

# **Species-specific hydrocarbon profiles of South African fig wasp communities (Hymenoptera: Chalcidoidea)**

by

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## Abstract

Cuticular hydrocarbon (CHC) profiles of insects play roles in behavioural interactions within and between species, encompassing species-, colony- and mate-recognition. CHCs are largely genetically determined and are thus unique to each species, making them useful in chemotaxonomy. However, species exhibit intra-species variation in their CHC profile which can be the result of both intra-species genetic variation as well as environmental influences such as habitat effects, colony effects, diet, host switching, as well as adsorption of CHCs from other insects. Studies have found that the CHC profiles of a specific insect species will often exhibit variations between regions as well as the species of host the insect is associated with. Therefore, an ideal system to investigate the effects of genetic population structure and environment on the CHC profiles of insects is within the fig – fig wasp mutualism. Fig species occur in a wide variety of habitats and host a diverse complement of fig wasp species. We were therefore offered the opportunity to investigate a wide range of potential influences on fig wasp CHC profiles ranging from environmental to genetic effects. Firstly, through GC-MS we found that the CHC profiles of the fig wasps investigated are both species-specific and species-group-specific, with the species *Elisabethiella glumosae*, *Elisabethiella stuckenbergi* and *Ceratosolen capensis*, and two *Otitesella* species-groups (the Uluzi and Sesqui species-groups) separating out significantly. Consensus phylogenies (based on COI, Cytb and EF-1 $\alpha$ ) showed that within the galling fig wasp genus *Otitesella* there were multiple genetic lineages within a species-group which corresponds to species-level genetic variation, and that each genetic lineage was confined to a single host fig species. The CHC profiles reflected the genetic relationships between the two species-groups, and the CHC profiles within a species group could be differentiated by genetic lineage/host species. This indicated that although genetic lineage was mostly responsible for the observed variation in CHC profiles, factors associated with different host species also had an effect. Strong regional variation overriding both the influence of genetic lineage and factors associated with host species were observed in the CHC profiles of the fig wasps within a species-group. This regional variation in CHC profiles was also observed within two pollinating fig wasp species, *Elisabethiella stuckenbergi* and *Ceratosolen capensis*, which was not supported by population genetic data (COI and Cytb). In fact, very little genetic population structure was found within the pollinating species, even

though the pollinators were collected across South Africa. The lack of genetic structure in pollinating fig wasps can be the result of high gene flow caused by the large dispersal capability of pollinating fig wasps. Our results indicated that fig wasp CHC profiles have the potential to be used in chemotaxonomy and are possibly used as species and mate-recognition cues by the fig wasps. Furthermore, we found both a regional and associated host species effect on the CHC profile. We suggest that the observed regional effect in this study could be attributed to habitat differences and differences in fig wasp community between regions. Moreover, the effect host species had on the CHC profiles may be as a result of dietary differences between galls in different host species. A possible consequence of the observed regional/host species-associated effect on fig wasp CHC profiles is that it could lead to pre-mating isolation within fig wasp species, which could ultimately result in speciation. In addition, our results indicated that the interpretation of the variation in the fig wasp CHC profile was dependent on the scale of the analysis: on a broad, inter-species-level scale, fig wasp CHC profiles were species-specific; on a finer intra-species scale, variation in CHC profiles occurred between fig wasps collected from different regions; and on a within-region scale, variation in CHC profiles within species-groups occurred between genetic lineages/host species. Future studies should look at the application of CHCs in chemotaxonomic studies on the fig wasp phylogeny, as well as the effect of fig wasp community composition on fig wasp CHCs.

## Opsomming

Kutikulêre koolwaterstof (KK) profiele van insekte speel rolle in die gedragsinteraksies binne sowel as tussen spesies, en behels die herkenning van spesie- of kolonielidmaatskap asook potensiële maats. Kutikulêre koolwaterstowwe word meestal deur gene bepaal en is dus uniek vir elke spesie, wat dit handig maak vir chemotaksonomie. Spesies vertoon egter soms intraspesie variasie in hul KK profiele wat die gevolg kan wees van beide intraspesie genetiese variasie sowel as omgewingsinvloede soos habitat effekte, kolonie effekte, dieet, tussen-gasheer skuiwings, asook die adsorpsie van ander insekte se kutikulêre koolwaterstowwe. Studies het gevind dat die kutikulêre koolwaterstof profiele van 'n spesifieke insek spesie op 'n gereelde basis verskille vertoon tussen streke asook tussen die verskillende gasheer spesies waarmee die insek geassosieer is. Om hierdie redes is die vy – vy-wesp mutualisme 'n ideale sisteem om die uitwerking van genetiese populasie struktuur en omgewing op die KK profiele van insekte te ondersoek. Vy spesies kom in 'n wye verskeidenheid van habitatte voor en ondersteun 'n diverse groep vy-wesp spesies. Dit het ons die geleentheid gebied om 'n wye reeks moontlike invloede van vy-wesp KK profiele te ondersoek, van omgewings- tot genetiese invloede. Eerstens, deur die gebruik van GC-MS het ons gevind dat die KK profiele van die vy-wespe wat ondersoek was beide spesie-spesifiek en spesie-groep-spesifiek is, met die spesies *Elisabethiella glumosae*, *Elisabethiella stuckenbergi* en *Ceratosolen capensis*, asook twee *Otitesella* spesie-groepe (die Uluzi en Sesqui spesie-groepe) wat betekenisvol onderskei kon word. Konsensus filogenieë (gegrond op COI, Cytb en EF1-1 $\alpha$ ) het getoon dat daar in die gal-induserende vy-wesp genus *Otitesella* veelvuldige genetiese lyne binne die spesie-groepe voorgekom het ooreenstemmend met tussen-spesie genetiese variasie, en dat elke genetiese lyn beperk was tot 'n enkele gasheer vy spesie. Die KK profiele het die genetiese verhoudings tussen die twee spesie-groepe weerspieël, en die KK profiele binne 'n spesie-groep kon onderskei word op grond van hul genetiese lyn/gasheer spesie. Hierdie het getoon dat, alhoewel genetiese lyn meestal verantwoordelik was vir die waargeneemde variasie in KK profiele, faktore wat met verskille in gasheer spesies gepaard gaan ook 'n effek gehad het. Sterk streeks-verbonde variasie wat beide die invloed van genetiese lyn, én faktore wat met verskille in gasheer spesie gepaard gaan, oortref het, was waargeneem in die KK profiele van die vy-wespe binne 'n spesie-groep. Hierdie streeks-verbonde variasie in

