

Catalyzing rapid discovery of gold-precipitating bacterial lineages with university students

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Intriguing and potentially commercially useful microorganisms are found in our surroundings, and new tools allow us to learn about their genetic potential and evolutionary history. Engaging students from different disciplines and courses in the search for microbes requires an exciting project with innovative but straightforward procedures and goals. Here we describe an interdisciplinary program to engage students from different courses in the sampling, identification, and analysis of the DNA sequences of a unique yet common microbe, *Delftia* spp. A campus-wide challenge was created to identify the prevalence of this genus, able to precipitate gold, involving introductory level environmental and life science courses, upper-level advanced laboratory modules taken by undergraduate students (juniors and seniors), graduate students, and staff from the campus. The number of participants involved allowed for extensive sampling while undergraduate researchers and students in lab-based courses participated in the sample processing and analyses, helping contextualize and solidify their learning of the molecular biology techniques. The results were shared at each step through publicly accessible websites and workshops. This model allows for the rapid discovery of *Delftia* presence and prevalence and is adaptable to different campuses and experimental questions.

1 **Catalyzing rapid discovery of gold-precipitating bacterial**
2 **lineages with university students**

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46 Abstract

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48 Intriguing and potentially commercially useful microorganisms are found in our
49 surroundings, and new tools allow us to learn about their genetic potential and evolutionary
50 history. Engaging students from different disciplines and courses in the search for microbes
51 requires an exciting project with innovative but straightforward procedures and goals. Here we
52 describe an interdisciplinary program to engage students from different courses in the sampling,
53 identification, and analysis of the DNA sequences of a unique yet common microbe, *Delftia* spp.
54 A campus-wide challenge was created to identify the prevalence of this genus, able to precipitate
55 gold, involving introductory level environmental and life science courses, upper-level advanced
56 laboratory modules taken by undergraduate students (juniors and seniors), graduate students, and
57 staff from the campus. The number of participants involved allowed for extensive sampling
58 while undergraduate researchers and students in lab-based courses participated in the sample
59 processing and analyses, helping contextualize and solidify their learning of the molecular
60 biology techniques. The results were shared at each step through publicly accessible websites
61 and workshops. This model allows for the rapid discovery of *Delftia* presence and prevalence
62 and is adaptable to different campuses and experimental questions.

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64 Introduction

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66 The potential benefits from the study of the unique abilities of bacteria to everyday
67 human life is ever more obvious. Bacteria are used industrially in food preparation, drug
68 production, waste treatment, and many other roles. Advances in biotechnology techniques have
69 facilitated the use of known bacterial species and their enzymes, proteins, and pathways (Berini,
70 Casciello, Marcone, & Marinelli, 2017). For example, it is now possible, and indeed not very
71 difficult, to identify genes of interest in a bacterial species, clip those genes out of that species,
72 and insert them into another work horse species of bacteria to allow the products of those genes
73 to be produced industrially. Ironically, as our ability to harness the power of bacteria becomes
74 ever more sophisticated, one of the key challenges is still finding the useful bacteria in the first
75 place. In a world with as many as a trillion bacterial species (Locey & Lennon, 2016)(Pike,
76 Viciani, & Kumar, 2018), how does one speed the discovery of bacterial species with a particular
77 use or even simply strains of a particular bacterial taxon with sequences of interest?

78

79 One approach is to engage citizen scientists. In as much as the first step in the discovery
80 of novel, useful microbes is often collections from nature, collections made by the public have
81 the potential to speed up this key, and often rate-limiting, first step. What is more, in a rapidly
82 interconnected digital era, the potential for truly global projects that rely on hundreds, thousands,
83 or even hundreds of thousands of individuals is ever greater (Cooper, 2016). Citizen scientists
84 contribute data to many publicly-accessible projects, from birdwatchers helping conservation
85 efforts with the e-Bird project (<https://ebird.org/home>; Sullivan *et al.*, 2014), game enthusiasts
86 folding proteins for the FoldIt project (<https://fold.it/portal/>; Cooper *et al.*, 2010), or homeowners
87 exploring the microbial diversity in their houses (<http://robdunnlab.com/projects/wild-life-of-our-homes/>; Dunn, 2013). Additionally, projects like the Science Education Alliance – Phage
88 Hunters Advancing Genomics and Evolutionary Science (SEA-PHAGES) and Tiny Earth engage
89 students in large research projects as part of course-based undergraduate research experiences
90 (CUREs) (Hanauer, *et al.*, 2017)(Handelsman, J., 2018). Citizen scientists, we argue, can also
91 help discover bacteria with novel, useful traits.

