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Computing the 4-Edge-Connected Components of a Graph in Linear Time*

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Abstract

We present the first linear-time algorithm that computes the 4-edge-connected components of an undirected graph. Hence, we also obtain the first linear-time algorithm for testing 4-edge connectivity. Our results are based on a linear-time algorithm that computes the 3-edge cuts of a 3-edge-connected graph $G$, and a linear-time procedure that, given the collection of all 3-edge cuts, partitions the vertices of $G$ into the 4-edge-connected components.

1 Introduction

Let $G = (V, E)$ be a connected undirected graph with $m$ edges and $n$ vertices. An (edge) cut of $G$ is a set of edges $S \subseteq E$ such that $G \setminus S$ is not connected. We say that $S$ is a $k$-cut if its cardinality is $|S| = k$. Also, we refer to the 1-cuts as the bridges of $G$. A cut $S$ is minimal if no proper subset of $S$ is a cut of $G$. The edge connectivity of $G$, denoted by $\lambda(G)$, is the minimum cardinality of an edge cut of $G$. A graph is $k$-edge-connected if $\lambda(G) \geq k$.

A cut $S$ separates two vertices $u$ and $v$, if $u$ and $v$ lie in different connected components of $G \setminus S$. Vertices $u$ and $v$ are $k$-edge-connected, denoted by $u \overset{k}{\cong} v$, if there is no $(k - 1)$-cut that separates them. By Menger’s theorem \cite{15}, $u$ and $v$ are $k$-edge-connected if and only if there are $k$-edge-disjoint paths between $u$ and $v$. A $k$-edge-connected component of $G$ is a maximal set $C \subseteq V$ such that there is no $(k - 1)$-edge cut in $G$ that disconnects any two vertices $u, v \in C$ (i.e., $u$ and $v$ are in the same connected component of $G \setminus S$ for any $(k - 1)$-edge cut $S$). We can define, analogously, the vertex cuts and the $k$-vertex-connected components of $G$.

Computing and testing the edge connectivity of a graph, as well as its $k$-edge-connected components, is a classical subject in graph theory, as it is an important notion in several application areas (see, e.g., \cite{17}), that has been extensively studied since the 1970’s. It is known how to compute the $(k - 1)$-edge cuts, $(k - 1)$-vertex cuts, $k$-edge-connected components and $k$-vertex-connected components of a graph in linear time for $k \in \{2, 3\}$ \cite{5, 9, 16, 19, 22}. The case $k = 4$

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Our results and techniques In this paper we present the first linear-time algorithm that computes the 4-edge-connected components of a general graph G, thus resolving a problem that remained open for more than 20 years. Hence, this also implies the first linear-time algorithm for testing 4-edge connectivity. We base our results on the following ideas. First, we extend the framework of Georgiadis and Kosinas [6] for computing 2-edge cuts (as well as mixed cuts consisting of a single vertex and a single edge) of G. Similar to known linear-time algorithms for computing 3-vertex-connected and 3-edge-connected components [9, 22], Georgiadis and Kosinas [6] define various concepts with respect to a depth-first search (DFS) spanning tree of G. We extend this framework by introducing new key parameters that can be computed efficiently and provide characterizations of the various types of 3-edge cuts that may appear in a 3-edge-connected graph. We deal with the general case by dividing G into auxiliary graphs H₁, ..., Hₖ, such that each Hᵢ is 3-edge-connected and corresponds to a different 3-edge-connected component of G. Also, for any two vertices x and y, we have x ∈₄ G y if and only if x and y are both in the same auxiliary graph Hᵢ and x ∈₄ Hᵢ y. Furthermore, this reduction allows us to compute in linear time the number of minimal 3-edge cuts in a general graph G. Next, in order to compute the 4-edge-connected components in each auxiliary graph Hᵢ, we utilize the fact that a minimum cut of a graph G separates G into two connected components. Hence, we can define the set V_C of the vertices in the connected component of G \ C that does not contain a specified root vertex r. We refer to the number of vertices in V_C as the r-size of the cut C. Then, we apply a recursive algorithm that successively splits Hᵢ into smaller graphs according to its 3-cuts. When no more splits are possible, the connected components of the final split graph correspond to the 4-edge-connected components of G. We show that we can implement this procedure in linear time by processing the cuts in non-decreasing order with respect to their r-size.

2 Concepts defined on a DFS-tree structure

Let G = (V, E) be a connected undirected graph, which may have multiple edges. For a set of vertices S ⊆ V, the induced subgraph of S, denoted by G[S], is the subgraph of G with vertex set S and edge set {e ∈ E | both ends of e lie in S}. Let T be the spanning tree of G provided by a depth-first search (DFS) of G [19], with start vertex r. The edges in T are called tree-edges; the edges in E \ T are called back-edges, as their endpoints have ancestor-descendant relation in T. A
vertex $u$ is an ancestor of a vertex $v$ ($v$ is a descendant of $u$) if the tree path from $r$ to $v$ contains $u$. Thus, we consider a vertex to be an ancestor (and, consequently, a descendant) of itself. We let $p(v)$ denote the parent of a vertex $v$ in $T$. If $u$ is a descendant of $v$ in $T$, we denote the set of vertices of the simple tree path from $u$ to $v$ as $T[u,v]$. The expressions $T[u,v]$ and $T(u,v)$ have the obvious meaning (i.e., the vertex on the side of the parenthesis is excluded). From now on, we identify vertices with their preorder number (assigned during the DFS). Thus, $v$ being an ancestor of $u$ in $T$ implies that $v \leq u$. Let $T(v)$ denote the set of descendants of $v$, and let $ND(v)$ denote the number of descendants of $v$ (i.e., $ND(v) = |T(v)|$). With all $ND(v)$ computed, we can check in constant time whether a vertex $u$ is a descendant of $v$, since $u \in T(v)$ if and only if $v \leq u$ and $u < v + ND(v)$ [20].

Whenever $(x, y)$ denotes a back-edge, we shall assume that $x$ is a descendant of $y$. We let $B(v)$ denote the set of back-edges $(x, y)$, where $x$ is a descendant of $v$ and $y$ is a proper ancestor of $v$. Thus, if we remove the tree-edge $(v, p(v))$, $T(v)$ remains connected to the rest of the graph through the back-edges in $B(v)$. This implies that $G$ is 2-edge-connected if and only if $|B(v)| > 0$, for every $v \neq r$. Furthermore, $G$ is 3-edge-connected only if $|B(v)| > 1$, for every $v \neq r$. We let $b\text{-}\text{count}(v)$ denote the number of elements of $B(v)$ (i.e., $b\text{-}\text{count}(v) = |B(v)|$). $\text{low}(v)$ denotes the lowest $y$ such that there exists a back-edge $(x, y) \in B(v)$. Similarly, $\text{high}(v)$ is the highest $y$ such that there exists a back-edge $(x, y) \in B(v)$.

We let $M(v)$ denote the nearest common ancestor of all $x$ for which there exists a back-edge $(x, y) \in B(v)$. Note that $M(v)$ is a descendant of $v$. Let $m$ be a vertex and $v_1, \ldots, v_k$ be all the vertices with $M(v_1) = \ldots = M(v_k) = m$, sorted in decreasing order. (Observe that $v_{i+1}$ is an ancestor of $v_i$, for every $i \in \{1, \ldots, k-1\}$, since $m$ is a common descendant of all $v_1, \ldots, v_k$.) Then we have $M^{-1}(m) = \{v_1, \ldots, v_k\}$, and we define $\text{nextM}(v_i) := v_{i+1}$, for every $i \in \{1, \ldots, k-1\}$, and $\text{lastM}(v_i) := v_k$, for every $i \in \{1, \ldots, k\}$. Thus, for every vertex $v$, $\text{nextM}(v)$ is the successor of $v$ in the decreasingly sorted list $M^{-1}(M(v))$, and $\text{lastM}(v)$ is the lowest element in $M^{-1}(M(v))$.

The following two simple facts have been proved in [6].

**Fact 2.1.** All $\text{ND}(v)$, $b\text{-}\text{count}(v)$, $M(v)$, $\text{low}(v)$ and $\text{high}(v)$ can be computed in total linear-time, for all vertices $v$.

**Fact 2.2.** $B(u) = B(v) \iff M(u) = M(v)$, and $\text{high}(u) = \text{high}(v) \iff M(u) = M(v)$ and $b\text{-}\text{count}(u) = b\text{-}\text{count}(v)$.

Furthermore, [6] implies the following characterization of a 3-edge-connected graph.

**Fact 2.3.** $G$ is 3-edge-connected if and only if $|B(v)| > 1$, for every $v \neq r$, and $B(v) \neq B(u)$, for every pair of vertices $u$ and $v$, $u \neq v$.

**Lemma 2.4.** Let $v$ be an ancestor of $u$ and $M(v)$ a descendant of $u$. Then, $M(v)$ is a descendant of $M(u)$.

**Proof.** Let $(x, y) \in B(v)$. Then $x$ is a descendant of $M(v)$, and therefore a descendant of $u$. Furthermore, $y$ is a proper ancestor of $v$, and therefore a proper ancestor of $u$. This shows that $(x, y) \in B(u)$, and thus we have $B(v) \subseteq B(u)$. This shows that $M(v)$ is a descendant of $M(u)$.

The following lemma will be implicitly invoked several times in the following sections.

**Lemma 2.5.** Let $u$ be a proper descendant of $v$ such that $M(u) = M(v)$. Then, $B(v) \subseteq B(u)$. Furthermore, if the graph is 3-edge-connected, $B(v) \subseteq B(u)$. 

3
Proof. Let \((x,y) \in B(v)\). Then \(x\) is a descendant of \(M(v)\), and therefore a descendant of \(M(u)\), and therefore a descendant of \(u\). Furthermore, \(y\) is a proper ancestor of \(v\), and therefore a proper ancestor of \(u\). This shows that \((x,y) \in B(u)\), and thus \(B(v) \subseteq B(u)\) is established. If the graph is 3-edge-connected, \(B(v) \subseteq B(u)\) is an immediate consequence of fact 2.3. \(\Box\)

Now let us provide some extensions of those concepts that will be needed for our purposes. Assume that \(G\) is 3-edge-connected, and let \(v \neq r\) be a vertex of \(G\). By fact 2.3, \(b_{\text{count}}(v) > 1\), and therefore there are at least two back-edges in \(B(v)\). Of course, there is at least one back-edge \((x,y) \in B(v)\) such that \(y = \text{low}(v)\). We let \(\text{low}1(v)\) denote \(y\), and \(\text{low}1D(v)\) denote \(x\). That is, \(\text{low}1(v)\) is the low point of \(v\), and \(\text{low}1D(v)\) is a descendant of \(v\) which is connected with a back-edge to its low point. (Of course, \(\text{low}1D(v)\) is not uniquely determined, but we need to have at least one such descendant stored in a variable.) Similarly, we let \(\text{high}D(v)\) denote a descendant of \(v\) which is connected with a back-edge to the high point of \(v\). (Again, \(\text{high}D(v)\) is not uniquely determined.) Then, there may exist another back-edge \((x',y') \in B(v)\) with \(x' \neq x\) and \(y' = y\). In this case, we let \(\text{low}2(v)\) denote \(y'\) (that is, \(\text{low}2(v)\) is, again, the low point of \(v\)) and \(\text{low}2D(v)\) denote \(x'\). If there is no back-edge \((x',y') \in B(v)\) with \(x' \neq x\) and \(y' = y\), let \((x',y') \in B(v)\) denote a back-edge with \(y' = \min(\{w \mid \exists(x,w) \in B(v)\} \setminus \{y\})\). Then we let \(\text{low}2(v)\) denote \(y'\) and \(\text{low}2D(v)\) denote \(x'\). Thus, if \(v \neq r\), we know that \((\text{low}1D(v),\text{low}(v))\) and \((\text{low}2D(v),\text{low}2(v))\) are two distinct back-edges in \(B(v)\). We have defined \(\text{low}1\), \(\text{low}1D\), \(\text{low}2\) and \(\text{low}2D\) because we need to have stored, for every vertex \(v \neq r\), two back-edges from \(B(v)\) (see section 3.1). Any other pair of back-edges from \(B(v)\) could do as well. It is easy to compute all \(\text{low}1(v)\), \(\text{low}1D(v)\), \(\text{low}2(v)\) and \(\text{low}2D(v)\) during the DFS.

We let \(l(v)\) denote the lowest \(y\) for which there exists a back-edge \((v,y)\), or \(v\) if no such back-edge exists. Thus, \(\text{low}(v) \leq l(v)\). Now let \(c_1,\ldots,c_k\) be the children of \(v\) sorted in non-decreasing order w.r.t. their low point. Then we call \(c_1\) the \(\text{low}1\) child of \(v\), and \(c_2\) the \(\text{low}2\) child of \(v\). (Of course, the \(\text{low}1\) and \(\text{low}2\) children of \(v\) are not uniquely determined after a DFS on \(G\), since we may have \(\text{low}(c_1) = \text{low}(c_2)\).) Let \(\tilde{M}(v)\) denote the nearest common ancestor of all \(x\) for which there exists a back-edge \((x,y) \in B(v)\) with \(x\) a proper descendant of \(M(v)\). Formally, \(\tilde{M}(v) := \text{nca}\{x \mid \exists(x,y) \in B(v) \text{ and } x \neq M(v)\}\). If the set \(\{x \mid \exists(x,y) \in B(v) \text{ and } x \neq M(v)\}\) is empty, we leave \(\tilde{M}(v)\) undefined. We also define \(M_{\text{low}1}(v)\) as the nearest common ancestor of all \(x\) for which there exists a back-edge \((x,y) \in B(v)\) with \(x\) being a descendant of the \(\text{low}1\) child of \(M(v)\), and \(M_{\text{low}2}(v)\) as the nearest common ancestor of all \(x\) for which there exists a back-edge \((x,y) \in B(v)\) with \(x\) a descendant of the \(\text{low}2\) child of \(M(v)\). Formally, \(M_{\text{low}1}(v) := \text{nca}\{x \mid \exists(x,y) \in B(v) \text{ and } x \text{ is a descendant of the } \text{low}1 \text{ child of } M(v)\}\) and \(M_{\text{low}2}(v) := \text{nca}\{x \mid \exists(x,y) \in B(v) \text{ and } x \text{ is a descendant of the } \text{low}2 \text{ child of } M(v)\}\). If the set in the formal definition of \(M_{\text{low}1}(v)\) (resp. \(M_{\text{low}2}(v)\)) is empty, we leave \(M_{\text{low}1}(v)\) (resp. \(M_{\text{low}2}(v)\)) undefined.

### 2.1 Computing the DFS parameters in linear time

Algorithm 1 shows how we can easily compute \(\text{high}D(v)\) during the computation of all \(\text{high}\) points. The algorithm uses the static tree disjoint-set-union data structure of Gabow and Tarjan [4] to achieve linear running time.

Algorithm 2 shows how we can compute all \(M(v)\) and \(\text{next}M(v)\), algorithm 3 shows how we can compute all \(\tilde{M}(v)\), and algorithm 4 shows how we can compute all \(M_{\text{low}1}(v)\) and \(M_{\text{low}2}(v)\), for all vertices \(v \neq r\), in total linear time. These algorithms process the vertices in a bottom-up fashion, and they work recursively on the descendants of a vertex. To perform these computations in linear time, we have to avoid descending to the same vertices an excessive amount of times during the recursion. To achieve this, we use a variable \(\text{current}M[w]\), that has the property that, during the
Algorithm 1: Compute all $high(v)$ and $highD(v)$, for all vertices $v \neq r$

1. initialize a DSU structure on the vertices of $G$, where the link operations are predetermined by the edges of $T$

2. for $v = n$ to $v = 1$
   3. foreach $u$ adjacent to $v$
      4. if $u$ is a descendant of $v$
         5. $x \leftarrow \text{find}(u)$
         6. while $x > v$
            7. $high[x] \leftarrow v$
            8. $highD[x] \leftarrow u$
            9. $next \leftarrow \text{find}(p(x))$
            10. $link(x, p(x))$
            11. $x \leftarrow next$
         12. end
      13. end
   14. end
15. end

course of the algorithm, when we process a vertex $v$, all back-edges that start from a descendant of $w$ and end in a proper ancestor of $v$ have their higher end in $T(currentM[w])$ (this means, of course, that $currentM[w]$ is a descendant of $w$). And so, if we want e.g. to compute $M_{\text{low1}}(v)$, we may descend immediately to $currentM[c_1]$, where $c_1$ is the low1 child of $M(v)$. In Lemma 2.7, we give a formal proof of the correctness and linear complexity of Algorithms 3 and 4.