KK profiele was ook waargeneem in twee bestuiwende vy-wespe, *Elisabethiella stuckenbergi* en *Ceratosolen capensis*, 'n resultaat wat nie ondersteun was deur die genetiese bevolkingsdata nie (COI en Cytb). In werklikheid was baie min genetiese bevolkings-struktuur opgespoor binne die bestuiwer spesies, selfs as was die bestuiwer spesies regoor Suid-Afrika ingesamel. Die tekort aan genetiese struktuur in die vy-wesp bestuiwers kan die gevolg wees van hoë geenvloei wat veroorsaak word deur die hoë verspreidingskapasiteit van bestuiwende vy-wespe. Die resultate toon aan dat vy-wesp KK profiele die potensiaal besit om in chemotaksonomie gebruik te word, en word moontlik deur vy-wespe gebruik as kenmerke vir die herkenning van spesie en potensiële maats. Verder was daar gevind dat daar beide 'n streekseffek en 'n effek geassosieer met gasheer spesie op KK profiele was. Ons stel voor dat die waargeneemde streekseffek in hierdie studie toegeskryf kan word aan verskille tussen habitate asook streeksverbonde verskille tussen vy-wesp gemeenskappe. Boonop kan die effek wat gasheer spesie op die KK profiele gehad het 'n gevolg wees van dieetverskille tussen die galle in verskillende gasheer spesies. 'n Moontlike gevolg van die waargeneemde streeks/gasheer-spesie-geassosieerde effek op vy-wesp KK profiele is dat dit moontlik kon lei tot voor-paring-isolasie binne vy-wesp spesies, wat uiteindelik spesiasie kon veroorsaak het. Daarbenewens wys ons resultate dat die interpretasie van die variasie in die vy-wesp KK profiel was afhanklik van die skaal van die analise: op 'n breë interspesie vlak was die vy-wesp KK profiele spesie-spesifiek; op 'n fyner intra-spesie vlak het variasie in KK profiele voorgekom tussen vy-wespe wat in verskillende streke ingesamel was; en op streeksvlak het variasie in die KK profiele binne spesie-groepe voorgekom tussen genetiese lyne/gasheer spesies. Toekomstige studies behoort te kyk na die toepassing van kutikulêre koolwaterstowwe in chemotaksonomiese studies van die vy-wesp filogenie, asook die effek wat vy-wesp gemeenskap samestelling het op vy-wesp kutikulêre koolwaterstowwe.

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## Chapter 1. **General introduction**

### **1.1. Introduction**

One of the most diverse groups of organisms on Earth are the insects. This diversity is particularly apparent for plant-feeding groups (Mitter *et al.*, 1988), and plant-insect interactions have been extensively investigated using phylogenetic approaches. Since the coevolution concept was first introduced (Ehrlich and Raven, 1964), studies were biased towards the search for strict, pairwise associations under the hypothesis of reciprocal adaptation (Brooks and Ferrao, 2005). The expectation of close congruence between host and host-dependent phylogenies has resulted in widespread testing to corroborate the conserved co-speciation predicted for many host-associate interactions, including the fig – fig wasp mutualism. Thus, numerous attempts have been made to match fig wasp phylogenies with those of their host trees to demonstrate close cospeciation between figs and fig wasps (Molbo *et al.*, 2003; Machado *et al.*, 2005; Marussich and Machado, 2007; Silvieus *et al.*, 2007; Jousselin *et al.*, 2008). Instead, these studies indicated substantial variation in phylogenetic correspondence among different fig wasp clades (Marussich and Machado, 2007) that suggested processes other than cospeciation must be taken into account in order to explain fig wasp diversification. Processes such as host switching and extinction are potential explanations for the mismatches between fig wasp and host tree phylogenies (Brooks and Ferrao, 2005; Marussich and Machado, 2007; Hoberg and Brooks, 2008; Nyman, 2010; Warren *et al.*, 2010). Clarifying the specific processes involved in fig – fig wasp evolution has been exacerbated by difficulties in constructing a clear phylogeny, particularly for *Ficus*. Additionally, the systematic relationships among fig wasp groups have still not been fully resolved (Rasplus *et al.*, 1998). Possible reasons for this difficulty are that different species of fig wasps may often have highly similar morphologies (Weiblen, 2002; Cook and Rasplus, 2003), and that genetic studies used to determine taxonomy often don't yield consistent phylogenies (e.g. Rasplus *et al.*, 1998 vs. Weiblen, 2002). An additional method in clarifying phylogenetic relationships is the use of chemotaxonomy (Lockey, 1988; Blomquist and Bagnères, 2010). This method has been used successfully in many different insect groups (reviewed in Blomquist, 2010), and has yet to be applied to fig wasps.

We therefore aim to use a novel approach to investigate interactions amongst diverse species of fig wasps, belonging to one of the most prominent and well-studied plant-insect model systems in the literature, by focusing on chemical profiles of the fig wasp cuticle as well as the population genetic background of individual species.

## 1.2. Fig and fig wasp background

Trees from the genus *Ficus* of the family Moraceae occur across the world, consisting of over 850 species found in tropical, temperate as well as arid habitats (Janzen, 1979; Compton *et al.*, 1994; Cook and Rasplus, 2003). In the form of trees, rock-splitters, shrubs, stranglers, epiphytes and vines (Janzen, 1979; Berg, 1989; Compton *et al.*, 1994; Cook and Rasplus, 2003), these plants act as keystone species, providing habitats to numerous insect species as well as highly nutritious food in the form of figs to birds, mammals and insects (Janzen, 1979).

Fig trees are characterised by a distinctive pollination system and high pollinator specificity (Wiebes, 1979) that has evolved to provide these plants with an extremely successful pollination rate regardless of the number of different species of fig occupying a habitat (Janzen, 1979). This involves chemical signalling by the tree as well as the screening of potential pollinators, while restricting the access of other insects to the flowers (Janzen, 1979; Verkerke, 1989; Grison *et al.*, 1999). This system (which will be discussed in more detail later) allows fig trees to successfully cross-pollinate despite potentially long distances between individual trees or low concentrations of a specific fig species in a habitat (Janzen, 1979).

