

Independent *FLC* Mutations as Causes of Flowering-Time Variation in *Arabidopsis thaliana* and *Capsella rubella*

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ABSTRACT *Capsella rubella* is an inbreeding annual forb closely related to *Arabidopsis thaliana*, a model species widely used for studying natural variation in adaptive traits such as flowering time. Although mutations in dozens of genes can affect flowering of *A. thaliana* in the laboratory, only a handful of such genes vary in natural populations. Chief among these are *FRIGIDA* (*FRI*) and *FLOWERING LOCUS C* (*FLC*). Common and rare *FRI* mutations along with rare *FLC* mutations explain a large fraction of flowering-time variation in *A. thaliana*. Here we document flowering time under different conditions in 20 *C. rubella* accessions from across the species' range. Similar to *A. thaliana*, vernalization, long photoperiods and elevated ambient temperature generally promote flowering. In this collection of *C. rubella* accessions, we did not find any obvious loss-of-function *FRI* alleles. Using mapping-by-sequencing with two strains that have contrasting flowering behaviors, we identified a splice-site mutation in *FLC* as the likely cause of early flowering in accession 1408. However, other similarly early *C. rubella* accessions did not share this mutation. We conclude that the genetic basis of flowering-time variation in *C. rubella* is complex, despite this very young species having undergone an extreme genetic bottleneck when it split from *C. grandiflora* a few tens of thousands of years ago.

FOR 2 decades, *Arabidopsis thaliana* has been the preeminent model for mechanistic studies of many aspects of plant development and physiology. In addition, it is extensively used to investigate the genetic basis of natural variation for adaptive traits such as the onset of flowering (Bergelson and Roux 2010; Koornneef and Meinke 2010; Weigel 2012). As in other species, flowering of *A. thaliana* is influenced by prolonged exposure to cold, which signals winter, by ambient temperature and long days, both of which indicate spring, as well as the age of the plant. An indication of the complexity of its regulation is that well

over 100 genes affecting flowering time in the laboratory have been identified through mutant analysis (Srikanth and Schmid 2011).

A. thaliana is found throughout much of the Northern hemisphere, with a native range that extends from North Africa to the Arctic Circle, and from the Atlantic coast of Western Europe to Central Asia. Accordingly, *A. thaliana* accessions show a wide range of flowering-time behaviors when grown in climate chambers or in common gardens (Gazzani *et al.* 2003; Lempe *et al.* 2005; Werner *et al.* 2005; Brachi *et al.* 2010; Li *et al.* 2010; Hancock *et al.* 2011; Méndez-Vigo *et al.* 2011; Strange *et al.* 2011). In contrast to the multitude of laboratory-induced mutations that change flowering behavior, genetic analysis has identified only a handful of loci responsible for flowering variation among natural accessions. Chief among these are *FRIGIDA* (*FRI*) and *FLOWERING LOCUS C* (*FLC*), with *FRI* repressing flowering by allowing expression of *FLC*. Vernalization stably reduces the *FLC* transcription, thus reversing the action of *FRI*. Together, allelic differences at *FRI* and *FLC* can account for more than half of flowering-time variation when *A. thaliana* accessions are grown in constant, strongly flower-promoting conditions and without vernalization (Johanson

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DNA sequences from this article have been deposited with the GenBank Library (JQ992992-JQ993051, JX003246-JX003248); short read data have been deposited with the European Nucleotide Archive (ENA) (ERP001651). Sequence variants have been deposited with Dryad (<http://datadryad.org>), doi:10.5061/dryad.4rq51.

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et al. 2000; Le Corre *et al.* 2002; Gazzani *et al.* 2003; Michaels *et al.* 2003; Lempe *et al.* 2005; Shindo *et al.* 2005; Werner *et al.* 2005; Atwell *et al.* 2010; Brachi *et al.* 2010; Li *et al.* 2010; Méndez-Vigo *et al.* 2011; Salomé *et al.* 2011; Strange *et al.* 2011).

The ancestors of the two extant genera *Arabidopsis* and *Capsella* separated from each other about twice as long ago as *A. thaliana* split from other species in the genus *Arabidopsis* (Koch and Kiefer 2005). Reduced genetic diversity and the pattern of allele sharing suggest that *Capsella rubella* was founded about 30,000 to 50,000 years ago when a single *C. grandiflora* individual became self-compatible. The general picture is that most *C. rubella* alleles can be easily found in the *C. grandiflora* population and that loci typically have only one or two different major alleles (Foxe *et al.* 2009; Guo *et al.* 2009). Compared with *C. grandiflora*, *C. rubella* has a much wider distribution (Hurka and Neuffer 1997), which raises the question of how *C. rubella* could adapt so seemingly rapidly to a much wider range of environmental conditions than encountered by the genetically much more diverse *C. grandiflora*. In addition to new mutations, recombination could expose new epistatic interactions, allowing selection to act on standing variation (Barrett and Schluter 2008).

To address the extent and genetic basis of variation in a model adaptive trait, we have examined flowering-time variation in a set of *C. rubella* accessions. Using mapping-by-sequencing, we have identified a rare mutation in an *FLC* homolog as being responsible for rapid flowering in one particularly early accession. We demonstrate by transformation in *A. thaliana* that a splice site mutation greatly reduces the flowering-repressing activity of this allele.

Materials and Methods

Plant material

The *C. rubella* accessions studied (Table 1) have been described (Guo *et al.* 2009); they included the reference accessions MTE, for which a draft genome sequence has been produced by the U.S. Department of Energy Joint Genome Institute (DOE-JGI). The *A. thaliana* strain in the Col-0 background with the *FRI*^{SP2} and *flc-3* alleles has been described (Lee *et al.* 1993; Michaels and Amasino 1999).

For flowering-time measurements, siblings from the same maternal family were used. Seeds were stratified for 7 days at 4° in 0.1% agar. For each treatment, we sowed six plants, most of which survived. Trays were moved to random positions in the growth rooms every 2 days to reduce positional effects. Flowering time was measured as total leaf number (TLN) and days to flowering (DTF).

Mapping-by-sequencing

Early flowering F₂ plants from a cross of accession 1408 and the reference accession MTE were selected, and pooled genomic DNA was sequenced to 30-fold coverage on the Illumina GenomeAnalyzer Ix platform with 101-bp paired-end

reads (59 million alignable reads, 11 Gb of sequence). SHORE (Ossowski *et al.* 2008) was used to discover single-nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) in the pool by alignment to a preliminary assembly of the MTE genome (CR_stitch_Feb15th.fasta) kindly provided by Jeremy Schmutz (DOE-JGI and HudsonAlpha), Stephen Wright and Khaled Hazzouri (University of Toronto), and Adrian Platts (McGill University). For annotation of variants, we used the *Capsella* v. 1.0 gene set released with Phytozome v8.0 (<http://www.phytozome.net/capsella/>). Using SHORE's scoring matrix approach optimized for heterozygous SNP detection and stringent filtering (requiring uniqueness of reads, minimum 10× coverage, minimum 20% allele frequency, SHORE SNP quality score >25), 354,080 SNPs could be identified (Supporting Information, Table S2). These SNPs were used as markers in SHOREmap (Schneeberger *et al.* 2009) to identify genomic regions with an excess of homozygous 1408 alleles. The final mapping interval was defined as having an allele frequency of at least 90% on both sides for 40 contiguous SNPs and fewer than 10 contiguous SNPs with allele frequency below 50% within this region.

