DNA Barcoding of Commercial Cockroaches in Turkey

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ABSTRACT

Accurate species identification has become a precondition for accomplished biodiversity administration and further genetic research. Species acquaintance technics require molecular tools such as DNA barcoding as well as morphological identification for accurate identification. Particularly, the application of subunit I of the mitochondrial cytochrome c oxidase (COI) gene for DNA barcoding for insects has approved to be very useful in species acquaintance. The main aim of this study is to generate the first reference library of DNA barcode for cockroaches in Turkey using previously published data. As a result of the literature research, it has been observed that no study has been carried out on the DNA barcode of Turkish cockroaches. Therefore, in this study, we evaluated the advantage of DNA barcoding applied to two cockroach samples from Turkey for the first time. Our working samples implicated 10 DNA barcodes grounded on sequences created from our present study and 109 other DNA barcodes from BOLD. Various molecular analyzes including genetic distance-origin assessment (NeighborJoining and Maximum Likelihood trees) has been applied to accurately identify and describe species. In addition, Blaptica dubia (B. dubia) (Serville, 1838) and Nauphoeta cinerea (N. cinerea) (Olivier, 1789) have been reported as the first country records. It has been observed that reference libraries like BOLD are not yet sufficiently populated with COI sequences of Turkish cockroach species. In order for Turkish cockroach bio-assessment and biodiversity studies to benefit from the advantages of DNA barcoding, it is of great importance that cockroach inventories and taxonomic studies include DNA barcodes.

Keywords: Blaptica dubia, Nauphoeta cinerea, Cockroaches, DNA barcoding.

Introduction

The concept of using DNA in taxonomic identification of species was first proposed by Hebert and Gregory [1]. The concept of DNA barcoding means "small standard DNA sequence" that can be used to distinguish species from one another. It is a technique based on PCR amplification of selected specific regions in the genome and used for species identification. Since the first barcoding study, over 6000 barcoding articles have been published [2]. The idea of a barcoding zone where species could distinguish life forms from one another was quickly adopted. Later, barcoding studies expanded with the idea that other organelle regions, markers and associated primer sets could also be used for barcoding [3].

For instance MatK for plants [4] and rbcL [5]; ITS for fungi [6] gene regions were used as barcode gene regions. Zoological DNA barcoding continues to grow as a popular way to identify animal specimens by similarity comparison of cytochrome c oxidase subunit I (COI) sequences of the mitochondrial genome [7-10]. The reasons why the COI region is a good barcode indicator; it does not contain insertions and deletions, is easy to isolate, has great differences between species although conserved, has a high copy number, relatively few differences within the species, does not contain introns, and the range of mutation rates in different regions of the molecule [11].

Essentially, barcoding includes two key elements, each as indirectly vital as the other in allowing precise identification through molecular characterization. These are the query and the target. The query is normally represented by a partial sequence of COIs of unknown origin (approximately 650 base pairs), while the target is a sequence of COIs located in a predetermined (typically by morphology and preferably species level) database or other repository. The purpose of DNA barcoding is to help recognize the diversity of species in our ecosystem, and species-level identification is crucial to achieving this goal [12].

Recently, those who do DNA barcoding have tried to create large-scale, carefully selected storage databases such as the Barcode Of Life Data System (BOLD), [10] and it serves securely because barcodes in databases are created in coordination with GenBank (NCBI). In addition, DNA barcoding offers the most convenient method for detecting cryptic species [13, 14]. Moreover, differences at the molecular level also help to identify (marking) new species. Besides to the use of barcoding for sample identification, the fact that it can also be used in fields such as biosecurity, conservation biology, epidemiology and the food industry is proof that these studies should increase [12].

While the use of morphological data in the diagnosis and identification of insect species is a requirement in classical taxonomy, it is a time-consuming and species-specific method. However, DNA barcoding is a uniform
and practical techniques for insect species identification. It offers the opportunity to detect insect species at all developmental stages (egg, pupa, nymph, adult). It also works well in cases where morphological differentiation cannot be achieved. In addition, DNA barcoding is important for the rapid detection of invasive insect species. Diagnostic studies using the DNA barcoding approach have provided better solutions than other molecular techniques in terms of identifying new species and monitoring existing pest species. It is believed that the DNA barcoding technique can reliably resolve ecological and evolutionary connections in insect-host-plant relationships. In addition, DNA barcoding studies with flies are important in terms of human health and agriculture, especially in determining the vector-disease relationship [15].