92 *Delftia* is a genus first discovered in the city Delft (Den Dooren de Jong, 1927; Wen,
93 Fega, Hayward, Chakraborty, and Sly 1999), where bacteria themselves were discovered by
94 Leeuwenhoek (Gest, 2004). *Delftia* have genes capable of precipitating gold by excreting a
95 metabolite called delftibactin (Johnston *et al.*, 2013). Gold in solution as gold chloride is toxic to
96 bacteria, so *Delftia* has evolved this novel mechanism for precipitating aqueous gold out of
97 solution to non-toxic solid gold nanoparticles. This mechanism has obvious potential uses in gold
98 recycling in used electronics, gold mining, and urban waste (“Gold Recycling,” 2013; Reith,
99 Lengke, Falconer, Craw, & Southam, 2007; Subhabrata, Natarajan, & Ting, 2017), but to date,
100 the existing genetic diversity of *Delftia* in strain collections is modest. There are only six known
101 species of *Delftia*. Full genome assemblies exist for four of these species within the National
102 Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) database (Wen, Fegan, Hayward, Chakraborty, &
103 Sly, 1999). Discovery of novel *Delftia* species and their relatives has the potential to better
104 elucidate variations in *Delftia* genetic sequences, especially within the gold precipitation gene
105 cluster and other industrially and human health related sequences. The more information about
106 these gold precipitation genes, for example, the greater potential for using *Delftia* or its genetic
107 potential to recycle our electronics and make mining more sustainable.

108 Here we leverage a citizen science approach to detect new *Delftia* species on a university
109 campus. We simultaneously test whether students are able to aid the speed of discovery of novel
110 lineages and consider the biology of the lineages we have discovered. The Wolfpack Citizen
111 Science Challenge for spring 2018 (go.ncsu.edu/wpc18) was a collaborative project to document
112 the presence and genetic diversity of *Delftia* spp. across the North Carolina State University
113 campus and create a *scalable and interdisciplinary* model to continue learning about this and
114 other organisms. In addition to involving students in two introductory courses in the initial data
115 collection, we also involved students in two upper-level courses in the downstream study of the
116 microbes detected during the Challenge.

117

118 **Materials & Methods**

119

120 *Recruitment of Participants and Sample Collection*

121 Participants were primarily recruited from two courses, ES 100: Introduction to
122 Environmental Sciences (176 students) and LSC 170: First Year Seminar in the Life Sciences:
123 Meet Your Microbes (20 students). However, anyone interested was able to obtain a sampling kit
124 and participate. A post-event survey indicated that 96% of the participants were required to
125 participate as part of a course, and that 48% were currently enrolled as STEM majors.

126 Three events were held to create excitement and share results from the challenge. In
127 January, the Challenge was launched with a public event attended by 19 people, in which Goller
128 and Riley shared information about *Delftia acidovorans* found in sinks, drains, and soil and
129 encouraged members of the campus to think critically about the microbial communities around
130 us. In March, the sequencing data were shared with the campus community at an event at which
131 participants used the NCBI Basic Local Alignment Search Tool (BLAST) to find regions of
132 similarity between the discovered sequences and those deposited in the NCBI database. This
133 BLAST workshop was attended by 55 people. In April, results of the project were shared at a
134 closing event open to the campus and general public, attended by 30 people.

