

Phenotypic plasticity, population structure and adaptation in a young weed species with a worldwide distribution

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- 1 Phenotypic plasticity, population structure and adaptation in a young weed species
- 2 with a worldwide distribution.
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Summary

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The colonization success of a species depends on phenotypic plasticity, adaptive potential and population structure. Assessing their relative contributions during a colonization process is challenging, and a large-scale experiment had yet to be done. In this study, we attempted to tease apart their effects on the fitness of one of the most common plant on Earth, the shepherd's purse (Capsella bursa-pastoris), a self-fertilizing and allopolyploid weed, with a worldwide distribution. The overarching goal is to eventually understand how the shepherd's purse extensive distribution range was established so rapidly. To do so, we carried out three common gardens, located in Europe, Asia and North America, and measured several life-history traits on field-collected accessions belonging to three distinct genetic clusters (Middle East, Europe, and Asia). Our experiment showed that (i) the success of C. bursa-pastoris is mainly due to its high degree of phenotypic plasticity; and (ii), genetic cluster effect reflected a classic pattern observed in core vs marginal populations, with the Middle Eastern cluster (putative core population) outperforming the European and Asian clusters. This study therefore revealed, in a model species, different relative contributions of plasticity and adaptation to fitness, depending on the population and the time since colonization occurred.

- 47 **Keywords**
- 48 Adaptation, Capsella bursa-pastoris, common garden, Finlay-Wilkinson regression,
- 49 fitness components, phenotypic plasticity, population structure.

Introduction

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Some species have tiny natural ranges, others very large ones. In the latter, the current size was sometimes reached surprisingly fast something that might have left a strong footprint on the current pattern of genetic and phenotypic variation. In the present study we will focus on such a case, namely the shepherd's purse, Capsella bursa-pastoris (L.) Medik. (Brassicaceae), one of the most common plants on Earth (Coquillat, 1951). Since plants are sessile organisms, the expansion speed mainly depends on their ability to disperse efficiently and establish themselves successfully in new environments. Sometimes the environment will be quite similar to the one in which the parental plants were growing, sometimes it will not. In this latter case, establishment success in the short term may depend on phenotypic plasticity and in the long run on the capacity to adapt to local conditions. Phenotypic plasticity is defined here as the ability of a given genotype to produce different phenotypes in different environments (Bradshaw, 1965; Grenier et al. 2016 and references therein), and adaptation as the natural selection process by which a population progressively increases its fitness in a given environment (Linhart & Grant, 1996; Chevin et al. 2010 and references therein). These two evolutionary mechanisms are not mutually exclusive, so that each successful expansion will likely correspond to a particular combination of both. In any case, when species succeed to extend their distributions to a worldwide scale, granted that they hence face strongly different environmental conditions, signatures of both adaptation and phenotypic plasticity are likely to be observed. We can conjecture that phenotypic plasticity might be more important in newly established populations and adaptation in older ones. Such predictions are fraught with difficulties, since the age of populations is generally hard to estimate and patterns of phenotypic plasticity may vary depending on the time since colonization. Indeed, theoretical models indicate that while adaptation to a new extreme environment may lead to a transient increase in plasticity, this is followed by a second period of genetic assimilation which, on the contrary is associated to decreased plasticity (Lande, 2015). These complex dynamics could explain why different studies on phenotypic plasticity of colonizing species led to divergent conclusion: some recent studies concluded that phenotypic plasticity could play a role during colonization of new environments (e.g., Daehler, 2003) while others did not (e.g., Davidson et al. 2011, Godoy et al. 2011). Likewise, while evolutionary pressures underlying adaptation in populations at equilibrium are fairly well documented, the literature is more limited for recent and marginal populations that are usually characterized by non-

87 equilibrium demographics (Excoffier et al., 2009; Gilbert et al., 2017). As illustrated 88 by Willi et al. (2018) determining the respective role of phenotypic plasticity and 89 adaptation during colonization can be challenging. 90 Two prominent properties of plants that might influence a plant's adaptive potential 91 and its phenotypic plasticity are ploidy level and mating system. Both have their own 92 costs and benefits, though arising on a different timescale. Allopolyploidy and its evolu-93 tionary success can appear paradoxical since its birth will also be accompanied by nu-94 merous early challenges (Yant & Bomblies, 2015; Pelé et al., 2018). These challenges are 95 first encountered during the initial hybridization event between two divergent genomes, 96 implying, among other things, potential changes of gene expression patterns (Bomblies et 97 al., 2016). On the other hand, the increase in chromosome number in polyploids creates 98 genetic redundancy, which potentially allows pattern of expression to diverge, and the 99 evolution of new functions as well as tissue-specific expression of different gene copies 100 (Buggs et al., 2010, 2011). This greater genomic flexibility could lie behind the increased 101 trait plasticity of tetraploids in heterogeneous environments, as was recently observed in 102 strawberries (Wei et al., 2019). As to mating system, the shift from out-crossing to self-103 fertilization (a.k.a. selfing) confers "reproductive assurance" when the number of mates 104 is limited. Reproductive assurance is expected to favor colonization of new environments 105 as a few individuals can establish a new population (Baker et al. 1965; Pannell et al., 106 2015). The benefit of self-fertilization might, however, be short-lived because the lack of 107 genetic mixing is predicted to limit adaptation and to lead to the genome-wide accumula-108 tion of deleterious mutations (Heller &Smith, 1978; Hollister et al., 2015, Glémin et al., 109 2019). In agreement with these predictions, selfing species tend to have larger ecological ranges (Grossenbacher et al., 2015) but decreasing niche breadth with time (Park et al., 110 111 2018) compared to their outcrossing congeners, aligned with the "evolutionary dead end" 112 hypothesis (Stebbins 1957; Takeyabashi & Morell, 2001 and references therein). This 113 phenomenon is even more pronounced during a colonization process (Slatkin & 114 Excoffier, 2012; Gonzalez-Martinez *et al.*, 2017 and references therein). 115 C. bursa-pastoris is a successful worldwide self-fertilizing colonizer of recent allopol-116 yploid origin that arose some 100,000 years ago from the hybridization between the self-117 fertilizing, C. orientalis (Fauché & Chaub.) Boiss, and the out-crossing, C. grandiflora 118 (Klokov) (Douglas et al., 2015). As opposed to its two parents, which are restricted to 119 specific areas (from Central Asia to eastern Europe for C. orientalis and mountains of 120 northwest Greece and Albania for C. grandiflora), C. bursa-pastoris has an almost 121 worldwide distribution. The rapid expansion of the shepherd's purse did not prevent the

