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Authors: Nakajima, Keisuke, Nakajima, Taeko, and Yaoita, Yoshio

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Generation of Albino *Cynops pyrrhogaster* by Genomic Editing of the *tyrosinase* Gene

Keisuke Nakajima*, Taeko Nakajima, and Yoshio Yaoita

Division of Embryology and Genetics, Institute for Amphibian Biology, Graduate School of Science, Hiroshima University, 1-3-1, Kagamiyama, Higashihiroshima, Hiroshima 739-8526, Japan

Albino animals are useful for in situ hybridization experiments that demonstrate gene expression in embryos and organs, for the immunological rejection of skin grafts transplanted to host animals, and to identify tissues with regenerative ability during limbs and retina regeneration processes. *Cynops pyrrhogaster* has extensive regenerating capacities. To facilitate regenerative research, in the present study, we produced albino *C. pyrrhogaster* using genomic editing. The DNA fragment containing part of the *tyrosinase* gene from *C. pyrrhogaster* was amplified using degenerate primers corresponding to evolutionarily conserved nucleotide sequences among several species, and the nucleotide sequence was determined. We designed a transcription activator-like effector nuclease (TALEN) that targets a candidate of the *C. pyrrhogaster tyrosinase* gene. Fertilized eggs were injected with TALEN mRNA, and albinos of *C. pyrrhogaster* were obtained. The results of the present study demonstrated that TALEN can be used effectively for genomic editing in *C. pyrrhogaster* and that the candidates of the *tyrosinase* gene that were cloned by us are essential for melanin synthesis. The albino newts created in the present study can be used as versatile experimental material.

Key words: *Cynops pyrrhogaster*, *tyrosinase*, TALENs, genomic editing, targeted gene knockout, albino phenotype

INTRODUCTION

The albino phenotype is important and useful for many experiments including in situ hybridization and transplantation of nuclei, skin, and organs. John Bertrand Gurdon transplanted the nuclei from a single tail-bud albino embryo of *Xenopus laevis* into u.v.-enucleated unfertilized eggs of the wild-type female and produced 30 frogs, which were all female and albino. These frogs were the first vertebrate clones generated using nuclear transplantation techniques. This study also indicated that the nuclei of a tail-bud embryo contain the genetic information that is necessary to form all types of differentiated somatic cells in the adult frogs (Gurdon, 1962, 1977). Recently, the following albino amphibians have been developed: *Xenopus tropicalis* (Ishibashi et al., 2012; Nakajima et al., 2012), *Xenopus laevis* (Nakajima and Yaoita, 2015b; Suzuki et al., 2013) and *Pleurodeles waltl* (Hayashi et al., 2014). These albinos were produced by modifying the *tyrosinase* gene using zinc-finger nucleases or transcription activator-like effector nucleases (TALENs). Tyrosinase is essential for melanin biosynthesis, and it converts tyrosine to dopaquinone in the initial step of the melanin synthesis pathway.

Urodeles are recognized for the regenerative ability of their limbs, tail, brain, and heart. In particular, *Cynops pyrrhogaster*, one of the most abundant species of newts in

Japan, effectively regenerates limbs (Asahina et al., 1999; Kato et al., 2003; Shimizu-Nishikawa et al., 2001), jaw (Kurosaka et al., 2008), lenses (Inoue et al., 2012; Okamoto et al., 1998; Okamoto et al., 2004), and retinas (Fujisawa, 1981; Kaneko and Saito, 1992; Nakamura et al., 2014). Moreover, experimental techniques such as transgenesis have been established in *C. pyrrhogaster* (Casco-Robles et al., 2011).

In the present study, we showed that albino *C. pyrrhogaster* can be generated by modifying a tentative *tyrosinase* gene that was obtained by gene amplification using a pair of primers corresponding to the evolutionary conserved nucleotide sequences of *tyrosinase* genes. These albino newts represent good material for studies of regeneration, transplantation, and pigmentation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Animals

Cynops pyrrhogaster newts were caught in the field and raised in the laboratory for more than two years at 20–24°C. The ovulation and breeding of embryos were performed as previously described (Casco-Robles et al., 2011). All of the newts were maintained and used following the guidelines established by Hiroshima University for the care and use of experimental animals.