135 Participants registered as teams of up to five members and were provided kits with
136 instructions and materials to collect samples: three swabs and two 50 mL conical tubes for soil
137 samples along with gloves, plastic spoons for scooping soil, alcohol swabs to sanitize the soil

138 collection spoons, and labels for samples. Approximately forty kits were distributed, and over
139 one hundred and fifty swab and soil samples were received between January 30 and February 14.
140 Samples were delivered in person to either the Biotechnology Program (BIT) teaching
141 laboratories or the NC State University Libraries front desk. Samples were stored in -20° C
142 freezer until ready for metagenomic DNA extraction. Along with physical samples, metadata
143 including location descriptors and latitude-longitude data were submitted online through a
144 customized SciStarter citizen science website (<https://scistarter.com/delftia>). Students'
145 identifying information was removed from samples and a numerical identity was assigned.

146 147 *Safety*

148 Participants were provided with detailed instructions on how to sample environments
149 around the campus and use the sampling kit. Participants were instructed to use the swab to
150 sample a safe location and immediately place the swab in the transport container. Students
151 collected soil samples with the provided tube and spoon while wearing disposable gloves. For
152 processing of samples, students in molecular biology courses were trained in lab safety
153 procedures and given a document detailing the potential hazards and safety procedures used in
154 the teaching laboratory. For all extractions and qPCR reactions, students were provided
155 disposable lab coats, safety glasses, and gloves, and disinfected all surfaces before and after use.

156 157 *Isolation and Purification of Metagenomic DNA*

158 Metagenomic DNA was extracted from samples using the Invitrogen PureLink
159 Microbiome DNA Purification Kit according to the corresponding protocol for swab and soil
160 samples, respectively. Soil was transferred from collection tubes to bead tubes with alcohol-
161 sterilized metal scoops. Swab tips were cut off into bead tubes with alcohol-sterilized metal
162 scissors. Samples were lysed and homogenized by heat, bead beating, and lysis buffer. After
163 purification, samples were eluted in 50 µl of elution buffer. DNA concentration was determined
164 spectrophotometrically using a ThermoFisher NanoDrop 2000c instrument and normalized to 5
165 ng/µl. Samples were matched with descriptive location data in an online spreadsheet using
166 information submitted on the SciStarter website (<https://scistarter.com/delftia>). Isolations were
167 performed by Riley in batches of 12-24 samples.

168 169 *Detection of Delftia-specific Sequences by Quantitative Real-time PCR*

170 An Eppendorf epMotion 5075 TC liquid handler was used to set up quantitative real-time
171 PCR (qPCR) reactions with New England BioLabs Luna Universal Probe qPCR reagents,
172 primers, and double-quenched probes (IDT DNA). qPCR reactions were run on a Bio-Rad CFX
173 Connect instrument, and data were exported as spreadsheets with cycle threshold (Ct) values for
174 each reaction. Samples were screened for the quantity of *Delftia* present using double-quenched,
175 *Delftia*-specific primers and probe for a portion of the unique gold biomineralization metabolite
176 production system (hereafter “gold gene”; Johnston *et al.* 2013; GenBank CP000884.1, region
177 5233319-5234363; see **Supplemental Data S1** for primer and probe sequences, **Seq1, Seq2,**
178 **Seq3**). Presence and abundance of *Delftia* were then confirmed with a second set of primers and
179 probe for a putative *Delftia*-specific toxin-antitoxin sequence unique to *Delftia* spp. (hereafter
180 “CP sequence”; GenBank CP000884.1, region 759992-760309; see **Supplemental Data S1** for
181 primer and probe sequences, **Seq4, Seq5, Seq6**). Reactions were set up in duplicate along with
182 an 8-point, ten-fold dilution standard curve with “Gold Gene” standard beginning at 40 pg/µl and

183 CP gene standard at 30 pg/μl. Dilution calculation tables and qPCR conditions are described in
184 **Supplemental Data S2**.