Although the *Ficus* phylogeny is still relatively unresolved, it is believed that Moraceae originated during the mid-Cretaceous period, with *Ficus* speciating during the Tertiary period and dispersing from Eurasia, where the oldest *Ficus* fossils are found, to Africa and the Americas (Zerega *et al.*, 2005). Today there are approximately 112 species of *Ficus* in the Afrotropical region (Africa and Madagascar including surrounding islands) (Berg and Wiebes, 1992; Compton *et al.*, 1994; Burrows and Burrows, 2003) which are found in tropical and montane forest, wooded grassland and in transitional habitats (Berg, 1989, Berg and Wiebes, 1992; Burrows and Burrows, 2003). Of these 112 species, 25 are known to occur in South Africa (Berg and Wiebes, 1992; Burrows and Burrows, 2003; van Noort and Rasplus, 2004-

2011). These are mostly found in the humid north-eastern areas of Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Kwa-Zulu Natal and along the coast in the Western and Eastern Cape, although a few species also occur in the more arid regions of the Karoo and Kalahari (Compton and van Noort, 1992; Burrows and Burrows, 2003; Mcleish *et al.*, 2011).

### 1.2.1. *Figs and fig wasp life history*

Fig species can be either monoecious, with both male and female flowers borne on the same tree, or gynodioecious, with one type of tree bearing only female flowers and the other bearing both male and female flowers (Janzen, 1979; Verkerke, 1989; Cook and Rasplus, 2003), with most South African species being monoecious (Berg, 1989). The flowers are found inside a closed inflorescence called a fig or syconium. This makes it appear as though fig trees do not produce flowers, and that the “fruit” just magically appears without the need for pollination, causing the Chinese to call the fig the “flowerless fruit”. In fact, the fig is pollinated by the females of tiny fig wasp species generally specific to the fig species in question, which crawl through a tiny bract-lined hole [the ostiole, which restricts access to the syconium interior (Verkerke, 1989)] in the base of the syconium with the aid of morphological adaptations, such as an elongated head (Cook and Rasplus, 2003). Once inside, the wasps oviposit by laying their eggs in the ovules of a portion of the female flowers while they pollinate the flowers (Verkerke, 1989; Compton *et al.*, 1994). Flowers that have received eggs develop galls which feed the developing fig wasp larvae instead of developing seeds (Compton and van Noort, 1992; Cook and Rasplus, 2003). Male fig wasps eclose before the females and search for galls containing female fig wasps, which they then chew open to mate with the females (Janzen, 1979; West *et al.*, 1996; Cook and Rasplus, 2003). After this the females will emerge and gather pollen before leaving the syconium through an exit hole that has been chewed by the males (Janzen, 1979; Compton *et al.*, 1994; West *et al.*, 1996; Cook and Rasplus, 2003). Non-pollinating fig wasps (NPFWs) have a similar life-cycle to the pollinators with some species entering the fig in the same way as the pollinators (internal galls, Compton and van Noort, 1992; Cook and Rasplus, 2003) while others possess longer ovipositors that they use to oviposit through the syconium wall (external galls, Janzen, 1979; Kerdelhué and Rasplus, 1996). Once the fig wasps have emerged from the syconium





specificity that exists in NPFWs may be maintained by the matching of ovipositor length to the thickness of the syconium wall, as well as differences in developmental time of the syconia between fig species (Janzen, 1979).

It is generally agreed that the reason for the closer phylogenetic association between the pollinators and figs is the result of the stricter requirements imposed by the syconium of the host tree on pollinators in order for successful oviposition to occur (Weiblen and Bush, 2002). The fact that a pollinator must have morphology adapted to a specific fig species to enter the syconium, as well as carry the correct pollen in order to fertilise the flowers used in oviposition, ties this group more closely to the correct host than non-pollinating gallers and parasitoids which can oviposit through the syconium wall (Weiblen and Bush, 2002; Silvieus *et al.*, 2007). The ability to circumvent the barrier imposed by the syconium (Silvieus *et al.*, 2007), as well as the fact that successful oviposition does not necessarily depend on pollination, allows externally galling NPFWs to switch hosts much more easily than the pollinators (Weiblen and Bush, 2002). A recent study on NPFWs have shown that host switching is extensive in the phylogeny of these groups, with most NPFW groups possessing at least one species that occurs on more than one fig species, and the NPFW community of any given fig species presenting a diverse complement of unrelated fig wasp species (Marussich and Machado, 2007).

In parasitoids, multiple host species use might even be necessary to survive, because if a parasitoid species were restricted to a single fig wasp species occurring on a single fig species, its fitness would not only depend on locating the correct fig-bearing species, but also on the probability that the fig wasp species it parasitizes is present in the syconia of the specific tree (Silvieus *et al.*, 2007). In this case, being able to parasitize as wide a range of fig wasps as possible greatly increases its chances of successful oviposition.

When host switching occurs, it is probably not through the evolution of novel characteristics, but as a result of plesiomorphic characters allowing it to take advantage of a novel resource, through a process known as ecological fitting (Janzen, 1985; Brooks and Ferrao, 2005; Brooks *et al.*, 2006). Since so much convergent adaptation has taken place in diverse Chalcidoidea lineages in order to inhabit the syconium (Cook and Rasplus, 2003), ecological fitting should play an especially large

role in host switching in this system. The relationships among fig wasps and their host should therefore be determined by a combination of diffuse co-evolution, host switching and extinction (Weiblen and Bush, 2002; Brooks *et al.*, 2006; Marussich and Machado, 2007).

#### *1.2.4. Dispersal ability of pollinating fig wasps*

It is not clear how far fig wasps can disperse the pollen from a fig since the minute size of the fig wasps make it hard to follow their movements after they have left the syconium. To date the best estimates – based on paternity tests of pollen arriving at receptive trees combined with the density of conspecifics in a habitat – indicated that fig wasps may regularly travel long distances between trees [up to 164.7 km has been recorded (Ahmed *et al.*, 2009)] and that pollen from a single tree can be dispersed across almost 300 square kilometres (Nason *et al.*, 1996, also reviewed in Herre *et al.*, 2008). These data suggest that, given the right conditions, fig trees in a population can maintain very high levels of gene flow. It is suggested that the long dispersal distances are achieved through the wind dispersal of fig wasps (Nason *et al.*, 1996; Ahmed *et al.*, 2009), which is highly likely considering their small size. Zavodna and colleagues (2005) found that high gene flow existed between island and mainland populations of fig wasps separated by 40 kilometres, and that in fact some mainland populations were more isolated than the island population. This indicates that environmental factors other than distance – such as habitat fragmentation and fig wasp life history traits – may play a more important role in the genetic population structure of fig and fig wasp populations (Zavodna *et al.*, 2005). Given the long potential dispersal distances and complex life history of fig wasps, it is important to define what constitutes a fig wasp population. We have defined it here as all the individuals belonging to the same species occurring within a region that fig wasps can potentially disperse across. Thus if two fig wasps of the same species emerging from the syconia of two different fig trees has the potential to arrive at the same tree to oviposit, they are considered to belong to the same population because their offspring will then have the chance to mate. Likewise, a region is then defined as an area that is broadly homogenous in habitat and of a particular size that fig wasps can conceivably disperse across (i.e. home to one fig wasp population).



















