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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table S1. Interspecific and intraspecific nucleotide distance (K2P) found for the *COI* gene. The values are the percentages. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** | **11** | **12** | **13** | **14** | **15** | **16** | **17** | **18** | **19** | **20** | **21** | **22** | **23** | **24** | **25** | **26** | **27** | **28** | **29** | **30** | **31** | **32** | **33** | **34** | **35** | **36** |
| ***1- Hippocampus* spp.**  ***Mozambique*** | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***2- H. kelloggi*** | 0.2 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***3- H. abdominalis*** | 15.0 | 15.2 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***4- H. algiricus*** | 8.9 | 9.1 | 15.0 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***5- H. angustus*** | 13.7 | 13.8 | 15.4 | 11.7 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***6- H. barbouri*** | 12.0 | 11.9 | 14.1 | 13.2 | 8.0 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***7- H. bargibanti*** | 18.3 | 18.6 | 19.2 | 16.6 | 18.1 | 19.9 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***8- H. biocellatus*** | 11.9 | 11.9 | 14.1 | 11.5 | 13.2 | 12.1 | 18.3 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***9- H. breviceps*** | 18.3 | 18.3 | 14.2 | 17.2 | 20.4 | 18.0 | 22.1 | 15.3 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***10- H. comes*** | 13.5 | 13.6 | 15.9 | 13.0 | 3.5 | 7.6 | 18.4 | 13.0 | 19.4 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***11- H. camelopardalis*** | 14.7 | 14.8 | 17.4 | 15.0 | 16.1 | 16.0 | 20.8 | 15.9 | 19.7 | 16.5 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***12- H. zosterae*** | 12.0 | 12.1 | 15.9 | 13.4 | 14.5 | 14.5 | 19.9 | 15.6 | 19.0 | 14.7 | 16.2 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***13- H. reidi*** | 8.3 | 8.5 | 15.0 | 1.0 | 12.3 | 13.4 | 17.0 | 11.4 | 16.7 | 13.4 | 14.8 | 13.3 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***14- H. capensis*** | 8.3 | 8.3 | 14.6 | 2.1 | 12.5 | 13.2 | 17.2 | 12.0 | 16.5 | 13.8 | 14.8 | 14.1 | 2.1 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***15- H. dahli*** | 13.9 | 13.9 | 14.3 | 13.4 | 13.4 | 14.1 | 19.9 | 7.4 | 16.2 | 13.2 | 18.3 | 17.6 | 13.8 | 13.6 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***16- H. denise*** | 19.2 | 19.2 | 19.4 | 18.2 | 18.3 | 18.5 | 11.6 | 15.8 | 19.8 | 17.2 | 20.6 | 18.9 | 18.3 | 19.5 | 17.1 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***17- H. erectus*** | 10.1 | 10.0 | 17.4 | 13.0 | 16.5 | 15.3 | 19.9 | 14.5 | 19.8 | 16.0 | 15.1 | 16.2 | 13.0 | 13.2 | 15.0 | 19.1 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***18- H. fisheri*** | 9.5 | 9.4 | 15.9 | 3.1 | 13.2 | 13.2 | 18.3 | 11.0 | 16.7 | 14.0 | 15.0 | 12.4 | 3.7 | 3.7 | 12.9 | 17.4 | 13.2 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***19- H. fuscus*** | 8.1 | 8.1 | 14.8 | 2.1 | 12.8 | 13.4 | 17.2 | 12.0 | 17.0 | 14.0 | 14.8 | 14.3 | 2.1 | 0.3 | 13.6 | 19.5 | 13.0 | 3.7 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***20- H. guttulatus*** | 11.5 | 11.7 | 14.7 | 10.5 | 14.2 | 15.5 | 16.7 | 11.2 | 17.9 | 13.8 | 14.8 | 15.9 | 10.5 | 10.7 | 13.3 | 15.4 | 14.2 | 10.5 | 10.9 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***21- H. hendriki*** | 13.0 | 13.0 | 15.4 | 11.1 | 1.5 | 6.6 | 18.1 | 12.1 | 19.7 | 3.3 | 16.8 | 13.5 | 11.7 | 12.3 | 12.3 | 17.8 | 15.8 | 12.5 | 12.5 | 13.8 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***22- H. histrix*** | 12.3 | 12.3 | 14.9 | 14.4 | 10.1 | 10.5 | 18.3 | 12.7 | 18.4 | 9.3 | 14.8 | 16.7 | 14.1 | 15.2 | 12.1 | 17.1 | 15.9 | 13.9 | 15.0 | 13.9 | 9.9 