021-02159-x>)

- 10 µM forward: 5' - GGTTATTTACAAGCCCAACCAAG - 3',
- 10 µM Reverse: 5' - ACAGAAGGGCCACTGAAATAG - 3'
- 10 µM Probe : ACTCCAGATTTCAAGTCTGATGCCCT

3. PrimeTimeTM Gene Expression Master Mix (IDT **1055770**)

4. DNase/RNase free water/PCR grade water

5. Optical 8-cap strips for 0.2 ml tubes (Biorad TCS0803)

6. white PCR Plate (Biorad MLL9651)

7. Sterile 1.5 mL screw-top microcentrifuge tubes


8. Sterile filter pipette tips

Equipment

- Quantitative PCR instrument
- Microcentrifuge and/or reagent reservoir
- Vortex
- Laminar flow hood for PCR setup

Troubleshooting

Prepare for qPCR

- 1
 - Remove PCR reagents from freezer and allow reagents to thaw on ice or at room temperature.
 - Wipe down PCR hood with 10% bleach and ethanol.
 - Place consumables such as tubes, plates, plate sealers, and water in PCR hood and turn on UV light for  00:20:00
 - Once everything is thawed vortex PCR reagents, spin them down, and place them on ice.
 - Keep reagents cool or on ice during the duration of the protocol.

20m

Prepare PCR master mix

- 2 Prepare enough master mix for the number of reactions needed. Each combination of sample and target (gene) should be run at least in duplicates. Add a few reactions to your calculations to account for pipetting errors.

***A. cervicornis* (CAM) master mix**

	A	B	C
	Component	Volume per Rxn	x rxn + 10%
	PCR water	2.4 uL	
	PrimeTime MM	5 uL	
	Forward primer (10 uM)	0.2 uL	
	Reverse primer (10 uM)	0.2 uL	
	Probe (10 uM)	0.2 uL	
	Total MM volume per reaction	8 uL	

***A. rohwerii* (tlc1) master mix**



	A	B	C
	Component	Volume per Rxn	x rxn + 10%
	PCR water	2.4 uL	
	PrimeTime MM	5 uL	
	Forward primer (10 uM)	0.2 uL	
	Reverse primer (10 uM)	0.2 uL	
	Probe (10 uM)	0.2 uL	
	Total MM volume per reaction	8 uL	

- Combine all the PCR master-mix reagents in a microcentrifuge tube
- Mix gently and spin down to collect mixture and remove bubbles

Setup the qPCR plate

- 3
 - Add 8 uL of master mix to each well. Aiming for the bottom of the well will help to visualize what wells had master mix and DNA added.
 - Add DNA to each well (2 uL). Aiming for the top of the well will help to visualize what wells had master mix and DNA added.
 - Close the plate with optical clear caps or seals
 - Spin down the plate to mix the DNA and mastermix.
 - Place in the qPCR machine and start the machine using the specified settings.

qPCR thermocycler program settings

- 4 Select SYBER green and long run

	A	B	C	D
	Procedure	Temperature	Time	Cycle
	Initial denaturation	95 C	3 min	1
	Denaturation	95 C	15 sec	40
	Annealing	60 C	1 min	40
	Extension	72 C	30 sec	40