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content, which could then possibly affect the CHC profile of the fig wasps eating those galls. Regional differences may also influence the CHC profile of *Otitessella* fig wasps, for three reasons. Firstly, the fig wasp community in the syconium of a specific fig species may differ between regions. This is because moving between regions will also in some cases mean moving between habitats, and the fig wasp communities of a fig species is affected by differences in habitat across even very short distances (Compton et al., 1994). Additionally, fig wasp communities can be influenced by chance colonisation events (Hawkins and Compton, 1992), which refers to the presence or absence of a fig wasp species in a fig, not because of a specific ecological reason, but simply as a result of whether the fig tree was discovered by that species of fig wasp during the timeframe when the fig wasp could oviposit in the fig. This introduces a random element to fig wasp community composition which is difficult to account for. The fact that the fig wasp community is highly likely to change between regions means that fig wasps will be exposed to different combinations of CHCs based on which other species of fig wasp are present in a syconium, which will present opportunities to exchange CHCs with other species by adsorption of CHCs onto the cuticle. This has been shown to occur when different species of termite or cockroach live in close proximity, with CHCs being exchanged between species (Everaerts *et al.*, 1997; Vauchot *et al.*, 1998; Liang and Silverman, 2000; Millar, 2010). Secondly, habitat differences (Lockey, 1988) between regions may directly affect the CHC profiles of fig wasps. A previous study has found that differences in vegetation between regions influenced the CHC profiles of two grasshopper species (Buckley *et al.*, 2003), indicating that vegetation may have an indirect effect on the CHC profiles of fig wasps occurring in different regions. Thirdly, some biogeographical studies investigating regional variation in the CHC profiles of social paper wasps have found that geographic distance between populations causes genetic variation between populations, and thus potentially affect the CHC profile as the result of genetic differences (e.g. Dapporto *et al.*, 2004).

In a study on *Otitessella* in Africa, Jusselin *et al.* (2006) indicated that there is a high probability that these fig wasps are more host-specific than might be expected from a parasitic lineage, and that they may consequently occur as separate genetic lineages on different fig species. Fig wasps from the two *Otitessella* species-groups can occur in more than one fig species over different regions (Jusselin *et al.*, 2006), which may

result in divergent lineages from both species-groups occurring in the same fig. This situation offers us the opportunity to investigate both host species and environmental differences as possible influences on CHC profiles. Cuticular hydrocarbons have been found to be important in distinguishing between closely related species in the past (Bagnères and Wicker-Thomas, 2010), thus there is a possibility that CHC profiles may be used to distinguish between different groups within *Otitesella*. This will be done by exploring the genetic relationships within and between the two species-groups, as well as regional- and host species-induced variation in CHC profiles.

## 3.2 Materials and Methods

### 3.2.1 Fig wasp collection and study sites

Fig wasps of the Uluzi and Sesqui species-groups were collected using the fig wasp collection methods described in Chapter 2. The data used for analyses in this chapter were from three collection sites: Baviaanskloof Nature Reserve in the Eastern Cape Province, Ithala Game Reserve and Mabibi Nature Reserve in Kwa-Zulu Natal Province (see Figure 2.1; voucher specimens lodged at the Iziko Museum Cape Town). Collection data for all sites are given in Table 6.1b (Appendix). Due to the aseasonal nature of fig production in the *Ficus* species used for this study (reviewed in Weiblen, 2002; Cook and Rasplus, 2003), finding fig trees carrying figs at the right stage of development posed a challenge, and resulted in small sample sizes in some cases.

### 3.2.2 Analyses of host species-associated influences on CHC profiles

The GC-MS protocol (see Chapter 2 for details) was used to distinguish CHC profiles of fig wasps from different host species. Data were analysed using multivariate statistics in both SPSS (v. 18) and Primer (v. 5.2.9). For multivariate analyses in SPSS, the CHC peaks were standardised as the percentage contribution to the total hydrocarbon blend for the sample in question and then transformed using Aitchison's equation as described in Chapter 2 (Aitchison, 1986). Principal components analysis and stepwise discriminant analysis were performed using the same methods as those described in Chapter 2. For analyses in Primer, the data were standardised as the percentage contribution as before, and then transformed using double square root transformations as described in Chapter 2. Analysis of similarity (ANOSIM, 999

permutations from a random sample of total possible permutations) was performed as described in Chapter 2, followed by adjustments of significant  $\alpha$  values using sequential Bonferroni correction for pairwise comparisons.

To explore the effect that host species (*F. glumosa* and *F. burtt-davyi*, in this case) has on the CHC profiles of fig wasps in the Sesqui species-group collected from Ithala, multidimensional scaling (MDS, Primer) was used (as only two groups were compared, an MDS was more appropriate than discriminant analysis). Multidimensional scaling displays categories based on how similar or dissimilar they are from each other (Quinn and Keough, 2002) and represents the relationships between groups in multidimensional space, with the spatial manner in which the groups are displayed indicating their underlying differences (Quinn and Keough, 2002). The closer two points are to each other the more similar their CHC profiles are. Stress values are used to indicate dissimilarity and level of match between groups, and are an indication of the goodness of fit, with stress values below 0.15 indicating good fit (Clarke and Gorley, 2001). Analysis of similarity (ANOSIM, 999 permutations from a random sample of total possible permutations) was performed to test for significant pairwise differences between fig wasps from different host species, with the application of sequential Bonferroni corrections to determine significant  $\alpha$  values.