Cloning of the *C. pyrrhogaster tyrosinase* gene

A tail tip was placed in 800 µl 50 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.4) containing 1 mM CaCl₂. After the addition of 50 µl 10% SDS and 30 µl 10 mg/ml proteinase K, the mixture was incubated at 65°C for several hours. The genomic DNA was extracted using phenol and chloroform. An amount of 1 µg DNA was used as a substrate in polymerase chain reaction (PCR) amplification by a three-step protocol [(95°C, 30 s; 65°C, 30 s; 72°C, 30 s) × 40]; the degenerate primers

* Corresponding author. Tel. : +81-82-424-4495;

Fax : +81-82-424-0739;

E-mail: kei@hiroshima-u.ac.jp

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(10 μ M of 5'-GGMGAYGRKCTCYCTGTGGNSAG-3' and 5'-AAARSMHGGDGGCTTCRTGRGCAA-3') (Supplementary Figure S1 online) and TaKaRa *Ex Taq* Hot Start Version (TaKaRa) were used in the reaction. The nucleotide sequence of the amplified DNA fragment was determined to clone the full-length cDNA sequence using the 5' and 3' rapid amplification of cDNA ends (Frohman et al., 1988). The full-length cDNAs were cloned by PCR using a pair

of primers, full-lengthF and full-lengthR, that were located upstream and downstream of the coding region, respectively (Supplementary Figure S1 online).

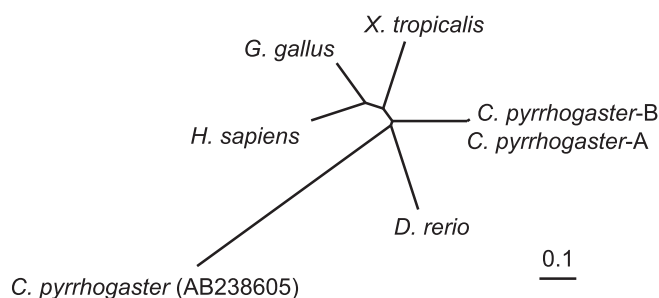
TALEN construction

DNA-binding domains were designed to target the sequences 5'-CGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGA-3' and 5'-CCCGGGACGCG-