185

186 *Abundance Estimation of Delftia spp. in Samples*

187 Undergraduate juniors and seniors and first- and second-year graduate students enrolled
188 in an upper-level *High-throughput Discovery* 8-week lab module programmed an epMotion 5075
189 TC liquid handler with the qPCR script, prepared metagenomic samples for qPCR, and
190 calculated *Delftia* copy numbers using the qPCR Ct data (see **Supplemental Table S1**). Students
191 were provided a spreadsheet template with detailed explanations and information on the use of a
192 standard curve for calculation of absolute copy numbers of target sequences. Data were shared
193 with students, and groups of three to four were tasked with determining copy numbers for one
194 96-well PCR plate containing: twenty-three genomic DNA samples tested in duplicate along
195 with an 8-point standard curve and negative "buffer only" controls. Multiple groups analyzed the
196 same samples to confirm the results, and copy number trends were further supported by
197 analyzing qPCR data for the same samples with a primer set for the single-copy *Delftia*-specific
198 "CP" sequence described above. Data were then analyzed as a class and shared with Danica
199 Lewis (NCSSU Libraries) for visualization and dissemination of the results to participants and the
200 public (go.ncsu.edu/exploredelftia). Samples with the highest *Delftia* copy number using both
201 primer sets were selected for further analysis of the unique "gold" sequence.

202

203 *Sequencing of "Gold Gene" in Samples Positive for Delftia spp.*

204 For twenty samples with high *Delftia* counts, a portion of the gold gene sequence was
205 amplified using primers **Seq7 and Seq8** identified in **Supplemental Data S1** and the Q5(R)
206 High-Fidelity 2X Master Mix (New England Biolabs) according to the protocol outlined in
207 **Supplemental Data S3**. The amplified portion of the gold gene was selected because it is highly
208 specific to *Delftia* and, based on current sequence database information, varies slightly between
209 known species and strains, allowing for identification from metagenomic samples. The target
210 *Delftia* sequence is 1045 base pairs in length (**Supplemental Data S4**). Of the twenty tested
211 samples, seventeen produced sufficient PCR product for sequencing and were sent to the NC
212 State University Genomic Sciences Laboratory (GSL) for Sanger DNA sequencing using primers
213 **Seq7 and Seq8**. Amplicons were sequenced from both directions, and sequences were trimmed
214 based on stringent quality settings to match existing sequences in the NCBI database. The
215 sequencing data were shared with the campus community at an event at which participants used
216 the NCBI Basic Local Alignment Search Tool (BLAST) to find regions of local similarity
217 between the discovered sequences and those deposited in the NCBI database. This allowed
218 participants to identify which *Delftia* species and strains best matched the samples that were
219 sequenced (see **Supplemental Data S5-S9**).

220

221 *Data Dissemination*

222 The Google Maps Fusion Tables extension was used to create a heatmap of *Delftia*
223 presence and abundance across campus, and Tableau Public software was used to create an
224 interactive map (<http://go.ncsu.edu/ExploreDelftia>). Participants were invited to explore the data
225 and evaluate which samples had the highest amount of *Delftia*. Students in the courses involved
226 in sampling and analysis were shown the results and asked to discuss future research questions.

227

228

229 Results

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231 *Proportion of Samples Containing Delftia spp. Sequences*

232 Over 150 samples were received from participants. Of these, 135 were labeled correctly
233 and matched with the online SciStarter database containing sampling location descriptions and
234 latitude-longitude coordinates. Through qPCR analysis using primers and probe **Seq1, Seq2, and**
235 **Seq3**, 125 samples (92.6%) had detectable quantities of the target *Delftia* “gold gene” DNA
236 sequence. Quantities of *Delftia* within samples were confirmed using the CP qPCR primers and
237 probe **Seq4, Seq5, and Seq6**. The twenty samples with highest *Delftia* counts were primarily
238 swabs from sinks and drains (**Table 1**). In contrast, the samples with the least *Delftia* DNA
239 tended to be those from soil samples and outdoor locations. However, it is worth reiterating that
240 nearly all of the samples contained some *Delftia*, a relatively understudied genus of bacteria.

241 We next compared the *Delftia* gold gene sequences in the samples to those of sequenced
242 strains. Collectively, the sequences from our samples were most similar to those of *Delftia*
243 *tsuruhatensis* strain CM13, *Delftia acidovorans* strains ANG1 and SPH-1, or *Delftia*
244 *acidovorans* strain RAY209 (see **Table 2**). Differentiation between *D. acidovorans* strains
245 ANG1 and SPH-1 was not possible as each matched query had the same identity, query
246 coverage, and E value results for both strains. However, for strains of *D. tsuruhatensis* CM13
247 and *D. acidovorans* RAY209, the sequences matched with highest probability to each,
248 respectively. None of our samples were close matches for the other sequenced *Delftia* species of
249 *D. deserti*, *D. lacustris*, *D. litopenaei*, *D. rhizosphaerae*, or other strains of *D. acidovorans* and
250 *D. tsuruhatensis*. Fourteen out of the seventeen sequences had less than 97% sequence identity
251 with the *Delftia* strains they most closely matched.