122 emergence of three distinct genetic clusters: Asia (ASI), Middle East and northern Africa 123 (ME), and Europe and the Russian Far East (EUR) (Cornille et al., 2016). Demographic 124 inferences showed that these three clusters are the result from a range expansion that 125 started either from the Middle East or Europe (the starting point is not known with cer-126 tainty), and was followed by a consecutive colonization event towards Asia. This recent 127 worldwide spread was, in some cases, likely associated to human migrations, as for in-128 stance the spread to eastern Siberia of western European accessions (Cornille et al., 129 2016), or of southern European and Middle Eastern accessions to North America (Hurka 130 & Neuffer, 1997; Cornille *et al.*, 2016). 131 Given conflicting predictions, it remains challenging to explain the apparent ecologi-132 cal success of species, such as C. bursa-pastoris, that recently expanded their range. 133 Moreover, adopting a "reciprocal transplant" framework to address this question would 134 be hard to implement as it would require numerous transfers to capture the genetic diver-135 sity and the environmental range of C. bursa-pastoris. Instead, in order to investigate the 136 joint role of phenotypic plasticity and adaptation in the colonization success of C. bursa-137 pastoris, we implemented an experimental design with three large common gardens lo-138 cated in three contrasted environments. Firstly, in order to reflect the diversity of envi-139 ronmental conditions that C. bursa-pastoris faced during its range expansion, we in-140 stalled two common gardens at extreme latitudes in Eurasia, one in East Asia and one in 141 Northern Europe, and a third one in North America, which lies outside of the native range 142 of the species. Secondly, to capture the demographic history of C. bursa-pastoris, we 143 used a comprehensive sampling of populations from Europe, Asia, North Africa, the 144 Middle East and North America. And thirdly, to be able to characterize phenotypic varia-145 tion and accession's performances, we measured several life-history and phenological 146 traits, some of which are main fitness components. This provided us with a solid frame-147 work to: (i) measure the responsiveness of individual accessions to different environ-148 ments (i.e., assess their phenotypic plasticity) by comparing the performance of each ac-149 cession across the three common gardens; (ii) estimate the genetic cluster effect associat-150 ed to past demographic history by comparing the performances of the three genetic clus-151 ters across the common gardens; and (iii) assess the variation in responsiveness among 152 accessions of a same cluster using Finlay-Wilkinson regressions (Finlay & Wilkinson, 153 1963). Evidence of the role of adaptation in the colonization process would be provided 154 by analyzing all the results together and notably by estimating the genotype (genetic clus-155 ter) by environment (common garden) interactions. We will discuss these results in the 156 light of C. bursa-pastoris colonization history and its accumulated expansion load.

Materials and Methods

Common gardens

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- Localization. One common garden was located at Uppsala (59°51'N, 17°38'E,
- Sweden), the second one at Guangzhou (23°08'N, 113°16'E, China), and the third one at
- 162 Toronto (43°39'N, 79°23'W, Canada). To account for the sensitivity of *C. bursa-pastoris*
- 163 to extreme environmental conditions and to guarantee intermediate temperatures,
- 164 experiments were started at different periods of the year: at Uppsala, the experiment
- started in early May 2014 for 139 days; at Guangzhou, in early November 2014 for 193
- days; and at Toronto, in early June 2014 for 118 days.
- 167 Environmental conditions. At Uppsala and Guangzhou, environmental conditions
- 168 were monitored daily at ground level using temperature and humidity sensors (TGP-
- 169 4017[®], TinytagTM). At Toronto, temperature and humidity were extracted from a public
- 170 database (https://www.timeanddate.com). For each location, day length was obtained
- with the R package *geosphere* (function *daylength*; Hijmans, 2019).

Plant materials

- Sampling. We used a collection of 267 accessions from 65 sites distributed across
- 175 Europe, Asia, North Africa, the Middle East and North America (for more details, see
- 176 Cornille et al., 2016, Kryvokhyzha et al., 2016, Kryvokhyzha et al. 2019b). In Toronto,
- 177 due to limited space, we had to subsample this collection down to 160 accessions, and
- were chosen to share less than 97% of identity-by-state (for further details, see Salcedo,
- 179 2015), to maximize the genetic diversity.
- Genotypes. Genotyping-by-sequencing (GBS) data for the 267 accessions acquired by
- 181 Cornille et al., (2016, https://datadryad.org/stash/dataset/doi:10.5061/dryad.71f99) were
- 182 used to assign accessions to different clusters (Asia, Middle East or Europe). First, we ran
- 183 a Multi-Dimensional Scaling analysis (function cmdscale from the base R package stats)
- 184 on the GBS data that gave the five first principal components on which we ran an
- unsupervised k-means algorithm with K = 3 (function *kmeans* from the base R package
- 186 stats). We then tested its robustness by using a random forest approach (function
- 187 randomForest from the R package randomForest; Liaw & Wiener, 2002), with a
- bootstrap (1000 iterations) of 20% of the dataset (80% being used as a training set). Only