A

<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> -A	MMVWGLAVCVLLWALPCRAQFRPCASSEALLSKECCPVWDGDSGPCQLSGRGSQAEVVSQAPNGPQFPFSDDVDDREDWPLVFNRTCHCVPPFSGFG	100
<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> -B	MMVWGLAVCVLLWALPCRAQFRPCASSEALLSKECCPVWDGDSGPCQLSGRGSQAEVVSQAPNGPQFPFSDDVDDREDWPLVFNRTCHCVPPFSGFG	100
<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> (AB238605)	MMVWGLAVCVLLWALPCRAQFRPCASSEALLSKECCPVWDGDSGPCQLSGRGSQAEVVSQAPNGPQFPFSDDVDDREDWPLVFNRTCHCVPPFSGFG	100
<i>X. tropicalis</i>	MMVWGLAVCVLLWALPCRAQFRPCASSEALLSKECCPVWDGDSGPCQLSGRGSQAEVVSQAPNGPQFPFSDDVDDREDWPLVFNRTCHCVPPFSGFG	99
<i>D. rerio</i>	MSLHLLFFFLQFSSSLQDFPRVCTSPVQLSKRCPPWPDGSGVCGVSGRGCQDILVSDLPNGPQYHSGVDDRERWPLVFNRTCHCVPPFSGFG	100
<i>G. gallus</i>	MFLFAMGLLLVILQSTGDFPRVCANTQSLRKKECCPPWDGDTGTCGERSNRGTQRIILLQAPLGPQFPFSDDVDDREDWPLVFNRTCHCVPPFSGFG	99
<i>H. sapiens</i>	MLLAVLYQLLWSFQTSAGHPRACVSSKNLMEKECCPVWDGDSGPCQLSGRGSQAEVVSQAPNGPQFPFSDDVDDREDWPLVFNRTCHCVPPFSGFG	99
<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> -A	CGCEAFGRWGPDCAESRVQVRKSITQLSATESARLLAYLNLAKRNTNPDIYSTGTVEQMDNGSRPLFADISYDVFVWHYASRDSWPAEGEEETVV	200
<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> -B	CGCEAFGRWGPDCAESRVQVRKSITQLSATESARLLAYLNLAKRNTNPDIYSTGTVEQMDNGSRPLFADISYDVFVWHYASRDSWPAEGEEETVV	200
<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> (AB238605)	CGCEAFGRWGPDCAESRVQVRKSITQLSATESARLLAYLNLAKRNTNPDIYSTGTVEQMDNGSRPLFADISYDVFVWHYASRDSWPAEGEEETVV	200
<i>X. tropicalis</i>	CGCEAFGRWGPDCAESRVQVRKSITQLSATESARLLAYLNLAKRNTNPDIYSTGTVEQMDNGSRPLFADISYDVFVWHYASRDSWPAEGEEETVV	111
<i>D. rerio</i>	CADCKFGFRGPNCTERRIMIRKIFRMSSAEKSFVAYLNLAHITSDIYVITGTVAQMNNGSNPMFADINVDLFVMMHYASRDVFI-----GDAI	194
<i>G. gallus</i>	CCECKFGFFGANCARRESVRRNIFQLSTTERORFISYLNLAHITSDIYVITGTVAQMNNGSNPMFADINVDLFVMMHYASRDVFI-----GDAI	196
<i>H. sapiens</i>	CCECKFGFFGANCARRESVRRNIFQLSTTERORFISYLNLAHITSDIYVITGTVAQMNNGSNPMFADINVDLFVMMHYASRDVFI-----GDAI	194
<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> -A	WSNIDFAHEAPAFLPWHRYFLFWERELQKVTDENFTIPYDWDRDA--QGCEVCTDQLMGARHPTVAGLLSPASFSSWQIICSKAE--EYNNLRILCNGT	298
<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> -B	WSNIDFAHEAPAFLPWHRYFLFWERELQKVTDENFTIPYDWDRDA--QGCEVCTDQLMGARHPTVAGLLSPASFSSWQIICSKAE--EYNNLRILCNGT	298
<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> (AB238605)	WSNIDFAHEAPAFLPWHRYFLFWERELQKVTDENFTIPYDWDRDA--QGCEVCTDQLMGARHPTVAGLLSPASFSSWQIICSKAE--EYNNLRILCNGT	298
<i>X. tropicalis</i>	WSNIDFAHEAPAFLPWHRYFLFWERELQKVTDENFTIPYDWDRDA--QGCEVCTDQLMGARHPTVAGLLSPASFSSWQIICSKAE--EYNNLRILCNGT	298
<i>D. rerio</i>	WADIDFAHEAPAFLPWHRYFLFWERELQKVTDENFTIPYDWDRDA--QGCEVCTDQLMGARHPTVAGLLSPASFSSWQIICSKAE--EYNNLRILCNGT	294