To test for possible host species-associated effects on the CHC profiles of fig wasps within the Uluzi species-group, stepwise discriminant analysis based on principal components identified by PCA was used. Fig wasps were collected from the host species *F. glumosa*, *F. burkei*, *F. polita*, *F. burtt-davyi* and *F. lutea* in Ithala and Mabibi. Analysis of similarity (ANOSIM, 999 permutations from a random sample of total possible permutations) was used to test for significant pairwise differences between fig wasps from different host species. Sequential Bonferroni corrections were used to determine significant  $\alpha$  values.

### 3.2.3 Regional differences within the Uluzi species-group

To investigate possible regional influences on the CHC profiles of fig wasps from the Uluzi species-group, PCA followed by stepwise discriminant analysis was performed for fig wasps from this species-group that were collected in Mabibi, Bavianskloof and Ithala. Samples from Ithala included fig wasps collected from *F. glumosa*, *F.*



### 3.2.5 Genetic analyses

Sequences from two mitochondrial gene regions [cytochrome oxidase I (COI ~ 630 bp) and cytochrome b (Cytb ~380 bp)] as well as a nuclear gene region [elongation factor – one alpha F2 copy (EF-1 $\alpha$  ~510 bp)] was used to infer genetic divergences within and between lineages collected from different fig species. Genetic divergences were inferred using a Bayesian phylogenetic approach. This gave an indication of the relationships between the two species-groups and among samples collected from different regions and host species. Samples from both the Uluzi and Sesqui species-groups were sequenced in all of the fig tree collections where they were present, which consisted of 18 Uluzi samples from five different host species across eight different collections, and 6 Sesqui samples from two different host species across three collections (Appendix, Table 6.2). To more stringently assess genetic variation among the samples collected for the GC analysis, we included sequence data (McLeish, M.J., unpublished) for 35 additional *Otitesella* specimens in the phylogenetic inference, which in total included 7 outgroup taxa belonging to the fig wasp genus *Philoaenus* and 59 ingroup taxa.

The DNA extractions used for the sequencing data were from tissue preserved in > 96% ethanol. DNA was extracted from single whole fig wasps using a QIAGEN® QIAamp DNA Micro Kit. The PCR reactions included SuperTherm® DNA Polymerase (100U @ Enzyme Concentration: 5u/ml) and 10X Buffer (1ml @ pH 8.5). Amplifications of mitochondrial DNA were performed using the following protocol: 94°C, 3 minute polymerase incubation period for the first cycle only; 92°C, 30 seconds denaturation; 48°C, 1.5 minute annealing; 72°C, 1.5 minute extension for 35 cycles; with a final cycle of 72°C, 7 minute extension. The PCR mixture was a 25  $\mu$ l reaction including: 2.5  $\mu$ l 10X buffer, 0.2  $\mu$ l of 5 U/ml of polymerase, 2.5  $\mu$ l of MgCl<sub>2</sub> (25mM), 2.5  $\mu$ l (10 mg/ml) of dNTPs, 1.0  $\mu$ l (0.2 pmol/ $\mu$ l) of each primer, and 2.0  $\mu$ l of unknown concentrations of template DNA. Amplifications of nuclear DNA were performed using the following protocol: 94°C, 3 minutes polymerase incubation period for the first cycle only; 92°C, 45 second denaturation; 56°C, 1.5 minute annealing; 72°C, 1.5 minute extension for 45 cycles; with a final cycle of 72°C, 7 minute extension. The PCR mixture was a 25  $\mu$ l reaction including: 2.5  $\mu$ l 10X buffer, 0.2  $\mu$ l of 5 U/ml of polymerase, 0.75  $\mu$ l of MgCl<sub>2</sub> (25mM), 1.5  $\mu$ l (10 mg/ml) of

dNTPs, 0.75  $\mu$ l (0.2 pmol/ $\mu$ l) of each primer, and 2.0  $\mu$ l of unknown concentrations of template DNA. All primers were specifically designed for use in fig wasps (McLeish *et al.*, 2010; McLeish unpublished) and are given in Table 3.1.

Sequence editing was performed using SeqEd version 1.0.3 (Applied Biosystems, 1992). Sequence alignment was carried out by hand and matched to an existing dataset. No insertions or deletions were present. All sequence data has been submitted to GenBank (accession numbers as well as collection information are given in the Appendix, Table 6.2).

We used a Bayesian approach implemented in MrBayes v.3.1.1 (Huelsenbeck and Ronquist, 2001) to infer a consensus phylogeny. The DNA sequence was partitioned into gene fragments and each of these into codon positions (3 x coding gene fragments x 3 codon positions each = 9 partitions total). A general time reversible DNA substitution model (GTR) was used with gamma distributed (+G) rates, a default rate category prior of 4, and with a proportion of invariant sites (+I). This substitution model incorporates specific models that potentially emerge from the Markov-Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) parameter search space. Posterior probabilities and mean branch lengths were derived from 30000 trees sampled every 1000 trees from generations 10 to 40 million. The trees were derived from post-burnin generations of Markov chains that had reached apparent stationarity. The MCMC Tracer Analysis Tool v.1.4.1 (Drummond and Rambaut, 2007; available from <http://beast.bio.ed.ac.uk/>) was used to assess the point in the MCMC chain where stable likelihood values were reached. The mean of standard deviations of the post-burnin split frequencies were used to assess the consistency between runs. All Bayesian reconstructions were run four times to verify consistency of the inferences. A phylogram consensus phylogeny was used to visualise branch length differences between individual fig wasp samples.

Table 3.1: Primers used in PCR reactions

Primer	Reference	Primer sequence (5'-3')
COI-070368	McLeish <i>et al.</i> , 2010	F: TTATCTTTACCAAGTATTAGC
COI-070029	McLeish <i>et al.</i> , 2010	R: AATGTTGAGGGAAAAATGT(CT)
Cytb-070330	McLeish <i>et al.</i> , 2010	F: CTACCATGAGGACAAATATC
Cytb-070326	McLeish <i>et al.</i> , 2010	R: (AG)GAAT(TA)GATCG(TA)A(AG)AAT(TA)GC
EF-1 $\alpha$ -080588	McLeish unpublished	F: GGTCTTGGACAACTGAAGG
EF-1 $\alpha$ -073534	McLeish unpublished	R: TTGTC(AG)GT(TG)GG(CT)CTGCT(TG)GG

### 3.3 Results

#### 3.3.1 Analyses of host species-associated influences on CHC profiles

##### Sesqui species-group:

There was a distinct significant difference between CHCs of fig wasps from the Sesqui species-group collected from *F. glumosa* and those collected from *F. burtt-davyi*. Samples from different host species separate clearly in the MDS (Figure 3.1), and the low stress value (0.05) and significant results from the ANOSIM (Global R = 0.941,  $p = 0.001$ ) indicates a large difference in CHC profiles between the two groups (94.1% dissimilarity of CHC profiles between groups).