Targeted DNA sequence analysis

Individual young leaves were collected for DNA extraction using the cetyltrimethyl ammonium bromide (CTAB) method (Doyle and Doyle 1987), followed by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) amplification with Pfu polymerase (Fermentas, St. Leon-Rot, Germany). Products from two independent reactions were mixed and directly Sanger sequenced on an ABI3730XL (Applied Biosystems, Foster City, CA). Primers for *FRI* were designed based on sequence of a *C. rubella* BAC (GenBank accession no. JX003248), and a 2.3-kb fragment covering the entire transcription unit was sequenced. Primers for *FLC* were designed based on *A. thaliana* genome sequence, and a 5.8-kb fragment encompassing most of the first exon through the 3' UTR was sequenced. Sequences were assembled and inspected with Lasergene Seqman (DNASTAR, Madison, WI). See Table S1 for oligonucleotide primers.

Sequences were aligned using ClustalX v. 1.81 (Thompson *et al.* 1997), and alignments were refined manually. All polymorphic sites were individually confirmed again based on the original traces. DnaSP v. 4.10.9 (Rozas *et al.* 2003) was used to perform population analyses: levels of nucleotide diversity per site (π) (Nei 1987).

Expression analysis

RNA was extracted from 2-week-old plants with the Plant RNeasy kit (Qiagen, Hilden, Germany) or with the TRIzol reagent (Invitrogen, Carlsbad, CA) and treated with RNase-free DNase I (Fermentas). Two to four micrograms of RNA was reverse transcribed using RevertAid first-strand cDNA Synthesis kit (Fermentas). PCRs were carried on in the presence of SYBR Green (Invitrogen, Carlsbad, CA) in 20- μ l reactions. Amplification was monitored in real time with the Opticon continuous fluorescence detection system (MJ

Table 1 Flowering times of *C. rubella* accessions

Accession	Country of origin	Latitude (°) ^a	Longitude (°) ^a	Elevation (m)	16LD			16LDv			23LD			23SD				
					n	Range	Mean	Median	n	Range	Mean	Median	n	Range	Mean	Median	n	Range
690	Esp	+36.15	-5.58	50	6	65-74	71.8	74.0	6	32-35	34.5	35.0	—	—	—	—	—	—
697	Ita	N/A	N/A	950	6	56-56	56.0	56.0	6	35-35	35.0	35.0	36-40	38.7	39.0	63-71	68.7	69.5
698	Ita	N/A	N/A	1180	6	70-74	72.0	72.0	6	49-49	49.0	49.0	—	—	—	—	—	—
762	Gre	+37.58	+23.43	N/A	6	72-72	72.0	72.0	6	32-32	32.0	32.0	—	—	—	—	—	—
844	Gre	N/A	N/A	200	6	60-64	62.5	63.0	6	37-37	37.0	37.0	—	—	—	—	—	—
879	Gre	+35.29	+24.42	1200	6	51-51	51.0	51.0	6	32-32	32.0	32.0	28-29	28.3	28.0	63-77	69.8	69.5
907	Gre	+39.40	+19.48	40	6	61-61	61.0	61.0	5	51-51	51.0	51.0	—	—	—	—	—	—
925	Gre	+39.40	+20.51	450	6	98-100	98.3	98.0	6	51-51	51.0	51.0	—	—	—	—	—	—
1204	Esp	+28.19	-16.34	1000	6	72-74	72.3	72.0	6	37-37	37.0	37.0	—	—	—	—	—	—
1207	Esp	+28.19	-16.34	1100	6	56-58	57.7	58.0	6	29-29	29.0	29.0	70-85	77.3	78.0	58-103	75.2	70.5
1208	Esp	+28.19	-16.34	100	6	51-56	53.5	53.5	6	29-29	29.0	29.0	70-95	78.5	74.5	68-106	88.7	87.5
1209	Esp	+28.19	-16.34	1200	6	70-72	70.3	70.0	6	32-32	32.0	32.0	—	—	—	—	—	—
1215	Esp	+28.19	-16.19	0	6	60-65	62.3	63.0	6	27-29	28.7	29.0	44-67	56.2	59.5	103	103	103
1311	Fra	+42.53	-0.06	N/A	6	70-81	76.5	77.0	6	27-29	28.0	28.0	—	—	—	—	—	—
1377	Arg	-34.40	-58.30	10	6	65-70	66.7	65.0	6	32-32	32.0	32.0	36-72	48.6	36.0	52-91	70.0	68.0
1408	Gre	+35.29	+24.42	170	6	51-52	51.3	51.0	6	29-29	29.0	29.0	65-72	68.0	67.5	56-56	56.0	56.0
1453	Ita	+43.28	+11.02	N/A	6	74-77	75.5	75.5	6	42-44	43.0	43.0	60-79	71.5	79.0	77	77.0	77.0
1482	Aus	-31.56	+115.50	N/A	6	77-79	77.7	77.0	6	32-35	33.0	32.0	—	—	—	—	—	—
MTE	Ita	N/A	N/A	N/A	6	100-106	102.5	103.0	6	42-44	43.3	44.0	—	—	—	—	—	—
RIAH	Ita	N/A	N/A	N/A	6	70-74	71.3	71.0	6	32-32	32.0	32.0	—	—	—	—	—	—

N/A, information not available.

^a + or - indicates Northern and Southern latitudes, and Eastern and Western longitudes.

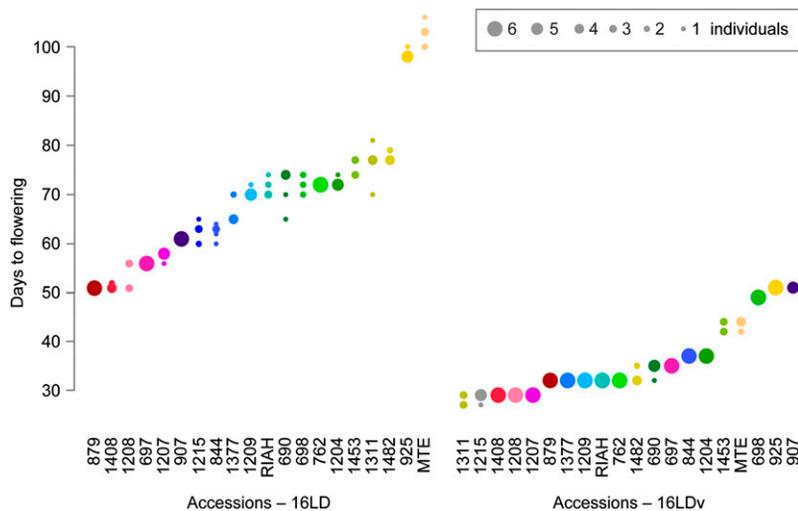


Figure 1 Distribution of flowering time among 20 *C. rubella* accessions in 16LD and 16LDv. Note the differences in scale. Accessions, which are ordered by mean flowering time in each condition, are color coded for comparison. For each accession, the number of individuals that flowered on a given day is indicated.

Research, Reno, NV). Threshold cycles (cT) were based on a reaction reaching a specific fluorescence intensity in the log-linear phase of the amplification curve.

For the analysis of splice forms, a fragment of about 200 bp was amplified by PCR from pooled complementary DNA (cDNA) obtained from four primary transformants for each transgenic line and digested for 2 hr with 1 μ l of Fast Digest *Bst*XI (Fermentas). See Table S1 for oligonucleotide primers.

Transgenic lines

FLC genomic fragments covering the entire open reading frame and introns were amplified using Phusion polymerase (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA). These fragments were placed under the control of the constitutive CaMV 35S promoter in the pGREEN-derived (Hellens *et al.* 2000) vector pFK210 and introduced into different *A. thaliana* genotypes by *Agrobacterium tumefaciens*-mediated transformation (Weigel and Glazebrook 2002).