Barcode data (COI gene region) has been entered for approximately 217,000 species from insect groups to date (September 2022) in the BOLD database and GenBank (NCBI) databases. Of these, about 76,000 species are in the order Lepidoptera, 39,000 species are in the order Hymenoptera and about 40,000 species are in the order Coleoptera. The BOLD system (http://www.barcodinglife.org) has data for 1436 species from the order Blattodea (October 2022).

Cockroaches are a highly diverse group of insects, with over 4000 species commonly found worldwide [16]. Because cockroaches are capable of living in habitats containing various amounts of toxic substances, including environmental pollutants, microbial toxins, insecticides, it has been proposed as a good experimental model to study stress responses and detoxification abilities [17]. In addition, because cockroaches often live close to humans, they constitute an important reservoir for human pathogens. Therefore, they are of medical importance due to their potential to spread bacteria and other pathogens [18, 19]. Especially N. cinerea (Olivier, 1789) is important in that it is used as a model for correlations between sexual selection, bacterial infections, toxicology studies and metabolic rate and adaptation studies [20, 21]. The aim of this study is to investigate the suitability of DNA barcodes of commercially purchased B. dubia (Serville, 1838) and N. cinerea (Olivier, 1789) to identify cockroaches in Turkey and to create the first reference library of DNA barcode for cockroach species in Turkey using previously published data.

Material and Methods

Sample statement

Adults of B. dubia and N. cinerea (Blattodea: Blaberidae) were commercially obtained from a producer in Antalya/Turkey in February 2020 (https://www.antalyacekirge.net/). B. dubia and N. cinerea adults were brought to the laboratory by controlled storage in the RNAlater® (Qiagen) that is RNA stabilization reagent and stored at freezer (-20°C) until used in further experiments.

Total Genomic DNA Isolation, PCR Amplification and Sequencing

Total genomic DNA isolation from insect tissues was carried out with the sing a commercial DNA extraction kit (PureLink Genomic DNA Mini Kit, Invitrogen, USA) in accordance with the manufacturer’s recommended protocol. Additional blank negative controls without tissue samples were used to exclude possible contamination during DNA isolation. All DNA samples were stored at -20 °C until further analysis. Universal COI barcode region primers, sequenced below, were used for amplification of the COI gene region [22].

LCO1490: 5’-GGTCAACAAATCATATAAGATATTGG-3’
HC02198: 5’-TAAACTTCAGGGTGACCAAAAAATCA-3’

With a final volume of 25 µL, the PCR mix contents are as follows: 2.5 µl 10X reaction buffer (KCL buffer), 1.25 µl (1.5 mM/µl) MgCl2, 10pmol of each of the primers, 0.5 µl (0.2 mM) dNTPs, 5 U Taq DNA polymerase, and 1 µl (50 ng/µl) template DNA. PCR conditions for cockroaches’ species included initial denaturation at 94 °C for 2 min; followed by 35 cycles of denaturation at 94 °C for 30 s, annealing at 51.3 °C for 1 min, extension at 72 °C for 2 min; and a final elongation at 72 °C for 10 min. PCR reactions were performed in a thermal cycler (T100, BioRad). Negative controls without a DNA template were included in all PCR runs. To ensure reproducibility and accuracy, PCR products were visualized by 1% agarose gel electrophoresis to assess success in amplification. By observing under UV transilluminator (Syngene), the presence of the expected amplicons was assessed by comparing with a standard DNA marker (Fermantas, EU).