189 accessions that were assigned more than 95% of the iterations to the same cluster were 190 kept for further analyses (Table S1 and Figure S1). 191 **Seeds preparation.** Before the establishment of the common garden experiment, and 192 to limit maternal effects, seeds collected from the field were first sown and grown under 193 controlled conditions in growth chambers (55% moisture, 22°C, 12h:12h light:darkness 194 cycles). Their offspring (seeds) were then used to establish the common gardens. About 195 20 seeds per accession were surface-sterilized the same day and germinated in Petri 196 dishes, with MS medium and agar (see protocol in Kryvokhyzha et al., 2016). Petri 197 dishes were then stratified for seven days at 4°C in the dark to promote germination. 198 After this cold treatment, Petri dishes were placed in a greenhouse with no additional 199 light or heating, in order to protect seeds from rainfall and to facilitate acclimation to 200 outdoor conditions. Petri dishes were randomized over tables and moved every day to 201 avoid micro-environmental effects, and they were left in the greenhouse until seedlings 202 reached a four-leaf stage. 203 **Transplantation.** At Uppsala and Guangzhou, once a seedling reached the four-leaf 204 stage, it was thinned to one per pot (7 cm x 7 cm) containing mud (basic soil mixed with 205 water). The pots were left seven days in the greenhouse (watered automatically twice a 206 week) and then they were pierced on the bottom and placed outside in the common 207 garden. The pots were dispatched into six blocks (1m x 3.2m, grids of 9 x 30) arranged at 208 2 m spacing and containing basic soil. Each block contained exactly one replicate per 209 accession, so that we ended up with six replicates per accession in total. An accession 210 was included in the common garden experiment even if less than six seedlings 211 germinated. In such case, and to keep the same individual density in each block, 212 seedlings from another accession from the same sampling site were planted. At Toronto, 213 after reaching the four-leaf stage, seedlings were directly transplanted from Petri dishes 214 to planting beds (13 cm x 33 cm) containing Promix soil (thoroughly wet). These beds 215 contained exactly one replicate per accession, and we used the same workaround when 216 germination failed. The beds were covered with shade cloth for two days after planting. 217 At each location, apart from the initial shading and watering, we did not provide any 218 support to the seedlings. The experiment lasted until the senescence of the last plant, i.e., 219 when the last plant dried up but had not yet shed its fruits. 220 **Subdividing datasets.** We considered three approaches for studying the 267 221 accessions: for exploratory analyses, we kept the "whole dataset", accepting potential

unbalance; this dataset was thereafter referred to as the whole dataset. Since the

interaction effect between common garden and genetic cluster was significant (see Supplementary materials), following the recommendation of Crawley (2012), we chose to analyze each common garden separately; this dataset was thereafter referred to as the "common garden dataset". Finally, in order to mimic a reciprocal transplant experiment and test for signature of local adaptation, we considered a sub-dataset made only of accessions from Sweden and South China (12 accessions in total, sampled close to Uppsala or Guangzhou), and excluding their phenotype measurement in Toronto; this dataset was thereafter referred to as the "local adaptation dataset".

Statistical analyses

Phenotypes. After senescence, we recorded for each plant the *height of the highest inflorescence* (in dm), the *number of basal inflorescences*, and the *number of fruits along a section of 1 dm* in the middle of the main inflorescence. In order to compare the overall performances, we considered the total number of fruits per individual as a proxy of fitness (denoted w), that were measured differently in the common gardens: at Uppsala and Guangzhou, we considered a composite index of fitness, computed as the product of the aforementioned three traits (*number of basal inflorescences*, *height* and *number of fruits along a section of 1 dm*). At Toronto, the total number of fruits was directly measured for each individual.

Three phenological traits were also measured, *bolting time* (*i.e.*, time until differentiation of the bud from vegetative parts indicating the initiation of the reproductive period), *flowering time* (*i.e.*, time until the appearance of the first opened flower) and *senescence time* (*i.e.*, time until the drying state of the plant). In addition, *flowering time span* was computed as being the inter-event time between *flowering time* and *senescence time*. At flowering time, we also recorded the rosette leaf number and the maximum diameter of the rosette. Finally, at Uppsala and Guangzhou, germination time was also measured.

Statistical modeling. For the statistical analyses, we fitted the following generalized linear mixed model to the data:

Fitness_{ijkl} ~
$$\mu$$
 + cluster_i + block_j + accession_k + e_{ijkl} [1]

where μ is the overall mean, 'cluster' is the fixed effects of the genetic cluster, 'block' and 'accession' are uncorrelated random effects ('accession' being nested into 'cluster'), and 'e' is the residual. We used a log link function and the residual distribution was fitted

to a Negative Binomial distribution (function glmer.nb of R package lme4; see Bates et al., 2015). This model was thereafter referred to as the "GLMM model". For phenological traits, we fitted the GLMM model to the four inter-event durations (between sowing, germination, bolting, flowering, and senescence), square-rooted, with the starting date of each time span as an additional explaining variable, and with the residual fitted to a normal distribution (function *lmer* of R package *lme4*). Statistical significance of the cluster effect was assessed with a type II Wald chi-square test, and the difference between genetic clusters was assessed with Tukey's HSD test.

Finlay-Wilkinson regression (FWR). We further investigated the specificity of each genetic cluster by performing a Finlay-Wilkinson regression (Finlay & Wilkinson, 1963), enabling us to characterize individual genotype responses for a trait across different environments. Following the formulation of Lynch & Walsh (1998), a FWR for one accession can be expressed as follows:

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$$\operatorname{Trait}_{ij} \sim \mu + (1 + b_j) \, \mu_j + e_{ij}$$
 [2]

where 'Trait' is the focal trait (fitness or phenological traits), i is the block, j is the common garden, μ_j is the average value of the trait at the common garden j, b_j is the regression factor of μ_j and e_{ij} is the residual which is assumed to be normally distributed. We performed as many regressions as the number of accessions. This model was thereafter referred to as the FWR model.