Statistical analyses

Mean, median, and standard deviation were calculated using Microsoft Excel (Microsoft, Redmond, WA). Differences between groups in Figure 7B were tested by ANOVA using Tukey's test, as implemented in Excel. Spearman's

rank-order correlation coefficient r_s was determined in R (<http://www.r-project.org/>).

Results

Flowering-time variation in *C. rubella*

We analyzed the response of *C. rubella* accessions to long-day (16 hr light) and short-day (8 hr light) photoperiods and to vernalization for 6 weeks at 4° in short-day photoperiods, after seeds had been germinated on soil in 16°. Twenty accessions were grown in 16° long days without vernalization (16LD) and in 16° long days with vernalization (16LDv) (Table 1). A subset of eight accessions was grown in two 23° environments with contrasting photoperiods, long days (23LD), and short days (23SD) (Table 1). As in *A. thaliana* (Koornneef *et al.* 1991; Gazzani *et al.* 2003; Lempe *et al.* 2005), DTF and TLN were correlated (16LD, $r_s = 0.62$, $P = 0.003$; 16LDv, $r_s = 0.80$, $P \ll 0.001$). Below, we report only DTF data.

Accessions flowered on average much earlier after vernalization (Figure 1). In 16LD, onset of flowering ranged from 51 to 103 days (mean, 69; median, 71). In 16LDv, it ranged from 28 to 51 days (mean, 36; median, 33). While

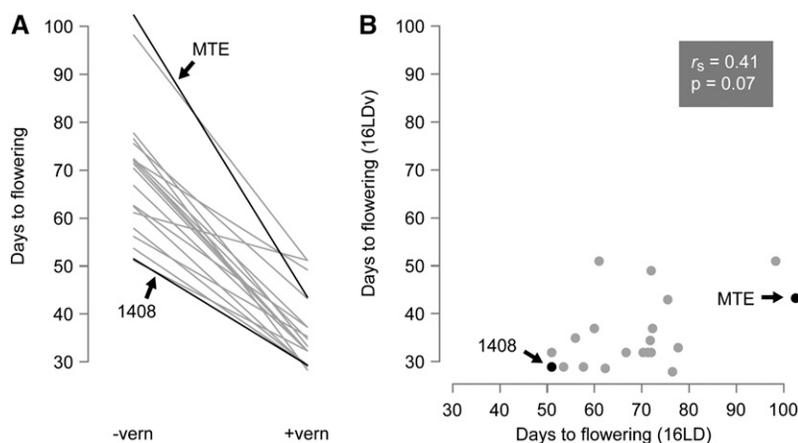


Figure 2 Relationship of flowering-time variation and vernalization response. (A) Reaction norms of flowering time in 16LD without and with vernalization (-vern, +vern). (B) Correlation of mean flowering times with and without vernalization; same data as in Figure 2A.

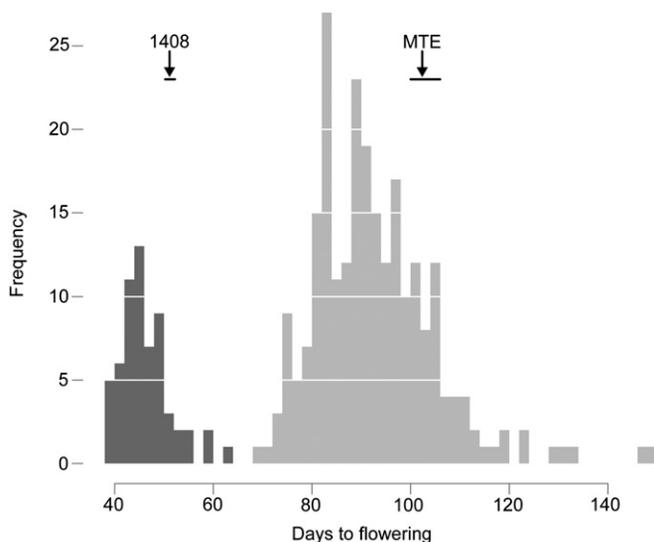


Figure 3 Flowering time in 16LD among 305 F_2 individuals from the MTE \times 1408 cross. Average and range of flowering times of grandparents are indicated. Darker shading indicates the 61 individuals used for bulked segregant mapping.

all accessions responded to vernalization, there was considerable variation in the extent of the response, as seen most clearly in a reaction norm representation (Figure 2A). Late-flowering accessions tended to respond more strongly to vernalization than early flowering ones, but DTF variation in 16LD explained about 17% of DTF variation in 16LDv (Figure 2B). In addition to vernalization, both longer photoperiods and increased ambient temperature tended to accelerate flowering (Table 1).

***FLC* underlies a major effect locus for flowering time**

The reference accession MTE, from Italy, was the last accession to flower in 16LD, after 103 days on average, which was twice as late as accession 1408, from Greece (Table 1). Following vernalization in 16LDv, MTE was still late, flowering after 43 days, but it was no longer the last accession to flower. A robust vernalization response was also seen in accession 1408, which flowered in 16LDv after 29 days, as did several other accessions.

To begin to investigate the genetic basis of flowering-time variation in *C. rubella*, we crossed the late-flowering accession MTE with the early flowering accession 1408. In an F_2 population, about one-quarter of plants flowered early, similar to 1408, and three-quarters flowered late, similar to MTE (Figure 3), suggesting that a major, recessively acting gene controlled early flowering of accession 1408.

MTE is the reference accession for the ongoing *C. rubella* genome sequencing effort (collaboration with Jeremy Schmutz from the Joint Genome Institute of the U.S. Department of Energy and the HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology, Stephen Wright and Khaled Hazzouri of the University of Toronto, and Adrian Platts of McGill University). The MTE draft genome sequence in turn enables the discovery of polymorphisms between MTE and 1408, including polymorphisms that

are potentially causal for the flowering-time differences between the two accessions. With this rationale in mind, we selected from 305 F_2 plants of the MTE \times 1408 cross 61 individuals that had flowered after 65 days in 16 LD (Figure 3 and Table S3). We extracted a single pool of genomic DNA from these plants and sequenced the pooled DNA on the Illumina GAIIx platform.

Sequencing reads were aligned to a preliminary genome assembly of *C. rubella* MTE. The proportion of sequence reads that could not be mapped on the MTE genome was 7.3%, which is similar to what we have found with *A. thaliana* accessions (Cao *et al.* 2011). As described (Schneeberger *et al.* 2009), polymorphisms that can be used for genetic mapping, including SNPs, can be identified directly from F_2 data, if one allows for both homo- and heterozygous SNPs. Accordingly, SNPs characteristic for 1408 were discovered from the bulked segregant data. These SNPs were then used to identify regions enriched for either 1408 or MTE SNPs (Schneeberger *et al.* 2009). Rearrangements and indels were not considered in this step. With this strategy, we identified on chromosome 6 of the genome assembly a region of 333 kb that contained over 600 positions where over 90% of reads supported a nonreference polymorphism (Figure 4 and Table S4). The overall density of 2.0 SNPs/kb was close to the genome-wide average of 2.3 SNPs/kb.

