

Introgressive hybridisation in Icelandic birch

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In this talk I will present an overview of my 35 years of research on the two co-existing birch species in natural woodlands in Iceland, diploid dwarf birch *Betula nana* and tetraploid downy birch *B. pubescens*. Topics include (1) identification of natural triploid hybrids using cytogenetic methods, (2) qualitative and quantitative botanical evaluation of hybrid introgression between these two species, (3) cpDNA haplotyping of all three ploidy groups in comparison with birch populations in Scandinavia, (4) AFLP analysis of the origin of birch species in Iceland (unpublished), (5) palynological analysis of birch hybridisation during the Holocene in Iceland, and (6) fluorescence microscopy for studying fertility of triploid hybrids (unpublished). Special thanks to all my Finnish students, colleagues and mentors.