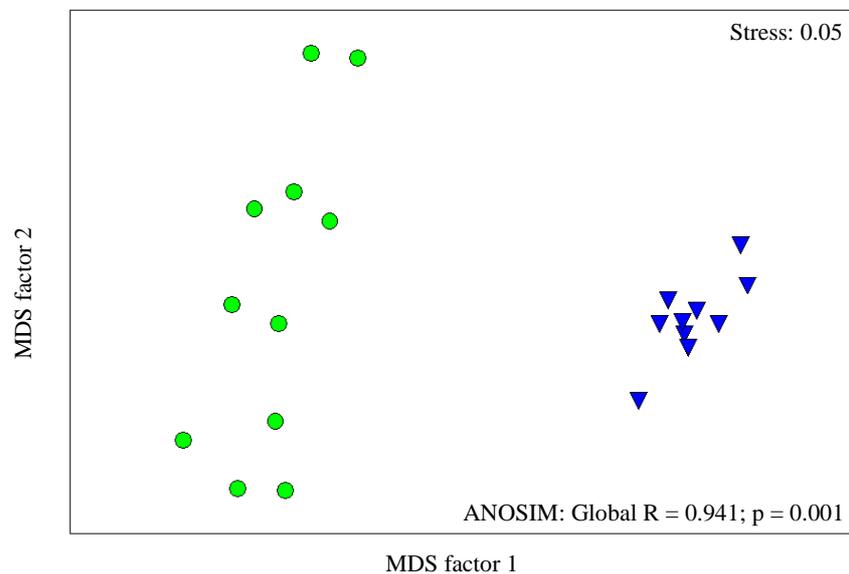


Figure 3.1: Multidimensional scaling indicating differences in CHC profiles between fig wasps from the Sesqui species-group collected from host trees *F. burtt-davyi* ( $\blacktriangledown$   $n = 10$ ) and *F. glumosa* ( $\bullet$ ,  $n = 11$ ).

##### Uluzi species-group:

There was a significant difference in CHC profiles between fig wasps from the Uluzi species-group that were collected from different host species. Principal component analysis identified 24 principle components (PCs) that were responsible for 92.89% of the variance within the dataset. Using these 24 principal components, stepwise discriminant analysis identified 12 PCs that were responsible for 85.2% of the separation of CHC profiles of fig wasps belonging to the Uluzi species-group by host species (Figure 3.2; Wilks'  $\lambda < 0.001$ ,  $x^2 = 301.457$ ,  $df = 40$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Discriminant

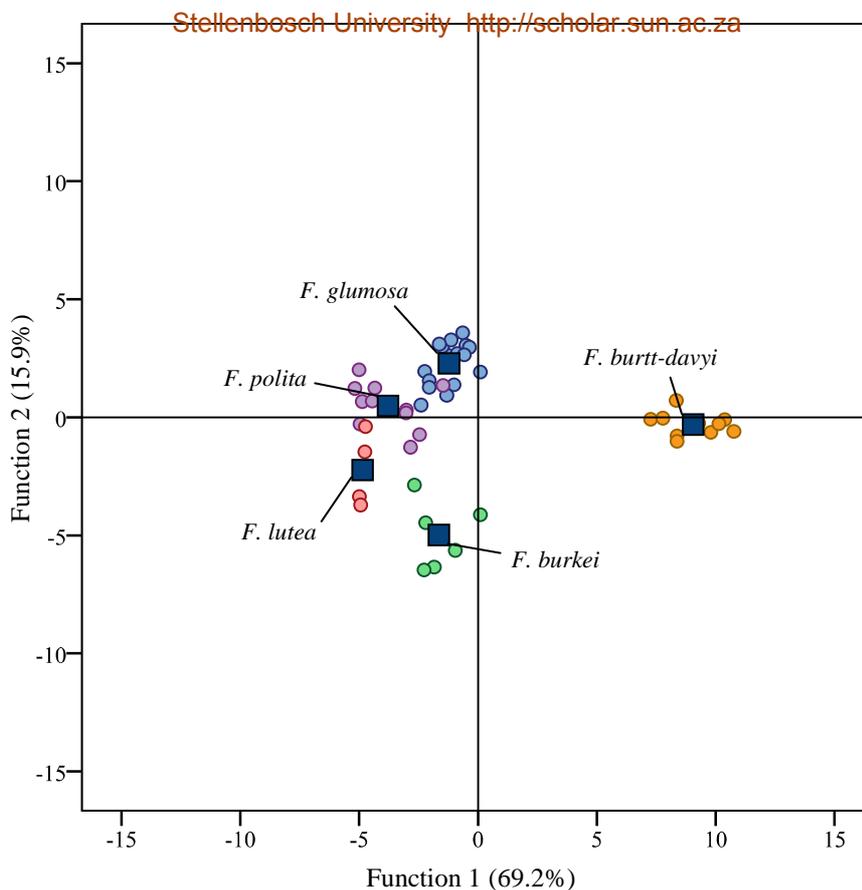


Figure 3.2: Stepwise Discriminate Analysis of regression factors identified by PCA contributing to the separation of CHC profiles of fig wasps from the Uluzi species-group collected on different host trees (*F. glumosa*, ●, n = 16; *F. burkei*, ●, n = 6; *F. lutea*, ●, n = 4; *F. polita*, ●, n = 11; and *F. burtt-davyi*, ●, n = 20). Wilks'  $\lambda < 0.001$ ,  $\chi^2 = 301.457$ ,  $df = 40$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . (Group centroid = ■).

function 1 was responsible for 69.2% of the variation in the CHCs of fig wasps collected from different host species. Most of the separation between the CHCs of fig wasps collected from *F. burtt-davyi* and those collected from the remaining host species occurred on this function, as well as the separations between the CHCs of fig wasps collected from *F. glumosa* and *F. lutea* and between those collected from *F. burkei* and *F. lutea*. Discriminant function 2 accounted for 15.9% of the separation of CHCs by host species, and was responsible for most of the separation between the CHCs of fig wasps collected from *F. glumosa* and those collected from *F. burkei* and *F. lutea*. This discriminant function also highlighted the separation between the CHCs of fig wasps collected from *F. polita* and those collected from *F. burkei*. A 100% of samples were correctly classified by the host species they originated from. Results from Primer's ANOSIM indicated that all groups of fig wasps from the Uluzi species-group defined by different host species were significantly different from each other (Table 3.2a, Global R = 0.836,  $p = 0.001$ ).









species-groups found in *F. glumosa*. This effect of host species on fig wasp CHCs would be increased separation between the CHC profiles of fig wasps from the same species-group, with decreased separation between the CHCs of fig wasps from different species-groups collected from the same host species (Figure 3.5b). Consequently, the overall CHC pattern would be one of a more even distribution between groups (Figure 3.5c). The fact that the groups are not arranged in such a way that more closely related groups have more similar CHC profiles suggests that host species does, in fact, exert some influence on the CHC profile.