Using all reads from the bulked segregant pools that mapped to this region, we annotated 1408 variants relative to the *Capsella* v. 1.0 gene set (<http://www.phytozome.net/capsella/>), which contained 90 protein-coding genes in the final mapping interval. The algorithms implemented in SHORE v. 0.8 (Ossowski *et al.* 2008) and pindel v. 0.2.4s (Ye *et al.* 2009) detected 652 SNPs, 184 small indels of length 1 to 3 bp, 25 longer structural variants (SVs) of length 7 to 679 bp, and 109 highly variable regions, recognizable as simultaneous insertions and deletions (Table S4). Copy number variants (CNVs) and inversions were not detected. Fifty-one SNPs were predicted to cause nonsynonymous amino acid substitutions in 35 genes, with one SNP altering a stop codon. Five SVs affected the coding regions of four genes, and 14 highly variable regions affected the coding regions of 11 genes. Close to the middle of the final mapping interval from position 2.968 to 3.301 Mb, at position 3.112 to 3.120 Mb, was the only *C. rubella* homolog of *A. thaliana* *FLC*, a well-known flowering repressor (Sheldon *et al.* 1999; Michaels *et al.* 2003). None of the other genes in this interval were closely related to homologs of known flowering-time genes.

In *A. thaliana*, there is large variation in *FLC* levels, and accessions with weak *FLC* alleles often have very little *FLC* expression (Lempe *et al.* 2005; Shindo *et al.* 2005). Variation in *FLC* expression was more moderate in *C. rubella* accessions. MTE had the highest *FLC* levels, consistent with it being the latest accession, but accession 1408 did not have the least *FLC* expression (Figure 5A). Across all accessions, there was no clear correlation of *FLC* expression and flowering in unvernallized plants (Figure 5A), but a modest

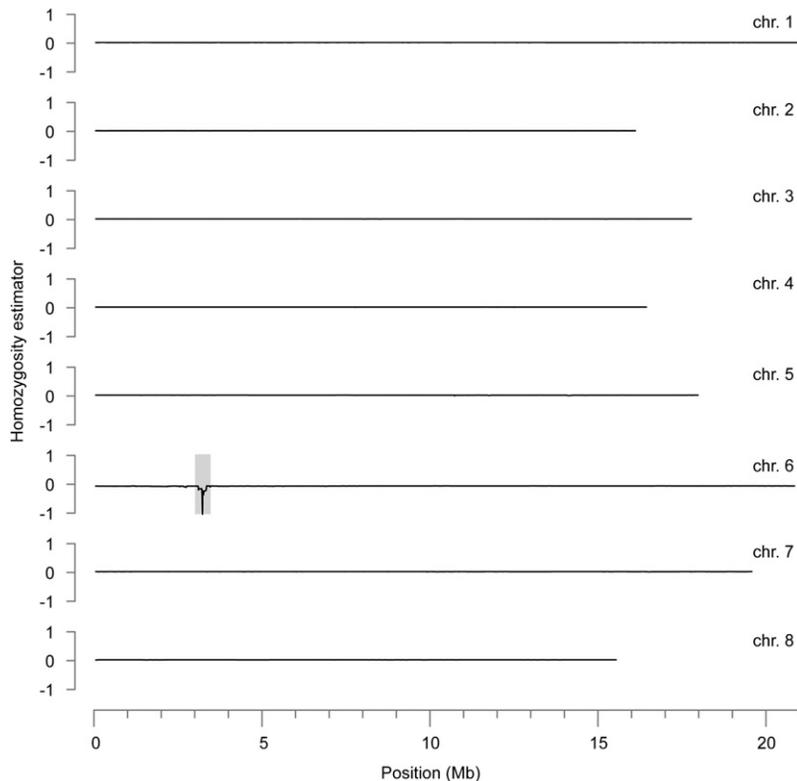


Figure 4 SHOREmap analysis of early flowering QTL. The homozygosity estimator is 0 at even allele frequencies of both parents, 1 when homozygous for late-flowering accession MTE, and -1 when homozygous for early flowering accession 1408 (Schneeberger *et al.* 2009). Sliding windows of 100 kb with step size 10 kb were used. The region of chromosome 6 enriched at over 600 markers indicative of 1408 is indicated in gray. The eight largest scaffolds of a preliminary *C. rubella* genome assembly are shown, corresponding to the majority of the eight chromosomes.

correlation of *FLC* and vernalization response (Figure 5B). As expected, expression of *FLC* was reduced after vernalization, although to quite a different extent in different accessions, which is clearly seen in a reaction norm representation (Figure 5C).

Because it was unclear whether differences of *FLC* expression were likely to be the cause for earlier flowering of accession 1408 compared to MTE, we compared the *FLC* DNA sequence of the two accessions. There is an ACAG-to-AGAG substitution at the very end of intron 6 that shifts the splice acceptor site so that two bases are inserted into the *FLC* mRNA of accession 1408, as revealed by sequencing of cDNA. This leads to a frame shift and truncation of the open

reading frame, removing the last 35 of 198 amino acids (Figure 6).

To test whether this polymorphism could indeed be responsible for the flowering-time difference between MTE and 1408, we introduced both *FLC* alleles into *A. thaliana* *FRI^{Sf-2} flc-3* plants. Because we did not know the extent of regulatory sequences in *C. rubella*, we expressed the *FLC* alleles under the control of the constitutive cauliflower mosaic virus 35S promoter. The MTE allele strongly delayed flowering, as did overexpression of a wild-type *FLC* copy from *A. thaliana*, and both were similarly effective in repressing the flowering activators *FT* and *SOC1* (Figure 7, A and B). In contrast, the 1408 allele delayed flowering by only

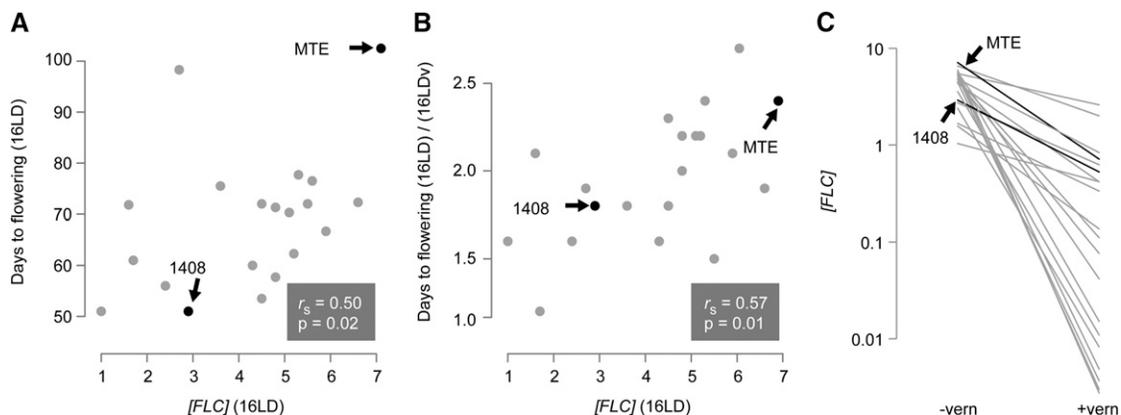


Figure 5 Relationship between *FLC* expression measured by qRT-PCR and flowering time of accessions. (A) Correlation between *FLC* expression and flowering without vernalization. The lowest value was arbitrarily set to 1. (B) Correlation between *FLC* expression and vernalization response. (C) Effect of vernalization (vern) on *FLC* expression. The difference between *FLC* and *BETA-TUBULIN*, ΔcT , was used to calculate *FLC* expression, assuming PCR efficiency was 100% for both genes. Two biological replicates, each with two technical replicates, were analyzed.