252

253 Discussion

254

255 Here, we sought to simultaneously test whether we could engage students campus-wide
256 in a citizen science style microbial research project and, in doing so, understand the distribution
257 and diversity of strains of one particular bacterial genus, *Delftia*. In short, we were indeed able to
258 engage students from diverse majors across campus. In doing so, we discovered that some
259 sampling sites had many more *Delftia* counts than did others, that *Delftia* was relatively
260 ubiquitous, and that some of the strains we identified had gold genes that appeared relatively
261 divergent from those known from the literature. Although we were unable to accurately
262 determine the diversity of *Delftia* strains present, this unanswered question presents a new
263 challenge and opportunity for our citizen science and *Delftia* research efforts.

264 Collectively, the qPCR, Sanger DNA sequencing, and BLAST comparison results
265 showed that strains of *Delftia* are diverse, abundant and frequent (found at many sites) in
266 environments in and around the college campus. Based on available genomic sequences
267 deposited in the NCBI database and partial sequencing of the highly conserved gold gene, the
268 strains students discovered beset matched the reference strains *D. tsuruhatensis* CM13 and *D.*
269 *acidovorans* ANG1 and SPH-1. However, fourteen of seventeen samples contained strains that
270 were a 97% or lower match to strains in the NCBI database. Our suspicion is that these strains
271 represent uncharacterized genetic diversity among strains in *Delftia*'s gold gene. However,
272 because we sequenced from complex environmental samples we can't preclude the possibility
273 that some of this variation is due to cases in which the forward and reverse sequences obtained
274 were from different *Delftia* species or strains in the sample.

275 The sequenced *Delftia* gold gene from many of the participant samples matched well to
276 known *Delftia* species, but some samples matched two different existing strains equally well. For
277 example, samples from 7-1 and 24-1 were equally similar to the strains *D. acidovorans* ANG1
278 and SPH-1 (**Table 2**). Clearly further work can be done to sequence additional portions or the
279 entire genomes of these samples to identify what known strain is present or discover a new
280 lineage of *Delftia*. More extensive community analyses of the samples using both targeted (16S
281 rRNA gene) and whole genome shotgun sequencing would aid in the identification of which
282 microbes associate with the presence of *Delftia* and the identity of the gold sequences in the
283 environment, respectively. Additionally, high-throughput sequencing approaches such as Hi-C
284 from Phase Genomics (“Hi-C Proximity-Guided Assembly,” 2018)(Sieber *et al.*, 2018) or
285 Nanopore single-molecule long-read sequencing can be employed to attempt to sequence and
286 assemble the entire *Delftia* genome in metagenomic samples positive for *Delftia* by
287 qPCR. Ultimately, selective media capable of isolating and identifying *Delftia* would allow us to
288 increase our collection of *Delftia* strains for basic functional studies and genome sequencing.

289 Our sequencing results best matched the species *D. acidovorans* and *D. tsuruhatensis*,
290 both of which have been found in environments similar to those we studied. *D. acidovorans* was
291 originally discovered in soil and has been found in drains, waterspouts, and showerheads in the
292 built environment (Wen, Fegan, Hayward, Chakraborty, & Sly, 1999). *D. tsuruhatensis* was first
293 discovered in a wastewater treatment plant and has been found in similar locations along with *D.*
294 *acidovorans* (Hou *et al.*, 2015). The *Delftia* species we did not encounter in our study are species
295 that have so far been associated with more restricted habitats. *Delftia deserti* has been found to
296 inhabit desert environments (Li *et al.*, 2015), *D. lacustris* in lake water (Jørgensen, Brant,
297 Nybroe, & Hansen, 2012), *D. litopenaei* in pond water (Chen, Lin, Sheu, & Sheu, 2012), and *D.*
298 *rhizosphaerae* in the rhizosphere of *Cistus ladanifer*, a plant native to the Mediterranean region
299 (Carro *et al.*, 2017). The apparent ubiquity of the genus *Delftia* hides the reality that individual
300 species appear to show considerable habitat restriction. In the future, it would be interesting to
301 understand which traits and genes of individual *Delftia* species confer the ability to survive in
302 particular habitats.

