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Gene flow is the exchange of genes between two separate populations. This is most often achieved when animals or spores from plants migrate to a new area. Every time a gene is introduced into a population where that gene once did not exist, gene flow has occurred. Discover some gene flow examples in both plant and animal kingdoms. gerbera daisy pollen transfer gene flow example Geneflow can occur among plants in a variety of ways. Pollinators from a crop of flowers on one side of a river transport pollen to the flowers across the river, producing flower offspring. Pollen from trees is blown far, far away to a completely separate group of trees and pollinates their flowers, producing trees with genetic characteristics for each population. Seeds and pollen from conifers on one side of a ravine are blown high into the air, eventually reaching and pollinating trees on the other side of the esophagus. Fruit in the cucurbit family (cucumbers and most squash) must be pollinated by bees. If a bee carries pollen from one variety of squash or cucumber to another (within the same species), that will result in hybridization. If you save seeds from a squash or cucumber plant and the resulting fruit does not resemble fruit from the original plant, it is the result of reflow. A farmer who wants to produce a special gene resistant range of tomato, corn or other crops will use gene flow to cross plants together based on specific properties. This is called hybridization. Modern grains, like durum wheat, which are used to make bread, pasta and other flour-based foods, were developed through a hybridization process. Lager beer yeast (*Saccharomyces pastorianus*) is the result of gene flow (hybridization) between two other types of yeast, one of which has a higher degree of cold tolerance than the other. The hybrid variety is more suitable for fermentation than the original types. When people deliberately bring in plants that are non-native, they may end up starting the gene flow process that allows invasive species to develop. Gene flow will occur between new plants and existing ones, often strengthening existing plants, making them harder to control or create hybrids that become invasive. As the strongest genes survive and cross, species that are resistant to the herbicide can develop. When this happens, it can be difficult (or impossible) to slow the spread of unwanted plants, such as weeds. When the plants that grow back on previously damaged soil through secondary heritage are different from what was originally there, the change may be a result of reflow. There are many reflow examples in the animal kingdom. Blue-eyed people from Sweden move to a small town in Mexico where people all have brown eyes. When they mate, some of their children now have blue eyes. Some birds with shorter beaks are part of a birds with much longer beaks, resulting in the hatching of birds with medium beaks. A Maine coon cat is brought to an island where only wild tabby cats live. After mating with other cats on the island, some of the kittens have bushy tails and tufted ears. A group of women from West Africa, where malaria is present, are mating with a group of Europeans. Their children are less susceptible to contracting malaria due to the presence of antibodies from their West African mothers. Rhinos from one came moved to a new area and are breeding with rhinos of a completely different uttered. A man with very dark skin moves to a remote village in Eastern Europe, where most people have light skin. Their children and grandchildren show signs of this genetic flow when some are born with dark skin. Several red foxes move in and mate with a silver fox population. Two lion prides meet in Savannah and end up multiplying, introducing genetic diversity to each strain. Red parrots are brought on an expedition to a remote part of the jungle with only blue parrots, introducing color variation into the gene pool of jungle parrots. Brown beetles are part of a society made up entirely of green beetles, which creates offspring with greater diversity of colour. Crossing occurs due to the migration of tall members of an African tribe to an area of South America where people are much shorter, allowing new combinations of genetic traits, including variations of skin color and height. A population of moths with a high frequency of white alleles enters a population of darker-colored moths. Over time, more and more white moths are born as a result. Tigers with increased sensitivity in the dark mate with a group of tigers with less sensitive eyes, allowing a larger population of tigers with improved vision to be born after a few generations. Gene flow, which can also be described as migration, is a common event with both plants and animals. It occurs when alleles or genes are successfully transferred from one population to another population. It may occur naturally or intentionally. Gene flow can take place in several ways. When the wind causes the spread of plant spores or seeds to a new area, they can cross with other plants already in this area to form new types of plants. Gene flow also occurs when bees carry pollen from one plant to another. When botanists hybridize plants, they deliberately cross different varieties or species to create a new plant. This is called selective breeding. When people move to a new location, meet partners and have children, it's also an example of reflow. The same thing happens to non-human animals and their offspring. Gene flow can shape and alter ecosystems and species, making it very important to understand both for those who are interested in nature and for those who are interested in science. If you find this topic expand your knowledge of how genetics works by reviewing some examples of genotype and phenotype. From there you can go on to explore some examples of homozygote genes. M.A. Communication middle school high school college If you see this message, it means that we have trouble loading external resources on our website. If you are behind a web filter, make sure that the domains \*.kastatic.org and \*.kasandbox.org are unblocked. To continue to enjoy our website, we ask that you confirm your identity as a human being. Thank you very much for your cooperation. Reflow is the exchange of alleles between two or more populations. For this reason it is sometimes referred to as allele flow or remigration. While migrating animals often carry new alleles from one population to another, they must cross-breed with the new population for reflow to occur. In the picture below, a beetle from a population of brown beetles migrates into a population of green beetles. Reflow If the brown beetle finds a mate, the alleles that cause a brown exoskeleton can be transferred to his offspring. But these two populations of beetles have evolved over time to become different colors. The cause could have been genetic drift or founder