Algorithm 2: Compute all $M(v)$ and $nextM(v)$, for all vertices $v \neq r$

// Compute all $M(v)$ and $nextM(v)$
1. for $v = n$ to $v = 2$
   2. $nextM[v] \leftarrow \emptyset$
   3. $c \leftarrow v$, $m \leftarrow v$
   4. while $M(v) = \emptyset$
      5. if $l(m) < v$ then $M(v) \leftarrow m$, break
      6. $c_1 \leftarrow \text{low1 child of } m$
      7. $c_2 \leftarrow \text{low2 child of } m$
      8. if $low(c_2) < v$ then $M(v) \leftarrow m$, break
      9. $c \leftarrow c_1$, $m \leftarrow M(c)$
   10. end
   11. if $c \neq v$ then $nextM(c) \leftarrow v$
12. end

Lemma 2.6. Let $v$ and $v'$ be two vertices such that $v'$ is an ancestor of $v$ with $M(v') = M(v)$. Then, $M(v')$ (resp. $M_{\text{low1}}(v')$, resp. $M_{\text{low2}}(v')$), if it is defined, is a descendant of $M(v)$ (resp. $M_{\text{low1}}(v)$, resp. $M_{\text{low2}}(v)$).

Proof. Let $v'$ be an ancestor of $v$ such that $M(v') = M(v)$.

Assume, first, that $M(v')$ is defined. Then, there exists a back-edge $(x, y) \in B(v')$ where $x$ is a proper descendant of $M(v')$. Since $M(v') = M(v)$, $x$ is a proper descendant of $M(v)$. Furthermore,
Algorithm 3: Compute all $\tilde{M}(v)$, for all vertices $v \neq r$

1. initialize an array $currentM$ with $n$ entries
   
   // Compute all $\tilde{M}(v)$
2. foreach vertex $v$ do $currentM[v] \leftarrow v$
3. for $v = n$ to $v = 2$ do
   4. $m \leftarrow M(v)$
   5. $c \leftarrow low1 \text{ child of } m$
   6. if $low(c) \geq v$ then $\tilde{M}(v) \leftarrow \emptyset$, continue
   7. $c' \leftarrow low2 \text{ child of } m$
   8. if $low(c') < v$ then $\tilde{M}(v) \leftarrow m$, continue
   9. $m \leftarrow currentM[c]$
10. while $\tilde{M}(v) = \emptyset$ do
    11. if $l(m) < v$ then $\tilde{M}(v) \leftarrow m$, break
    12. $c_1 \leftarrow low1 \text{ child of } m$
    13. $c_2 \leftarrow low2 \text{ child of } m$
14. if $low(c_2) < v$ then $\tilde{M}(v) \leftarrow m$, break
    15. $m \leftarrow currentM[c_1]$
16. end
17. $currentM[c] \leftarrow m$
18. end

since $y$ is a proper ancestor of $v'$, it is also a proper ancestor of $v$. This shows that $(x, y) \in B(v)$, and $\tilde{M}(v)$ is an ancestor of $x$. Due to the generality of $(x, y)$, we conclude that $\tilde{M}(v)$ is an ancestor of $\tilde{M}(v')$.

Now assume that $M_{low1}(v')$ is defined. Then, there exists a back-edge $(x, y) \in B(v')$ where $x$ is a descendant of the low1 child of $\tilde{M}(v')$. Since $M(v') = M(v)$, $x$ is a descendant of the low1 child of $M(v)$. Furthermore, since $y$ is a proper ancestor of $v'$, it is also a proper ancestor of $v$. This shows that $(x, y) \in B(v)$, and $M_{low1}(v)$ is an ancestor of $x$. Due to the generality of $(x, y)$, we conclude that $M_{low1}(v)$ is an ancestor of $M_{low1}(v')$.

Finally, assume that $M_{low2}(v')$ is defined. Then, there exists a back-edge $(x, y) \in B(v')$ where $x$ is a descendant of the low2 child of $\tilde{M}(v')$. Since $M(v') = M(v)$, $x$ is a descendant of the low2 child of $M(v)$. Furthermore, since $y$ is a proper ancestor of $v'$, it is also a proper ancestor of $v$. This shows that $(x, y) \in B(v)$, and $M_{low2}(v)$ is an ancestor of $x$. Due to the generality of $(x, y)$, we conclude that $M_{low2}(v)$ is an ancestor of $M_{low2}(v')$.

Lemma 2.7. Algorithms 3 and 4 compute all $\tilde{M}(v)$, $M_{low1}(v)$ and $M_{low2}(v)$, for all vertices $v \neq r$, in total linear time.

Proof. Let us show e.g. that Algorithm 4 correctly computes all $M_{low1}(v)$, for all $v \neq r$, in total linear time. The proofs for the other cases are similar. So let $v$ be a vertex $\neq r$. Since we are interested in the back-edges $(x, y) \in B(v)$ with $x$ a descendant of the low1 child $c$ of $M(v)$, we first have to check whether $low(c) < v$. If $low(c) \geq v$, then there is no such back-edge, and therefore we set $M_{low1}(v) \leftarrow \emptyset$ (in line 6). If $low(c) < v$, then $M_{low1}(v)$ is defined, and in line 7 we assign $m$ the value $currentM[c]$. We claim that, at that moment, $currentM[c]$ is an ancestor of $M_{low1}(v)$, and every $currentM[c_1]$ that we will access in the while loop in line 13 is also an ancestor of $M_{low1}(v)$; furthermore, when we reach line 15, $currentM[c]$ is assigned $M_{low1}(v)$. It is not difficult to see this
Algorithm 4: Compute all $M_{\text{low1}}(v)$ and $M_{\text{low2}}(v)$, for all vertices $v \neq r$

1. initialize an array $currentM$ with $n$ entries
   // Compute all $M_{\text{low1}}(v)$
2. for each vertex $v$ do $currentM[v] \leftarrow v$
3. for $v = n$ to $v = 2$ do
   4. $m \leftarrow M(v)$
   5. $c \leftarrow$ low1 child of $m$
   6. if $\text{low}(c) \geq v$ then $M_{\text{low1}}(v) \leftarrow \emptyset$, continue
   7. $m \leftarrow currentM[c]$
   8. while $M_{\text{low1}}(v) = \emptyset$ do
      9. if $l(m) < v$ then $M_{\text{low1}}(v) \leftarrow m$, break
     10. $c_1 \leftarrow$ low1 child of $m$
     11. $c_2 \leftarrow$ low2 child of $m$
     12. if $\text{low}(c_2) < v$ then $M_{\text{low1}}(v) \leftarrow m$, break
     13. $m \leftarrow currentM[c_1]$
   14. end
   15. $currentM[c] \leftarrow m$
16. end
   // Compute all $M_{\text{low2}}(v)$
17. for each vertex $v$ do $currentM[v] \leftarrow v$
18. for $v = n$ to $v = 2$ do
19.   $m \leftarrow M(v)$
20.   $c \leftarrow$ low2 child of $m$
21. if $\text{low}(c) \geq v$ then $M_{\text{low2}}(v) \leftarrow \emptyset$, continue
22. $m \leftarrow currentM[c]$
23. while $M_{\text{low2}}(v) = \emptyset$ do
24.   if $l(m) < v$ then $M_{\text{low2}}(v) \leftarrow m$, break
25.   $c_1 \leftarrow$ low1 child of $m$
26.   $c_2 \leftarrow$ low2 child of $m$
27. if $\text{low}(c_2) < v$ then $M_{\text{low2}}(v) \leftarrow m$, break
28.   $m \leftarrow currentM[c_1]$
29. end
30. $currentM[c] \leftarrow m$
31. end

inductively. Suppose, then, that this was the case for every vertex $v' > v$, and let us see what happens when we process $v$. Let $c$ be the low1 child of $M(v)$. Initially, $currentM[c]$ was set to be $c$. Now, if $currentM[c]$ is still $c$, $M_{\text{low1}}(v)$ is a descendant of $c$ (by definition). Otherwise, due to the inductive hypothesis, $currentM[c]$ had been assigned $M_{\text{low1}}(v')$ during the processing of a vertex $v' > v$ with $M(v') = M(v)$. This implies that $v'$ is a descendant of $v$, and by Lemma 2.6 we have that $M_{\text{low1}}(v')$ is an ancestor of $M_{\text{low1}}(v)$. In any case, then, we have that $m = currentM[c]$ in an ancestor of $M_{\text{low1}}(v)$. Now we enter the while loop in line 8. If either $l(m) < v$ or $\text{low}(c_2) < v$, where $c_2$ is the low2 child of $m$, we have that $M_{\text{low1}}(v)$ is an ancestor of $m$. Since $m$ is also an ancestor of $M_{\text{low1}}(v)$, we correctly set $M_{\text{low1}}(v) \leftarrow m$ (in lines 9 or 12). Otherwise, we have that $M_{\text{low1}}(v)$ is a descendant of the low1 child $c_1$ of $m$. Now, due to the inductive hypothesis, $currentM[c_1]$ is either $c_1$ or $M_{\text{low1}}(v')$ for a vertex $v' > v$ with $M(v') = m$. In the first case we
obviously have that currentM[c]1 is an ancestor of Mlow1(v). Now assume that the second case is true, and let (x, y) be a back-edge with x a descendant of c1 and y a proper ancestor of v. Then, since v' > v and v, v' have m as a common descendant, we have that v is ancestor of v', and therefore y is a proper ancestor of v'. This shows that x is a descendant of Mlow1(v'). Thus, due to the generality of (x, y), we have that Mlow1(v) is a descendant of Mlow1(v'). In any case, then, we have that currentM[c]1 is an ancestor of Mlow1(v). Thus we set m ← currentM[c]1 and we continue the while loop, until we have that m = Mlow1(v), in which case we will set currentM[c] ← m in line 15. Thus we have proved that Algorithm 4 correctly computes Mlow1(v), for every vertex v ≠ r, and that, during the processing of a vertex v, every currentM[c] that we access is an ancestor of Mlow1(v) (until, in line 15, we assign currentM[c] to Mlow1(v)).

Now, to prove linearity, let S(v) = {m1, ..., mk}, ordered increasingly, denote the (possible empty) set of all vertices that we had to descend to before leaving the while loop in lines 8-14. (Thus, if k ≥ 1, mk = Mlow1(v).) In other words, S(v) contains all vertices that were assigned to m in line 13. We will show that Algorithm 4 runs in linear time, by showing that, for every two vertices v and v', v ≠ v' implies that S(v) ∩ S(v') ⊆ {Mlow1(v)}, where we have S(v) ∩ S(v') = {Mlow1(v)} only if Mlow1(v) = Mlow1(v'). Of course, it is definitely the case that S(v) ∩ S(v') = ∅ if v and v' are not related as ancestor and descendant, since the while loop descends to descendants of the vertex under processing. So let v' be a proper ancestor of v. If Mlow1(v') is not a descendant of the low1 child c of M(v), then we obviously have S(v) ∩ S(v') = ∅ (since S(v) consists of descendants of c, but the while loop during the computation of Mlow1(v') will not descend to the subtree of c). Thus we may assume that Mlow1(v') is a descendant of c. Now, let S(v') = {m1, ..., mk} and m0 = currentM[c], where c is the low1 child of M(v'). We will show that every mi, for every i ∈ {1, ..., k}, is either an ancestor of M(v) or a descendant of Mlow1(v). (This obviously implies that S(v') ∩ S(v) ⊆ {Mlow1(v)}.) First observe that M(v') is either an ancestor of M(v) or a descendant of Mlow1(v). To see this, suppose that M(v') is not an ancestor of M(v). Since Mlow1(v') is a descendant of c, there is at least one back-edge (x, y) in B(v') with x a descendant of c. Then, since y is a proper ancestor of v' and v' is a proper ancestor of v, we have that (x, y) is in B(v), and therefore x is a descendant of Mlow1(v). Now let (x', y') be a back-edge in B(v'). If x' is a descendant of a vertex in T[c, v'], but not a descendant of c, then the nearest common ancestor of x and x' is in T[M(v), v'], and therefore M(v') is an ancestor of M(v), contradicting our supposition. Thus, x' is a descendant of c. Furthermore, y' is a proper ancestor of v, and therefore (x', y') ∈ B(v). Thus, x' is a descendant of Mlow1(v). Due to the generality of (x', y') ∈ B(v'), we conclude that M(v') is a descendant of Mlow1(v). Thus we have shown that M(v') is either an ancestor of M(v) or a descendant of Mlow1(v).

Now, if M(v') is a descendant of Mlow1(v), we obviously have S(v) ∩ S(v') = ∅. Let’s assume, then, that M(v') is an ancestor of M(v). If M(v') coincides with M(v), then c' = c, and so m0 coincides with currentM[c], which is a descendant of Mlow1(v) (since Mlow1(v) has already been calculated), and therefore every mi, for every i ∈ {1, ..., k}, is a proper descendant of Mlow1(v) (since m1, if it exists, is a proper descendant of m0), and so we have S(v') ∩ S(v) = ∅. So let’s assume that M(v') is a proper ancestor of M(v). Then, c' is an ancestor of M(v). Suppose that m0 is not an ancestor of M(v). This means that currentM[c'] ≠ c', and therefore there is a vertex \( \tilde{v} \) > v' with \( M(\tilde{v}) = M(v') \) and Mlow1(\( \tilde{v} \)) = currentM[c']. Furthermore, since m0 is not an ancestor of M(v), it must be a descendant of c. Now, since v' is an ancestor of v and M(v') is a proper ancestor of M(v), Lemma 2.4 implies that M(v') is a proper ancestor of v. Since M(v') = M(\( \tilde{v} \)), this implies that M(\( \tilde{v} \)) is a proper ancestor of v, and therefore \( \tilde{v} \) is a proper ancestor of v. Now let (x, y) be a back-edge in B(\( \tilde{v} \)) such that x is a descendant of Mlow1(\( \tilde{v} \)) = currentM[c'] = m0. Then, since m0 is a descendant of c, x is also descendant of c. Furthermore, since \( \tilde{v} \) is an ancestor of v, y is a proper ancestor of v. This shows that x is a descendant of Mlow1(v). Due to the generality
of \((x, y)\), we conclude that \(M_{\text{low}1}(\tilde{v})\) is a descendant of \(M_{\text{low}1}(v)\). Thus we have shown that \(m_0\) is either an ancestor of \(M(v)\) or a descendant of \(M_{\text{low}1}(v)\).

Now let’s assume that \(m_i\) is either an ancestor of \(M(v)\) or a descendant of \(M_{\text{low}1}(v)\), for some \(i \in \{0, \ldots, k - 1\}\). We will prove that the same is true for \(m_{i+1}\). If \(m_i\) is a descendant of \(M_{\text{low}1}(v)\), then the same is true for \(m_{i+1}\). Let’s assume, then, that \(m_i\) is an ancestor of \(M(v)\). Now we have that \(m_{i+1} = \text{currentM}[c_i]\), where \(c_i\) is the \(\text{low}\) child of \(m_i\). If \(m_i = M(v)\), then we have \(c_i = c\), and therefore \(\text{currentM}[c_i] = \text{currentM}[c]\) is a descendant of \(M_{\text{low}1}(v)\) (since \(M_{\text{low}1}(v)\) has already been computed). Suppose, then, that \(m_i\) is a proper ancestor of \(M(v)\). Then, \(c_i\) is an ancestor of \(M(v)\). If \(\text{currentM}[c_i] = c_i\), we obviously have that \(\text{currentM}[c_i]\) is an ancestor of \(M(v)\). Otherwise, if \(\text{currentM}[c_i] \neq c_i\), there is a vertex \(\tilde{v}\) such that \(M(\tilde{v}) = m_i\) and \(\text{currentM}[c_i] = M_{\text{low}1}(\tilde{v})\). Assume, first, that \(\tilde{v}\) is an ancestor of \(v\). Suppose that \(M_{\text{low}1}(\tilde{v})\) is not an ancestor of \(M(v)\). Then it must be a descendant of \(c\). Let \((x, y)\) be a back-edge in \(B(\tilde{v})\) with \(x\) a descendant of \(M_{\text{low}1}(\tilde{v})\). Then \(x\) is a descendant of \(c\). Furthermore, \(y\) is a proper ancestor of \(\tilde{v}\), and therefore a proper ancestor of \(v\). This shows that \(x\) is a descendant of \(M_{\text{low}1}(v)\). Due to the generality of \((x, y)\), we conclude that \(M_{\text{low}1}(\tilde{v})\) is a descendant of \(M_{\text{low}1}(v)\). Thus, if \(\tilde{v}\) is an ancestor of \(v\), \(M_{\text{low}1}(\tilde{v})\) is either an ancestor of \(M(v)\) or a descendant of \(M_{\text{low}1}(v)\). Suppose, now, that \(\tilde{v}\) is a descendant of \(v\). Let \((x, y)\) be a back-edge in \(B(\tilde{v})\). Then, \(x\) is a descendant of \(M(v)\), and therefore a descendant of \(c_i\). Furthermore, \(y\) is a proper ancestor of \(v\), and therefore a proper ancestor of \(\tilde{v}\). This shows that \(x\) is a descendant of \(M_{\text{low}1}(\tilde{v})\). Due to the generality of \((x, y)\), we conclude that \(M(v)\) is a descendant of \(M_{\text{low}1}(\tilde{v})\). In any case, then, \(m_{i+1}\) is either an ancestor of \(M(v)\) or a descendant of \(M_{\text{low}1}(v)\). Thus, \(S(v) \cap S(v') \subseteq \{M_{\text{low}1}(v)\}\) is established. \(\square\)

3 Computing the 3-cuts of a 3-edge-connected graph

In this section we present a linear-time algorithm that computes all the 3-edge-cuts of a 3-edge-connected graph \(G = (V, E)\). It is well-known that the number of the 3-edge-cuts of \(G\) is \(O(n)\) (e.g., it follows from the definition of the cactus graph [1, 13]), but we provide an independent proof of this fact. Then, in Section 4.1, we show how to extend this algorithm so that it can also count the number of minimal 3-edge-cuts of a general graph. Note that there can be \(O(n^3)\) such cuts [2].

