

‘Transcontinental pollination’: How migrating insects enable plants to mix

Metabarcoding, a technique of mass DNA sequencing, allows for tracing migratory routes of insects, an understudied subject due to technical limitations. A small DNA fragment of the pollen that insects transport is used as a barcode to identify the plant species they visited previously.

[The research shows] that transcontinental pollination mediated by migrating insects is possible and, therefore, various plants located very far apart can mix. The migration of insects is a natural phenomenon, as important as it is unknown The reasons, in short, are the technical limitations to study this behavior. Now, in a study published in the journal [Molecular Ecology Resources](#), researchers have developed a technique that allows [them] to easily study the migratory movements of insects: the DNA metabarcoding analysis of the pollen transported by insects.

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The results of this study represent an important discovery because it demonstrates for the first time that transcontinental pollination by migratory insects is possible. It is a phenomenon to be taken into account both in wild and in cultivated plants because it enables plants from very distant locations to mix.

Read full, original article: [Sequencing pollen DNA to discover insect migratory routes](#)