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Systematic Study of Genus *Acanthopanax* Using ITS Sequences

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Genus *Acanthopanax* is a long-lived woody species primarily distributed throughout Asia. Many species of this genus are regarded as medically and ecologically important in the world. We evaluated a representative sample of the nine taxa with nuclear ribosomal DNA internal transcribed spacer sequences (ITS) to estimate genetic relationships within genus. As some Korean populations were isolated and patchily distributed, they exhibited a low level of genetic diversity. *Acanthopanax seoulense* was similar to *A. sessiliflorus*, while *A. rufinerve* and Chinese and Russian *Acanthopanax* taxa were more distinct. *A. senticosus* is closed related to *A. seoulense* and *A. sessiliflorus*, whereas other species (*A. koreanum*) are more diverse from the Korean accessions. The phylogenetic tree clearly distinguished three clades, the Korean, Chinese, and Russian clades. Species-specific markers, which may be useful in germ-plasm classification and agricultural process.