Our method is to classify the 3-cuts on the DFS-tree \(T\) in a way that allows us to compute them efficiently. If \(\{e_1, e_2, e_3\}\) is a 3-cut, we can initially distinguish three cases: either \(e_1\) is a tree-edge and both \(e_2\) and \(e_3\) are back-edges (section 3.1), or \(e_1\) and \(e_2\) are two tree-edges and \(e_3\) is a back-edge (section 3.2), or \(e_1, e_2\) and \(e_3\) is a triplet of tree-edges (section 3.3). Then, we divide those cases in subcases based on the concepts we have introduced in the previous section. Figure 1 gives a general overview of the cases we will handle in detail in the following sections.

3.1 One tree-edge and two back-edges

**Lemma 3.1.** Let \(\{(u, p(u)), e, e'\}\) be a 3-cut such that \(e\) and \(e'\) are back-edges. Then \(B(u) = \{e, e'\}\). Conversely, if for a vertex \(u \neq r\) we have \(B(u) = \{e, e'\}\) where \(e\) and \(e'\) are back-edges, then \(\{(u, p(u)), e, e'\}\) is a 3-cut.

**Proof.** After removing the tree-edge \((u, p(u))\), the edges that connect \(T(u)\) with the rest of the graph are precisely those contained in \(B(u)\). Let \(e\) and \(e'\) be two back-edges in \(B(u)\). Then it is obvious that \(\{(u, p(u)), e, e'\}\) is a 3-cut if and only if \(B(u)\) consists precisely of these two back-edges. \(\square\)

Thus, to find all 3-cuts of the form \(\{(u, p(u)), e, e'\}\), where \(e\) and \(e'\) are back-edges, we only have to store, for every vertex \(u\), two back-edges \(e, e' \in B(u)\). Since \((\text{low}1D(u), \text{low}1(u))\) and
Figure 1: The types of 3-cuts with respect to a DFS-tree. (a) One tree-edge $(u, p(u))$ and two back-edges (section 3.1). (b) Two tree-edges $(u, p(u))$ and $(v, p(v))$, where $u$ is a descendant of $v$, and one-back edge in $B(v) \setminus B(u)$ (section 3.2.1). (c) Two tree-edges $(u, p(u))$ and $(v, p(v))$, where $u$ is a descendant of $v$, and one-back edge in $B(u) \setminus B(v)$ (section 3.2.2). (d) Three tree-edges $(u, p(u))$, $(v, p(v))$ and $(w, p(w))$, where $w$ is an ancestor of $u$ and $v$, but $u$ and $v$ are not related as ancestor and descendant (section 3.3.1). (d) Three tree-edges $(u, p(u))$, $(v, p(v))$ and $(w, p(w))$, where $u$ is a descendant of $v$ and $v$ is a descendant of $w$ (section 3.3.2).
\((\text{low}2D(u), \text{low}2(u))\) are two such back-edges, we mark the triplet \((u, p(u)), (\text{low}1D(u), \text{low}1(u)), (\text{low}2D(u), \text{low}2(u))\), for every \(u\) that has \(b_{\text{count}}(u) = 2\).

### 3.2 Two tree-edges and one back-edge

**Lemma 3.2.** Let \(\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), e\}\) be a 3-cut such that \(e\) is a back-edge. Then \(u\) and \(v\) are related as ancestor and descendant.

**Proof.** Suppose that \(u\) and \(v\) are not related as ancestor or descendant. Since the graph is 3-edge-connected, \(b_{\text{count}}(u) > 1\), and therefore there is least one back-edge \((x, y) \in B(u) \setminus \{e\}\). Since \(v\) is not a descendant of \(u\), \(v \notin T[x, u]\); and since \(v\) is not an ancestor of \(u\), \(v \notin T[p(u), y]\). Thus, by removing the edges \((u, p(u)), (v, p(v))\), and \(e\), from the graph, \(u\) remains connected with \(p(u)\), through the path \(T[u, x], (x, y), T[p(u), y]\). This contradicts that fact that \(\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), e\}\) is a 3-cut. \(\square\)

**Proposition 3.3.** Let \(\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), e\}\) be a 3-cut, where \(e\) is a back-edge. Then, either (1) \(B(v) = B(u) \cup \{e\}\) or (2) \(B(u) = B(v) \cup \{e\}\). Conversely, if there exists a back-edge \(e\) such that (1) or (2) is true, then \(\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), e\}\) is a 3-cut.

**Proof.** (\(\Rightarrow\)) By Lemma 3.2, we may assume, without loss of generality, that \(v\) is an ancestor of \(u\). Now, suppose that (1) does not hold; we will prove that (2) does. Since (1) is not true, there must exist a back-edge \(e'\) such that \(e' \in B(v)\) and \(e' \notin B(u) \cup \{e\}\), or \(e' \notin B(v)\) and \(e' \in B(u) \cup \{e\}\). Suppose the first is true: that is, there exists a back-edge \((x, y)\) such that \((x, y) \in B(v)\) and \((x, y) \notin B(u) \cup \{e\}\). Then \(y\) is an ancestor of \(v\), and therefore an ancestor of \(u\). But, since \((x, y) \notin B(u)\), \(x\) cannot be a descendant of \(u\), and thus it belongs to \(T(v) \setminus T(u)\). Now, by removing the edges \((u, p(u)), (v, p(v))\) and \(e\) from the graph, we can see that \(v\) remains connected with \(p(v)\) through the path \(T[v, x], (x, y), T[y, p(v)]\). This contradicts the fact that \(\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), e\}\) is a 3-cut. Thus we have shown that there exists a back-edge \(e'\) such that \(e' \notin B(v)\) and \(e' \in B(u) \cup \{e\}\), and also that \(B(v) \subseteq B(u) \cup \{e\}\). Now, suppose that there exists a back-edge \((x, y)\) such that \((x, y) \notin B(v)\) and \((x, y) \in B(u)\). Then \(x\) is a descendant of \(u\), and therefore a descendant of \(v\). But, since \((x, y) \notin B(v)\), \(y\) is not a proper ancestor of \(v\), and thus belongs to \(T[p(u), v]\). Now, by removing the edges \((u, p(u)), (v, p(v))\) and \(e\) from the graph, we can see that \(u\) remains connected with \(p(u)\) through the path \(T[u, x], (x, y), T[y, p(u)]\). This contradicts the fact that \(\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), e\}\) is a 3-cut. Thus we have shown that \(e\) is the unique back-edge such that \(e \notin B(v)\) and \(e \in B(u)\), and also that \(B(u) \subseteq B(v) \cup \{e\}\). In conjunction with \(B(v) \subseteq B(u) \cup \{e\}\), this implies that \(B(u) = B(v) \cup \{e\}\).

(\(\Leftarrow\)) First, observe that both (1) and (2) imply that \(u\) and \(v\) are related as ancestor and descendant: Since the graph is 2-edge-connected, we have \(b_{\text{count}}(x) > 0\), for every vertex \(x \neq v\); and whenever we have \(B(u) \cap B(v) \neq \emptyset\), for two vertices \(u\) and \(v\), (and such is the case if either (1) or (2) is true), we can infer that \(u\) and \(v\) are related as ancestor and descendant. Now, due to the symmetry of the relations (1) and (2), we may assume, without loss of generality, that \(v\) is an ancestor of \(u\). Let’s assume first that (1) is true, and let \(e = (x, y)\). Since \((x, y) \in B(v)\), \(y\) is a proper ancestor of \(v\), and therefore a proper ancestor of \(u\). But, since \((x, y) \notin B(u)\), \(x\) cannot be a descendant of \(u\), and thus it belongs to \(T(v) \setminus T(u)\). Furthermore, this is the only back-edge that starts from \(T(v) \setminus T(u)\) and ends in a proper ancestor of \(v\), since \(B(v) \setminus \{e\} = B(u)\). Thus we can see that, by removing the edges \((u, p(u)), (v, p(v))\) and \(e\) from the graph, the graph becomes disconnected. (For the subgraph \(T(v) \setminus T(u)\) becomes disconnected from \(T(u) \cup (T(r) \setminus T(v))\).) Now assume that (2) is true, and let \(e = (x, y)\). Since \((x, y) \in B(u)\), \(x\) is a descendant of \(u\), and therefore a descendant of \(v\). But, since \((x, y) \notin B(v)\), \(y\) is not a proper ancestor of \(v\), and thus it belongs to \(T[p(u), v]\). Furthermore, it is
the only back-edge that starts from $T(u)$ and ends in $T[p(u), v]$, since $B(u) \setminus \{ e \} = B(v)$. Thus we can see that, by removing the edges $(u, p(u)), (v, p(v))$ and $e$ from the graph, the graph becomes disconnected. (For the subgraph $T(v) \setminus T(u)$ becomes disconnected from $T(u) \cup (T(v) \setminus T(u))$.)

Here we distinguish two cases, depending on whether $B(v) = B(u) \cup \{ e \}$ or $B(u) = B(v) \cup \{ e \}$.

### 3.2.1 v is an ancestor of u and $B(v) = B(u) \cup \{ e \}$.

Throughout this section let $V(u)$ denote the set of vertices $v$ that are ancestors of $u$ and such that $B(v) = B(u) \cup \{ e \}$, for a back-edge $e$. By proposition 3.3, this means that $\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), e\}$ is a 3-cut. The following lemma shows that, for every vertex $v$, there is at most one vertex $u$ such that $v \in V(u)$.

**Lemma 3.4.** Let $u, u'$ be two distinct vertices. Then $V(u) \cap V(u') = \emptyset$.

**Proof.** Suppose that there exists a $v \in V(u) \cap V(u')$. Then there are back-edges $e, e'$ such that $B(v) = B(u) \cup \{ e \}$ and $B(v) = B(u') \cup \{ e' \}$, and so we have $B(u) \cup \{ e \} = B(u') \cup \{ e' \}$. Since $b\text{-count}(u) > 1$ and $b\text{-count}(u') > 1$ (for the graph is 3-edge-connected), we infer that $B(u) \cap B(u') \neq \emptyset$, and thus $u$ and $u'$ are related as ancestor and descendant. Thus we can assume, without loss of generality, that $u'$ is an ancestor of $u$. Now let $(x, y) \in B(u)$. Then $x$ is a descendant of $u$, and therefore a descendant of $u'$. Furthermore, since $B(v) = B(u) \cup \{ e \}$, we have $(x, y) \in B(v)$, and so $y$ is a proper ancestor of $v$, and therefore a proper ancestor of $u'$.

This shows that $(x, y) \in V(u')$, and thus we have $B(u) \subseteq B(u')$. In conjunction with $B(u) \cup \{ e \} = B(u') \cup \{ e' \}$ (which implies that $|B(u)| = |B(u')|$), we infer that $B(u) = B(u')$ (and $e = e'$). This contradicts the fact that the graph is 3-edge-connected.

Thus, the total number of 3-cuts of the form $\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), e\}$, where $u$ is a descendant of $v$ and $e$ is a back-edge such that $B(v) = B(u) \cup \{ e \}$, is $O(n)$. Now we will show how to compute, for every vertex $v$, the vertex $u$ such that $v \in V(u)$ (if such a vertex $u$ exists), together with the back-edge $e$ such that $\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), e\}$ is a 3-cut, in total linear time.

Let $u, v, e$ be such that $v \in V(u)$ and $B(v) = B(u) \cup \{ e \}$, and let $e = (x, y)$. Then $y$ is a proper ancestor of $v$, and therefore a proper ancestor of $u$, so $x$ cannot be a descendant of $v$ (since $e \notin B(u)$). Thus, $x$ is either on the tree-path $T(u, v)$, or it is a proper descendant of a vertex in $T(u, v)$, but not a descendant of $u$. In the first case we have $M(v) = M(u)$ (and $x = M(v)$); in the second case either $M_{\text{low}1}(v) = M(u)$ (and $x = M_{\text{low}2}(v)$) or $M_{\text{low}2}(v) = M(u)$ (and $x = M_{\text{low}1}(v)$). (For an illustration, see figure 2.) The following lemma shows how we can determine $u$ from $v$.

**Lemma 3.5.** Let $v$ be an ancestor of $u$ such that $M(v) = M(u)$ or $M_{\text{low}1}(v) = M(u)$ or $M_{\text{low}2}(v) = M(u)$, and let $m = M(v)$ or $M_{\text{low}1}(v)$ or $M_{\text{low}2}(v)$, depending on whether $M(v) = M(u)$ or $M_{\text{low}1}(v) = M(u)$ or $M_{\text{low}2}(v) = M(u)$. Then, $v \in V(u)$ if and only if $u$ is the lowest element in $M^{-1}(m)$ which is greater than $v$ and such that $\text{high}(u) < v$ and $b\text{-count}(v) = b\text{-count}(u) + 1$.

**Proof.** ($\Rightarrow$) $v \in V(u)$ means that there exists a back-edge $e$ such that $B(v) = B(u) \cup \{ e \}$. Thus we get immediately $b\text{-count}(v) = b\text{-count}(u) + 1$ as a consequence. Furthermore, since $B(u) \subset B(v)$, we also get $\text{high}(u) < v$ (since for every $(x, y) \in B(u)$ it must be the case that $y$ is a proper ancestor of $v$, and therefore $\text{high}(u)$ is a proper ancestor of $v$). Now, suppose that there exists a $u' \in M^{-1}(m)$ which is lower than $u$ and greater than $v$. Then, since $B(u) = B(u')$ (and, in particular, $B(u') \subset B(u)$), there is a back-edge $(x, y) \in B(u)$ with $x \in T(u)$ and $y \in T[p(u), u']$. But this contradicts the fact that $\text{high}(u) < v$.

($\Leftarrow$) Let $(x, y) \in B(u)$. Then $x$ is a descendant of $u$, and therefore a descendant of $v$. Furthermore,
high(u) < v implies that y is a proper ancestor of v. This shows that (x, y) ∈ B(v), and thus we have B(u) ⊆ B(v). Then, back_count(v) = back_count(u) + 1 implies the existence of a back-edge e ∈ B(v) \ B(u) such that B(v) = B(u) ∪ {e}.

Thus, for every vertex v, we have to check whether the lowest element u of \( M^{-1}(m) \) which is greater than v satisfies back_count(v) = back_count(u) + 1, for all \( m \in \{\tilde{M}(v), M_{low1}(v), M_{low2}(v)\} \). To do this efficiently, we process the vertices in a bottom-up fashion, and we keep in a variable currentVertex[m] the lowest element of \( M^{-1}(m) \) currently under consideration, so that we do not have to traverse the list \( M^{-1}(m) \) from the beginning each time we process a vertex. Algorithm 5 is an implementation of this procedure.

### 3.2.2 v is an ancestor of u and \( B(u) = B(v) \cup \{e\} \).

Throughout this section let \( U(v) \) denote the set of vertices u that are descendants of v and such that \( B(u) = B(v) \cup \{e\} \), for a back-edge e. By proposition 3.3, this means that \( \{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), e\} \) is a 3-cut. The following lemma shows that, for every vertex u, there is at most one vertex v such that \( u \in U(v) \).