303 It is unclear the extent to which the life history of *Delftia* in the above habitats is the same
304 as that of *Delftia* in the built environment of a college campus. Nor is it well understood whether
305 the presence of *Delftia* in water systems is problematic or potentially beneficial. Like many
306 bacterial taxa, *Delftia* species are recorded as opportunistic pathogens that can infect hospitalized
307 or immunocompromised patients (Patel *et al.*, 2019)(Bilgin, Sarmis, Tigen, Soyletir, &
308 Mulazimoglu, 2015). However, there is no indication that human bodies are a common habitat
309 for this genus. Instead, in buildings such as those we sampled it appears to be much more
310 common in water systems – in drains, showerheads, and downspouts. In as much as the
311 ecological conditions of water systems differ greatly, it is possible that a comparative study of
312 water systems, such as those that are or are not chlorinated, might reveal more about the build
313 environment natural history of this organism (cite our NTM study).

314 Our approach kindled campus-wide student interest in microbial diversity and molecular
315 biology techniques through the excitement of discovering this unique microbe in places that
316 students frequent on campus. Groups of students from various academic disciplines and courses
317 produced and analyzed samples that contributed to a large public dataset. The findings helped
318 teach the student community about *Delftia*, and also reinforced the importance of the
319 collaborative nature of scientific discovery. The success of this project, in terms of the
320 documentation of *Delftia*'s distribution helps to validate our general approach. In addition, our

321 approach has the potential to encourage future students to participate. We aim to continue the
322 challenge of accurately identifying new *Delftia* lineages and engage others by expanding the
323 sampling opportunity to a multi-section first-year English class that is required for all
324 undergraduate students on our campus. Using a similar approach and incorporating the expertise
325 of faculty in the English department, we will engage students in writing tasks related to the
326 project. Additionally, an upper-level metagenomics course will tie into this endeavor by
327 processing, sequencing, and analyzing the microbial communities in samples with high numbers
328 of *Delftia* sequences. With relatively minor changes to the course schedules and curricula, one
329 hundred more students per semester can participate, learn, and contribute to the project. We are
330 creating resources that are accessible for other faculty and campuses to implement this project
331 and share findings. For this, students participating in the project are writing the *Delftia* book
332 (go.ncsu.edu/delftiaibook), and we have created a group for instructor resources on the QUBES
333 web portal (<https://qubeshub.org/community/groups/delftia/projects>). Liquid handlers can be
334 cost-prohibitive, but less expensive models such as the Opentrons OT-2 are available, and we are
335 developing scripts for this instrument. Student groups in lab-based courses can always set up
336 qPCRs manually to participate in this project.

337

338 **Conclusions**

339

340 As the future plans for integrating this project into courses indicate, enthusiasm for the
341 project was high among our colleagues and grew as the project proceeded. However, if we are to
342 continue the project it is key that it continues to yield new scientific insights. Fortunately, this
343 seems very likely to be the case. For example, although *Delftia* abundance was very patchy on
344 campus, we have yet to explain what factors account for such patchiness. Additional samples
345 will help us to have sufficient coverage across sample types to allow spatial models of *Delftia*
346 diversity and abundance. In addition, our results suggest that new variants of the *Delftia* gold
347 gene and even new *Delftia* strains remain to be discovered. Conversely, there is a lack of
348 genomic diversity represented in the NCBI database. By leveraging the enthusiasm of university
349 students and staff, interconnecting courses and researchers, and using our model pipeline, new
350 lineages of *Delftia* can be rapidly identified and studied (*e.g.*, groups of students cloning novel
351 gold gene cluster into a host such as *Escherichia coli* or yeast for functional characterization).
352 This will yield a better understanding of the ecological and environmental significance of these
353 organisms and simultaneously help to connect students and faculty across campus in a common
354 scientific project. Finally, it is of note that *Delftia* species, while little known, are of potentially
355 great applied importance. In addition, they contain genes that allow many strains to precipitate
356 gold. Given the many waste streams in which gold is present but hard to concentrate, this ability
357 has the potential to be very useful moving forward.