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***23- H. ingens*** | 8.7 | 8.7 | 14.5 | 3.9 | 11.7 | 13.4 | 17.9 | 11.9 | 16.9 | 13.2 | 15.6 | 12.6 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 12.5 | 18.3 | 13.2 | 4.4 | 3.5 | 10.7 | 11.5 | 14.3 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***24- H. kuda*** | 8.7 | 8.8 | 15.9 | 2.9 | 13.8 | 14.0 | 17.2 | 12.5 | 17.9 | 15.4 | 15.4 | 14.3 | 2.8 | 2.6 | 13.8 | 20.0 | 14.7 | 4.2 | 2.2 | 11.1 | 13.6 | 14.5 | 4.4 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***25- H. mohnikei*** | 14.6 | 14.7 | 15.5 | 14.4 | 13.5 | 13.3 | 18.7 | 11.0 | 18.9 | 13.1 | 13.7 | 14.8 | 15.1 | 14.6 | 12.1 | 17.4 | 16.3 | 13.8 | 14.6 | 12.0 | 13.3 | 13.7 | 14.2 | 16.1 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***26- H. nalu*** | 22.1 | 22.0 | 23.9 | 24.5 | 22.8 | 20.9 | 18.6 | 21.4 | 24.8 | 21.4 | 23.6 | 22.6 | 23.7 | 23.5 | 21.2 | 18.5 | 22.7 | 23.4 | 23.0 | 22.1 | 21.8 | 21.1 | 22.4 | 22.7 | 24.8 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***27- H. patagonicus*** | 11.7 | 11.8 | 15.2 | 13.5 | 14.9 | 14.9 | 18.4 | 15.5 | 18.0 | 14.3 | 16.0 | 16.0 | 13.6 | 14.1 | 15.8 | 18.2 | 7.4 | 14.5 | 13.9 | 14.7 | 15.6 | 13.9 | 14.3 | 14.7 | 17.0 | 24.1 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***28- H. pontohi*** | 17.7 | 17.7 | 18.5 | 17.3 | 17.4 | 18.8 | 12.6 | 15.6 | 21.2 | 16.6 | 18.6 | 16.5 | 17.9 | 18.4 | 17.0 | 10.0 | 16.4 | 17.9 | 18.2 | 14.4 | 17.0 | 16.7 | 17.7 | 18.6 | 16.7 | 17.7 | 16.0 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***29- H. spinosissimus*** | 7.0 | 7.2 | 15.2 | 8.6 | 14.1 | 13.2 | 17.6 | 12.7 | 15.3 | 13.6 | 14.5 | 12.9 | 8.7 | 8.9 | 14.9 | 18.0 | 11.9 | 9.5 | 9.1 | 11.3 | 13.9 | 12.7 | 8.9 | 9.9 | 15.7 | 20.0 | 13.4 | 17.2 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***30- H. subelongatus*** | 14.1 | 14.1 | 16.3 | 12.2 | 2.1 | 7.2 | 18.6 | 12.1 | 19.4 | 2.8 | 17.5 | 14.9 | 12.8 | 13.0 | 12.5 | 17.4 | 16.0 | 12.3 | 13.2 | 14.5 | 1.5 | 9.9 | 12.1 | 14.7 | 12.7 | 21.1 | 15.4 | 16.1 | 14.5 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***31- H. trimaculatus*** | 12.7 | 12.7 | 16.1 | 13.4 | 13.6 | 13.6 | 18.1 | 7.8 | 17.6 | 12.1 | 16.9 | 18.0 | 13.3 | 13.1 | 5.9 | 17.6 | 14.1 | 14.2 | 13.5 | 12.7 | 12.5 | 12.1 | 12.9 | 14.6 | 12.1 | 19.8 | 15.5 | 15.9 | 14.6 | 13.0 | 0 |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***32- H. whitei*** | 14.3 | 14.5 | 16.3 | 15.2 | 7.2 | 9.0 | 21.1 | 12.9 | 18.0 | 6.0 | 16.0 | 15.6 | 15.3 | 16.0 | 13.0 | 19.2 | 16.9 | 15.5 | 16.2 | 14.6 | 6.2 | 9.5 | 15.3 | 16.9 | 14.2 | 21.6 | 15.3 | 17.6 | 13.8 | 6.0 | 14.1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***33- S.\_abaster*** | 27.3 | 27.4 | 22.5 | 24.6 | 25.5 | 24.4 | 25.5 | 25.4 | 27.0 | 26.3 | 25.0 | 25.2 | 24.8 | 25.3 | 24.5 | 27.3 | 26.8 | 24.3 | 25.0 | 25.7 | 25.2 | 24.8 | 25.2 | 25.3 | 24.8 | 28.1 | 26.1 | 28.8 | 24.6 | 26.8 | 24.8 | 25.7 | 0 |  |  |  |
| ***34- S.\_schmidti*** | 23.0 | 23.0 | 24.6 | 22.2 | 25.3 | 23.7 | 24.7 | 22.5 | 23.5 | 24.5 | 25.0 | 26.7 | 22.4 | 21.9 | 21.8 | 24.5 | 22.3 | 21.7 | 22.1 | 23.8 | 25.5 | 22.3 | 21.6 | 22.1 | 24.3 | 26.4 | 23.6 | 24.0 | 21.8 | 26.0 | 21.6 | 25.5 | 16.1 | 0 |  |  |
| ***35- C.\_flavofasciatus*** | 29.9 | 29.8 | 29.6 | 30.8 | 31.0 | 28.1 | 30.3 | 30.2 | 29.2 | 29.9 | 28.5 | 32.2 | 31.0 | 31.0 | 29.1 | 32.3 | 27.3 | 31.3 | 30.5 | 29.1 | 31.3 | 27.7 | 29.7 | 31.2 | 28.9 | 25.9 | 28.8 | 31.1 | 29.3 | 31.0 | 28.8 | 29.4 | 26.8 | 25.8 | 0 |  |
| ***36- C. schultzi*** | 28.7 | 28.7 | 31.5 | 30.7 | 30.3 | 28.1 | 31.0 | 29.1 | 30.8 | 29.2 | 28.7 | 30.8 | 30.3 | 30.9 | 29.8 | 31.5 | 29.6 | 29.5 | 30.9 | 32.4 | 30.8 | 28.3 | 29.5 | 31.2 | 30.9 | 29.4 | 31.1 | 33.6 | 28.4 | 29.7 | 29.6 | 30.2 | 26.1 | 26.4 | 21.0 | 0 |