**Lemma 3.6.** Let \( v, v' \) be two distinct vertices. Then \( U(v) \cap U(v') = \emptyset \).

**Proof.** Suppose that there exists a \( u \in U(v) \cap U(v') \). Then v and v' are related as ancestor and descendant, since they have a common descendant. Thus we may assume, without loss of generality, that v' is an ancestor of v. Let \( (x, y) \) be a back-edge in \( B(v') \). Then, y is a proper ancestor of v', and therefore a proper ancestor of v. Furthermore, \( u \in U(v') \) implies that \( B(v') \subseteq B(u) \), and therefore \( (x, y) \in B(u) \). Thus, x is a descendant of u, and therefore a descendant of v. This shows that \( (x, y) \in B(v) \), and thus we have \( B(v') \subseteq B(v) \). Now, \( u \in U(v) \cap U(v') \) means that there exist two back-edges \( e, e' \) such that \( B(u) = B(v) \cup \{e\} \) and \( B(u) = B(v') \cup \{e\} \), and thus we have \( B(v) \cup \{e\} = B(v') \cup \{e'\} \). Therefore, \( |B(v)| = |B(v')| \). In conjunction with \( B(v') \subseteq B(v) \),
Algorithm 5: Find all 3-cuts \( \{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),e\} \), where \( u \) is a descendant of \( v \) and \( B(v) = B(u) \cup \{e\} \), for a back-edge \( e \).

1 initialize an array currentVertex with \( n \) entries
   // \( m = M(v) \)
2 foreach vertex \( x \) do currentVertex\([x]\) ← \( x \)
3 for \( v ← n \) to \( v = 1 \) do
   \hspace{1em} \( m ← \bar{M}(v) \)
   \hspace{1em} if \( m = \emptyset \) then continue
   // find the lowest \( u \in M^{-1}(m) \) which is greater than \( v \)
   \hspace{2em} \( u ← \text{currentVertex}[m] \)
   \hspace{1em} while nextM\((u) \neq \emptyset \) and nextM\((u) \geq v \) do \( u ← \text{nextM}(u) \)
   \hspace{1em} currentVertex\([m]\) ← \( u \)
   // check the condition in lemma 3.5
   \hspace{2em} if high\((u) < v \) and b_count\((v) = b\_count(u) + 1 \) then
   \hspace{3em} mark the triplet \( \{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(M(v),l(M(v)))\} \)
   \hspace{1em} end
4 end
5 // \( m = M_{low1}(v) \)
6 foreach vertex \( x \) do currentVertex\([x]\) ← \( x \)
7 for \( v ← n \) to \( v = 1 \) do
   \hspace{1em} \( m ← M_{low1}(v) \)
   \hspace{1em} if \( m = \emptyset \) then continue
   // find the lowest \( u \in M^{-1}(m) \) which is greater than \( v \)
   \hspace{2em} \( u ← \text{currentVertex}[m] \)
   \hspace{1em} while nextM\((u) \neq \emptyset \) and nextM\((u) \geq v \) do \( u ← \text{nextM}(u) \)
   \hspace{1em} currentVertex\([m]\) ← \( u \)
   // check the condition in lemma 3.5
   \hspace{2em} if high\((u) < v \) and b_count\((v) = b\_count(u) + 1 \) then
   \hspace{3em} mark the triplet \( \{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(M_{low2}(v),l(M_{low2}(v)))\} \)
   \hspace{1em} end
8 end
9 // \( m = M_{low2}(v) \)
10 foreach vertex \( x \) do currentVertex\([x]\) ← \( x \)
11 for \( v ← n \) to \( v = 1 \) do
   \hspace{1em} \( m ← M_{low2}(v) \)
   \hspace{1em} if \( m = \emptyset \) then continue
   // find the lowest \( u \in M^{-1}(m) \) which is greater than \( v \)
   \hspace{2em} \( u ← \text{currentVertex}[m] \)
   \hspace{1em} while nextM\((u) \neq \emptyset \) and nextM\((u) \geq v \) do \( u ← \text{nextM}(u) \)
   \hspace{1em} currentVertex\([m]\) ← \( u \)
   \hspace{1em} currentVertex\([m]\) ← prev
   // check the condition in lemma 3.5
   \hspace{2em} if high\((u) < v \) and b_count\((v) = b\_count(u) + 1 \) then
   \hspace{3em} mark the triplet \( \{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(M_{low1}(v),l(M_{low1}(v)))\} \)
   \hspace{1em} end
12 end
this implies that $B(v) = B(v')$ (and $e = e'$), contradicting the fact that the graph is 3-edge-connected.

Thus, the total number of 3-cuts of the form $\{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),e\}$, where $u$ is a descendant of $v$ and $e$ is a back-edge such that $B(u) = B(v) \cup \{e\}$, is $O(n)$. We will now show how to compute, for every vertex $u$, the vertex $v$ such that $u \in U(v)$ (if such a vertex $v$ exists), together with the back-edge $e$ such that $\{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),e\}$ is a 3-cut, in total linear time.

Let $u,v,e$ be such that $u \in U(v)$ and $B(u) = B(v) \cup \{e\}$, and let $e = (x,y)$. Then, $x$ is a descendant of $u$, and therefore a descendant of $v$. But since $e \notin B(v)$, $y$ is not an ancestor of $v$, and therefore $y \in T[p(u),v]$. Thus, $y = high(u)$ (and $x = highD(u)$), since every other back-edge $(x',y') \in B(u)$ is also in $B(v)$ and thus has $y' < v \leq y$. This shows how we can determine the back-edge $e$ from a pair of vertices $u,v$ that satisfy $u \in U(v)$. Furthermore, $B(u) = B(v) \cup \{e\}$ implies that $M(u)$ is an ancestor of $M(v)$. Thus, either $M(u) = M(v)$, or $M(u)$ is a proper ancestor of $M(v)$. In the second case, we have that either $\tilde{M}(u) = M(v)$ or $M_{low1}(u) = M(v)$ (since the low point of $u$ is given by a back-edge in $B(v)$). (For an illustration, see figure 3.) Now the following lemma shows how we can determine $v$ from $u$.

**Lemma 3.7.** Let $u$ be a descendant of $v$ such that $M(u) = M(v)$ or $\tilde{M}(u) = M(v)$ or $M_{low1}(u) = M(v)$, and let $m = M(u)$ or $\tilde{M}(u)$ or $M_{low1}(u)$, depending on whether $M(u) = M(v)$ or $M(u) = M(v)$ or $M_{low1}(u) = M(v)$. Then $u \in U(v)$ if and only if $v$ is the greatest element in $M^{-1}(m)$ which is lower than $u$ and such that $b\_count(u) = b\_count(v) + 1$.

**Proof.** ($\Rightarrow$) $u \in U(v)$ means that there exists a back-edge $e$ such that $B(u) = B(v) \cup \{e\}$. Thus we get immediately that $b\_count(u) = b\_count(v) + 1$. Now suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that there exists a $v' \in M^{-1}(m)$ which is greater than $v$ and lower than $u$. Let $(x,y) \in B(v')$. Then $y$ is a proper ancestor of $v'$, and therefore a proper ancestor of $u$. Furthermore, $x$ is a descendant of $M(v')$ ($= M(v)$), and so every one of the relations $M(u) = M(v)$, $\tilde{M}(u) = M(v)$
or $M_{low1}(u) = M(v)$ implies that $x$ is a descendant of $u$. This shows that $(x, y) \in B(u)$, and thus we have $B(v') \subseteq B(u)$. Now, since $M(v) = M(v')$ and $v'$ is a proper ancestor of $v$, we have $B(v) \subseteq B(v')$. Since $b_{\text{count}}(u) = b_{\text{count}}(v) + 1$, $B(v) \subseteq B(v') \subseteq B(u)$ implies that $B(u) = B(v')$, contradicting the fact that the graph is 3-edge-connected.

$(\Leftarrow)$ Let $(x, y) \in B(v)$. Then $y$ is a proper ancestor of $v$, and therefore a proper ancestor of $u$. Furthermore, $x$ is a descendant of $M(v)$, and every one of the relations $M(u) = M(v)$, $M(u) = M(v)$ or $M_{low1}(u) = M(v)$ implies that $x$ is a descendant of $M(u)$. This shows that $(x, y) \in B(u)$. Thus we have $B(v) \subseteq B(u)$, and so $b_{\text{count}}(u) = b_{\text{count}}(v) + 1$ implies that there exists a back-edge $e$ such $B(u) = B(v) \cup \{e\}$.

Thus, for every vertex $u$, we have to check whether the greatest element $v$ in $M^{-1}(m)$ which is lower than $u$ satisfies $b_{\text{count}}(u) = b_{\text{count}}(v) + 1$, for all $m \in \{M(u), \bar{M}(u), M_{low1}(u)\}$. To do this efficiently, we process the vertices in a bottom-up fashion, and we keep in a variable $\text{currentVertex}[m]$ the lowest element of $M^{-1}(m)$ currently under consideration, so that we do not have to traverse the list $M^{-1}(m)$ from the beginning each time we process a vertex. Algorithm 6 is an implementation of this procedure.

### 3.3 Three tree-edges

**Lemma 3.8.** Let $\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\}$ be a 3-cut, and assume, without loss of generality, that $w < \min\{v, u\}$. Then $w$ is an ancestor of both $u$ and $v$.

**Proof.** Suppose that $w$ is neither an ancestor of $u$ nor an ancestor of $v$. Let $(x, y) \in B(w)$. Then $x$ is a descendant of $w$, and therefore it is not a descendant of either $u$ or $v$. In other words, $u, v \notin T[x, w]$. Furthermore, $y$ is a proper ancestor of $w$. Since neither $u$ nor $v$ is an ancestor of $w$ (since $w < \min\{v, u\}$), we have that $u, v \notin T[w, r]$, and therefore $u, v \notin T[w, y]$. Thus, by removing the tree-edges $(u, p(u)), (v, p(v))$ and $(w, p(w))$, $w$ remains connected with $p(w)$ through the path $T[w, x], (x, y), T[y, p(w)]$, contradicting the fact that $\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\}$ is a 3-cut. This shows that $w$ is an ancestor of either $u$ or $v$ (or both). Suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that $w$ is not an ancestor of $u$. Then $w$ is an ancestor of $v$. This implies that $u$ is not a descendant of $v$ (for otherwise it would be a descendant of $w$). If $u$ is an ancestor of $v$, it must necessarily be an ancestor of $w$ (because $v \in T(w)$ and $u \notin T(w)$), but $w < u$ forbids this case. Thus, $u$ is not a descendant of $v$. So far, then, we have that $u$ is not related as ancestor and descendant with either $w$ or $v$. Thus we may follow the same reasoning as above, to conclude that, by removing the tree-edges $(u, p(u)), (v, p(v))$ and $(w, p(w))$, $u$ remains connected with $p(u)$, again contradicting the fact that $\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\}$ is a 3-cut. This shows that $w$ is an ancestor of $u$. Using the same argument we can also prove that $w$ is an ancestor of $v$.

At this point we distinguish two cases, depending on whether $u$ and $v$ are related as ancestor and descendant.

#### 3.3.1 $u$ and $v$ are not related as ancestor and descendant

In what follows we will provide some characterizations of the 3-cuts of the form $\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\}$, where $w$ is an ancestor of $u$ and $v$, and $u, v$ are not related as ancestor and descendant. It will be useful to keep in mind the situation depicted in Figure 4.

**Proposition 3.9.** Let $u$ and $v$ be two vertices which are not related as ancestor and descendant, and let $w$ be an ancestor of both $u$ and $v$. Then, $\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\}$ is a 3-cut if and only if $B(w) = B(u) \cup B(v)$. 

16
Algorithm 6: Find all 3-cuts \( \{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),e\} \), where \( u \) is a descendant of \( v \) and \( B(u) = B(v) \cup \{e\} \), for a back-edge \( e \).

1. initialize an array \( \text{currentVertex} \) with \( n \) entries

   // \( m = M(v) \); just check whether the condition of Lemma 3.7 is satisfied for \( \text{nextM}(u) \)

2. if \( b_{\text{count}}(u) = b_{\text{count}}(\text{nextM}(u)) + 1 \) then
3.    mark the triplet \( \{(u,p(u)),(\text{nextM}(u),p(\text{nextM}(u))), (\text{highD}(u),\text{high}(u))\} \)
4. end

   // \( m = \tilde{M}(u) \)

5. foreach vertex \( x \) do \( \text{currentVertex}[x] \leftarrow x \)

6. for \( u \leftarrow n \) to \( u = 1 \) do
7.    \( m \leftarrow \tilde{M}(u) \)
8.    if \( m = \emptyset \) then continue
9.    // find the greatest \( v \in M^{-1}(m) \) which is lower than \( u \)
10.   \( v \leftarrow \text{currentVertex}[m] \)
11.   while \( v \neq \emptyset \) and \( v \geq u \) do \( v \leftarrow \text{nextM}(v) \)
12.   \( \text{currentVertex}[m] \leftarrow v \)
13.   // check the condition in Lemma 3.7
14.   if \( b_{\text{count}}(u) = b_{\text{count}}(v) + 1 \) then
15.      mark the triplet \( \{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)), (\text{highD}(u),\text{high}(u))\} \)
16.   end
17. end

   // \( m = M_{\text{low1}}(u) \)

18. foreach vertex \( x \) do \( \text{currentVertex}[x] \leftarrow x \)
19. for \( u \leftarrow n \) to \( u = 1 \) do
20.    \( m \leftarrow M_{\text{low1}}(u) \)
21.    if \( m = \emptyset \) then continue
22.    // find the greatest \( v \in M^{-1}(m) \) which is lower than \( u \)
23.    \( v \leftarrow \text{currentVertex}[m] \)
24.    while \( v \neq \emptyset \) and \( v \geq u \) do \( v \leftarrow \text{nextM}(v) \)
25.    \( \text{currentVertex}[m] \leftarrow v \)
26.    // check the condition in Lemma 3.7
27.    if \( b_{\text{count}}(u) = b_{\text{count}}(v) + 1 \) then
28.       mark the triplet \( \{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)), (\text{highD}(u),\text{high}(u))\} \)
29.    end
30. end
Proof. (⇒) Let \((x, y) \in B(w)\), and let’s assume that \((x, y) \notin B(u)\). Since \(y\) is a proper ancestor of \(w\), and therefore a proper ancestor of \(u\), from \((x, y) \notin B(u)\) we infer that \(x\) is not a descendant of \(u\). Suppose for the sake of contradiction that \(x\) is not a descendant of \(v\), either. This means that neither \(u\) nor \(v\) is in \(T[x, w]\), and so, by removing the edges \((u, p(u)), (v, p(v))\) and \((w, p(w))\), \(w\) remains connected with \(p(w)\) through the path \(T[w, x, \{x, y\}, T[y, p(w)]\). This contradicts that fact that \\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\} is a 3-cut. Thus we have established that \(x\) is a descendant of \(v\). Since \(y\) is also a proper ancestor of \(v\), we have \((x, y) \in B(v)\). Thus we have shown that \(B(w) \subseteq B(u) \cup B(v)\). Conversely, let \((x, y) \in B(u) \cup B(v)\), and assume, without loss of generality, that \((x, y) \in B(u)\). Then, \(x\) is a descendant of \(u\), and therefore a descendant of \(w\). Now suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that \(y\) is not a proper ancestor of \(w\). Then we have \(w \notin T[p(u), y]\), and since \(w\) is not a descendant of \(u\), we also have \(w \notin T[x, u]\). Furthermore, since \(u\) and \(v\) are not related as ancestor and descendant, \(v\) is not contained neither in \(T[p(u), y]\) nor in \(T[x, u]\). Thus, by removing the edges \((u, p(u)), (v, p(v))\) and \((w, p(w))\), \(u\) remains connected with \(p(u)\) through the path \(T[u, x, \{x, y\}, T[y, p(u)]\). This contradicts that fact that \\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\} is a 3-cut. Thus we have shown that \(y\) is a proper ancestor of \(w\), and so we have that \((x, y) \in B(v)\). Thus we have established that \(B(u) \cup B(v) \subseteq B(w)\), and so we have \(B(w) = B(u) \cup B(v)\). Since \(u\) and \(v\) are not related as ancestor and descendant, we have \(B(u) \cap B(v) = \emptyset\). We conclude that \(B(w) = B(u) \cup B(v)\).

\((⇐)\) Consider the sets of vertices \(T(u), T(v)\), \(A = T(w) \setminus (T(u) \cup T(v))\) and \(B = T(r) \setminus T(w)\). Since \(u\) and \(v\) are not related as ancestor and descendant, and \(w\) is an ancestor of both \(u\) and \(v\), these sets are mutually disjoint. Now, since \(B(u) \subseteq B(w)\), all back-edges that start from \(T(u)\) end either in \(T(u)\) or in \(B\). Similarly, since \(B(v) \subseteq B(w)\), all back-edges that start from \(T(v)\) end either in \(T(v)\) or in \(B\). Furthermore, a back-edge that starts from \(A\) cannot reach \(B\) and must necessarily end in \(A\), since it starts from a descendant of \(w\), but not from a descendant of either \(u\) or \(v\) (while we have \(B(w) = B(u) \cup B(v)\)). Thus, by removing from the graph the tree-edges \((u, p(u)), (v, p(v))\) and \((w, p(w))\), the graph becomes separated into two parts: \(T(u) \cup T(v) \cup B\) and \(A\).