358

359 **Acknowledgements**

360

361 We would like to acknowledge the contributions of all the students involved in this
362 project and the support offered by the NC State Biotechnology Program and Genomic Sciences
363 Laboratory.

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Table 1 (on next page)

Top twenty samples with *Delftia* DNA identified via qPCR targeting of unique “gold” gene.

1 **Table 1:** Top twenty samples with *Delftia* DNA identified via qPCR targeting of unique “gold”
 2 gene.

DNA Sample Number	<i>Delftia</i> Gold Gene Count	Latitude	Longitude	Sample Type	Location	Description
15-1	113,191	35.78593062	78.66805315	Swab	Poe Hall	Water fountain
7-1	17,294	35.78472956	78.67292404	Swab	Owen Residence Hall	<i>None provided</i>
24-1	14,167	35.78822065	78.67522672	Swab	University Towers	parking deck drains
1-3	12,041	35.78654	-78.671737	Swab	Williams Hall	bathroom sink
17-3	9,493	35.78068018	78.67308866	Swab	Wood Residence Hall	Sink drain
23-2	8,780	35.78468	-78.666723	Swab	SAS building	The girls bathroom sink on the first floor of SAS building, middle sink
33-2	5,789	35.78744498	78.67013454	Swab	DH Hill Library	3rd floor Women’s bathroom sink
12-2	5,095	35.785385	-78.673091	Swab	Metcalf bathroom	bathroom sink
26-1	5,095	35.74477072	78.68757963	Swab	Campus Crossing	Apartment complex
9-1	4,612	35.78795303	78.67699295	Swab	Valentine Commons	Kitchen sink
44-4	4,356	35.78670028	78.67463044	Soil	fence on Dan Allen Dr.	chilly (56 F), drier soil, live organisms present
25-2	2,961	35.7861221	78.66352558	Swab	NCSU Bell Tower, main campus	Wild Card sample-seat located on NCSU bell tower
45-4	2,317	35.78753054	78.67083426	Soil	Atrium	Trash bins next to the vending machines
24-2	1,971	35.78822065	78.67522672	Swab	University Towers	drain
15-2	1,873	35.785982	-78.677831	Swab	Lee Hall	Suite 807 Sink

<i>18-1</i>	1,733	35.78481659	78.67285967	- Swab	Owen residence hall	inside in dorm room
<i>25-1</i>	1,535	35.77153404	78.67522001	- Swab	Engineering Building I, Centennial Campus	Drain in the middle of the floor of the bathroom
<i>29-2</i>	1,452	35.78751407	78.66981704	- Swab	DH Hill	Floor 1
<i>7-2</i>	1,381	35.78412031	78.67101431	- Swab	Talley Student Union	Bathroom Sink Drain
<i>30-2</i>	1,113	35.78824567	78.67403984	- Swab	Nelson Hall	Water fountain

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Table 2 (on next page)

NCBI BLAST results for sequenced environmental “gold gene”.

1 **Table 2:** NCBI BLAST results for sequenced environmental “gold gene”.

Sample	Species and Strain	Identity	Query Coverage	E Value
1-3	<i>Delftia tsuruhatensis</i> strain CM13	98%	100%	0.0
9-1		96%	100%	0.0
12-2		95%	99%	0.0
15-1		97%	100%	0.0
15-2		95%	100%	0.0
17-3		95%	100%	0.0
25-1		95%	100%	0.0
25-2		96%	100%	0.0
26-1		96%	100%	0.0
30-2		95%	99%	0.0
33-2		97%	100%	0.0
7-1		<i>Delftia acidovorans</i> strain ANG1 or strain SPH-1	91%	100%
18-1	94%		99%	0.0
23-2	95%		100%	0.0
24-1	95%		100%	0.0
7-2	<i>Delftia acidovorans</i> strain RAY209	82%	99%	3e-154
30-3		96%	99%	0.0

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