<i>G. gallus</i>	WRDIDFAHEAPAFLPWHRYFLFWERELQKVTDENFTIPYDWDRDA--QGCEVCTDQLMGARHPTVAGLLSPASFSSWQIICSKAE--EYNNLRILCNGT	292
<i>H. sapiens</i>	WRDIDFAHEAPAFLPWHRYFLFWERELQKVTDENFTIPYDWDRDA--QGCEVCTDQLMGARHPTVAGLLSPASFSSWQIICSKAE--EYNNLRILCNGT	292
<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> -A	QEGPLVRNPGNHDKSRVQLPTSEEEFCVSLTOYDTEPMDRSANLSFRNTLEGFANPSTGIANRSISALHNSLHVFMNGSMSSVQGSANDPFIHHAFF	398
<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> -B	QEGPLVRNPGNHDKSRVQLPTSEEEFCVSLTOYDTEPMDRSANLSFRNTLEGFANPSTGIANRSISALHNSLHVFMNGSMSSVQGSANDPFIHHAFF	398
<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> (AB238605)	QEGPLVRNPGNHDKSRVQLPTSEEEFCVSLTOYDTEPMDRSANLSFRNTLEGFANPSTGIANRSISALHNSLHVFMNGSMSSVQGSANDPFIHHAFF	398
<i>X. tropicalis</i>	QEGPLVRNPGNHDKSRVQLPTSEEEFCVSLTOYDTEPMDRSANLSFRNTLEGFANPSTGIANRSISALHNSLHVFMNGSMSSVQGSANDPFIHHAFF	398
<i>D. rerio</i>	PEGPLLRNPGNHDKSRVQLPTSEEEFCVSLTOYDTEPMDRSANLSFRNTLEGFANPSTGIANRSISALHNSLHVFMNGSMSSVQGSANDPFIHHAFF	394
<i>G. gallus</i>	SEGRILRNPGNHDKSRVQLPTSEEEFCVSLTOYDTEPMDRSANLSFRNTLEGFANPSTGIANRSISALHNSLHVFMNGSMSSVQGSANDPFIHHAFF	392
<i>H. sapiens</i>	PEGPLLRNPGNHDKSRVQLPTSEEEFCVSLTOYDTEPMDRSANLSFRNTLEGFANPSTGIANRSISALHNSLHVFMNGSMSSVQGSANDPFIHHAFF	392
<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> -A	VDSIFEQWLRHQPLLDVYPEASAPIGHNREYFMVPIPLTTNGEYFLPSRDLGYEYELVEPAPGTFQDFLEPYLEQASRIWQWLVAAALVGGITAVI	498
<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> -B	VDSIFEQWLRHQPLLDVYPEASAPIGHNREYFMVPIPLTTNGEYFLPSRDLGYEYELVEPAPGTFQDFLEPYLEQASRIWQWLVAAALVGGITAVI	498
<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> (AB238605)	VDSIFEQWLRHQPLLDVYPEASAPIGHNREYFMVPIPLTTNGEYFLPSRDLGYEYELVEPAPGTFQDFLEPYLEQASRIWQWLVAAALVGGITAVI	498
<i>X. tropicalis</i>	VDSIFEQWLRHQPLLDVYPEASAPIGHNREYFMVPIPLTTNGEYFLPSRDLGYEYELVEPAPGTFQDFLEPYLEQASRIWQWLVAAALVGGITAVI	490
<i>D. rerio</i>	VDSIFEQWLRHQPLLDVYPEASAPIGHNREYFMVPIPLTTNGEYFLPSRDLGYEYELVEPAPGTFQDFLEPYLEQASRIWQWLVAAALVGGITAVI	494
<i>G. gallus</i>	VDSIFEQWLRHQPLLDVYPEASAPIGHNREYFMVPIPLTTNGEYFLPSRDLGYEYELVEPAPGTFQDFLEPYLEQASRIWQWLVAAALVGGITAVI	492
<i>H. sapiens</i>	VDSIFEQWLRHQPLLDVYPEASAPIGHNREYFMVPIPLTTNGEYFLPSRDLGYEYELVEPAPGTFQDFLEPYLEQASRIWQWLVAAALVGGITAVI	492
<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> -A	ASLVALVCRKRKQRTN--PEERQPLMEAEYQST--YQSGL	536
<i>C. pyrrhogaster</i> -B	ASLVALVCRKRKQRTN--PEERQPLMEAEYQST--YQSGL	536
<i>X. tropicalis</i>	ATIMGLACRRKRKFP--SEETQPLMEAEYQST--YQSGL	527
<i>D. rerio</i>	ASLFAVACRRKRKLSYGEROPLNLSSEEGSASYQTLL	535
<i>G. gallus</i>	SGLI--LACRRKRKFP--SPEIQPLMEAEYQST--YQSGL	529
<i>H. sapiens</i>	AGLVSLLCRKRKQRTN--PEERQPLMEAEYQST--YQSGL	529