Lemma 3.10. Let \(u\) and \(v\) be two vertices which are not related as ancestor and descendant, and let \(w\) be an ancestor of both \(u\) and \(v\). Then \(B(w) = B(u) \cup B(v)\) if and only if: \(M_{low1}(w) = M(u)\) and \(M_{low2}(w) = M(v)\) (or \(M_{low1}(w) = M(v)\) and \(M_{low2}(w) = M(u)\)), and \(high(u) < w\), \(high(v) < w\), and \(b_{\text{count}}(w) = b_{\text{count}}(u) + b_{\text{count}}(v)\).

Proof. (⇒) \(b_{\text{count}}(w) = b_{\text{count}}(u) + b_{\text{count}}(v)\) is an immediate consequence of \(B(w) = B(u) \cup B(v)\). Furthermore, since every \((x, y) \in B(w)\) is also in \(B(u)\), it has \(y \leq w\), and so \(high(u) < w\). With the same reasoning, we also get \(high(v) < w\). Now, since \(B(w) = B(u) \cup B(v)\), we have that \(M(w)\) is an ancestor of both \(M(u)\) and \(M(v)\). Since \(u\) and \(v\) are not related as ancestor and descendant, \(M(u)\) and \(M(v)\) are not related as ancestor or descendant, either. This implies that they are both proper descendants of \(M(w)\). Now, suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that \(M(u)\) and \(M(v)\) are descendants of the same child \(c\) of \(M(w)\). Then there must exist a back-edge \((x, y) \in B(w)\) such that \(x = M(w)\) or \(x\) is a descendant of a child of \(M(w)\) different from \(c\). (Otherwise, \(M(w)\) would be a descendant of \(c\), which is absurd.) But this contradicts the fact that \(B(w) = B(u) \cup B(v)\), since \((x, y)\) does not belong neither in \(B(u)\) nor in \(B(v)\). Thus, \(M(u)\) and \(M(v)\) are descendants of different children of \(M(w)\). Furthermore, since every back-edge \((x, y) \in B(w)\) has \(x\) in \(T(u)\) or \(T(v)\), there are no other children of \(M(w)\) from whose subtrees begin back-edges that end in a proper ancestor of \(w\). Thus, one of \(M(u)\) and \(M(v)\) is a descendant of the low1 child of \(M(w)\), and the other is a descendant of the low2 child of \(M(w)\). We may assume, without loss of generality, that \(M(u)\) is a descendant of the low1 child of \(M(w)\), and \(M(v)\) is a descendant of the low2 child of \(M(w)\). Since \(B(u) \subset B(w)\), we have that \(M(u)\) is a descendant of
Figure 4: In this example we have $B(w) = B(u) \sqcup B(v)$. Observe that $M_{low_1}(w) = M(u)$ and $M_{low_2}(w) = M(v)$. Furthermore, $high(u) < w$ and $high(v) < w$. Also, if there is another vertex $u'$ with $M(u') = M(u)$, it must either be a descendant of $u$ or an ancestor of $w$. Thus, $u$ is the lowest vertex in $M^{-1}(M_{low_1}(w))$ which is greater than $w$. Similarly, $v$ is the lowest vertex in $M^{-1}(M_{low_2}(w))$ which is greater than $w$. By Lemmata 3.10 and 3.11, these properties (together with $b_{\text{count}}(w) = b_{\text{count}}(u) + b_{\text{count}}(v)$) are sufficient to establish $B(w) = B(u) \sqcup B(v)$. Notice also that, if we remove the tree-edges $(u, p(u)), (v, p(v))$ and $(w, p(w))$, the graph becomes disconnected into two components: $T(u) \cup T(v) \cup (T(r) \setminus T(w))$ and $T(w) \setminus (T(u) \cup T(v))$. (See also the “$\Leftarrow$” part of the proof of proposition 3.9.)
$M_{\text{low1}}(w)$. Furthermore, since $B(w) = B(u) \cup B(v)$ and $M(v)$ is not a descendant of the low1 child of $M(u)$, there are no back-edges $(x,y)$ with $x$ a descendant of the low1 child of $M(u)$ and $y$ a proper ancestor of $w$ apart from those contained in $B(u)$. Thus, $M(u)$ is an ancestor of $M_{\text{low1}}(w)$, and $M_{\text{low1}}(w) = M(u)$ is established. With the same reasoning, we also get $M_{\text{low2}}(w) = M(v)$.

$(\Leftarrow)$ Let $(x,y) \in B(u)$. Then $x$ is a descendant of $u$, and therefore a descendant of $w$. Furthermore, since $\text{high}(u) < w$, we have $y < w$, and therefore $y$ is a proper ancestor of $w$. This shows that $(x,y) \in B(w)$, and thus $B(u) \subseteq B(w)$. With the same reasoning, we also get $B(v) \subseteq B(w)$. Thus we have $B(u) \cup B(v) \subseteq B(w)$. Since $u$ and $v$ are not related as ancestor and descendant, we have $B(u) \cap B(v) = \emptyset$. From $B(u) \cup B(v) \subseteq B(w)$, $B(u) \cap B(v) = \emptyset$, and $b_{\text{count}}(w) = b_{\text{count}}(v)$, we conclude that $B(w) = B(u) \cup B(v)$.

The following lemma shows, that for every vertex $w$, there is at most one pair $u,v$ of descendants of $w$ which are not related as ancestor and descendant and are such that $\{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(w,p(w))\}$ is a 3-cut. Thus, the number of 3-cuts of this type is $O(n)$. Furthermore, it allows us to compute $u$ and $v$ (if such a pair of $u$ and $v$ exists).

**Lemma 3.11.** Let $\{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(w,p(w))\}$ be a 3-cut such that $u$ and $v$ are not related as ancestor and descendant and let $w$ is an ancestor of both $u$ and $v$. Assume w.l.o.g. that $M_{\text{low1}}(w) = M(u)$ and $M_{\text{low2}}(w) = M(v)$, and let $m_1 = M_{\text{low1}}(w)$ and $m_2 = M_{\text{low2}}(w)$. Then $u$ is the lowest vertex in $M^{-1}(m_1)$ which is greater than $w$, and $v$ is the lowest vertex in $M^{-1}(m_2)$ which is greater that $w$.

**Proof.** By Proposition 3.9, we have that $B(w) = B(u) \cup B(v)$. Now, suppose that there exists a $u' \in M^{-1}(m_1)$ which is lower than $u$ and greater than $w$. Then, $M(u') = M(u)$ implies that $B(u') \subseteq B(u)$, and so there is a back-edge $(x,y) \in B(u) \setminus B(u')$. This means that $y$ is not a proper ancestor of $u'$, and therefore not a proper ancestor of $w$, either. But this implies that $(x,y) \notin B(w)$, contradicting the fact that $B(u) \subset B(w)$. A similar argument shows that there does not exist a $v' \in M^{-1}(m_2)$ which is lower than $v$ and greater than $w$. 

Thus we only have to find, for every vertex $w$, the lowest element $u$ of $M^{-1}(M_{\text{low1}}(w))$ which is greater than $w$, and the lowest element $v$ of $M^{-1}(M_{\text{low2}}(w))$ which is greater than $w$, and check the condition in Lemma 3.10 - i.e., whether $\text{high}(u) < w$, $\text{high}(v) < w$, and $b_{\text{count}}(w) = b_{\text{count}}(u) + b_{\text{count}}(v)$. To do this efficiently, we process the vertices in a bottom-up fashion, and we keep in a variable currentVertex[$x$] the lowest element of $M^{-1}(x)$ currently under consideration. Thus, we do not need to traverse the list $M^{-1}(x)$ from the beginning each time we process a vertex. Algorithm 7 is an implementation of this procedure.

### 3.3.2 $u$ and $v$ are related as ancestor and descendant

Throughout this section it will be useful to keep in mind the situation depicted in Figure 5.

**Proposition 3.12.** Let $u,v,w$ be three vertices such that $u$ is a descendant of $v$ and $v$ is a descendant of $w$. Then $\{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(w,p(w))\}$ is a 3-cut if and only if $B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)$.

**Proof.** $(\Rightarrow)$ Let $(x,y) \in B(v)$, and assume that $(x,y) \notin B(u)$. $(x,y) \in B(v)$ implies that $y$ is a proper ancestor of $v$, and therefore a proper ancestor of $u$. Thus, $(x,y) \notin B(u)$ implies that $x$ is not a descendant of $u$. Furthermore, $(x,y) \in B(v)$ implies that $x$ is a descendant of $v$, and therefore a descendant of $w$. Now suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that $y$ is not a proper ancestor of $w$. Then, $w \notin T[p(v),y]$. Now we see that, by removing the edges $(u,p(u)),(v,p(v))$, and $(w,p(w))$ from the graph, $v$ remains connected with $p(v)$ through the path $T[v,x],(x,y),T[y,p(v)]$ (since
Algorithm 7: Find all 3-cuts $\{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(w,p(w))\}$, where $w$ is an ancestor of $u$ and $v$, and $u,v$ are not related as ancestor and descendant.

1. initialize an array $currentVertex$ with $n$ entries
2. foreach vertex $x$ do $currentVertex[x] \leftarrow x$
3. for $w \leftarrow n$ to $w = 1$ do
   4. $m_1 \leftarrow M_{\text{low}}(w)$, $m_2 \leftarrow M_{\text{low}}(w)$
   5. if $m_1 = \emptyset$ or $m_2 = \emptyset$ then continue
   6. // find the lowest $u$ in $M^{-1}(m_1)$ which is greater than $w$
      $u \leftarrow currentVertex[m_1]$
   7. while $\text{nextM}(u) \neq \emptyset$ and $\text{nextM}(u) > w$ do $u \leftarrow \text{nextM}(u)$
   8. $currentVertex[m_1] \leftarrow u$
   9. // find the lowest $v$ in $M^{-1}(m_2)$ which is greater than $w$
      $v \leftarrow currentVertex[m_2]$
   10. while $\text{nextM}(v) \neq \emptyset$ and $\text{nextM}(v) > w$ do $v \leftarrow \text{nextM}(v)$
   11. $currentVertex[m_2] \leftarrow v$
   12. // check the condition in Lemma 3.10
   13. if $b_{\text{count}}(u) = b_{\text{count}}(u) + b_{\text{count}}(v)$ and $\text{high}(u) < w$ and $\text{high}(v) < w$ then
   14. mark the triplet $\{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(w,p(w))\}$
   15. end

$u, w \notin T[v,x] \cup T[p(v),y]$. This contradicts the fact that $\{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(w,p(w))\}$ is a 3-cut. Therefore, $y$ is a proper ancestor of $w$, and thus $(x,y) \in B(w)$. Thus far we have established that $B(v) \subseteq B(u) \cup B(w)$. Now let $(x,y) \in B(u)$. Then $x$ is a descendant of $u$, and therefore a descendant of $v$. Suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that $y$ is not a proper ancestor of $v$. Then, $v \notin T[p(u),y]$. Now we see that, by removing the edges $(u,p(u)),(v,p(v))$ and $(w,p(w))$ from the graph, $u$ remains connected with $p(u)$ through the path $T[u,x],(x,y),T[y,p(u)]$. This contradicts the fact that $\{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(w,p(w))\}$ is a 3-cut. Therefore, $y$ is a proper ancestor of $v$, and thus $(x,y) \in B(v)$. This shows that $B(u) \subseteq B(v)$. Now let $(x,y) \in B(w)$. Then $y$ is a proper ancestor of $w$, and therefore a proper ancestor of $v$. Suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that $x$ is not a descendant of $v$. Then $x$ is not a descendant of $u$, either, and so $u,v \notin T[x,w]$. Thus we see that, by removing the edges $(u,p(u)),(v,p(v))$ and $(w,p(w))$ from the graph, $w$ remains connected with $p(w)$ through the path $T[w,x],(x,y),T[y,p(w)]$. This contradicts the fact that $\{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(w,p(w))\}$ is a 3-cut. Therefore, $x$ is a descendant of $v$, and thus $(x,y) \in B(v)$. This shows that $B(v) \subseteq B(v)$. Thus we have established that $B(u) \cup B(w) \subseteq B(u)$, and so we have $B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)$.

Now suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that there is a back-edge $(x,y) \in B(u) \cap B(w)$. Since $B(u) \neq B(w)$ (for otherwise $u = w$), there must exist a back-edge $(x',y')$ in $B(u) \setminus B(w)$ or in $B(w) \setminus B(u)$. Take the first case, first. Then, since $B(u) \subseteq B(v)$, $y'$ is a proper ancestor of $v$. But since $(x',y') \notin B(w)$, $y'$ cannot be a proper ancestor of $w$. Let $P$ be a path connecting $x'$ with $x$ in $T(u)$. Then, by removing the tree-edges $(u,p(u)),(v,p(v))$ and $(w,p(w))$, $w$ remains connected with $p(w)$ through the path $T[w,x]',(x',y'),P,(x,y),T[y,p(w)]$, which contradicts the assumption that $\{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(w,p(w))\}$ is a 3-cut. Now take the case $\exists (x',y') \in B(w) \setminus B(u)$. Then, since $B(w) \subseteq B(v)$, $x'$ is a descendant of $v$. But since $(x',y') \notin B(u)$, $x'$ cannot be a descendant of $u$. Let $P$ be a path connecting $y$ with $y$ in $T(r) \setminus T(w)$, and $Q$ be a path connecting $x'$ with $p(u)$ in $T(v) \setminus T(u)$. Then, by removing the tree-edges $(u,p(u)),(v,p(v))$ and $(w,p(w))$, $u$ remains
Corollary 3.13. If \((u, p(u)), (v, p(v))\) are two tree-edges, there is at most one \(w\) such that \(\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\}\) is a 3-cut.

Proof. This is a consequence of propositions 3.9 and 3.12. □

Here we distinguish two cases, depending on whether \(M(v) = M(w)\) or \(M(v) \neq M(w)\).

\(M(v) \neq M(w)\)

Lemma 3.14. Let \(u\) be a descendant of \(v\) and \(v\) a descendant of \(w\), and \(M(v) \neq M(w)\). Then, \(\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\}\) is a 3-cut if and only if: \(M(w) = M_{\text{low1}}(v)\) and \(w\) is the greatest vertex with \(M(w) = M_{\text{low1}}(v)\) which is lower than \(v\), \(M(u) = M_{\text{low2}}(v)\) and \(u\) is the lowest vertex with \(M(u) = M_{\text{low2}}(v)\), \(\text{high}(u) < v\) and \(b_{\text{count}}(v) = b_{\text{count}}(u) + b_{\text{count}}(w)\). (See Figure 6.)

Proof. \(\Rightarrow\) By proposition 3.12, we have \(B(v) = B(u) \sqcup B(w)\). This immediately establishes both \(\text{high}(u) < v\) and \(b_{\text{count}}(v) = b_{\text{count}}(u) + b_{\text{count}}(w)\). Now, since \(B(v) = B(u) \sqcup B(w)\), both \(M(u)\) and \(M(w)\) are descendants of \(M(v)\). We will show that \(M(u)\) and \(M(w)\) are not related as ancestor and descendant. First, suppose that \(M(u)\) is an ancestor of \(M(w)\). Now let \((x, y) \in B(w)\).
Then $x$ is a descendant of $M(w)$, and therefore a descendant of $M(u)$. Furthermore, $y$ is a proper ancestor of $w$, and therefore a proper ancestor of $u$. This shows that $(x, y) \in B(u)$, contradicting the fact that $B(u) \cap B(w) = \emptyset$. Now suppose that $M(w)$ is an ancestor of $M(u)$. Let $(x, y) \in B(v)$. Since $B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)$, $x$ is a descendant of either $M(u)$ or $M(w)$. In either case, $x$ is a descendant of $w$. Due to the generality of $(x, y)$, this shows that $M(v)$ is a descendant of $M(w)$. Since $M(w)$ is also a descendant of $M(v)$, we get $M(w) = M(v)$, contradicting $M(w) \neq M(v)$. Thus we have established that $M(u)$ and $M(w)$ are not related as ancestor and descendant. Since $M(u)$ and $M(v)$ are descendants of $M(v)$, they must be proper descendants of $M(v)$. Now we will show that $M(u)$ and $M(w)$ are descendants of different children of $M(v)$. Suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that $M(u)$ and $M(w)$ are descendants of the same child $c$ of $M(v)$. Then, there must exist a back-edge $(x, y) \in B(v)$ such that $x = M(v)$ or $x$ is a descendant of a child of $M(v)$ different from $c$. (Otherwise, we would have that $M(v)$ is a descendant of $c$, which is absurd.) But this means that $(x, y)$ is neither in $B(u)$ nor in $B(w)$, contradicting the fact that $B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)$. Thus, one of $M(u)$ and $M(w)$ is a descendant of the $\text{low}1$ child of $M(v)$, and the other is a descendant of the $\text{low}2$ child of $M(v)$. Observe that there does not exist a back-edge $(x, y) \in B(u)$ such that $y = \text{low}(v)$, for this would imply that $(x, y) \in B(w)$ (since $u$ is a descendant of $w$), and $B(u)$ does not meet $B(w)$. Thus, since $B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)$, $v$ gets its $\text{low}$ point from $B(w)$. This shows that $M(w)$ is a descendant of the $\text{low}1$ child of $M(v)$ and $M(u)$ is a descendant of the $\text{low}2$ child of $M(v)$. Since $B(w) \subset B(v)$, we have that $M(w)$ is a descendant of $M_{\text{low}1}(v)$. Furthermore, since $B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)$ and $M(u)$ is not a descendant of the $\text{low}1$ child of $M(v)$, there are no back-edges $(x, y)$ with $x$ a descendant of the $\text{low}1$ child of $M(v)$ and $y$ a proper ancestor of $v$ apart from those contained in $B(w)$. Thus, $M(w)$ is an ancestor of $M_{\text{low}1}(v)$, and $M_{\text{low}1}(v) = M(w)$ is established. With the same reasoning, we also get $M_{\text{low}2}(v) = M(u)$.