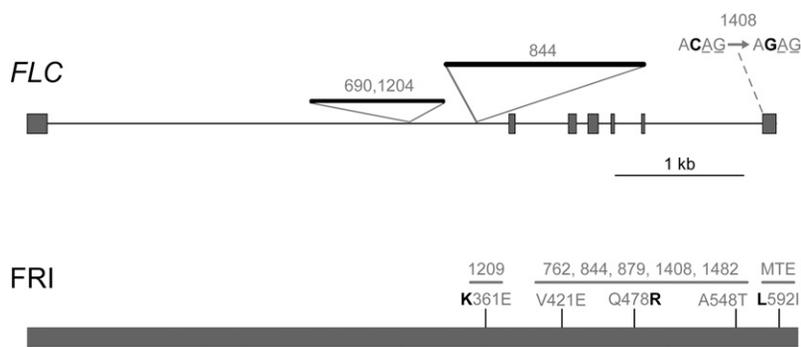


Figure 6 Sequence variation of *FLC* and *FRI* in *C. rubella*. In addition to the *FLC* point mutation at the end of the last intron in accession 1408, two insertions that are segregating in the population, are shown. Thin lines indicate introns; thick lines protein-coding sequences. The C → G substitution creates a new splice acceptor site. PCR amplification and sequencing of cDNA confirmed that 2 bases are inserted into the *FLC* mRNA in accession 1408. There was no apparent heterogeneity in the sequence, suggesting that the canonical splice form, if it exists at all, is rare. For *FRI*, amino acid residues that appear to be ancestral based in several Brassicaceae (Irwin *et al.* 2012) are shown in bold-face type; numbers indicate position in the peptide sequence. Shaded numbers indicate affected accessions.

a few days, from 25.2 to 29.6 days, and it had a much smaller effect on *FT* and *SOC1* expression (Figure 7, A and B). *FLC* transcript levels were similar in all three transgenic lines (Figure 7B). An analysis of cDNA obtained from plants expressing either the MTE or 1408 allele showed that the 1408 allele produced only the misspliced version of the *FLC* transcript (Figure 7C).

FLC and variation in flowering-time and vernalization response

Several other accessions flowered as early as 1408 both with and without vernalization (Table 1 and Figure 2). A survey of *FLC* sequences, however, did not reveal any additional accessions with the 1408 mutation. Compared to *C. grandiflora*, there were very few *FLC* polymorphisms in *C. rubella*. All *FLC* sequences from *C. rubella* clustered together and formed a group that was distinct from *C. grandiflora* *FLC* alleles (Guo *et al.* 2009). This strongly suggested that the 1408 mutation arose very recently, after the split of *C. rubella* and *C. grandiflora*.

In *A. thaliana*, large insertions into the first intron are a common cause for reduced *FLC* activity (Gazzani *et al.*

2003; Michaels *et al.* 2003; Liu *et al.* 2004; Lempe *et al.* 2005; Shindo *et al.* 2005; Strange *et al.* 2011; Sánchez-Bermejo *et al.* 2012). Three *C. rubella* accessions had over 1-kb-long insertions into the first intron, but none of them stood out as being particularly early flowering or having a particularly weak vernalization response (Table 1 and Figure 6). We also surveyed the accessions for changes in the open reading frame of *FRI*, which is located in a region syntenic to chromosome 5 of *A. thaliana* (Figure S1) (Irwin *et al.* 2012). The open reading frames were intact in all 20 accessions. However, there were several nonsynonymous substitutions (Figure 6), and π was much higher for *FRI* than for *FLC* (0.004 compared with 0.0004).

Discussion

Flowering-time variation in the Brassicaceae

Apart from disease resistance, flowering time is perhaps the most comprehensively studied adaptive trait in *A. thaliana*. In both laboratory and field conditions, there is a wide range in the onset of flowering. Much of this variation can be

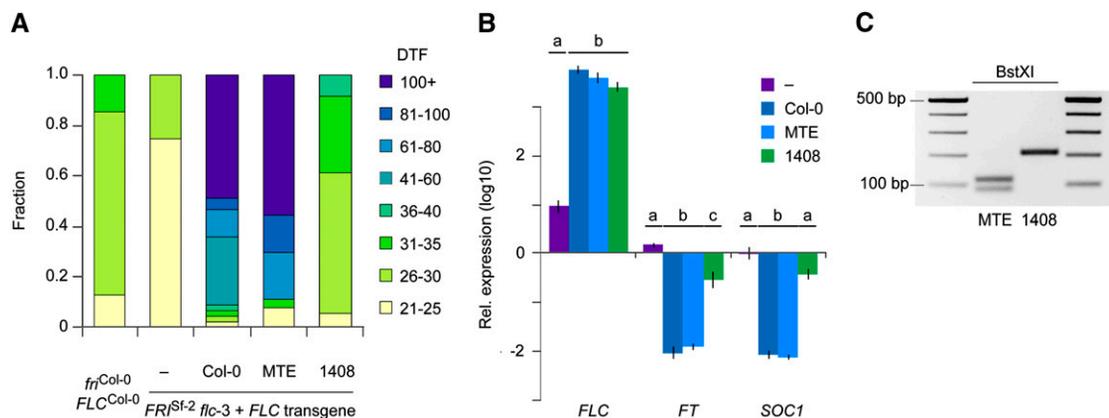


Figure 7 Functional analysis of *C. rubella* *FLC* alleles in *A. thaliana*. (A) Flowering time of plants grown in 23LD. The three left strains are controls. *fri*^{Col-0} *FLC*^{Col-0} is the Col-0 reference strain, which carries a functional *FLC* allele, but a naturally inactive *FRI* allele (Johanson *et al.* 2000). *FRI*^{Sf-2} *flc-3* carries an introgression of the functional *FRI* allele from the Sf-2 accession and has also an induced mutation at the *FLC* locus (Michaels and Amasino 1999). The three right strains are transgenic lines, expressing the indicated *FLC* allele from the constitutive CaMV 35S promoter. The effect of the *C. rubella* MTE allele is similar to that of the fully functional *A. thaliana* Col-0 allele. $n \geq 30$. (B) Expression of *FLC* and of two downstream flowering regulators in transgenic and non-transgenic *FRI*^{Sf-2} *flc-3* plants, determined by qRT-PCR using the $2^{-\Delta\Delta CT}$ method. Expression levels were normalized to those of wild-type Col-0 plants. Averages for four individuals for controls and eight for transgenic lines are shown. Error bars indicate standard errors of the mean. Differences between groups are significant at $P < 0.05$. (C) cDNA analysis of MTE and 1408 alleles expressed in transgenic *A. thaliana* plants. The splicing variant generated by the SNP in 1408 abolishes a *Bst*XI restriction site in the amplified cDNA fragment.

explained by allelic variation at *FRI* along with *FLC* and its homologs. Consistent with the role of *FRI* and *FLC* in repressing flowering in unvernalsized plants, much of the flowering variation disappears after vernalization (recently reviewed by Weigel 2012).

Because allelic variation at *FRI* and *FLC* is so common in *A. thaliana*, their homologs have been prime candidates for loci affecting flowering time in other Brassicaceae (Axelsson *et al.* 2001; Tadege *et al.* 2001; Lou *et al.* 2007; Zhao *et al.* 2010a; Uptmoor *et al.* 2012). There is evidence for *FRI* or *FLC* homologs being responsible for quantitative trait loci (QTL) affecting flowering in *A. lyrata*, *Brassica napus*, and *B. rapa*, with the situation being less clear for *B. oleracea* (Schranz *et al.* 2002; Pires *et al.* 2004; Long *et al.* 2007; Okazaki *et al.* 2007; Razi *et al.* 2007; Kuittinen *et al.* 2008; Zhao *et al.* 2010b; Wang *et al.* 2011). While the potential molecular causes for a change in *FLC* function in these cases remain uncertain, splice-site mutations in *FLC* homologs have been linked to earlier flowering in *B. rapa* and *Capsella bursa-pastoris* (Slotte *et al.* 2009; Yuan *et al.* 2009; Hu *et al.* 2011). However, in all these cases there has been little direct proof for a causal role of *FLC* or *FRI* alleles in flowering-time variation. An induced mutation in the *FLC* homolog *PERPETUAL FLOWERING 1 (PEP1)* changes the perennial flowering habit of *Arabis alpina*. Its response to vernalization is different from the one of *A. thaliana FLC*, pointing to diversification in the function of *FLC* homologs in the Brassicaceae (Wang *et al.* 2009).