B



C

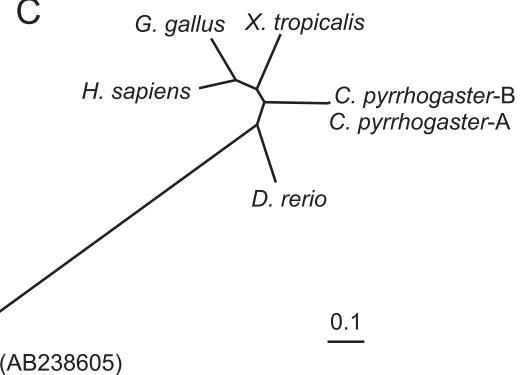
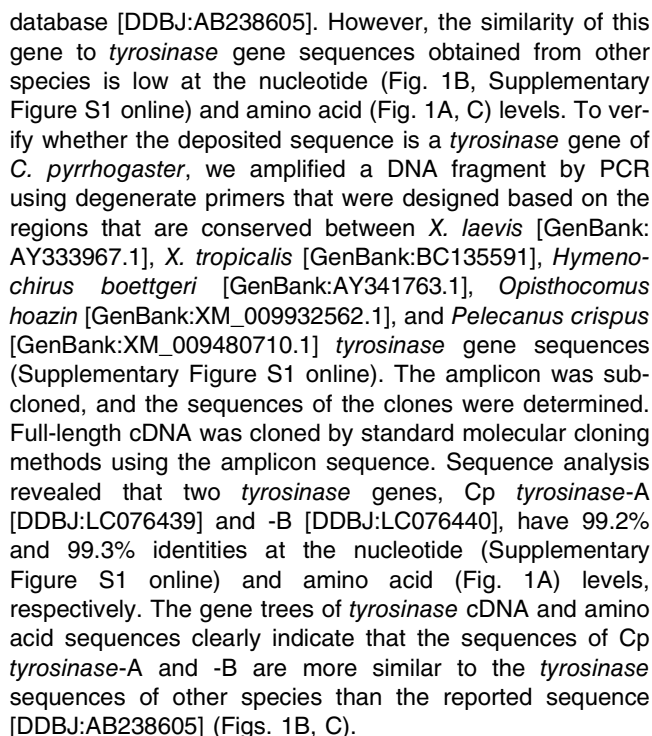


Fig. 1. Comparison of tyrosinase sequences. **(A)** Alignment of amino acid sequences that were deduced from the nucleotide sequences of *Cynops pyrrhogaster* tyrosinase-A [DDBJ:LC076439] and -B [DDBJ:LC076440], *C. pyrrhogaster* tyrosinase [DDBJ:AB238605], *Xenopus tropicalis* tyrosinase [GenBank:BC135591], *Danio rerio* tyrosinase [JPO:E0128319], *Gallus gallus* tyrosinase [DDBJ:D88349.1], and *Homo sapiens* tyrosinase [GenBank:M27160.1]. Shaded boxes indicate amino acids that are the same as those in *C. pyrrhogaster* tyrosinase-A. Cp-Tyr-TALEN target sites are denoted by solid bars. **(B, C)** Phylogenetic trees of tyrosinase cDNA **(B)** and amino acid sequences **(C)**. Phylogenetic relationships were deduced using the neighbor-joining method. The scale bar indicates the number of nucleotide or amino acid substitutions per site.



To examine whether Cp *tyrosinase*-A and -B are essential for melanin synthesis, we designed TALENs (designated Cp-Tyr-TALENs) that targeted the common region of Cp *tyrosinase*-A and -B (Fig. 2, Supplementary Figure S1 online). Fertilized eggs were injected with mRNA that was synthesized using Cp-Tyr-TALENs. Genomic DNA was purified from one 7-d-old larva and subjected to mutation analysis. All eight clones harbored mutations. Seven of eight clones contained an out-of-frame mutation, and one clone had an in-frame mutation (Fig. 2). Mutation analysis using one 32-d-old larva showed that three of twelve clones contained a mutation in the target sites (25%); namely, a large deletion of 310 base pairs (bp) and an insertion of 67 bp in one clone, a 9-bp deletion and 4-bp insertion in another clone, and a 6-bp deletion in the third. Three newts developed from embryos that had been injected with Cp-Tyr-TALEN-mRNAs at the one cell stage, and two were apparent albinos (Figs. 3B and C). Only one newt survived from embryos had been injected at the two-cell stage into both blastomeres, and displayed a similar phenotype (Fig. 3D). The mutation types were determined in these apparent albino newts using genomic DNA prepared from tail tips. Among the clones, 92% (#3) and 100% (#4) had a mutation in the target sites of Cp-Tyr-TALEN; however, only 4/13 (#3) and 6/11 (#4) of the mutations were out-of-frame (Fig. 4). Their albino phenotype suggests that the *tyrosinase* function was impaired by the in-frame mutations, because almost all genes should be non-functional in pigment cells. The spacer sequence between TALEN target sites encodes