The intercept (μ) can be interpreted as the accession's performance in a poor environment, and the slope (b_j) can be viewed as the accession's relative responsiveness to environmental changes (the steeper the slope, the more responsive the accession; Lynch & Walsh, 1998). By definition, across the whole dataset, we expect a null average intercept $(\mu = 0)$ and a unit average slope $(b_j = 0)$. Each genetic cluster can, however, have its own specificity and deviate from the global trend. We used FWR to assess whether a genetic cluster was homogeneous, *i.e.*, with a trend followed by every individual belonging to this cluster, or heterogeneous and actually driven by some "outliers". For intercept (μ) and slope (b), the statistical significance of difference in average or variance between genetic clusters was assessed with a pairwise Welch's t-test or a Fisher's F-test, respectively.

Results

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Statistical interaction between "common garden" and "genetic cluster" was significant for most traits (Table 1 and Supplementary materials), therefore we focused our analyses on the common garden dataset with the GLMM model; the use of the whole dataset was restricted to the description of phenotypic variation (Table 1 and Figures 1 to 3). Due to experimental issues (e.g., failed germination, climatic events), common garden experiments ended up with an unbalanced block design: the whole dataset was left as is, but we shrank the common garden dataset to balance it, ending up with 186 accessions in Uppsala, 86 in Guangzhou and 116 in Toronto (Table S1). Also, due to these issues, the number of accessions common to all three common gardens in the common garden dataset was reduced to a total of 34 accessions (12 Asian, 9 European and 13 Middle Eastern): we therefore fitted the FWR model on the (unbalanced) whole dataset filtered for accessions for which a fitness score was available in all three common gardens, ending up with a total of 114 accessions (46 Asian, 46 European and 22 Middle Eastern). At the time of the experiment (2014), environmental conditions (in terms of temperature, humidity and day length) strongly differed among the common gardens (Figure 1). In Uppsala, accessions grew in rather cold and wet climatic conditions (15.2 \pm 5.1°C, 76.8 ± 14.1%); in Toronto they grew under a relatively warm and dry climate $(20.7 \pm 3.1^{\circ}\text{C}, 71.2 \pm 8.9\%)$; finally, in Guangzhou they grew in a warm and humid weather $(19.3 \pm 5.0^{\circ}\text{C}, 81.1 \pm 11.4\%)$. The photoperiod and the magnitude of its variation during the experiment also strongly differed among common gardens, day length being the longest in Uppsala (16.9h \pm 1.7h, ranging from 13h to 18.8h), the shortest in Guangzhou (11.9h \pm 1.0h, ranging from 10.7h to 13.5h), and intermediate in Toronto $(14.3 \pm 1.1h)$, ranging from 12h to 15.4h). For further details, see Tables S2 to S4 and Figures S2 to S5.

Environmental variation as the main explanatory factor of the

phenotypic variation of Capsella bursa-pastoris

- Most of the phenotypic variation was explained by the common garden, with a strong environmental effect (Figure 1, Table 1).
- Accessions showed contrasted phenotypes among common gardens (Figures 2 and S6), highlighting their phenotypic plasticity. In Toronto, accessions tended to be more
- 318 "bushy" with relatively more branches and more rosette leaves, whereas in Guangzhou,

- 319 accessions tended to be relatively taller. In Uppsala, accessions were globally smaller and
- 320 performed poorly for most phenotypic traits. The common garden effect was even more
- pronounced on phenology than on life history traits ($\chi^2_{pheno} = 1051 \pm 557.5$; $\chi^2_{life\ history\ traits}$
- $= 293.3 \pm 111.7$; all p < 0.001; Table 1). In particular, bolting time, flowering time and
- 323 senescence time were longer in Guangzhou (respectively 61.3 ± 13 days, 71.5 ± 13.1
- 324 days, 138 ± 9.5 days) than in Toronto (28.0 ± 4.8 days, 31.9 ± 7.5 days, 79.8 ± 9.5 days)
- 325 and Uppsala (30.9 \pm 6.1 days, 36.4 \pm 5.6 days, 85.3 \pm 7.6 days).
- More importantly, environmental effect on fitness was significant ($\chi^2 = 128.5$, df = 2, p
- 327 < 0.001, type II Wald chi-square test; Table 1): fitness was much lower on average in
- 328 Uppsala ($w = 224 \pm 178$) than in Guangzhou ($w = 918 \pm 753$) and Toronto ($w = 1161 \pm 1161$)
- 329 788). Toronto presented the most favorable conditions in terms of temperature and day
- length, two factors *C. bursa-pastoris* is known to be particularly sensitive to.

Genetic effect associated to the past demographic history

significantly explained variation within a common garden

- Genetic effect comes second and explains the phenotypic variation within each
- 335 common garden (Figures 1 and 2).

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- Phenotypes. Within each common garden, except for the number of primary
- 337 branches, phenotypic variation showed a strong genetic effect (Table 2). The cluster
- 338 effect for the number of primary branches was not significant in Uppsala, and strongly
- 339 significant (p < 0.01) in Guangzhou and Toronto. Surprisingly, the cluster effect for
- 340 rosette characteristics (number of leaves and diameter) was much more significant than
- 341 that for height of the main inflorescence or number of primary branches (Table 2). On
- average, the size and the number of leaves of the European accessions were much higher
- 343 (respectively 188.6 \pm 55.5 mm and 40.8 \pm 30.4) than those of the Middle Eastern
- 344 accessions (respectively 172 ± 54.8 mm and 19.3 ± 8.4) and of the Asian accessions
- 345 $(121.0 \pm 56.5 \text{ mm} \text{ and } 19.5 \pm 11.7).$
- 346 **Phenology.** Phenological variation also showed a strong and significant cluster effect
- 347 (Table 2). The Asian cluster exhibited a late germination, early bolting, early flowering
- 348 and late senescence, therefore a long flowering time span. In contrast, the European
- 349 cluster germinated early, but bolted, flowered and withered late (Table S5). European
- accessions' late flowering partly explains their larger rosette, since they had more time
- 351 for vegetative growth. Accessions from the Middle-East genetic cluster did not follow a