After PCR analysis, DNA sequencing was conducted by Macrogen through BMLabosis company. Sequence operations were performed bidirectionally with the primers in the PCR process. The files with the .ab1 extension obtained after this process were checked by reciprocating the forward and reverse sequences in the Geneious Prime program. After the Contig files were created, false peaks were corrected and BLAST scan was performed. These unique gene sequences have been uploaded to NCBI and Barcode of Life Data System (BOLD) databases (Supplementary data). Genbank accession numbers and BOLD accession numbers are shown in Table 1.

Bioinformatics and Phylogenetic Data Analysis

COI/barcode region sequences were downloaded from 102 Blattodea orders from the NCBI gene bank to be used in phylogenetic analyzes and from 7 Mantodea orders to be used as outgroups. The accession numbers of the sequences are shown on the trees. A data set consisting of 119 sequences was obtained by combining all sequences. Sequence alignments were made in the MAFFT program. FASTA format was converted to NEXUS and PHYLIP formats by using ALTER alignment (http://www.sing-group.org/ALTER/) program so that the data can be used in different formats in phylogenetic analysis.
Mitochondrial COI gene barcode region was amplified by conventional PCR in five individuals of two cockroach species and PCR products were validated by running on 1% agarose gel. Band images were obtained in the correct gene region (~700bp) of all samples (Figure 1).

**The Properties of DNA Sequence**

The products obtained after PCR were sequenced and approximately 700 bp sequence was obtained, including the 658 bp barcode region. Barcode sequences of 696 bases for B. dubia (n=5) and 682 bases for N. cinerea (n=5) were created by editing the raw sequences in the Geneious program. These sequences were uploaded to the NCBI GenBank system and BOLD systems and their accession numbers are given in Table 1. No deletion, insertion or stop codons were noted in the newly amplified sequences, indicating that the amplified sequences specify functional mitochondrial COI sequences. Overall, 99.5% sequence similarity was accomplished during the BLAST searching in the NCBI database. NJ tree-based identification via BOLD demonstrated cockroach species clustering in our study with other similar species in the database of COI sequences. This allowed these species to be defined precisely at the species level. The BIN analysis includes 10 BIN sets that are compatible with other barcode data in BOLD (Table 1). At the species level, BINs were determined in agreement with the morphology-based identification. Among these BINs, 5 (55%) are specified as the other 5 (18%), meaning that BIN refers to only one species (Table 1). BIN analyzes showed that the mean intraspecific distance of BIN varied between 0.18% and 0.55%, the maximum specific distance 0.62% and 0.61%, and the mean genetic distance to nearest neighbour 7.41 and 13.86 for B. dubia and N. cinerea, respectively (Table 1). For an exact resulting of COI genetic similarities, we merged our newly obtained COI sequence with COI sequences from other cockroach species in the BOLD system. Taken together, our dataset for phylogenetic analyzes included 102 individuals belonging to the order Blattodea. The approximately 700 bp COI sequence was aligned after the indeterminate bases were trimmed. Overall, GC percentages were recorded as 35% and 38% for B. dubia and N. cinerea, respectively (Table 1). All COI sequences were obtained heavily AT biased, with an average A+T content of 62.7%. Estimates of Evolutionary Divergence Between Sequences are shown in Table 2 and 3. The percentage of bases that are the same among B. dubia sequences is min. 98%, while for N. cinerea this ratio is 97%.

In order to obtain a tree with the maximum likelihood approach, BIC (Bayesian Information Criterion) and AICc (Akaike Information Criterion, corrected) values were determined by modeltesting in the MEGA 11 program, and the model was determined accordingly. Based on this model, PhyML and RaxML trees were constructed using the heuristic search method in the Geneious program. While creating the tree, Bootstrap (1000 bootstrap) method was used based on the Maximum likelihood method. The reproducibility of the measurement and its ability to give reliable and accurate results were effective in the selection of the Bootstrap method. It also has applicability to all methods used for phylogenetic structuring and is able to assign probability-like repetition percentages to each possible part of the datasets in the branches of the resulting tree. The Bootstrap method was preferred because it creates many new matrices with original dimensions and makes it possible to find the best tree for the analysis of each one, and the reliability of the branches in the tree is considered to be directly proportional to the frequency of branch exposure. In addition to these, giving information about how well the node to which the bootstrap values belong is supported in terms of the model used in creating the phylogenetic tree has been another reason for the use of the method. Since it is aimed to establish a phylogenetic relationship in which phenetic characters are not used in the study; Maximum likelihood, which is a method that uses a clear criterion for the comparison of all possible trees and takes into account all possible trees in order to establish a relationship with the highest similarity in the trees created, to define and reveal the best one. The bootstrap discrimination power values are written on the branches. In addition, the evolutionary distance test based on the use of the Neighbor-joining evolution principle was carried out using the Kimura 2-Parameter (K2-P) model [23], which tests multiple displacements based on the characteristic that transitional nucleotide changes are higher than transversional changes in nature. All transitions and transversions are included in the nucleotide changes, and the value of “nst=6” is entered by choosing the gamma distribution for the variation between nucleotide positions.