evolutionarily conserved amino acid sequences (LFVW) among *C. pyrrhogaster*, *X. tropicalis*, *Danio rerio*, *Gallus gallus*, and *Homo sapiens* (Fig. 1), suggesting the important function of this region. It is also possible that almost all skin melanophores have out-of-frame mutations, whereas other cells have in-frame and out-of-frame mutations. The mutation rate and type were variable among skin samples and not correlated to the level of skin pigmentation, even if they

	TALEN-L	TALEN-R	
	CTTCGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGACCTCTTTGTCTGGATTCTACTACTACGCGTCCCGGGACTCA	WT	
	CTTCGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGACCTCTTTGTCTGGATTCTACTACTACGCGTCCCGGGACTCA	WT (1/13)	
	CTTCGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGACCTCT-----TTCTACTACTACGCGTCCCGGGACTCA	$\Delta 9$ (6/13)	
#3	CTTCGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGAC-----ACCTGGATTCTACTACTACGCGTCCCGGGACTCA	$\Delta 9+2$ (4/13)	
	CTTCGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGAC-----CTGGATTCTACTACTACGCGTCCCGGGACTCA	$\Delta 9$ (1/13)	
	CTTCGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGACCTC-----CGGATTCTACTACTACGCGTCCCGGGACTCA	$\Delta 7+1$ (1/13)	
	CTTCGCCGATATCAG-----TCTACTACTACGCGTCCCGGGACTCA	$\Delta 24$ (4/11)	
	CTTCGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGAC-----TTCCTACTACTACGCGTCCCGGGACTCA	$\Delta 13$ (3/11)	
	CTTCGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGAC-----TCTACTACTACGCGTCCCGGGACTCA	$\Delta 13$ (1/11)	
#4	CTTCGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGCTCTACGACCTCTGGATTCTACTACTACGCGTCCCGGGACTCA	$\Delta 10+11$ (1/11)	
	CTTCGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGACCTCT-----TTCCTACTACTACGCGTCCCGGGACTCA	$\Delta 9$ (1/11)	
	-----CGAGCCCTTCATGTCTGGATTCTACTACTACGAAATCCAGGACTCG	$\Delta 297+46$ (1/11)	
	F A D I S V Y D L F V W I H Y Y A S R D S		

Fig. 4. Mutational analysis of the albino newts. The target DNA fragment was amplified using genomic DNA samples that were purified from the tail tip of two albino newts (Figs. 3B, C) (#3 and #4) and recloned for sequence determination. The alignment is labeled as described in the Fig. 2 legend.