Flowering-time variation in *C. rubella*

Capsella is more distantly related to *A. thaliana* than the other *Arabidopsis* species, but more closely than *Brassica* and *Arabis*. *Capsella* is a small genus with only five species, including one tetraploid species, *C. bursa-pastoris*, one of the most frequent and widespread cosmopolitan weeds (Hurka and Neuffer 1997; Ceplitis *et al.* 2005; Hurka *et al.* 2012). The four diploid species include the self-compatible *C. rubella*, which originated only a few tens of thousands of years ago from the self-incompatible *C. grandiflora* (Fuxe *et al.* 2009; Guo *et al.* 2009). *C. grandiflora* has a restricted distribution, in Western Greece and Albania and, rarely, Northern Italy, while *C. rubella* has spread across the Mediterranean, and followed European settlers into the New World and Australia (Hurka and Neuffer 1997). In this work, we have documented flowering-time variation in *C. rubella* under laboratory conditions. Similar to *A. thaliana*, flowering of many *C. rubella* accessions is accelerated by vernalization, longer photoperiods, and increased ambient temperature. As in *A. thaliana*, later-flowering *C. rubella* accessions tend to respond more strongly to vernalization than early flowering ones (Lempe *et al.* 2005; Shindo *et al.* 2005). However, the correlation between flowering-time and vernalization response, or between flowering-time and *FLC* expression, is less pronounced in *C. rubella*. This could be due to biased sampling, or it might reflect functional differences between *C. rubella* and *A. thaliana*. Given the different ranges of the

two species, the second hypothesis is well worth further testing.

FRI alleles with premature stop codons explain a large fraction of flowering-time variation in *A. thaliana* (Le Corre *et al.* 2002; Lempe *et al.* 2005; Shindo *et al.* 2005; Werner *et al.* 2005; Atwell *et al.* 2010). In *C. rubella*, we did not find any potential loss-of-function allele at *FRI*, even though the *C. rubella* accessions surveyed flower faster than many *A. thaliana* accessions. An indication for the functionality of *FRI* is that all *C. rubella* accessions analyzed responded to vernalization. In *A. thaliana*, structural variation at *FLC* itself appears to be often responsible for differences in the magnitude of the vernalization response (Michaels *et al.* 2003; Lempe *et al.* 2005; Shindo *et al.* 2006; Sánchez-Bermejo *et al.* 2012). In *C. rubella*, we did not observe an obvious correlation between structural variation at *FLC* and vernalization response.

Flowering-time variation through independent *FLC* mutations

The reference accession MTE turned out to be one of the latest-flowering *C. rubella* accessions we surveyed. The segregation pattern in the F₂ of a cross to one of the earliest flowering accession in our collection, 1408, suggested the presence of a single major effect QTL responsible for much of the flowering-time difference between the two accessions. To rapidly fine map this QTL, we exploited recent advances in mapping-by-sequencing methods that do not require separate sequence analysis of the parental genomes (Schneeberger *et al.* 2009). We found that the gene most likely to be responsible for the QTL is the *C. rubella* homolog of *FLC*. While we cannot exclude that other genes in the interval contribute to this QTL, none of the 89 other genes in the mapping interval is closely related to a known flowering-time regulator. Moreover, we note that it is difficult to draw firm conclusions about the quantitative differences in the activity of the MTE and 1408 alleles from the *A. thaliana* experiments, since there might be additional *trans*- and *cis*-factors that modify *FLC* activity between the two species.

The likely causal polymorphism in *FLC* affects splicing, which in turn removes the C-terminal 35 amino acids. That most of the open reading frame remains intact may explain why accession 1408 retains a robust vernalization response. In *A. thaliana*, reduction- or loss-of-function alleles of *FLC* either have insertions in the first, large intron, or they carry premature stop codons that can lead to alternative splicing (Michaels *et al.* 2003; Liu *et al.* 2004; Lempe *et al.* 2005; Shindo *et al.* 2005; Werner *et al.* 2005; Méndez-Vigo *et al.* 2011; Sánchez-Bermejo *et al.* 2012). However, alleles with splice-site mutations have, to our knowledge, not been described in *A. thaliana*. It is striking that *FLC* alleles with splice-site mutations have now been found in three other species, in *B. rapa*, *C. bursa-pastoris*, and *C. rubella* (this work; Slotte *et al.* 2009; Yuan *et al.* 2009; Hu *et al.* 2011).

Although several other accessions show a similar flowering behavior as in 1408, the 1408 *FLC* allele is not shared by

any other accession. Moreover, the pattern of polymorphisms in *FLC* alleles suggests that the 1408 mutation arose only after the split from *C. grandiflora* (Figure S2). Because of the strong recent bottleneck experienced by *C. rubella* (Foxe *et al.* 2009; Guo *et al.* 2009), there is only limited standing variation in this species, and new mutations likely play an important role in the adaptation to different environments. There is precedence for *FLC*, and to a lesser extent, *FRI*, loss-of-function alleles being rare. Although few individual loss-of-function alleles segregate at appreciable frequency in *A. thaliana* flowering, collectively, such alleles are quite frequent. There is good evidence that the more common *FRI* loss-of-function alleles have increased in frequency due to selection for early flowering (Toomajian *et al.* 2006), a conclusion that is supported by experimental selection experiments (Scarcelli and Kover 2009). In animals, most cases of parallel evolution are from closely related species, but there are also examples of the same gene being responsible for genetic variation in more distantly related taxa, the most notorious one being the melanocortin-1 receptor gene (*Mc1r*), which underlies changes in pigmentation in reptiles, birds, and mammals (Wood *et al.* 2005; Hoekstra 2006; Arendt and Reznick 2008; Protas and Patel 2008; Gompel and Prud'homme 2009; Elmer and Meyer 2011). Similarly, there are several cases of parallel evolution in flower pigmentation (Quattrocchio *et al.* 1999; Schwinn *et al.* 2006; Whittall *et al.* 2006; Hoballah *et al.* 2007; Streisfeld and Rausher 2009; Des Marais and Rausher 2010; Smith and Rausher 2011). How broadly *FLC* contributes to flowering-time variation in *C. rubella* is, however, not known yet. Thus, further studies are needed to determine whether it is appropriate to speak of parallel evolution when comparing the basis of flowering-time variation in *A. thaliana* and *C. rubella*.

In summary, we have found substantial flowering-time variation in *C. rubella*, although its extent is smaller than in *A. thaliana*, perhaps reflecting the more restricted geographic range of *C. rubella* (Hurka and Neuffer 1997; Hoffmann 2002). In one accession, a major-effect QTL affecting flowering maps *FLC*. In experimental crosses of *A. thaliana*, a small number of major effect QTL, including *FRI*, *FLC*, the *FLC* homolog *FLOWERING LOCUS M (FLM)/MADS AFFECTING FLOWERING 1 (MAF1)*, the *MAF2-5* cluster, and *FLOWERING LOCUS T (FT)*, explain much of the variation in flowering time (Brachi *et al.* 2010; Salomé *et al.* 2011; Strange *et al.* 2011). Given the reduced genetic diversity in *C. rubella* (Foxe *et al.* 2009; Guo *et al.* 2009), it will be interesting to determine how many additional loci are responsible for flowering-time variation.