effect, from when one population was established from the other. Gene flow can be a good thing for the new population, as genetic diversity tends to help species survive. The gene flow can also be negative as it can carry harmful alleles into the new population. If the two populations constantly cross (have a high gene flow), then the two population can be considered as one. Although they may be separated by barriers that seem to make them separate populations, they share the same allele frequencies and are essentially the same population. There are dogs of every shape and size in the world. The largest domestic dogs can dwarf a wild wolf. The smallest domestic dog, even as an adult, could easily be mistaken for a newborn wolf. By wolves, dogs have changed almost every aspect in their appearance in one population or another. Dogs are one of the best known examples of artificial selection, a process through which traits are established through selective breeding. About 15,000 years ago, all dogs were wolves. But some of these pre-dogs were far more likely to flush the pump loss from the new human settlements popping up everywhere. The wolves moved further away from civilization, while pre-dogs moved closer to humans. Eventually a social contract of sorts was worked out between humans and dogs. In this contract, dogs provided a service such as waste removal, pest control or a hunting guide. People would then provide shelter and food. But the many different populations had different uses for their dogs. Some needed dogs to protect their So they they the dogs with the greatest build and a protectionist mentality. These dogs became the big sheepdog breeds. Other dogs were needed to hunt mice and rabbits into small holes. Thus the dachshund was born. Need a dog with fluffy hair that likes to pick up? Golden Retriever. As these breeders zeroed in on their desired traits, the populations of dogs became more diverse. But they are still all the same species. Reflow, in this case, can be imagined as Labradoodle. Or the half Beagle, half-Pug mix Puggle. Geneflow is Chiweenie (Chihuahua/Dachshund), shown below. As a dog from a particular population is allowed to breed within a pure breeding group, new alleles are brought into the mix. The gene pool expands and new varieties are visible. Thus labradoodle has a Labrador mentality, but has Poodle hair. Artificial selection allows scientists and breeders to manipulate the timing and details of gene flow, to produce desirable traits. Unlike cases of dogs, most cases of gene flow involve natural selection. Imagine a large population of birds on a mainland. When a big storm brews up, it forces some of the birds high into the air to avoid the storm. When the small flock comes down, they find themselves over the sea. The wind carries them to a small island where they create a new home. The two populations are now sufficiently separate to prevent them from being inbred on a regular basis. Over time, the environmental factors affecting the two different populations will be different. Island birds may have to learn how to eat a new food, and may be subject to completely different weather patterns. Over time, this can even change the alleles present in the populations. But there are always more storms. In another storm, some birds may get transferred back to the mainland. Here they can again interbreed with the largest population, and reflow occurs as the new alleles from the island are introduced into the population. Likewise, if any birds go from the largest population to the island population, they will bring with them alleles selected for on the mainland. This gene flow will help to add diversity to the island population. Due to the founder effect, the birds on the island can not have all alleles on the mainland, and can benefit from reflow from the mainland. Mainland birds can also take advantage of the new alleles developed on the island. Bacteria are very interesting when it comes to gene flow. Unlike the rest of the organisms discussed in this article, bacteria are asexual. Without sexual reproduction, how do bacteria exchange genetic variation? Bacteria, and other asexual organisms, sometimes transmit genetic variation through alternative processes. These processes, such as horizontal gene transfer, allow DNA to pass between organisms without the need for sexual reproduction. In fact, a large part of the diversity that is present in life caused by these re-transfers millions of years ago. The chart below shows the gene flow between the different domains in life. Tree Of Life A horizontal line shows any place that gene flow allowed genetic variation to pass between the different populations of organisms. It is through this horizontal gene flow that eukaryotes were given pathways to both mitochondria and plastids such as chloroplasts. 1. Which of the following is NOT reflow? A. A bird flies to an island, and breeds with the birds there. He introduces new alleles. B. More hippos escape from the zoo and start a new population in New York City. C. A tiger raised in captivity is released into the wild, where he reproduces with a wild tiger. B is correct. The tiger raised in captivity is technically from a separate population than the wild tigers. In breeding with the wild tiger, he will introduce captive alleles into the population. These can be harmful or beneficial, only evolution can decide. The bird sample was covered in the article. Hippos, while they are founding a new population, do not experience reflow from another population. 2. What is the difference between gene flow and migration? A. Migration and gene flow describes the same process B. Migration can occur without reflow C. Reflow can occur without migration B is correct. Migration occurs when an organism physically moves into a new area or joins a new population. However, the gene flow occurs only when the populations are crossed. Even then, it is only considered gene flow if the populations exchange alleles and change the allele frequency of one or both populations. 3. Which of the following represents an advantage in the reflow to a population? A. Increased genetic diversity B. Increased genetic load C. Reduced adaptability A is correct. When animals migrate to a new population, they often bring with them beneficial alleles, which can be introduced to the new population. Sometimes, though, the migratory organisms bring unwanted alleles. Alleles that reduce adaptability and bring disease are considered a genetic strain that is unfavourable to a species. References Darwin, C., & Wallace, A. (1980). About the tendency of species to form varieties; and on the continuation of varieties and species by means of natural means of selection. In P. H. Barrett (Red.), *The Collected Papers by Charles Darwin* (Vol. 2, p. 3-18). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Feldhamer, G. A., Drickamer, L.C., Vessey, S. 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