#0 [A (5/7)]	CCGGGAGGAC	TGGCCCTCGTCTTCTACAACCGACCTGCCACTGCGTGCCGCCCTTCAG	60
#0 [B (2/7)]	CCGGGAGGAC	TGGCCCTCGTCTTCTACAACCGACCTGCCACTGCGTGCCGCCCTTCAG	60
#1 [B (8/8)]	CCGGGAGGAC	TGGCCCTCGTCTTCTACAACCGACCTGCCACTGCGTGCCGCCCTTCAG	60
#2 [C (9/11)]	CCGGGAAGAT	TGGCCCTCGTCTTCTACAACCGACCTGCCACTGCGTGCCGCCCTTCAG	60
#2 [B (2/11)]	CCGGGAGGAC	TGGCCCTCGTCTTCTACAACCGACCTGCCACTGCGTGCCGCCCTTCAG	60
#3 [A (13/13)]	CCGGGAGGAC	TGGCCCTCGTCTTCTACAACCGACCTGCCACTGCGTGCCGCCCTTCAG	60
#4 [A (10/10)]	CCGGGAGGAC	TGGCCCTCGTCTTCTACAACCGACCTGCCACTGCGTGCCGCCCTTCAG	60
#0 [A]	CGGCTTCCAGTGCGGGGAGTGCGCCTT	CGGCGCTGGGGTCCGGACTGCGCGGAGTCGCG	120
#0 [B]	CGGCTTCCAGTGCGGGGAGTGCGCCTT	CGGCGCTGGGGTCCGGACTGCGCGGAGTCGCG	120
#1 [B]	CGGCTTCCAGTGCGGGGAGTGCGCCTT	CGGCGCTGGGGTCCGGACTGCGCGGAGTCGCG	120
#2 [C]	CGGCTTCCAGTGCGGGGAGTGCGCCTT	CGGCGCTGGGGTCCGGACTGCGCGGAGTCGCG	120
#2 [B]	CGGCTTCCAGTGCGGGGAGTGCGCCTT	CGGCGCTGGGGTCCGGACTGCGCGGAGTCGCG	120
#3 [A]	CGGCTTCCAGTGCGGGGAGTGCGCCTT	CGGCGCTGGGGTCCGGACTGCGCGGAGTCGCG	120
#4 [A]	CGGCTTCCAGTGCGGGGAGTGCGCCTT	CGGCGCTGGGGTCCGGACTGCGCGGAGTCGCG	120
#0 [A]	CGTGCAAGGTGCGCAAGAGAT	CACCTACGCTACAGCGCCACCGAGAGCGCCGACTCCTCGC	180
#0 [B]	CGTGCAAGGTGCGCAAGAGAT	CACCTACGCTACAGCGCCACCGAGAGCGCCGACTCCTCGC	180
#1 [B]	CGTGCAAGGTGCGCAAGAGAT	CACCTACGCTACAGCGCCACCGAGAGCGCCGACTCCTCGC	180
#2 [C]	CGTGCAAGGTGCGCAAGAGAT	CACCTACGCTACAGCGCCACCGAGAGCGCCGACTCCTCGC	180
#2 [B]	CGTGCAAGGTGCGCAAGAGAT	CACCTACGCTACAGCGCCACCGAGAGCGCCGACTCCTCGC	180
#3 [A]	CGTGCAAGGTGCGCAAGAGAT	CACCTACGCTACAGCGCCACCGAGAGCGCCGACTCCTCGC	180
#4 [A]	CGTGCAAGGTGCGCAAGAGAT	CACCTACGCTACAGCGCCACCGAGAGCGCCGACTCCTCGC	180
#0 [A]	CTACCTGAACCTGGCCAAACGCACCACCAACCCCG	ACTACGTGATCTCCACTGGGACCTA	240
#0 [B]	CTACCTGAACCTGGCCAAACGCACCACCAACCCCG	ACTACGTGATCTCCACTGGGACCTA	240
#1 [B]	CTACCTGAACCTGGCCAAACGCACCACCAACCCCG	ACTACGTGATCTCCACTGGGACCTA	240
#2 [C]	CTACCTGAACCTGGCCAAACGCACCACCAACCCCG	ACTACGTGATCTCCACTGGGACCTA	240
#2 [B]	CTACCTGAACCTGGCCAAACGCACCACCAACCCCG	ACTACGTGATCTCCACTGGGACCTA	240
#3 [A]	CTACCTGAACCTGGCCAAACGCACCACCAACCCCG	ACTACGTGATCTCCACTGGGACCTA	240
#4 [A]	CTACCTGAACCTGGCCAAACGCACCACCAACCCCG	ACTACGTGATCTCCACTGGGACCTA	240
#0 [A]	CGAGCAGATGGACAAACGGGTCCCGGCG	CGCTCTTCGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGA	294
#0 [B]	CGAGCAGATGGACAAACGGGTCCCGGCG	CGCTCTTCGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGA	294
#1 [B]	CGAGCAGATGGACAAACGGGTCCCGGCG	CGCTCTTCGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGA	294
#2 [C]	CGAGCAGATGGACAAACGGGTCCCGGCG	CGCTCTTCGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGA	294
#2 [B]	CGAGCAGATGGACAAACGGGTCCCGGCG	CGCTCTTCGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGA	294
#3 [A]	CGAGCAGATGGACAAACGGGTCCCGGCG	CGCTCTTCGCCGATATCAGCGTCTACGA	294
#4 [A]	CGAGCAGATGGACAAACGGGTCCCGGCG	CGCTCTTCGCCGATATCAG	295