**Results and Discussion**
The main purpose of this study is to show the compatibility of DNA barcodes for identification of cockroaches in Turkey and to create the first DNA barcode reference library for cockroaches in Turkey using previously published data. Tree-based identifying usage of ML and NJ techniques, particularly applicable to newly barcoded samples, demonstrated that both species were clearly determinable from all other species by the formation of distinct, non-overlapping COI clusters. When we compared species identification methods, our study showed that it is compatible with tree-based identification using ML and NJ techniques. When we examine the DNA barcoding studies on cockroaches in the literature, Evangelista et al., used molecular identification using the COI DNA barcode gene to confirm that the new invasive insect species, Periplaneta japonica Karny, 1908, which does not conform to the typical morphology of the American cockroach Periplaneta americana L [24]. In another study by Farah Haziqah et al., they conducted research on Blastocystis spp infections. They collected a total of 151 cockroaches, mostly nymph and adult stages, from various residential species in the Malaysian state of Perak and Selangor, and reported that approximately half of the scanned cockroach gut contents were positive and determined that this infection was closely related to the host stage and housing types using DNA barcoding [25]. In a review by Miskelly and Paiero, it was reported that DNA barcodes are available for more than 60% of the species belonging to the order Blattodea, Orthoptera, Dermaptera, and Phasmdida known to be found in Canada [26]. Liao et al., used COI DNA barcodes in Hainan Province, China to confirm sexual dimorphism occurring in the cockroach species, Laevifaciesquadrialata gen. et sp.

**Phylogenetic Analyses**

In order to obtain trees with the maximum likelihood approach in phylogenetic analyses, first the model was determined. Accordingly, the results obtained are as in Table 4. On the basis of hierarchical likelihood-ratio tests as implemented in Modelltest 3.0, the model General Time Reversible (GTR) model + Gamma distribution + invariable sites were used (GTR + G + I, -lnL = 16,941.61, P < 0.001, AIC = 34,374.77, BIC = 36,642.61). The gamma distribution and proportion of invariant sites were set as 0.77 and 0.42 (estimated by Modeltest), respectively (Table 4).

The K2P/NJ tree, COI gene datasets, clustered individuals of the same species with high bootstrapping values (Figure 2). In our present study, most of the morphologically identified species formed distinct COI clusters that were well differentiated and supported by high bootstrapping values (Figure 2). When we look at the information given to us by the phylogenetic tree created by the NJ method, we see three main clades except the outgroups. B. dubia and N. cinerea individuals are located in different clades (Figure 2). Considering the branch values in the tree, considering the entire Blattodea order, this tree shows the accuracy of the barcoding work, although the distinction between species is not perfect within the clades. ML trees (1000bootstrap) created with the Maximum likelihood approach have patterned to support the NJ tree (Figure 3, 4). It supports the distinction between the 3 main clades subsets. The selection of outgroups in the Mantodea order increased the success of all trees (Figure 2-4).

Our study demonstrates the first cockroach DNA barcode analysis in Turkey containing mitochondrial COI gene sequences. In present study, the general achievement rate of DNA sequencing and barcode creation varies between 81.3 and 94.8%. These values represent the percentage of sequencing quality of unclipped bases in a sequence (a total of 20 forward and reverse reads for 10 samples).