352 global trend (Table S5), deploying again a certain amount of plasticity in their 353 phenological response. 354 For bolting time, mean intercept in the FWR model was significantly lower for the 355 Middle Eastern than for the Asian and the European clusters (all p < 0.05, Welch's t-test; 356 Table S6): in an environment pushing C. bursa-pastoris to bolt early on average, ME 357 bolted even earlier. 358 **Fitness.** Variation in fitness also showed a strong and significant genetic effect (Figure 359 1 and Table 2). The Middle Eastern cluster globally outperformed the other clusters, with 360 an overall mean performance of $w = 946 \pm 916$, compared to the Asian ($w = 565 \pm 613$) 361 and the European ($w = 652 \pm 685$) genetic clusters. At each common garden, its 362 performance is either significantly higher than another cluster, or not significantly smaller 363 than another one (Table 3). The Middle Eastern cluster deployed a significantly higher 364 phenotypic variance during this experiment than the other clusters (all p < 0.001, Fisher's 365 F-test; Table S7), and also showed a significantly higher responsiveness (slope in the 366 FWR model; all p < 0.01, Welch's t-test; Table 4), corroborating the hypothesis of a 367 higher plasticity of the Middle Eastern cluster. 368 The Middle Eastern accessions had a more homogeneous 369 response to environmental variation than Asian or European 370 371 accessions 372 **Phenology.** The Middle-Eastern cluster showed, according to the FWR model, a lower 373 variance in their phenological behavior: the variance of the slope for *flowering time*, 374 flowering time span and bolting time was significantly smaller than that of the Asian and 375 the European accessions (all p < 0.001, Fisher F-test; Table S6), therefore suggesting that 376 the Asian and European clusters are far more diverse than the Middle Eastern one. 377 **Fitness.** Variance of the intercept in the FWR model was too large compared to its 378 mean value to be interpreted, given the coefficients of variation of 27.4 for the Asian, 6.3 379 for the European and 7.7 for the Middle Eastern (Table 4) clusters. However, the slope 380 was more discriminant: the Middle Eastern cluster had a significantly higher (all p < 1381 0.01, Welch's t-test; Table 4) responsiveness (1.27 \pm 0.36) than the Asian (0.91 \pm 0.47) 382 and the European (0.96 \pm 0.44) clusters. Slope variance of the Middle-Eastern cluster was 383 smaller than for the two other clusters,, although not significantly (Table S6).

Linking fitness and phenology. Surprisingly, Pearson's correlation between different FWRs was weak (absolute values < 0.2 if putting ME aside; Table 5), suggesting that phenology explained only a small fraction of the variance of fitness. However, for the Middle-Eastern cluster, Pearson's correlation between *fitness* and *flowering time* or between *fitness* and *flowering time span* was equal to r = 0.30 and r = 0.50 respectively, suggesting that accessions that were plastic for part of the phenology were likely also plastic for the number of fruits.

Hints of signature of local adaptation when mimicking a

reciprocal transplant

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- In the presence of local adaptation, we expect a higher fitness of accessions in their own geographical range. In our case, we expected a higher relative fitness of the European accessions in Uppsala, and a higher relative fitness of the Asian accessions in Guangzhou.
- With the common garden dataset. Whereas the Middle Eastern cluster globally outperformed the other clusters, the European cluster ($w = 252 \pm 216$) significantly outperformed the Asian cluster ($w = 203 \pm 153$) in Uppsala (z = 2.65, p < 0.05, Tukey's HSD test; Table 3). However, although a trend of the Asian cluster ($w = 852 \pm 634$) outperforming the European cluster ($w = 697 \pm 604$) in Guangzhou can be seen, this difference was not significant (z = -1.83, p = 0.16, Tukey's HSD test; Table 3).
- 404 With the local adaptation dataset. The pattern of local adaptation was actually even 405 less clear when considering the local adaptation dataset: the performances of the South 406 Chinese and Swedish accessions did not differ significantly. Indeed, in Guangzhou, 407 though the performance of Chinese accessions ($w = 926 \pm 598$) tended to be higher than 408 that of Swedish accessions ($w = 524 \pm 533$), the difference was not significant ($z = -524 \pm 534$). 409 1.379, p = 0.17, Tukey's HSD test); likewise, in Uppsala, difference in terms of 410 performance between Chinese accessions ($w = 208 \pm 130$) and Swedish accessions ($w = 208 \pm 130$) and Swedish accessions ($w = 208 \pm 130$) 411 210 ± 193) was not significant (z = -0.752, p = 0.45, Tukey's HSD test). One accession 412 from Sweden outperformed all Chinese accessions though, suggesting that the lack of a 413 significant signature of local adaptation might be caused by the limited number of 414 accessions sampled ($N_{EUR} = 3$ and $N_{ASI} = 9$).

Discussion

Overall, the location of the common gardens explained a large part of the phenotypic variation of *C. bursa-pastoris*, suggesting that the underlying mechanism of its success is probably a high degree of phenotypic plasticity. To a lesser extent, genetic clusters explained phenotypic variance within common gardens. Assuming that populations in the colonization front gradually undergo a shift of their prior phenotypic plasticity to adaptation to local conditions, *C. bursa-pastoris* seems to be in this very transient state. As a matter of fact, the hypothesis of the presence of a transient state in invasive species could explain most of the discrepancies in the literature about the prevalence of either phenotypic plasticity or adaptation. Indeed, if the colonization event is recent, it is possible, like in our study or in VanWallendael *et al.* (2018), that signatures of local adaptation are not yet observable (but see Godoy *et al.*, 2011; Ducatez *et al.*, 2016).

The overall success of the Middle Eastern accessions might obscure the scale of local adaptation

C. bursa-pastoris is a self-fertilizing species that underwent a relatively recent worldwide expansion, and has a low genetic variation that could, by itself, explain the lack of local adaptation signature in the present study. C. bursa-pastoris and its diploid relatives are eminently ruderal and even a casual observation of their habitats highlights the importance of very local factors for their establishment, such as soil disturbance (Orsucci et al., in press). Nonetheless C. bursa-pastoris is genetically structured across its worldwide distribution (Cornille et al., 2016), and therefore, to account for this structure, we needed to implement a large-scale experiment with a large number of accessions. Thus, perhaps more than in other species, geographical scale is crucial in studies of adaptation in the Capsella genus and what is observed at a given scale may not apply at another one, as exemplified by Neuffer (1996).

