**DISENTANGLING THE HISTORICAL BIOGEOGRAPHY OF THE SUBCOSMOPOLITAN GENUS *Cladonia* (Cladoniaceae, Lecanorales)**

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*Cladonia* comprises 475 speciesandis the most diverse genus within Cladoniaceae, distributed in all continents. Species in this genus have a great ecological relevance and form one of the most important groups of terricolous lichens, making up a significant element of the vegetation of diverse biomes. In order to estimate the origin, diversification and biogeographical pattern of *Cladonia,* we used the most extensive phylogeny to date, based on five nuclear loci (ITS rSNA, IGS rDNA, *rpb2, rpb1, ef1a*). We inferred lineage divergence times using Bayesian relaxed clock models calibrated with secondary age estimates derived from a more inclusive fossil-calibrated analysis. Bayesian episodic birth-death models and ancestral area reconstructions were used to infer the tempo and mode of lineage diversification. Our results indicate that *Cladonia* arose during the Eocene in Asia, and most of the major lineages diverged during the Miocene. Both terrestrial land bridges and long-distance dispersal explain the current subcosmopolitan distribution of this genus. Our results suggest that geological and paleoclimatic events played a role in *Cladonia* time-heterogeneous diversification rates.

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