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Independent *FLC* Mutations as Causes of Flowering-Time Variation in *Arabidopsis thaliana* and *Capsella rubella*

Ya-Long Guo, Marco Todesco, Jörg Hagemann, Sandip Das, and Detlef Weigel

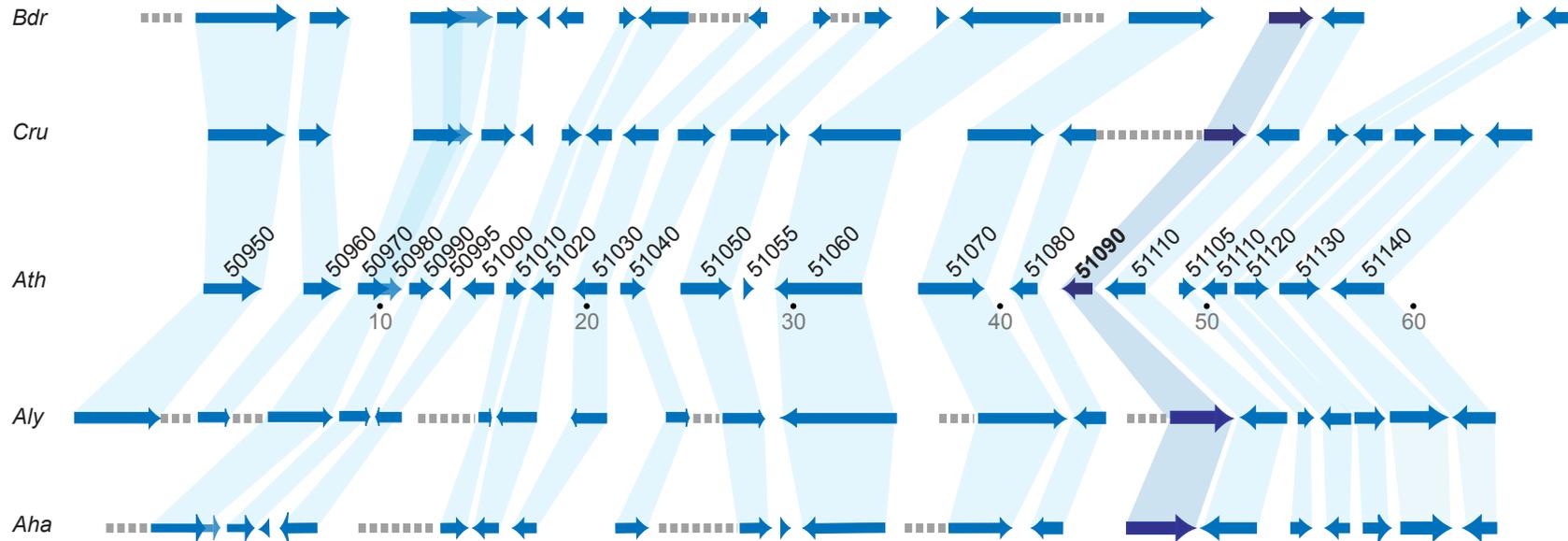


Figure S1 Comparison of BAC sequences from *Boechera drummondii* (*Bdr*, 93 kb), *Capsella rubella* (*Cru*, 75 kb), *Arabidopsis lyrata* (*Aly*, 110 kb), and *A. halleri* (*Aha*, 92 kb) to a syntenic region in *A. thaliana* (*Ath*, 60 kb), from which *A. thaliana* *FRIGIDA* (*FRI*) originated. Black numbers indicate At5gXXXXX gene identifiers. The *FRI* homolog, which is truncated in *A. thaliana*, is indicated in bold (see also IRWIN, J. A., C. LISTER, E. SOUMPOUROU, Y. ZHANG, E. C. HOWELL *et al.*, 2012 Functional alleles of the flowering time regulator *FRIGIDA* in the *Brassica oleracea* genome. *BMC Plant Biol.* **12**: 21). Grey numbers indicate distances in *A. thaliana* in kb. Dashes indicate non-syntenic sequences.

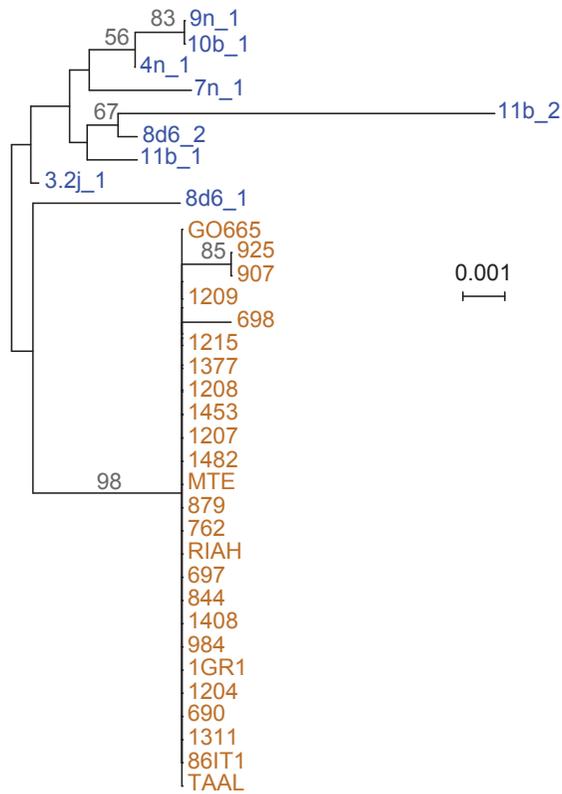


Figure S2 Phylogenetic tree of *FLC* alleles from *C. rubella* (blue) and *C. grandiflora* (ochre), constructed using PAUP* version 4.0b10 (SWOFFORD, D. L., 2003 PAUP*. Phylogenetic Analysis Using Parsimony (*and Other Methods). Version 4. Sinauer Associates, Sunderland, Massachusetts) and the Kimura-2 parameter model (KIMURA, M., 1980 A simple method for estimating evolutionary rate of base substitutions through comparative studies of nucleotide sequences. *J. Mol. Evol.* **16**: 111-120; SAITOU, N., and M. NEI, 1987 The neighbor-joining method: a new method for reconstructing phylogenetic trees. *Mol. Biol. Evol.* **4**: 406-425). Topological robustness was assessed by bootstrapping with 1,000 replicates (FELSENSTEIN, J., 1985 Confidence limits on phylogenies: an approach using the bootstrap. *Evolution* **39**: 783-791). Bootstrap report above 50% is indicated in gray. Scale indicates frequency of substitutions.

Table S1 Oligonucleotide primers.