To the best of our knowledge, however, there has not been a general study of the local ecological niches of the shepherd's purse. Our own observations and the few studies available, in particular the study by Caullet (2011) that exhaustively studied populations of *C. bursa-pastoris* and *C. rubella* across a 4 km² agricultural landscape of Central France over two years, indicate that *C. bursa-pastoris* is actually restricted to highly disturbed environments (hedges of fields, for instance). Within such environments it does not seem to be confined to specific types of soil though (Aksoy *et al.*, 1998; Neuffer *et al.*, 2018). The large spectrum of climatic environments covered by the accessions

included in our experiment also suggests that insufficient sampling is unlikely to explain the lack of a strong local adaptation pattern.

As shown above, though the effect of either environment or genetic background seems clear, the interaction between genetics and environment is complex. When considering all common gardens and all clusters at once, there is no clear evidence of local adaptation, mainly because the Middle Eastern cluster outperformed the other clusters everywhere. The Middle Eastern cluster is less variable for the traits considered here, and is consistently better and more responsive to variation in environmental conditions than those from the two other clusters. One of the possible explanations of this complex pattern, obscuring a potential signature of local adaptation, is that there is no or few local adaptation yet: an absence of local adaptation coupled with a pronounced plasticity have

already been observed in other invasive species at the colonization front, such as in

Reynoutira japonica (VanWallendael et al., 2018) or in clonally reproducing

macrophytes (Egeria densa, Elodea canadensis and Lagarosiphon major: Riis et al.,

464 2010).

It is also worth pointing out that the absence of evident GxE effect may be due to the fact that we did not consider the whole life cycle. Recently, Orsucci *et al.* (2020) emphasized that studying only one component of fitness could be insufficient and potentially misleading if interpreted as fitness, since they do not account for possible trade-offs between fitness components. Germination rate of the mother plant was not measured here, and is the only part of the life cycle that was controlled in a growth chamber. Accounting for the germination rate might change the ranking among clusters, as shown in Orsucci *et al.* (2020), we can thus only say that the Middle Eastern cluster outperformed others in terms of vegetative growth and fruit production, but whether it also does in term of fitness remains to be tested.

A species with a worldwide distribution might present a complex genetic structure and local adaptation pattern

The absence of local adaptation signature could also be explained by the marginality of our common gardens in deference to the species distribution described by Hurka *et al.* (2012). Indeed, Uppsala is close to the northern boundary of the distribution of European accessions; Guangzhou, likewise, is close to the southern boundary of the distribution of Asian accessions; and Toronto is even outside the natural species distribution. Environmental conditions can be extreme in Uppsala and Guangzhou compared to other

484 locations of the same continent. The extreme localization of our common gardens could 485 thus have hidden the importance of local adaptation among clusters, as discussed in Klisz 486 et al. (2019). We attempted to mimic a reciprocal transplant experiment by only 487 considering Swedish and South Chinese accessions at Uppsala and Guangzhou. 488 However, the results were mixed, with no apparent signature of local adaptation (i.e., no 489 apparent genetic cluster effect). To rigorously address this problem in further studies, it 490 will be necessary to either (i) increase the amount of actual local accessions, so that the 491 common gardens are less marginal relative to the set of accessions sampled, e.g., more 492 Swedish and South Chinese accessions; or (ii) consider several common gardens in a 493 smaller geographical scale, e.g., two or more common gardens in Europe. 494 The absence of evident G x E effect for all of the clusters leads to question about the 495 geographical scale at which local adaptation occurs. Although the populations we 496 considered are at the right genetic scale in the sense that our samples do capture the 497 major genetic clusters in Eurasia (Cornille et al., 2016; Kryvokhyzha et al., 2019a), local 498 adaptation might occur at a much more restricted geographical scale, as pointed out 499 above. First, C. bursa-pastoris is a ruderal species and probably a human commensal too, 500 as suggested by its distribution, and therefore it grows primarily, if not uniquely, in very 501 specific, disturbed environments, that will share common characteristics under different 502 latitudes. Second, C. bursa-pastoris is mainly self-fertilizing which implies that gene 503 flow occurs through seeds rather than pollen, thus slowing down its scattering. The 504 hypothesis of adaptation to micro-environment rather than macro-environment is also 505 supported by the fact that phenology is mostly influenced by environmental variation, 506 and only secondly by genetics. 507 The apparent lack of local adaptation observed in the present study at the phenotypic 508 level can be related to the results obtained by Kryvokhyzha et al. (2016). Using RNA-509 Seq data from 24 accessions originating from the three clusters, Kryvokhyzha and co-510 authors showed that the genes that were significantly differentially expressed between the 511 three clusters, were no longer so once one had corrected the data for the genetic 512 relationship between the three clusters. The differentiation could then have been mostly 513 neutral or both neutral and adaptive in which case demographic history and adaptive 514 differentiation were highly correlated and correcting for the first one would remove the 515 effect of the latter. The fitness results obtained here would support at least a significant 516 contribution of neutral processes. As in the RNA-Seq experiment, the present data does 517 not rule the presence of significant local adaptation at a more local scale. However, even

at that scale local adaptation does not seem to be pronounced in *C. bursa-pastoris* (Caullet, 2011; Huang *et al.*, 2018).