Now suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that there exists a vertex $w'$ with $M(w') = M(w)$ and $v > w' > w$. This implies that $B(w) \subset B(w')$, and thus there is a back-edge $(x, y) \in B(w') \setminus B(w)$. Then $x$ is a descendant of $M(w')$, and therefore a descendant of $M_{\text{low}1}(v)$. Furthermore, $y$ is a proper ancestor of $w'$, and therefore a proper ancestor of $v$. This shows that $(x, y) \in B(v)$, and therefore, since $B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)$ and $(x, y) \notin B(w)$, we have $(x, y) \in B(u)$. But $x$ is not a descendant of $M(u)$, since it is a descendant of $M(w)$ which is not related as ancestor or descendant with $M(u)$. That’s a contradiction. Thus we have established that $w$ is the greatest vertex with $M(w) = M_{\text{low}1}(v)$ which is lower than $v$. Finally, suppose for the sake of contradiction that there exists a vertex $u'$ with $M(u') = M(u)$ and $u' < u$. This implies that $B(u') \subset B(u)$, and therefore there exists a back-edge $(x, y) \in B(u) \setminus B(u')$. Then, $y$ is a proper ancestor of $u$ and a descendant of $u'$. Since $\text{high}(u) < v$, we have $y < v$, and therefore $u'$ is an ancestor of $v$. Now suppose that $u'$ is an ancestor of $w$. Let $(x', y') \in B(u')$. Then $x'$ is a descendant of $M(u')$, and therefore a descendant of $M(u)$, and therefore a descendant of $u$, and therefore a descendant of $w$. Furthermore, $y'$ is a proper ancestor of $u'$, and therefore a proper ancestor of $w$. This shows that $(x', y') \in B(w)$. But this cannot be the case, since $(x', y') \in B(u') \subset B(u)$ and $B(u) \cap B(w) = \emptyset$. Thus, $u'$ is a descendant of $w$. Since $u'$ is an ancestor of $v$, it is also an ancestor of $M_{\text{low}1}(v) = M(w)$. Thus, Lemma 2.4 implies that $M(u')$ is an ancestor of $M(w)$. But, since $M(u') = M(u)$, this contradicts the fact that $M(u)$ and $M(w)$ are not related as ancestor and descendant. Thus we have established that $v$ is the lowest vertex with $M(u) = M_{\text{low}2}(v)$.

($\Leftarrow$) By proposition 3.12, it is sufficient to prove that $B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)$. First, let $(x, y) \in B(u)$. Then $x$ is a descendant of $u$, and therefore a descendant of $v$. Furthermore, $y \leq \text{high}(u) < v$ implies that $y$ is a proper ancestor of $v$. This shows that $B(u) \subseteq B(v)$. Now let $(x, y) \in B(w)$. Then $y$ is a proper ancestor of $w$, and therefore a proper ancestor of $v$. Since $M(w) = M_{\text{low}1}(v)$, we have that $x$ is a descendant of $v$. This shows that $B(w) \subseteq B(v)$. Thus we have $B(u) \cup B(w) \subseteq B(v)$. Since $M(u)$ and $M(w)$ are not related as ancestor and descendant (for they are descendants of different children
of $M(v)$, we have that $B(u) \cap B(w) = \emptyset$. In conjunction with $b\_count(v) = b\_count(u) + b\_count(w)$, from $B(u) \cup B(w) \subseteq B(v)$ and $B(u) \cap B(w) = \emptyset$ we conclude that $B(u) \cup B(w) = B(v)$.  

This lemma shows that, for every vertex $v$, there is at most one pair of vertices $u, w$, where $u$ is a descendant of $v$, $w$ is an ancestor of $v$, $M(v) \neq M(w)$, and $\{(u,p(u)), (v,p(v)), (w,p(w))\}$ is a 3-cut. In particular, we have that $w$ is the greatest vertex with $M(w) = M_{low1}(v)$ which is lower than $v$, $u$ is the last vertex in $M^{-1}(M(w))$, $high(u) < v$ and $b\_count(v) = b\_count(u) + b\_count(w)$. Thus, Algorithm 8 shows how we can compute all 3-cuts of this type. We only have to make sure that we can compute $w$ without having to traverse the list $M^{-1}(M_{low1}(v))$ from the beginning, each time we process a vertex $v$. To achieve this, we process the vertices in a bottom-up fashion, and we keep in an array $currentM[x]$ the current element of $M^{-1}(x)$ under consideration, so that we do not need to traverse the list $M^{-1}(x)$ from the beginning each time we process a vertex.

**Lemma 3.15.** Let $u, v, w$ be three vertices such that $u$ is a descendant of $v$, $v$ is a descendant of $w$, and $M(v) = M(w)$. Then, $B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)$ only if $high(u) = high(v)$ and $nextM(u) = \emptyset$.

**Proof.** Let $(x, y) \in B(u)$ be such that $y = high(u)$. Then, since $B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)$, we have $(x, y) \in B(v)$, and so $y \leq high(v)$. Suppose for the sake of contradiction that $y \neq high(v)$. Then, since $B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)$, there exists a $(x', y') \in B(w)$ such that $y' = high(v)$. Furthermore, since $y \neq high(v)$ and $(x, y) \in B(v)$, we have $y' > y$, which means that $y$ is a proper ancestor of $w$. But then, since $x$ is a descendant of $u$, it is also a descendant of $w$, and thus $(x, y) \in B(w)$, contradicting the fact that $B(u) \cap B(w) = \emptyset$. Thus we have shown that $high(u) = high(v)$.

Now suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that there exists a $u'$ which is a proper ancestor of $u$ with $M(u') = M(u)$. Then we have $B(u') \subseteq B(u)$. Now suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that $u'$ is an ancestor of $v$. Suppose that $u'$ is an ancestor of $w$. Let $(x, y) \in B(u')$. Then $x$
Algorithm 8: Find all 3-cuts \( \{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\} \), where \( u \) is a descendant of \( v \), \( v \) is a descendant of \( w \), and \( M(v) \neq M(w) \).

```plaintext
1 foreach vertex \( v \) do currentVertex[\( v \)] ← \( v \)
2 for \( v ← n \) to \( v = 1 \) do
3     \( m_1 ← M_{\text{low1}}(v), m_2 ← M_{\text{low2}}(v) \)
4     if \( m_1 = \emptyset \) or \( m_2 = \emptyset \) then continue
5     // find the greatest \( w \) in \( M^{-1}(m_1) \) which is lower than \( v \)
6     \( w ← \text{currentVertex}(m_1) \)
7     while \( w \neq \emptyset \) and \( w \geq v \) do \( w ← \text{nextM}(w) \)
8     \( \text{currentVertex}[m_1] ← w \)
9     // \( u \) is the last element of \( M^{-1}(m_2) \)
10    \( u ← \text{lastM}(m_2) \)
11    // check the condition in Lemma 3.14
12    if \( w \neq \emptyset \) and \( \text{high}(u) < v \) and \( b_{\text{count}}(v) = b_{\text{count}}(u) + b_{\text{count}}(w) \) then
13        mark the triplet \( \{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\} \)
14    end
15 end
```

is a descendant of \( M(u') \), and therefore a descendant of \( M(u) \), and therefore a descendant of \( u \), and therefore a descendant of \( w \). Furthermore, \( y \) is a proper ancestor of \( u' \), and therefore a proper ancestor of \( w \). This means that \( (x, y) \in B(w) \), and thus we have \( B(u') \subseteq B(w) \). But this contradicts \( B(u) \cap B(w) = \emptyset \), since \( B(u') \subseteq B(u) \). Thus, we have that \( u' \) is a descendant of \( w \). Then, since \( u' \) is an ancestor of \( v \), it is also an ancestor of \( M(v) = M(w) \), and thus, by Lemma 2.4, \( M(u') = M(u) \) is an ancestor of \( M(v) \). Since \( B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w) \), we have that \( M(v) \) is an ancestor of \( M(u) \), and thus \( M(u) = M(v) \). In conjunction with \( \text{high}(u) = \text{high}(v) \), this implies that \( B(v) = B(u) \), contradicting the fact that the graph is 3-edge-connected. Thus, we have that \( u' \) is not an ancestor of \( v \). Since \( v \) and \( u' \) have \( u \) as a common descendant, we infer that \( u' \) is a descendant of \( v \). Now, since \( B(u') \subseteq B(u) \), we have that there exists a back-edge \( (x, y) \in B(u) \setminus B(u') \). Then, \( y \) is descendant of \( u' \), and therefore a descendant of \( v \). But this means that \( (x, y) \notin B(v) \), contradicting the fact that \( B(u) \subset B(v) \). We conclude that there is not \( u' \in M^{-1}(M(u)) \) which is a proper ancestor of \( u \).

Case \( w = \text{nextM}(v) \). Now we will show how to find, for every vertex \( v \), the unique \( u \) (if it exists) which is a descendant of \( v \) and such that \( \{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\} \) is a 3-cut, where \( w = \text{nextM}(v) \). Obviously, the number of 3-cuts of this type is \( O(n) \). According to Lemma 3.15, \( \text{high}(u) = \text{high}(v) \), and therefore it is sufficient to seek this \( u \) in \( \text{high}^{-1}(\text{high}(v)) \).

**Proposition 3.16.** Let \( h = \text{high}(v) \) and \( w = \text{nextM}(v) \), and suppose that the list \( \text{high}^{-1}(h) \) is sorted in decreasing order. Then, \( u \) is a descendant of \( v \) such that \( \{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\} \) is a 3-cut if and only if \( u \) is a predecessor of \( v \) in \( \text{high}^{-1}(h) \), \( \text{nextM}(u) = \emptyset \), \( \text{low}(u) \geq w \), \( b_{\text{count}}(u) = b_{\text{count}}(v) - b_{\text{count}}(w) \), and all elements of \( \text{high}^{-1}(h) \) between \( u \) and \( v \) are ancestors of \( u \).

**Proof.** (\( \Rightarrow \)) By proposition 3.12, we have \( B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w) \). This shows that \( b_{\text{count}}(u) = b_{\text{count}}(v) - b_{\text{count}}(w) \) and \( \text{low}(u) \geq w \) (for if we had \( \text{low}(u) < w \), then \( B(u) \) would intersect \( B(w) \)). Lemma 3.15 shows that \( \text{high}(u) = \text{high}(v) \) and \( \text{nextM}(u) = \emptyset \). Since \( u \) is a descendant of \( v \), it is greater than \( v \), and thus it is a predecessor of \( v \) in \( \text{high}^{-1}(x) \). Now suppose that there exists a \( u' \in \text{high}^{-1}(x) \) which is lower than \( u \) and greater than \( v \), but it is not an ancestor of \( u \).
Since \( u \) is a descendant of \( v, v < u' < u \) implies that \( u' \) is also a descendant of \( v \). Let \((x, h)\) be a back-edge with \( x \) a descendant of \( u' \). Then \( x \) is also a descendant of \( v \), and thus \((x, h) \in B(v)\). But since \( u' \) is not a descendant of \( u \), \( x \) cannot be a descendant of \( u \) either, and so \((x, h) \in B(v)\) and \( B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w) \) both imply that \((x, h) \in B(w)\). However, \( h = \text{high}(u) \geq \text{low}(u) \geq w \). A contradiction.

\((\Leftarrow)\) By proposition 3.12, it is sufficient to show that \( B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w) \). Let \((x, y) \in B(u)\). Then \( x \) is a descendant of \( u \), and therefore a descendant of \( v \). Furthermore, since \( \text{high}(u) = \text{high}(v) \), we have that \( y \) is a proper ancestor of \( v \). This shows that \((x, y) \in B(v)\), and thus we have \( B(u) \subseteq B(v) \). Now, since \( M(v) = M(w) \) and \( w = \text{nextM}(v) < v \), we have that \( B(w) \subseteq B(v) \).

Thus we have established that \( B(u) \cup B(w) \subseteq B(v) \). Now observe that \( B(u) \cap B(w) = \emptyset \): for if \((x, y) \in B(u)\), then \( y \geq \text{low}(u) \), and we have assumed that \( \text{low}(u) \geq w \); thus, \((x, y) \notin B(w)\). Now, since \( b_{\text{count}}(u) = b_{\text{count}}(v) - b_{\text{count}}(w) \) and \( B(u) \cup B(w) \subseteq B(v) \) and \( B(u) \cap B(w) = \emptyset \), we conclude that \( B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w) \).

Now let \( h \) be a vertex. Based on proposition 3.16, we will show how to find, for every \( v \) in the decreasingly sorted list \( \text{high}^{-1}(h) \), the unique vertex \( u \in \text{high}^{-1}(h) \) (if it exists) such that \( \{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\} \) is a 3-cut, where \( w = \text{nextM}(v) \). To do this, we need an array \( A \) of size \( m \) (the number of edges of the graph), and a stack \( S \). We begin by traversing the list \( \text{high}^{-1}(h) \) from its first element, and every \( u \) we meet that satisfies \( \text{nextM}(u) = \emptyset \) and is an ancestor of its predecessor (or the first element of the list) we push it in \( S \) and also store it in \( A[b_{\text{count}}(u)] \). If \( u \) is not an ancestor of its predecessor, we set \( A[z] = \emptyset \), for every \( z \in S \), while we pop out all elements from \( S \); then we push \( u \) in \( S \) and also store it in \( A[b_{\text{count}}(u)] \). Now, if we meet a vertex \( v \) that satisfies \( \text{nextM}(v) \neq \emptyset \) and is ancestor of its predecessor, we check whether the entry \( u = A[b_{\text{count}}(v) - b_{\text{count}}(\text{nextM}(v))] \) is not \( \emptyset \), and if \( \text{low}(u) \geq \text{nextM}(v) \) we mark the triplet \( \{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (\text{nextM}(v), p(\text{nextM}(v)))\} \) (observe that \( u \) satisfies all conditions of proposition 3.16). If \( v \) is not an ancestor of the top element of \( S \), we set \( A[u] = \emptyset \), for every \( u \in S \), while we pop out all elements from \( S \). In any case, we keep traversing the list, following the same procedure, until we reach its end. This process is implemented in Algorithm 9.

Case \( w \neq \text{nextM}(v) \). Now we will show how to find, for every vertex \( v \), the set of all \( u \) which are descendants of \( v \) with the property that there exists a \( w \) with \( M(w) = M(v) \) and \( w < \text{nextM}(v) \), such that \( \{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\} \) is a 3-cut. Let \( U(v) \) denote this set. (An illustration is given in Figure 7.) According to Lemma 3.15, for every \( u \in U(v) \) we have \( \text{high}(u) = \text{high}(v) \), and therefore it is sufficient to seek those \( u \) in \( \text{high}^{-1}(\text{high}(v)) \).

To do this, we use a stack \( \text{stackU}[v] \), for every vertex \( v \), in which we store vertices \( u \) from \( \text{high}^{-1}(\text{high}(v)) \). By the time we have filled all stacks \( \text{stackU}[v] \), the following three properties will be satisfied: (1) for every vertex \( v, U(v) \subseteq \text{stackU}[v] \), (2) if \( v \neq v' \), then \( \text{stackU}[v] \cap \text{stackU}[v'] = \emptyset \), and (3) every \( u \) in \( \text{stackU}[v] \) is a descendant of its successors in \( \text{stackU}[v] \). The contents of \( \text{stackU}[v] \) will be all those \( u \) satisfying the necessary condition described in the following lemma.