### 3.3.4 Regional influence on CHC profile in the *Uluzi* species-group

The CHC profiles of fig wasps from the *Uluzi* species-group could be grouped according to the region they originated from, regardless of the host species they were collected from (Figure 3.6). Principal components analysis identified 26 PCs that explained 93.15% of the variation in the dataset. Stepwise discriminant analysis of these principal components indicated that significant region-dependant differences exist in the CHC profiles of fig wasps from this species-group (Figure 3.6; Wilks'  $\lambda = 0.005$ ;  $\chi^2 = 235.872$ ;  $df = 36$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Discriminant function 1 explained 67.6% of the between-region variation and was responsible for most of the separation between the CHCs of fig wasps collected at Mabibi and those collected from Baviaanskloof and Ithala. Discriminant function 2 explained 32.4% of the between-region variance and was also responsible for the separation between the CHCs of fig wasps collected from Baviaanskloof and Ithala, and between Mabibi and Baviaanskloof. A 100% of samples were correctly assigned to their groups by the DA, and ANOSIM indicated that all pairwise comparisons were significant (Table 3.2b; Global R = 0.738,  $p = 0.001$ ). Cuticular hydrocarbon profiles show strong regional effects which override the host species influences. This is evident by the fact that fig wasp CHCs collected from *F. burtt-davyi* (the shared host species) from both Baviaanskloof and Ithala do not converge by host species but rather by region. This indicates that regional differences in the CHC profiles of fig wasps are important, but does not necessary mean that genetic influences are absent since CHC profiles are effective in separation fig wasp CHC profiles (see Chapter 2). This emphasises the importance of the level of analyses when interpreting variation in CHC profiles.

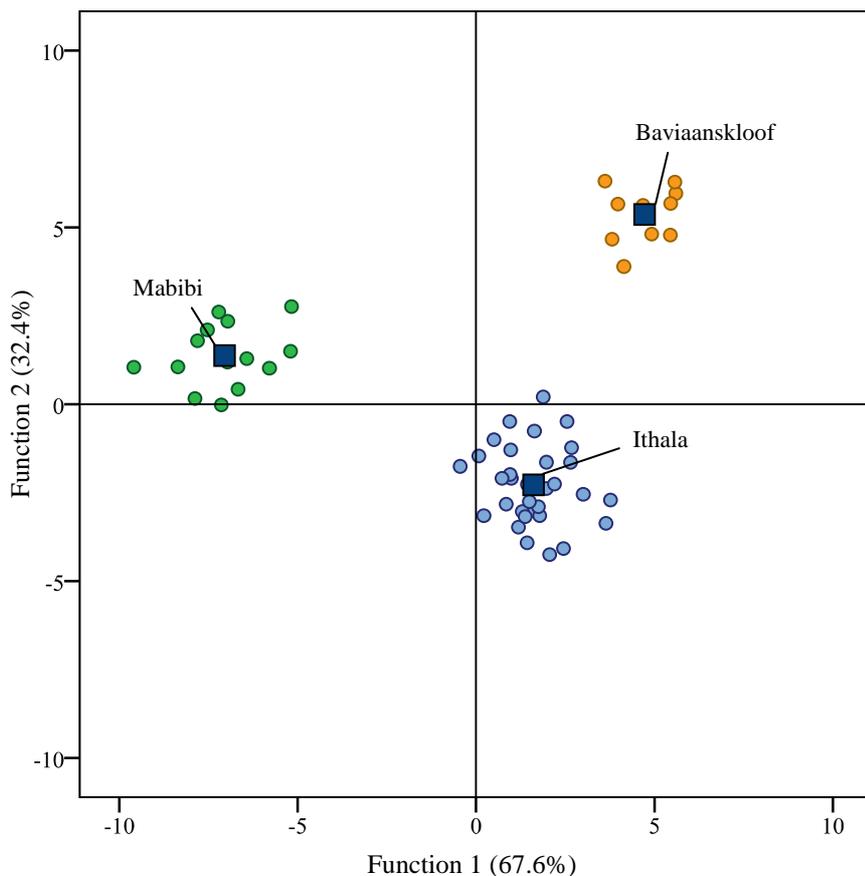


Figure 3.6: Stepwise Discriminate Analysis of regression factors identified by PCA contributing to separation of CHC profiles of Uluzi fig wasps collected in different regions (Baviaanskloof, ●,  $n = 10$ , *F. burtt-davyi*; Ithala, ○,  $n = 32$ , *F. burtt-davyi*, *F. burkei* and *F. glumosa*; and Mabibi, ●,  $n = 14$ , *F. polita* and *F. lutea*). Samples can clearly be separated based on their region of origin (Group centroid = ■).

Finally, permutational multivariate analysis of variance corroborated the results presented thus far by revealing that species-group membership, host species-associated effects as well as region were significantly responsible for explaining the underlying variation in fig wasp CHC profiles (Table 3.4). As has been inferred from the PCA results in this section, region explained the most of the variation in the dataset, followed by host species. It is clear that these three factors alone cannot explain all of the observed variation, indicating that there must be additional influences on fig wasp CHC profiles that remain to be investigated. As has been shown by the genetic results (section 3.3.2), separating host species-associated effects from the genetic effects of the different genetic lineages on different host species is challenging, and unfortunately further investigation of this is outside the scope of this study.



effect that region has on CHC profile does not affect the species-group and species-level variation shown in Chapter 2, an indication that it is important to keep in mind at which level of organisation CHC profiles are being compared in order to correctly interpret any potential variation in CHC profiles.