It is therefore likely that *C. bursa-pastoris* was able to cope with diverse environments primarily through phenotypic plasticity. Caullet (2011) also found that plasticity best explained fitness across soil niches when they planted both *C. bursa-pastoris* and *C. rubella* in four different disturbed environments where both species are naturally found: along paths, hedges of the paths, or within a transition zone between paths and fields and inside the internal hedge of the fields. The transplant environment did not significantly affect the fitness of *C. bursa-pastoris*. As a whole, as suggested by Caullet (2011), phenotypic plasticity was higher in *C. bursa-pastoris* than in *C. rubella* but there was no evidence of strong local adaptation in *C. bursa-pastoris*. Another possible explanation for the absence of signature of local adaptation is that *C. bursa-pastoris* failed to adapt locally due to its high genetic load. Indeed, *C. bursa-pastoris* is a selfer, with limited genetic diversity and it might have faced a drift barrier and lacked the initial effective population size needed to express local adaptation.

Phenological traits, between plasticity and adaptation

Controlling the timing of phenology to cope with biotic and abiotic stresses is the response adopted by many plant populations, especially those with an annual life cycle. Adaptation is one of the possible evolutionary responses, as seen in temperate crop species (e.g., wheat, barley or pea) with distinct vernalization strategies in different varieties (Roux *et al.*, 2006). As to *C. bursa-pastoris*, in agreement with previous studies (Neuffer & Hurka 1986; Neuffer, 1990), our experiment revealed that its phenological response was mainly through phenotypic plasticity, with a rather equivalent responsiveness among genetic clusters. Although Neuffer & Hurka (1986) evoked a "general purpose genotype" (a term borrowed from Baker, 1965) for germination strategy, we could not observe this pattern in our study, as germination seemed as plastic as other phenological traits.

Within each common garden, accessions from the Asian cluster flowered earlier than accessions from the other clusters, a phenological characteristic that might be an adaptation to Asia: (i) as a response to avoid biotic competition (Orsucci *et al.*, 2020), thus compensating being in the colonization front and its consequent genetic load; or (ii) as a response to a rather unpredictable environment such as Asia (e.g., typhoon, monsoon), as observed in *Arabidopsis thaliana* (Simpson & Dean, 2002; Roux *et al.*, 2006), that is a phylogenetically close species (Beilstein *et al.*, 2006). It can also be a side

consequence of a higher sensibility to photoperiod, as observed in tropical species such as rice (*Oryza sativa*) and maize (*Zea mays*) since the photoperiod is the main cue to the alternation of dry and humid seasons in these climates (Roux *et al.*, 2006). According to this last hypothesis, early flowering reflects a different sensitivity to photoperiod, not an advantage of early flowering *per se*. In addition, several studies showed that, in several species such as *Arabidopsis thaliana* (Le Corre *et al.*, 2002; Komeda, 2004) or *Triticum monococcum* (Yan *et al.*, 2003), late flowering seems to be the ancestral character: if it is also the case for *C. bursa-pastoris*, it is probable that the "early flowering" phenotype recently evolved during *C. bursa-pastoris* range expansion in Asia.

Our study also showed that the European cluster flowered later than the other clusters, causing a longer time span for vegetative growth, and partly explaining the significantly larger rosette. In the Alpine accessions of C. bursa-pastoris, overwintering in the rosette state is frequently observed (Neuffer, 1990): a large rosette could be an adaptation towards harsh winter conditions in Europe, though accessions with large rosette were not specifically from the Alps. In our study, correlation between the rosette size and the flowering time was of r = 0.52 (see also Figure 2). It is not surprising to see an association between flowering trends and rosette characteristics, as it has been shown previously that QTLs associated with these two traits are closely linked in C. bursa-pastoris (Linde $et\ al.$, 2001); likewise, in $Arabidopsis\ thaliana$, rosette leaf number has been shown to be sensitive to stimuli of flowering, such as shading (Cookson & Granier, 2006) or length of photoperiod (Lewandowska $et\ al.$, 2017).

Conclusion

Despite the large scale of the current study, involving three common gardens on as many continents and a large number of accessions representative of the natural range of the shepherd's purse, we only detected phenotypic plasticity and adaptation signatures, but not of local adaptation. Does this indicate that local adaptation did not contribute to the rapid colonization of *C. bursa-pastoris?* It is probably too early to conclude, but the present study suggests that understanding local adaptation in *C. bursa-pastoris* and other ruderal species that went through a rapid range expansion would likely require a combination of more targeted reciprocal transfer experiments as well as more small scale experiments.

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Author Contribution

- AC, SG, SW and MT planned and designed the common gardens. AC, SG, SW and
- ML directed the work. AC, AS, HH, DK, and KH performed experiments (installing the
- 602 common garden and phenotyping every accessions). AC, MT, MO and PM analyzed
- 603 datasets. AC and MT wrote the article, with thorough help from MO and PM. AC, MT,
- 604 AS and HH contributed equally.

Data availability

- 608 The data that support the findings of this study are openly available in [repository name
- e.g "figshare"] at http://doi.org/[doi], reference number [reference number].

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Tables

 Table 1. Analysis of variance of model [S1] (see Supplementary materials). Statistics (χ^2) , degree of freedom (df) and p-values of the type II Wald chi-square test. Only variables that were measured in all the common gardens are kept. FP: time between bolting and flowering; SP: time between flowering and senescence. The distributions of the residual are normal distributions. Significance levels are : $p^{***} < 0.001$; $p^{**} < 0.01$; $p^{**} < 0.05$; $p^{n.s.} > 0.05$. Since germination time was not monitored in Toronto, analysis of variance was not assessed for germination time and the inter event between bolting time and germination time.

	Genetic cluster		Common garde	n	Genetic cluster x common garden		
	χ^2	df	χ^2	df	χ^2	df	
Fitness (Nb. fruits)	67.1***	2	128.5***	2	135.1***	4	
Height	109.9***	2	248.9***	2	122.0***	4	
Nb. primary branches	3.2 ^{n.s.}	2	420.8***	2	194.7***	4	
Nb. rosette leaves	227.5***	2	358.7***	2	517.5***	4	
Rosette diameter	88.8***	2	309.4***	2	45.4***	4	
FP	66.2***	2	656.8***	2	2.2 ^{n.s.}	4	
SP	10.4***	2	1445.2***	2	6.1 ^{n.s.}	4	

Table 2. Analysis of variance of the GLMM model. Statistics (χ^2), degree of freedom (df) and p-values of the type II Wald chi-square test. GP: time between sowing and germination; BP: time between germination and bolting; FP: time between bolting and flowering; SP: time between flowering and senescence. The distributions of the residual are: negative binomial (NB), or Normal (N). Significance levels are: $p^{***} < 0.001$; $p^{**} < 0.05$; $p^{n.s.} > 0.05$. Since germination time was not monitored in Toronto, analysis of variance was not assessed in Toronto for GP and BP.