Fig. 6. Alignment of the *tyrosinase* sequences obtained from each individual. The target DNA fragment was amplified using genomic DNA that was purified from a wild-type adult newt (#0), Cp-Tyr-TALEN-mRNA-injected 7-day-old (#1) and 32-day-old (#2) embryos, and Cp-Tyr-TALEN-mRNA-injected albino newts (#3, #4). Sequences upstream of the Cp-Tyr-TALEN-binding site are compared, and divergent nucleotides are shaded. The three allotypes are denoted as A (*Cynops pyrrhogaster tyrosinase*-A), B (*C. pyrrhogaster tyrosinase*-B) and C. The ratio of the number of the indicated sequence to the total number of sequences in each individual is shown in parentheses. Mutations with a large deletion ($\Delta 310 + 67$ in #2 and $\Delta 297 + 46$ in #4) are not counted.

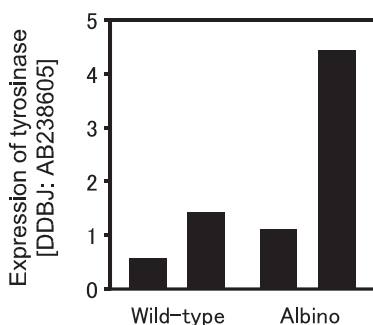


Fig. 5. Expression of tyrosinase [DDBJ: AB238605]. Expression levels of tyrosinase [DDBJ:AB238605] in the tail tips of two wild-type and two albino newts were determined by qPCR and are shown in arbitrary units.

were excised from a single chimeric F0 that had been injected with anti-tyrosinase TALEN mRNAs (Nakajima et al., 2012).

We examined the expression level and sequence (802 bp) of *C. pyrrhogaster tyrosinase* [DDBJ:AB238605] mRNA to know whether they are expressed without mutations even after the injection of the Cp-Tyr-TALEN-mRNAs. The expression levels in two albino newts were comparable to those of two wild-type newts (Fig. 5). The nucleotide sequence comparison showed more than 99% identity (99.1~99.6%) with the submitted sequence of *C. pyrrhogaster tyrosinase* [DDBJ:AB238605] in six clones obtained from wild-type newts and sixteen clones from albino newts (data not shown). Furthermore, *C. pyrrhogaster tyrosinase* [DDBJ:AB238605] was searched for Cp-Tyr-TALEN target sites using the left and right recognition sequences 5'-CRC-CRATATCARCCTCTACRA-3' and 5'-CCCRRRACRCR-TARTARTRA-3' (where R is A or G), respectively, because a TALEN DNA binding repeat that recognizes the nucleotide G also binds to the nucleotide A. There were no sequences with 14 or fewer mismatched nucleotides and 10 to 30 spacer nucleotides.

To determine whether Cp *tyrosinase*-A and -B are paralogs or allotypes, sequences upstream of the Cp-Tyr-TALEN-binding site were compared (Fig. 6). Three types of sequence were observed, and each individual had one or two sequence types; this finding strongly implies that the differences between Cp *tyrosinase* sequences can be ascribed to allotypes.

These results demonstrated that the Cp *tyrosinase*-A and -B genes are necessary for melanin production and that the TALEN can be used effectively in *C. pyrrhogaster*. We hope that the albino form of *C. pyrrhogaster* will contribute to newt studies, including regeneration, transplantation, and pigmentation experiments.

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