Other studies support our finding that some of the differences between CHC profiles within a species can be caused by genetic variation between groups (distinct genetic lineages on different host species in the case of this study). Investigations on termites have indicated that genetic relationships between colonies reflected variation in CHC profiles (Dronnet *et al.*, 2006), and closely related triatomine species that form part of the same species-complex also have more similar CHC profiles (Juárez and Fernández, 2007). Regarding the genetic differences between fig wasps found on different host species, our results support the conclusions of Jousselein *et al.* (2006), who found that within *Otitesella* in both the Sesqui and Uluzi species-groups there were separate genetic lineages that appeared to be host-specific.

The host species influence on CHC profiles seen in both the Uluzi and Sesqui species-groups has also been shown for other species. Piskorski and colleagues (2010) showed that *Cydia pomonella* moths on different host species could be distinguished by the host tree species they occurred on by using their CHC profiles, and the same situation applies to some aphid species (Bagnères and Wicker-Thomas, 2010). When Argentine ants from different colonies that interacted aggressively were fed the same diet, their CHC profiles converged to such a degree that aggressive interactions were significantly reduced between colonies (Buczkowski *et al.*, 2005), and in another study, being fed different diets affected the CHC profiles of ants so much that former nest mates acted aggressively toward each other (Liang and Silverman, 2000). In a study on the causes of differences in CHCs in *Drosophila mojavensis*, Stennett and Etges (1997) found the species of cactus used to rear larvae caused a significant difference in the CHCs of this species. This supports the possibility that the change in diet as a result of different host species use could affect the CHC profile of fig wasps to the degree observed here.

A possible reason why regional variation in CHC profile is overriding genetic and host species influences in determining CHC profile within a species-group could be the differences in vegetation (and therefore habitat) between the three regions

investigated. Ithala Game Reserve is located in the Savanna and Grassland biomes, Mabibi Nature Reserve is located in the Indian Ocean Coastal Belt as well as Forest biomes and Baviaanskloof Nature Reserve in the Albany Thicket biome (Mucina and Rutherford, 2006). Previous studies have found that changes in habitat can cause differences in CHC profiles of insects (Lockey, 1988; Bagnères and Wicker-Thomas, 2010; Ferreira-Caliman *et al.*, 2010, reviewed in Howard and Blomquist, 2005). The biomes in this study from where samples were collected are characterised by differences in vegetation, soils and amount of rainfall (Mucina and Rutherford, 2006), habitat differences which could conceivably be responsible for the observed differences in CHC profiles through a combination of habitat influences on both host trees and the fig wasp community that occurs in a syconium. In truth, such large differences in vegetation may not even be necessary to cause habitat-related changes, since habitat differences between closely situated areas can cause changes in fig wasp community composition in, for instance, *F. burtt-davyi* (Compton *et al.*, 1994). While some fig species have the potential to occur in more than one type of habitat, this might not necessarily be true for all the fig wasp species that can potentially form a part of the fig wasp community in that fig tree. For example, in some fig species that are pollinated by more than one species of fig wasp, the species of pollinator associated with a particular fig tree population may depend on habitat (Michaloud *et al.*, 1996). This is an indication of how habitat differences can influence the distribution of a fig wasp species, and specifically how the fig wasp community composition of a fig tree may be influenced by a tree's habitat. This will determine to which other species a fig wasp is exposed, with the potential to exchange CHCs with these other species (Vauchot *et al.*, 1996; Everaerts *et al.*, 1997; Vauchot *et al.*, 1998). However, to truly investigate the effect that fig wasp community structure has on the CHC profiles of fig wasps one would need to determine the exact community composition of every syconium, an aspect not investigated in this study.

When the importance of CHC profiles in species- and mate-recognition is taken into account (Lorenzi *et al.*, 1996; Nation, 2002; Millar, 2010), a possible consequence of our findings is that host species- and region-related changes in CHC composition may in the long term lead to pre-mating isolation (Bagnères and Wicker-Thomas, 2010). Pre-mating isolation could then result in populations of fig wasps which only occur on one type of host species, which may over time lead to speciation of non-pollinating

galling fig wasps inhabiting different host species through both adaptive changes to the new host as well as genetic drift. Cuticular hydrocarbons are important for mate recognition in *Drosophila mojavensis*, and it has been observed that populations from different regions exhibit pre-mating isolation. This has been attributed to the fact that *D. mojavensis* has switched hosts between regions, which caused changes in their CHC profiles, leading to pre-mating isolation (Etges and Ahrens, 2001). It had previously been shown that the CHC profiles of *D. mojavensis* are significantly affected by the species of host used to rear larvae (Stennett and Etges, 1997). This is highly relevant with regard to the potential changes in CHC profile caused by effects associated with different host species in the fig wasps in this study, as host switching in fig wasps may, hypothetically, in the long term also lead to genetic changes in the CHC profiles of individuals that can lead to pre-mating isolation. In other words, a fig wasp population diverged by host species or region over evolutionary time and the diverged populations were later reunited, this could be an explanation for the two separate genetic lineages encountered in fig wasps from the Uluzi species-group in *F. burkei*. This sets the stage for independent genetic lineages to develop within a group which may later lead to speciation on different host species. An example of sexual isolation caused by different host-use is apparent in the leaf beetle *Neochlamisus bebbianae* (Funk, 1998), where populations found on different host species were more reproductively isolated than those found on the same host species.

Common to many studies investigating the variation in CHCs is that although the authors identify a genetic or environmental influence on the CHC profile, they often follow this conclusion by emphasising that these identified influences only form part of a wider set of factors influencing CHC profiles, with both genes and environment responsible for the observed differences in CHC profiles (Lavine and Carlson, 1991; Nielsen *et al.*, 1999; Dapporto *et al.*, 2004; Dronnet *et al.*, 2006; Dapporto *et al.*, 2009). In the case of this study, we have identified three main factors which influence the CHC profiles of fig wasps belonging to two different species-groups: On a broad scale between and within species-groups the CHC profile is determined by genetic differences, within a species-group the CHC profile is further determined by regional differences, and on a finer within-region scale these differences are influenced by associated host species effects. As in the social paper wasp, *Polistes dominulus*, CHCs may be used in fig wasps as a “tool to emphasize biogeographical patterns of

similarity based both on gene flow and environmental characteristics” (Dapporto *et al.*, 2009).

### 3.1. References

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