Trait		Genetic cluster effect								
	Uppsala		Guangzho	Toront						
	χ^2	df	χ^2	df	χ^2	df				
Fitness	8.30*	2	34.29***	2	8.16*	2	NB			
Height	81.4***	2	38.4***	2	40.8***	2	N			
Nb. primary branches	1.8 ^{n.s.}	2	11.5**	2	11.4**	2	N			

Nb. rosette leaves	127.1***	2	52.0***	2	90.6***	2	N
Rosette diameter	99.3***	2	33.8***	2	24.2***	2	N
GP	123.8***	2	181.6***	2	NA	2	N
BP	60.2***	2	21.3***	2	NA	2	N
FP	14.1***	2	37.4***	2	31.5***	2	N
SP	10.1**	2	1.9 ^{n.s.}	2	0.1 ^{n.s.}	2	N

Table 3. Estimate of genetic cluster effect in the GLMM model, in log-scale at each common garden (Uppsala, Guangzhou, Toronto). Estimates of EUR and ME effects are relative to ASI effect; Tukey contrast analysis of fitness in the GLMM model: statistics and p-values of the Tukey's HSD test. Significance levels are : $p^{***} < 0.001$; $p^{**} < 0.05$; $p^{n.s.} > 0.05$.

Cluster Uppsala			Guangzh	ou		Toronto				
	Estimate	e Tukey's HSD		ISD Estimate		's HSD	Estimate	Tukey's HSD		
		EUR	ME		EUR	ME		EUR	ME	
ASI	4.56	-2.6*	-1.8 ^{n.s.}	6.12	1.8 ^{n.s.}	-4.5***	6.13	-1.4 ^{n.s.}	-2.8*	
EUR	+0.21	-	0.3 ^{n.s.}	-0.20	-	-5.6***	+0.14	-	-1.8 ^{n.s.}	
ME	+0.18	-	-	+0.50	-	-	+0.37	-	-	

Table 4. Mean and standard deviation of responsiveness (slope) and performance in poor environment (intercept) of fitness (the FWR model), for each genetic cluster (ASI, EUR, and ME); pairwise Welch's t-test between mean values of genetic clusters: statistics (T), degree of freedom (Df) and p-values. Significance levels are : $p^{***} < 0.001$; $p^{**} < 0.05$; $p^{n.s.} > 0.05$.

Cluster	Intercept			Slope						
	Mean ± SD	Welch's t-test					Welch's t-test			
		EUR		ME		Mean + SD	EUR		ME	
		T	Df	T	Df		Т	Df	T	Df
ASI	6.70 ± 183.5	0.94 ^{n.s.}	90.0	-0.38 ^{n.s.}	40.4	0.91 ± 0.47	-0.5 ^{n.s.}	90.0	-3.5**	53.2

EUR	-29.92 ± 189.0	-	-	-1.1 ^{n.s.}	41.5	0.96 ± 0.44	-	-	-3.1**	50.4
ME	25.47 ± 188.6	-	-	-	-	1.27 ± 0.36	-	-	-	-

Table 5. Correlation between different Finlay-Wilkinson regressions (slope and intercept)

897 on fitness and flowering time (FT), or flowering duration (SP).

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Cluster	Inter	rcept	Slope		
	FT	SP	FT	SP	
ASI	0.15	0.03	0.06	-0.07	
EUR	-0.10	0.09	-0.19	0.10	
ME	-0.15	0.14	-0.50	0.30	

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ME (blue).

Figures Figure 1. Interaction plot of fitness in C. bursa-pastoris between the three common gardens (Uppsala, Guangzhou and Toronto, on the x-axis) and the genetic clusters (ASI in green, EUR in red, and ME in blue), using the whole dataset. Error bars correspond to standard errors. **Figure 2.** Principal Component Analysis of the phenotypes of accessions of C. bursapastoris: bolting time (BT), flowering time (FT), senescence time (ST), number of rosette leaves (NRL), rosette diameter (RD), height of the main inflorescence (H), and the number of primary branches (NPB), using the whole dataset (267 accessions). The number of fruits (the fitness) was added as a supplementary variable. PC1 captured 52.4% of the variance, and PC2 captured 26.3%. The box on the top right corner of (a) highlights the correlation of each variable to the corresponding axis: the darker and bigger the circle, the higher the correlation (in brackets, the percentage of contribution of each variable to the first two PCs). Both (a) and (b) are the same PCA, only the color label changes. (a) PCA labeled according to the common gardens (Uppsala in brown, Toronto in orange, and Guangzhou in beige): common gardens appeared to be clearly delimiting three groups. (b) PCA labeled according to the genetic clusters (ASI in green, EUR in red, and ME in blue): genetic clusters did not appear to be clearly separating the dataset. **Figure 3.** Histograms of the phenological traits of *C. bursa-pastoris* (bolting time as BT, flowering time as FT, and senescence time as ST) according to the common garden and genetic cluster, using the whole dataset. Germination time was not plotted here for consistency with Toronto. **Figure 4.** Finlay-Wilkinson regressions of fitness (the FWR model) of *C. bursa-pastoris*. On the x-axis, the mean population fitness at each common garden; on the y-axis the mean fitness of each accession. Each dot is an accession at a specific common garden, and each line is a FWR for one accession. The bold black line is the population average FWR. (A) FWR of accessions belonging to the cluster ASI (green); (B) FWR of accessions belonging to the cluster EUR (red); (C) FWR of accessions belonging to the cluster





