Purpose	Primer	Strand	Sequence
<i>Capsella rubella</i>			
<i>FLC</i> gDNA	N-1075	+	GAA TTC ATG GGA AGA AAA AAA CTA GAA ATC AAG CG
	G-9544	-	ACA TGG TTT TGG ATT TCT GG
	G-9759	-	ACC ATA GTT CAG AGC TTT TGA CTG
	G-9854	+	TCT GAT GCG TGC TCG ATG TTG
	G-9898	+	ATG TTG AAG CTT GTT GAG AA
	G-10014	+	AAA TGT TTC TTC TGC CAT GC
	G-10015	-	TTC AGC AGG TTG AAA ATG ACA
	G-10040	+	TGA CAA TTG ACA ACC CTC CA
	G-10228	-	AGC CGG TCT TCC ATT TTG TA
	G-10287	+	TCT TAA AGC CTT GGT AAT ACA AAC A
	G-10320	-	CCA ATG ATC AAC ACT ACA ATG TCA
	G-10443	+	CCA CTC CTT TTT ATG GAT TTG C
	G-10997	+	ATT CGG TCT GGT TTG AGT TGA G
	G-10998	+	AAG TTT ACG GCT GTG TTT CCA T
	G-11096	-	AAG ATC ACC ATG TTC AGC AAT CA
	G-11116	+	TCT CTG GAA AGA ACC TTG TCC T
	G-11218	+	CCA TGT CAT TAG GTT GGG GTT A
	G-11219	-	AAA TTC AAA CCC GTT CAA TCA T
	G-11297	+	GAT TTA TCG TAG TTT TGT TAT CCA
	G-31703	+	ATG GGG AGA AAA AAA CTA GAA ATC A
G-31704	-	CTA ATT AAG CAG CGG GAG AGT CAC	
<i>FLC</i> cDNA	G-30600	+	GAG GAT CAA ATT AGG GCA CAA G
	G-30601	-	CAT GGT TTT GGA TTT CTG GTT T
<i>FLC</i> splicing analysis	G-12710	+	GAG ACC GCC CTT TCT GTA ACT A
	G-30481	-	GGA AGA TTG TCG GAG ATT TGT C
<i>FRI</i> gDNA	G-9537	-	TGA TGT ATC TGA GGT TGA CTA
	G-9748	+	CTT TCA AAC GCC AAT TCG ATG AT
	G-9749	-	CCC AAA TAT CTT TCT TCA GAT GG
	G-9884	+	CAG ATG GAG AAC TTT TAA TTA GGG
	G-9905	+	TGA AGG AGG ATT AGC TGT GGC
	G-9906	-	TCG TCT CTT TGA CTA GGA AAG

<i>FLC</i> qRT-PCR	G-12710	+	GAG ACC GCC CTT TCT GTA ACT A
	G-12711	+	CAG GTG ACA TCT CCA TCA TCT C
<i>BETA-TUBULIN2</i> qRT-PCR	G-12712	-	AGC TTG TTG AGA ATG CTG ATG A
	G-12713	+	GGT CAC CAA AGC TAG GGG TAG T
<i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i>			
<i>FLC</i> gDNA	G-32190	+	ATG GGA AGA AAA AAA CTA GAA ATC AA
	G-32191	-	CTA ATT AAG TAG TGG GAG AGT CAC
<i>FLC</i> qRT-PCR	G-30480	+	TGA GAA CAA AAG TAG CCG ACA A
	G-32817	-	CCG GAG GAG AAG CTG TAG A
<i>FT</i> qRT-PCR	G-30966	+	CCC TGC TAC AAC TGG AAC AAC
	G-30967	-	CAC CCT GGT GCA TAC ACT G
<i>SOC1</i> qRT-PCR	G-30974	+	ACG AGA AGC TCT CTG AAA AG
	G-30975	-	GAA CAA GGT AAC CCA ATG AAC
<i>BETA-TUBULIN2</i> qRT-PCR	N-0078	+	GAG CCT TAC AAC GCT ACT CTG TCT GTC
	N-0079	-	ACA CCA GAC ATA GTA GCA GAA ATC AAG

Table S2 SNPs in accession 1408 used as SHOREmap markers.

Table S2 is available for download as a Gzip compressed archive file at
<http://www.genetics.org/lookup/suppl/doi:10.1534/genetics.112.143958/-/DC1>.

Column 1:	sample ID
Column 2:	chromosome
Column 3:	position
Column 4:	reference base
Column 5:	alternative base
Column 6:	SHORE quality score (between 0 and 40, 40 best)
Column 7:	read support of alternative base
Column 8:	concordance of alternative base
Column 9:	average number of equal-best alignments of alternative base-supporting reads (denoted as repetitiveness)

Table S3 Flowering times of 305 F₂ plants used for SHOREmapping.

Orange indicates plants that were pooled for bulked segregant analysis.

Plant ID	DTF	ID		73	97	110	83	147	113
1	98	37	46	74	101	111	43	148	115
2	97	38	91	75	100	112	106	149	47
3	91	39	101	76	80	113	97	150	74
4	86	40	45	77	83	114	101	151	79
5	50	41	77	78	94	115	90	152	95
6	96	42	88	79	95	116	97	153	102
7	45	43	97	80	86	117	91	154	98
8	106	44	77	81	93	118	81	155	76
9	90	45	73	82	79	119	83	156	83
10	93	46	75	83	90	120	100	157	78
11	91	47	46	84	89	121	84	158	84
12	95	48	45	85	82	122	97	159	93
13	91	49	44	86	46	123	90	160	82
14	96	50	83	87	77	124	85	161	105
15	97	51	71	88	80	125	92	162	50
16	92	52	82	89	123	126	83	163	49
17	74	53	89	90	87	127	84	164	91
18	111	54	94	91	44	128	84	165	47
19	89	55	81	92	90	129	48	166	90
20	87	56	75	93	91	130	89	167	47
21	83	57	103	94	84	131	95	168	99
22	104	58	76	95	101	132	45	169	120
23	100	59	93	96	76	133	83	170	101
24	43	60	44	97	110	134	85	171	104
25	44	61	91	98	91	135	85	172	118
26	40	62	94	99	88	136	70	173	91
27	86	63	93	100	99	137	44	174	54
28	90	64	45	101	46	138	105	175	101
29	51	65	87	102	83	139	87	176	83
30	76	66	91	103	45	140	40	177	96
31	87	67	76	104	97	141	106	178	84
32	89	68	81	105	100	142	76	179	101
33	39	69	105	106	86	143	80	180	112
34	79	70	86	107	96	144	86	Plant ID	DTF
35	90	71	83	108	45	Plant ID	DTF	181	47
36	84	72	41	Plant ID	DTF	145	89	182	80
Plant ID	DTF	Plant ID	DTF	109	91	146	77	183	100

184	101
185	106
186	101
187	90
188	100
189	84
190	83
191	100
192	119
193	82
194	109
195	49
196	84
197	95
198	87
199	97
200	49
201	50
202	98
203	55
204	101
205	130
Plant ID	DTF
206	90
207	91

208	104
209	105
210	104
211	101
212	41
213	52
214	83
215	49
216	82
217	88
218	41
219	43
220	89
221	93
222	90
223	89
224	45
225	82
226	94
227	44
228	59
229	81
230	89
Plant ID	DTF
231	89

232	88
233	95
234	108
235	98
236	91
237	60
238	40
239	84
240	93
241	53
242	105
243	87
244	112
245	45
246	50
247	47
248	88
249	93
250	83
251	91
252	94
253	104
254	97
255	103
Plant ID	DTF

256	108
257	64
258	147
259	38
260	44
261	81
262	82
263	93
264	84
265	131
266	97
267	110
268	124
269	149
270	110
271	55
272	113
273	90
274	105
275	104
276	98
277	96
278	82
279	44
280	97
Plant	DTF

ID	
281	91
282	82
283	108
284	111
285	41
286	105
287	107
288	134
289	83
290	76
291	51
292	99
293	106
294	42
295	42
296	86
297	91
298	96
299	90
300	48
301	86
302	93
303	84
304	81
305	49

Table S4 Differences between accession 1408 and reference accession MTE in final mapping interval, as determined by SHORE v0.8 and pindel v0.2.4s. The *FLC* gene model is highlighted in bold and red.

Table S4 is available for download as an MS Excel Open XML file at
<http://www.genetics.org/lookup/suppl/doi:10.1534/genetics.112.143958/-/DC1>.

- Sheet 1: SNPs
- Sheet 2: short deletions
- Sheet 3: short insertions
- Sheet 4: SVs
- Sheet 5: complex insertions/deletions