Lemma 3.17. Let \( h = \text{high}(v) \), and assume that the list \( \text{high}^{-1}(h) \) is sorted in decreasing order. Then, \( u \in U(v) \) only if \( u \) is a predecessor of \( v \) in \( \text{high}^{-1}(h) \) such that \( \text{nextM}(u) = \emptyset \), \( \text{low}(u) < \text{nextM}(v) \), \( \text{low}(u) \geq \text{lastM}(v) \), and all elements of \( \text{high}^{-1}(h) \) between \( u \) and \( v \) are ancestors of \( u \).

Proof. \( u \in U(v) \) means that \( u \) is a descendant of \( v \), and there is an ancestor \( w \) of \( v \) such that \( M(v) = M(w) \), \( w \neq \text{nextM}(v) \), and \( \{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\} \) is a 3-cut. By proposition 3.12, we have \( B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w) \). From this we infer that \( \text{low}(u) \geq w \) (for otherwise, since \( u \) is a descendant of \( w \), we would have that \( B(u) \) meets \( B(w) \)). This shows that \( \text{low}(u) \geq \text{lastM}(v) \). Lemma 3.15 implies that \( \text{high}(u) = \text{high}(v) \) and \( \text{nextM}(u) = \emptyset \). Furthermore, since \( u \) is a descendant
of $v$, it is greater than $v$, and thus it is a predecessor of $v$ in $\text{high}^{-1}(h)$. Now suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that $\text{low}(u) \geq \text{nextM}(v)$. Since there is a $w < \text{nextM}(v)$ such that $M(w) = M(v)$, there must exist a back-edge $(x, y) \in B(v)$ with $y \in T(\text{nextM}(v), w)$. Since $\text{low}(u) \geq \text{nextM}(v)$, it cannot be the case that $(x, y) \in B(u)$, and therefore $B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)$ implies that $(x, y) \in B(w)$, which is absurd, since $y \geq w$. Thus, $\text{low}(u) < \text{nextM}(v)$. Finally, suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that there exists a $u' \in \text{high}^{-1}(h)$ which is lower than $u$ and greater than $v$, but it is not an ancestor of $u$. Since $u$ is a descendant of $v$, $v < u' < u$ implies that $u'$ is also a descendant of $v$. Let $(x, h)$ be a back-edge with $x$ a descendant of $u'$. Then $x$ is a also a descendant of $v$, and thus $(x, h) \in B(v)$. But since $u'$ and $u$ are not related as ancestor or descendant, $x$ cannot be a descendant of $u$. Thus, $(x, h) \notin B(u)$. Since $(x, h) \in B(v)$ and $B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)$, this implies that $(x, h) \in B(w)$. However, $h = \text{high}(u) \geq \text{low}(u) \geq w$. A contradiction.

Thus, $\text{stackU}[v]$ contains all $u$ that are predecessors of $v$ in $\text{high}^{-1}(\text{high}(v))$ and satisfy $\text{nextM}(u) =$

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**Algorithm 9:** Find all 3-cuts $\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\}$, where $u$ is a descendant of $v$ and $w = \text{nextM}(v)$.

1. initialize an array $A$ with $m$ entries (where $m$ is the number of edges of the graph)
2. initialize a stack $S$
3. sort the elements of every list $\text{high}^{-1}(h)$, for every vertex $h$, in decreasing order
4. foreach vertex $h$ do
   5. $u \leftarrow$ first element of $\text{high}^{-1}(h)$
   6. while $u \neq \emptyset$ do
      7. $z \leftarrow$ next element of $\text{high}^{-1}(h)$
      8. if $z = \emptyset$ then break
      9. if $z$ is not an ancestor of $u$ then
         10. while $S$ is not empty do
            11. $u' \leftarrow S.\text{pop}()$
            12. $A[b.\text{count}(u')] \leftarrow \emptyset$
         13. end
      14. end
      15. if $\text{nextM}(z) = \emptyset$ then
         16. $S.\text{push}(z)$
         17. $A[b.\text{count}(z)] \leftarrow z$
      18. end
   19. else if $\text{nextM}(z) \neq \emptyset$ then
      20. $v \leftarrow z$, $w \leftarrow \text{nextM}(v)$
      21. if $A[b.\text{count}(v) - b.\text{count}(w)] \neq \emptyset$ then
         22. $u \leftarrow A[b.\text{count}(v) - b.\text{count}(w)]$
         23. if $\text{low}(u) \geq w$ then
            24. mark the triplet $\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\}$
         25. end
      26. end
   27. end
   28. $u \leftarrow z$
50. end
Figure 7: In this example we have $M(v) = M(w_1) = M(w_2) = M(w_3)$, $U(v) = \{u_1, u_2, u_3\}$, and the triplets $\{(u_i, p(u_i)), (v, p(v)), (w_i, p(w_i))\}$, for $i \in \{1, 2, 3\}$, are 3-cuts. Observe that all $\{u_1, u_2, u_3\}$ are related as ancestor and descendant. This property is proved in Lemma 3.17. Furthermore, all $u \in U(v)$ have $\text{high}(u) = \text{high}(v)$. 
\( \emptyset, \text{low}(u) < \text{next}_M(v), \text{low}(u) \geq \text{last}_M(v) \) and all elements of \( \text{high}^{-1}(\text{high}(v)) \) between \( u \) and \( v \) are ancestors of \( u \). By Lemma 3.17, property (1) of the stacks \( \text{stack}_U[v] \) is satisfied. The following lemma shows that property (2) is also satisfied.

**Lemma 3.18.** Let \( v, v' \) be two vertices such that \( v' \) is a proper ancestor of \( v \) with \( \text{high}(v') = \text{high}(v) \), and let \( u \in \text{stack}_U[v] \). Then \( u \notin \text{stack}_U[v'] \).

**Proof.** First observe that the stacks \( \text{stack}_U[v] \) and \( \text{stack}_U[v'] \) are non-empty only if \( \text{next}_M(v) \neq \emptyset \) and \( \text{next}_M(v') \neq \emptyset \). Now, since \( \text{high}(v') = \text{high}(v) \), by Lemma 3.20, we have that \( \text{next}_M(v) < \text{last}_M(v') \). Since \( u \in \text{stack}_U[v] \), it has \( \text{low}(u) < \text{next}_M(v) \). But then \( \text{low}(u) < \text{last}_M(v') \), and so \( u \notin \text{stack}_U[v'] \).

This implies that the total number of elements in all stacks \( \text{stack}_U[v] \) (by the time we have filled them) is \( O(n) \). Now let \( h \) be a vertex, and let us show how to fill the stacks \( \text{stack}_U[v] \), for all \( v \) in the decreasingly sorted list \( \text{high}^{-1}(h) \). To do this, we will need a stack \( S \). We begin traversing the list \( \text{high}^{-1}(h) \) from its first element, and when we process a vertex \( u \) such that \( \text{next}_M(u) = \emptyset \) we push it in \( S \) if it is an ancestor of its predecessor (or the first elements of the list). Otherwise, we drop all elements from \( S \), push \( u \) in \( S \), and keep traversing the list. When we meet a vertex \( v \) that satisfies \( \text{next}_M(v) \neq \emptyset \) and is also an ancestor of its predecessor, we check whether the top element \( u \) of \( S \) satisfies \( \text{low}(u) < \text{last}_M(v) \), in which case we start popping elements out of \( S \), until the top element \( u \) of \( S \) (if \( S \) is not left empty) satisfies \( \text{low}(u) \geq \text{last}_M(v) \). Then, as long as the top element \( u \) of \( S \) satisfies \( \text{low}(u) < \text{next}_M(v) \), we repeatedly pop out the top element from \( S \) and push it in \( \text{stack}_U[v] \). If \( v \) is not an ancestor of its predecessor, we drop all elements from \( S \). In any case, we keep traversing the list, following the same procedure, until we reach its end. This process is implemented in Algorithm 10. Property (3) of the stacks \( \text{stack}_U \) is satisfied due to the way we fill them with this algorithm. To prove the correctness of Algorithm 10 - i.e., that by the time we reach the end of \( \text{high}^{-1}(h) \), every stack \( \text{stack}_U[v] \), for every \( v \in \text{high}^{-1}(h) \), contains all elements \( u \) satisfying the necessary condition in Lemma 3.17 -, we need the following two lemmata.

**Lemma 3.19.** If \( u' \) is an ancestor of \( u \) with \( \text{high}(u) = \text{high}(u') \), then \( \text{low}(u') \leq \text{low}(u) \).

**Proof.** Let \( (x, y) \in B(u) \). Then \( x \) is a descendant of \( u \), and therefore a descendant of \( u' \). Furthermore, \( y \leq \text{high}(u) = \text{high}(u') \), and therefore \( y \) is a proper ancestor of \( u' \). This shows that \( (x, y) \in B(u') \), and thus we have \( B(u) \subseteq B(u') \). \( \text{low}(u') \leq \text{low}(u) \) is an immediate consequence of this fact.

**Lemma 3.20.** Let \( v, v' \) be two vertices such that \( v' \) is a proper ancestor of \( v \), \( \text{next}_M(v') \neq \emptyset \), and \( \text{high}(v') = \text{high}(v) \). Then, \( \text{next}_M(v) < \text{last}_M(v') \).

**Proof.** Let \( (x, y) \in B(v) \). Then \( x \) is a descendant of \( v \), and therefore a descendant of \( v' \). Furthermore, since \( y \leq \text{high}(v) \) and \( \text{high}(v) = \text{high}(v') \) and \( \text{high}(v') < v' \), we have that \( y \) is a proper ancestor of \( v' \). This shows that \( (x, y) \in B(v') \), and thus \( B(v) \subseteq B(v') \). From this we infer that \( M(v) \) is a descendant of \( M(v') \). Now, since \( M(\text{next}_M(v)) = M(v) \) and \( \text{next}_M(v) < v \), we have that \( B(\text{next}_M(v)) \subseteq B(v) \). This means that there exists a back-edge \( (x, y) \) such that \( x \) is a descendant of \( M(v) \) and \( y \) is a proper ancestor of \( v \) but not a proper ancestor of \( \text{next}_M(v) \). Then, since \( (x, y) \in B(v) \), we have \( y \leq \text{high}(v) \), and so \( \text{high}(v) \) is not a proper ancestor of \( \text{next}_M(v) \), and thus \( \text{next}_M(v) \) is an ancestor of \( \text{high}(v) \). Since \( \text{high}(v) = \text{high}(v') \) and \( \text{high}(v') \) is a proper ancestor of \( v' \), we infer that \( \text{next}_M(v) \) is a proper ancestor of \( v' \). Now suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that \( \text{last}_M(v') \) is an ancestor of \( \text{next}_M(v) \). Let \( (x, y) \in B(\text{last}_M(v')) \). Then, \( x \) is a descendant of \( M(\text{last}_M(v')) \), and thus a descendant of \( M(v') \), and thus a descendant of \( v' \), and thus a descendant
of $nextM(v)$. Furthermore, $y$ is a proper ancestor of $lastM(v')$, and therefore a proper ancestor of $nextM(v)$. This shows that $(x,y) \in B(nextM(v))$, and thus we have $B(lastM(v')) \subseteq B(nextM(v))$. From this we infer that $M(lastM(v'))$ is a descendant of $M(nextM(v))$. But $M(lastM(v')) = M(v')$ and $M(nextM(v)) = M(v)$. Thus, $M(v')$ is a descendant of $M(v)$. Since $M(v)$ is a descendant of $M(v')$, we conclude that $M(v') = M(v)$. But this implies, in conjunction with $high(v') = high(v)$, that $B(v) = B(v')$, contradicting the fact that the graph is 3-edge-connected. This shows that $nextM(v)$ is a proper ancestor of $lastM(v')$.  

Now, to prove the correctness of Algorithm 10, we have to show that the elements we push into $stackU[v]$ satisfy the necessary condition in Lemma 3.17, and the elements we pop out from $S$ do not satisfy this condition either for $v$ or for any successor of $v$ in the list $high^{-1}(h)$. So, let $v$ be a vertex in $high^{-1}(h)$ such that $nextM(v) \neq \emptyset$, and let $v'$ be a successor of $v$ in $high^{-1}(h)$ such that $nextM(v') \neq \emptyset$. Now, when we meet $v$ as we traverse $high^{-1}(x)$, we pop out the top elements $u$ from $S$ that have $low(u) < lastM(v)$. By the definition of $stackU[v]$, these are not included in $stackU[v]$. Now, by Lemma 3.20, we have $nextM(v) < lastM(v')$. Since $low(u) < lastM(v) \leq nextM(v)$, we have $low(u) < lastM(v')$, and thus $u$ is not in $stackU[v']$ either, so it does not matter that we pop those $u$ out of $S$. Then, once we reach a $u$ in $S$ that satisfies $low(u) \geq lastM(v)$, we pop out the top elements $u$ of $S$ that have $low(u) < nextM(v)$, and push them into $stackU[v]$. This is according to the definition of $stackU[v]$. Since $nextM(v) < lastM(v')$ and $low(u) < nextM(v)$, we have $low(u) < lastM(v')$, and so, again, these $u$ are not included in $stackU[v']$, and thus it does not matter that we pop them out of $S$. Now, when we reach a $u$ in $S$ that has $low(u) \geq nextM(v)$, we can be certain, by Lemma 3.19, that no $u'$ in $S$ has $low(u') < nextM(v)$, since all elements of $S$ are descendants of $u$ (by the way we fill the stack $S$), and thus they have $low(u') \geq low(u) \geq nextM(v)$. Then it is proper to move on to the next element of $high^{-1}(h)$.

Lemma 3.21. Let $v$ be a vertex and $u, u'$ two elements in $stackU[v]$, where $u$ is a predecessor of $u'$ in $stackU[v]$. Then, $low(u') \leq low(u)$.

Proof. Since $u, u' \in stackU[v]$, we have $high(u) = high(v) = high(u')$. Since $u$ is a predecessor of $u'$ in $stackU[v]$, by property (3) of $stackU[v]$ we have that $u$ is a descendant of $u'$. Thus, by Lemma 3.19, we get $low(u') \leq low(u)$. 

The next lemma is the basis to find all 3-cuts of the form $\{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(w,p(w))\}$, where $u$ is a descendant of $v$, $M(v) = M(w)$, and $w \neq nextM(v)$.

Lemma 3.22. Let $u$ be a vertex in $stackU[v]$ and $w$ a proper ancestor of $v$ such that $M(w) = M(v)$. Then, if $\{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(w,p(w))\}$ is a 3-cut, we have that $b\_count(v) = b\_count(u) + b\_count(w)$ and $w$ is the greatest element of $M^{-1}(M(v))$ such that $w \leq low(u)$. Conversely, if $b\_count(v) = b\_count(u) + b\_count(w)$ and $w \leq low(u)$, then $\{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(w,p(w))\}$ is a 3-cut.

Proof. ($\Rightarrow$) By proposition 3.12, we have $B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)$. This explains both $b\_count(v) = b\_count(u) + b\_count(w)$ and $w \leq low(u)$. (For if we had $low(u) < w$, then, since $u$ is a descendant of $w$, $B(u)$ would meet $B(w)$.) Now suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that there is a vertex $w'$ such that $M(w') = M(v)$ and $w < w' \leq low(u)$. Since $B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)$, we have that $low(u) < v$, and therefore $w' < v$. Since $M(w') = M(v)$, this means that $B(w') \subset B(v)$. Furthermore, since $M(w) = M(w')$ and $w < w'$, we infer that $B(w) \subset B(w')$, and therefore there exists a back-edge $(x,y) \in B(w') \setminus B(w)$. Then, by $B(w') \subset B(v)$, we have that $(x,y) \in B(v)$, and $B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)$ implies that $(x,y) \in B(u)$ or $(x,y) \in B(w)$. Since $(x,y) \notin B(w)$, $(x,y) \in B(u)$ is the only option left. But $y$ is a proper ancestor of $w'$, and therefore a proper ancestor of $low(u)$ (since $w' \leq low(u)$).
Algorithm 10: Fill all stacks stackU[v], for all vertices v

1. initialize a stack S
2. foreach vertex v do initialize a stack stackU[v]
3. foreach vertex h do
4.     u ← first element of high−1(h)
5.     while u ≠ ∅ do
6.         z ← next element of high−1(h)
7.         if z = ∅ then break
8.         if z is not an ancestor of u then
9.             pop out all elements from S
10.        if nextM(z) = ∅ then
11.            S.push(z)
12.        end
13.    else if nextM(z) ≠ ∅ then
14.        while low(S.top()) < lastM(v) do S.pop()
15.        while low(S.top()) < nextM(v) do
16.            u ← S.pop()
17.        stackU[v].push(u)
18.    end
19. end
20. end
21. u ← z
22.
23. end

This implies that (x,y) ∉ B(u), which is absurd. We conclude that w is the greatest element of M−1(M(v)) such that w ≤ low(u).