The main purpose of this study is to show the compatibility of DNA barcodes for identification of cockroaches in Turkey and to create the first DNA barcode reference library for cockroaches in Turkey using previously published data. Tree-based identifying usage of ML and NJ techniques, particularly applicable to newly barcoded samples, demonstrated that both species were clearly determinable from all other species by the formation of distinct, non-overlapping COI clusters. When we compared species identification methods, our study showed that it is compatible with tree-based identification using ML and NJ techniques. When we examine the DNA barcoding studies on cockroaches in the literature, Evangelista et al., used molecular identification using the COI DNA barcode gene to confirm that the new invasive insect species, Periplaneta japonica Karny, 1908, which does not conform to the typical morphology of the American cockroach Periplaneta americana L [24]. In another study by Farah Haziqah et al., they conducted research on Blastocystis spp infections. They collected a total of 151 cockroaches, mostly nymph and adult stages, from various residential species in the Malaysian state of Perak and Selangor, and reported that approximately half of the scanned cockroach gut contents were positive and determined that this infection was closely related to the host stage and housing types using DNA barcoding [25]. In a review by Miskelly and Paiero, it was reported that DNA barcodes are available for more than 60% of the species belonging to the order Blattodea, Orthoptera, Dermaptera, and Phasmdida known to be found in Canada [26]. Liao et al., used COI DNA barcodes in Hainan Province, China to confirm sexual dimorphism occurring in the cockroach species, Laevifaciesquadrialata gen. et sp.

### Table 1. Information of GenBank and BOLD database

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<th>Max Divergence in BIN (%)</th>
<th>Distance to NN (nearist neighbour) (%)</th>
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### Table 2. Estimates of evolutionary divergence between sequences of B. dubia

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### Table 3. Estimates of evolutionary divergence between sequences of N. cinerea

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nov [27]. Von Beeren et al., analyzed mitochondrial DNA barcodes in American cockroach (Periplaneta americana) by collecting 284 cockroach samples from various states of America. P. americana barcode sequences formed a distinct monophyletic lineage from other Periplaneta species, and they found three distinct P. americana haplogroups between groups. They suggested that this genetic pattern likely reflects multiple introductions from genetically different source populations and subsequent interbreeding in the invasive range [28]. A new species of 2021 Bundoksia luchenas from China has been identified and Li et al. performed molecular identification by DNA barcoding with mitochondrial COI data to reveal relationships between Bundoksia longissima sp. nov. populations. They reported details of the female genitalia in addition to the known external morphology and male genitalia of this new species found [29]. Considering all these studies, DNA barcoding is important in determining the biodiversity of a country, determining the disease vector relationship in anthropophilic species, molecular identification of agriculturally important insects, determining the place of cryptic species in classical taxonomy and identifying new species. The first DNA barcoding records from cockroaches to NCBI and BOLD databases were made with this study. Molecular identification of these commercially available species was carried out in this study. These records in the database form the basis for future COI barcoding studies. It has been observed that reference libraries like BOLD do not yet contain information on the COI sequences of Turkish cockroach species. In order for the bio-assessment and biodiversity studies of Turkish cockroaches to benefit from the advantages of DNA barcoding, it is of great importance that the inventories and taxonomic studies of cockroaches include DNA barcodes.

Table 4. Maximum Likelihood fits of 24 different nucleotide substitution models

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<td>0.167683358</td>
</tr>
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</table>

The table shows the AICc and lnL values for the different models, with the AICc and lnL values indicating the goodness of fit for each model.
Figure 2. K2P/Neighbour-Joining (NJ) tree with bootstrap support (1000 replicates) showing clustering of species for COI sequences. Red nodes are the sequences obtained in this study.
Figure 3. Mitochondrial COI barcode Maximum likelihood (PhyML) tree. In the tree obtained by bootstrap method, branch values are shown above. Sequences obtained in this study are shown in red and outgroup in blue.

Figure 4. Mitochondrial COI barcode Maximum likelihood (RaxML). Sequences obtained in this study are shown in red and outgroup in blue.
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Conflict of Interest

The authors state that did not have conflict of interests.

References