(⇐) By proposition 3.12, is is sufficient to show that B(v) = B(u) ∪ B(w). u ∈ stackU[v] implies that u is a descendant of v such that high(u) = high(v). Now let (x,y) ∈ B(u). Then x is a descendant of u, and therefore a descendant of v. Furthermore, y ≤ high(u) = high(v), and therefore y is a proper ancestor of v. This shows that (x,y) ∈ B(v), and thus we have B(u) ⊆ B(v). Since M(w) = M(v) and w < v, we have B(w) ⊂ B(v). Thus we have established that B(u) ∪ B(w) ⊆ B(v). Notice that no (x,y) ∈ B(u) is contained in B(w), since y ≥ low(u) ≥ w, and thus y is not a proper ancestor of w. Thus we have B(u) ∩ B(w) = ∅. Now B(v) = B(u) ∪ B(w) follows from B(u) ∪ B(w) ⊆ B(v), B(u) ∩ B(w) = ∅ and b_count(v) = b_count(u) + b_count(w).

} Now our goal is to find, for every u ∈ stackU[v], for every vertex v, the vertex w (if it exists) which has M(w) = M(v) and w < nextM(v), and is such that \( \{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(w,p(w))\} \) is a 3-cut. By Lemma 3.22, w has the property that it is the greatest vertex in M−1(M(v)) which has w ≤ low(u). Let us describe a simple method to find the w with this property, which will give us the intuition to provide a linear-time algorithm for our problem. So let v be a vertex, m = M(v), and u be a vertex in stackU[v]. A simple idea is to start from v and keep traversing the list M−1(m), through the pointers nextM, until we reach a w ∈ M−1(m) such that w ≤ low(u). The problem here is that we may have to pass from the same elements of M−1(m) an excessive amount of times (depending on the number of elements in stackU[v]). We can remedy this by keeping in a variable lowestW the w that we reached the last time we processed a u ∈ stackU[v]. Then, when we process
the successor of $u$ in $stackU[v]$, we begin the search in $M^{-1}(m)$ from $lowestW$. This will work, since the every $u \in stackU[v]$ is a descendant of its successor $u'$ in $stackU[v]$ (due to the way we have filled the stacks $stackU$ with Algorithm 10), and we have $high(u) = high(u')$, and therefore, by Lemma 3.19, $low(u') \leq low(u)$. However, this is, again, not a linear-time procedure, since, for every vertex $v$, when we start processing the first vertex in $stackU[v]$, we begin traversing the list $M^{-1}(M(v))$ from $v$, and therefore, every time we process a vertex $v'$ with $M(v') = M(v)$, we may have to pass again from the same vertices that we passed from during the processing of $v$, exceeding the time bound in total. Now, to achieve linear time, we process the vertices from the lowest to the highest, and, for every $v$ that we process, we keep in a variable $lowestW[v]$ the $u$ that we reached the last time we processed a $u \in stackU[v]$. Then, when we have to process a $u \in stackU[v]$, we traverse the list $M^{-1}(M(v))$ through the pointers $lowestW$, starting from $lowestW[v]$. (Initially, we set every $lowestW[v]$ to $nextM(v)$.) Thus we perform a kind of path-compression method, which is shown Algorithm 11. The next three lemmata will be used in proving the correctness and linear complexity of Algorithm 11.

**Lemma 3.23.** Let $v$ be a vertex and $u \in stackU[v]$. When we reach line 8 during the processing of $u$, we have that $w$ is a vertex in $M^{-1}(M(v))$ such that $w \leq low(u)$ and $w \leq \min\{low(u') | \exists v' with M(v') = M(v), w < v' < v and u \in stackU[v']\}.

**Proof.** First observe that, during the processing of a vertex $v$, the variables $w$ and $lowestW[v]$ are members of $M^{-1}(M(v))$, and $w$ is an ancestor of $v$ while $lowestW[v]$ is a proper ancestor of $v$. (It is easy to see this inductively. For if this holds for all vertices $v' < v$, then it is also true for $v$, since the **while** loop in line 7 assigns $w$ to $lowestW[w]$, and $w$ is assumed to be an ancestor of $v$ with $M(w) = M(v)$, and thus $lowestW[w]$ is also an ancestor of $v$ with $M(lowestW[w]) = M(v)$, due to the inductive hypothesis.) Then it is obvious that, when we reach line 8 during the processing of $u \in stackU[v]$, we have that $M(w) = M(v)$ and $w \leq low(u)$, since the **while** loop in line 7 terminates precisely when such a $w$ is found. Now we will show that, when we process a $u \in stackU[v]$, every time $w$ is assigned $lowestW[w]$ during the execution of the **while** loop in line 7, we have $w \leq low(u')$, for every $u' \in stackU[v']$, for every $v'$ with $M(v') = M(v)$ and $w < v' < v$. It is easy to see this inductively. Suppose, then, that this was the case for every vertex that we processed before $v$, for every predecessor of $u$ in $stackU[v]$ that we already processed, and for every step of the **while** loop in line 7 in the processing of $u$ so far. Thus, now $w$ has the property that $w \leq low(u')$, for every $u' \in stackU[v']$, for every $v'$ with $M(v') = M(v)$ and $w < v' < v$. So let us perform $w \leftarrow lowestW[w]$ once more (which means that we still have $w > low(u)$), and let $\tilde{w}$ be the current value of $w$, to distinguish it from the previous one which we will denote simply as $w$. Now, due to the inductive hypothesis, we have that $\tilde{w} \leq low(u')$ for every $u' \in stackU[v']$, for every $v'$ with $M(v') = M(v)$ and $\tilde{w} < v' < w$. We also have (again, due to the inductive hypothesis) that $w \leq low(u')$ for every $u' \in stackU[v']$, for every $v'$ with $M(v') = M(v)$ and $w < v' < v$. Since $\tilde{w} < w$, we thus have $\tilde{w} \leq low(u')$, for every $u' \in stackU[v']$, for every $v'$ with $M(v') = M(v)$ and $\tilde{w} < v' < w$ or $w < v' < v$. Thus we only have to consider the case $v' = w$, and prove that every $u' \in stackU[w]$ satisfies $\tilde{w} \leq low(u')$. Observe that $lowestW[w]$ was updated for the last time in line 8 when we were processing the last element $\hat{u}$ of $stackU[w]$. Then, since $\tilde{w} = lowestW[w]$, due to the inductive hypothesis we have that $\tilde{w} \leq low(\hat{u})$. Since every $u' \in stackU[w]$ has $high(u') = high(\hat{u})$ and $\hat{u}$ is an ancestor of its predecessors in $stackU[w]$ (due to the way we have filled the stacks $stackU$ with Algorithm 10), by Lemma 3.19 we have that $low(\hat{u}) \leq low(u')$, and therefore $\tilde{w} \leq low(u')$. Thus we have shown that $\tilde{w} \leq low(u')$, for every $u' \in stackU[v']$, for every $v'$ with $M(v') = M(v)$ and $\tilde{w} < v' < v$. \(\square\)
Lemma 3.24. Let $v$ be a vertex and $u \in stackU[v]$. When we reach line 8 during the processing of $u$, we have that $w$ is the greatest vertex in $M^{-1}(M(v))$ such that $w \leq low(u)$ and $w \leq \min \{low(u') \mid \exists u' \text{ with } M(u') = M(v), w < v' < v \text{ and } u' \in stackU[v']\}$.

Proof. We will prove this lemma by induction. Let’s assume, then, that, for every vertex $v' \leq v$, and every $u' \in stackU[v']$ that we processed so far, whenever we reached line 8 $w$ was the greatest vertex with $M(u) = M(v')$ such that $w \leq low(u)$ and $w \leq \min \{low(u') \mid \exists u' \text{ with } M(u') = M(v'), w < v'' < v' \text{ and } u'' \in stackU[v'']\}$. Now let $u$ be the next element of $stackU[v]$ that we process. Let $w$ be the greatest vertex with $M(u) = M(v)$ such that $w \leq low(u)$ and $w \leq \min \{low(u') \mid \exists u' \text{ with } M(u') = M(v), w < v' < v \text{ and } u' \in stackU[v']\}$. (The existence of such a $w$ is guaranteed by Lemma 3.23.) Let $w$ be the last vertex during the execution of the while loop in line 7 that had $w > low(u)$, and let $w' = lowestW[w]$. Then we have that $w' = lowestW[w] \leq low(u)$, and the while loop terminates here. We will show that $w' = w$. We distinguish two cases, depending on whether $w' = nextM(w)$ or $w' \neq nextM(w)$. In the first case, we have that $w > low(u)$, but nextM($w$) = $w$. Thus, $w = nextM(w)$ is the greatest vertex with $M(u') = M(v)$ such that $w \leq low(u)$, and so we have $w = w$ (since $w'$ satisfies also $w \leq \min \{low(u') \mid \exists u' \text{ with } M(u') = M(v), w < v' < v \text{ and } u' \in stackU[v']\}$, by Lemma 3.23). Now, if $w' \neq nextM(w)$, this means, due to the inductive hypothesis (and since $w' = lowestW[w]$), that $w'$ is the greatest vertex with $M(u') = M(v)$ such that $w' \leq low(u')$ and $w' \leq \min \{low(u') \mid \exists u' \text{ with } M(u') = M(w), w < v' < w \text{ and } u' \in stackU[w']\}$, by Lemma 3.23. Consequently, $w' = \min \{low(u') \mid \exists u' \text{ with } M(u') = M(w), w < v' < w \text{ and } u' \in stackU[w']\}$. Thus, we cannot be greater than $w'$, and so we have $w' \geq w$. Since $w' \leq low(u)$, and, as a consequence of Lemma 3.23, $w' \leq \min \{low(u') \mid \exists u' \text{ with } M(u') = M(v), w < v' < v \text{ and } u' \in stackU[w']\}$, it must be the case that $w' = w$.

Lemma 3.25. Let $\{(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))\}$ be a 3-cut where $u$ is a descendant of $v$, $v$ is a descendant of $w$ with $M(v) = M(w)$, and $w \neq nextM(v)$. Then, $w$ is the greatest vertex in $M^{-1}(M(v))$ such that $w \leq low(u)$ and $w \leq \min \{low(u') \mid \exists u' \text{ with } M(u') = M(v), w < v' < v \text{ and } u' \in stackU[v']\}$.

Proof. Suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that there exists a vertex $v'$ with $M(v') = M(v)$ and $w < v' < v$, such that there exists a $u' \in stackU[v']$ with $low(u') < w$. Since $u' \in stackU[v']$, we have that $u'$ is a proper descendant of $v'$ with $high(u') = high(v')$. Let $(x, y) \in B(u')$ (of course, $B(u')$ is not empty, since the graph is 3-edge-connected). Then $x$ is a descendant of $u'$, and therefore a descendant of $v'$. Furthermore, $y \leq high(u') = high(v')$, and therefore $y$ is a proper ancestor of $v'$. This shows that $(x, y) \in B(v')$. Thus we have $B(u') \subset B(v')$. Since $M(v') = M(v)$ and $v' < v$, we have $B(v') \subset B(v)$. Thus, $B(u') \subset B(v)$. Now we will prove that $u'$ is not related as ancestor or descendant with $v$. First, since $low(u') < w \leq low(u)$, it cannot be the case that $u'$ is a descendant of $u$ (for a back-edge $(x, low(u')) \in B(u')$ would also be a back-edge in $B(u)$, and thus we would have $low(u) \leq low(u')$, which is a absurd). Suppose, then, that $u'$ is an ancestor of $u$. Since $v'$ is a proper ancestor of $v$ with $M(v') = M(v)$, we must have $high(v') < high(v)$; and since $high(u') = high(v')$, we therefore have $high(u') < high(v)$. This means that $u'$ (which is related as ancestor or descendant with $v$, since we supposed it is an ancestor of $u$) is a proper ancestor of $v$, and therefore a proper ancestor of $M(v)$. Since, then, $u'$ is a descendant of $v$ and $M(u') = M(v)$, by Lemma 2.4 we have that $M(u')$ is an ancestor of $M(v)$. But $B(u') \subset B(v)$ implies that $M(u')$ is a descendant of $M(v)$, and therefore $M(u') = M(v)$. Since $M(v) = M(v')$ and $high(v') = high(v')$, we get that $B(u') = B(v')$, which implies that $v' = u'$ - a contradiction. Thus we have shown that $u'$ is not related as ancestor or descendant with $u$.  

33
Now let \((x, y)\), with \(y = \text{high}(u')\), be a back-edge in \(B(u')\). Then we have \((x, y) \in B(v)\). By proposition \ref{prop:3.12}, we have \(B(v) = B(u) \cup B(w)\), and therefore \((x, y) \in B(u)\) or \((x, y) \in B(w)\). Since \(u'\) is not related as ancestor of descendant with \(u\), it cannot be the case that \(x\) (which is a descendant of \(u'\)) is a descendant of \(u\), and therefore \((x, y) \in B(u)\) is rejected. Now, since \(B(u') \subset B(v')\), we have \((x, y) \in B(v')\). Since \(M(v') = M(w)\) and \(w < v'\), we have that \(B(w) \subset B(v')\), and thus there exists a back-edge \((x', y') \in B(v')\) such that \(y' \in T(v', w)\). But since \(y = \text{high}(u') = \text{high}(v')\), we must have \(y' \leq y\). Thus, \(y\) is not a proper ancestor of \(w\), and so \((x, y) \notin B(w)\), either. We have arrived at a contradiction, as a consequence of our initial supposition. This shows that there is no vertex \(v'\) with \(M(v') = M(v)\) and \(w < v' < v\), such that there exists a \(u' \in \text{stackU}[v']\) with \(\text{low}(u') < w\). Thus, \(w \leq \min\{\text{low}(u') \mid \exists v'\text{ with } M(v') = M(v), w < v' < v\text{ and } u' \in \text{stackU}[v']\}\). Now, by Lemma \ref{lem:3.22}, \(w\) is the greatest vertex in \(M^{-1}(M(v))\) that satisfies both \(w \leq \text{low}(u)\) and \(w \leq \min\{\text{low}(u') \mid \exists v'\text{ with } M(v') = M(v), w < v' < v\text{ and } u' \in \text{stackU}[v']\}\). 

**Algorithm 11:** Find all 3-cuts \([(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))]\), where \(u\) is a descendant of \(v\), \(v\) is a descendant of \(w\) with \(M(v) = M(w)\), and \(w \neq \text{next}M(v)\).

1. Initialize an array \(\text{lowestW}\) with \(n\) entries.
2. For each vertex \(v\) do \(\text{lowestW}[v] \leftarrow \text{next}M(v)\).
3. For \(v \leftarrow 1\) to \(v \leftarrow n\) do
   4. While \(\text{stackU}[v].\text{top()} \neq \emptyset\) do
      5. \(u \leftarrow \text{stackU}[v].\text{pop()}\)
      6. \(w \leftarrow \text{lowestW}[v]\)
      7. While \(w > \text{low}(u)\) do \(w \leftarrow \text{lowestW}[w]\)
      8. \(\text{lowestW}[v] \leftarrow w\)
      9. If \(b_{\text{count}}(v) = b_{\text{count}}(u) + b_{\text{count}}(w)\) then
         10. Mark the triplet \([(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))]\)
   11. End
4. End

**Proposition 3.26.** Algorithm 11 identifies all 3-cuts \([(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))]\), where \(u\) is a descendant of \(v\), \(v\) is a descendant of \(w\) with \(M(v) = M(w)\), and \(w \neq \text{next}M(v)\). Furthermore, it runs in linear time.

**Proof.** Let \([(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))]\) be a 3-cut, where \(u\) is a descendant of \(v\), \(v\) is a descendant of \(w\) with \(M(v) = M(w)\), and \(w \neq \text{next}M(v)\). By Lemma \ref{lem:3.25}, \(w\) is the greatest vertex in \(M^{-1}(M(v))\) such that \(w \leq \text{low}(u)\) and \(w \leq \min\{\text{low}(u') \mid \exists v'\text{ with } M(v') = M(v), w < v' < v\text{ and } u' \in \text{stackU}[v']\}\). By Lemma \ref{lem:3.24}, Algorithm 11 will identify \(w\) during the processing of \(u\) in line 8. As a consequence of proposition \ref{prop:3.12}, we have \(b_{\text{count}}(v) = b_{\text{count}}(u) + b_{\text{count}}(w)\), and thus the triplet \([(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))]\) will be marked in line 10. Conversely, let \([(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))]\) be a triplet that gets marked by Algorithm 11 in line 10. Then, we have \(u \in \text{stackU}[v]\). Furthermore, Lemma \ref{lem:3.24} implies that \(w\) has \(M(w) = M(v)\) and \(w \leq \text{low}(u)\). Then, since \(u \in \text{stackU}[v]\), we have \(\text{low}(u) < \text{next}M(v)\), and therefore \(w\) is a proper ancestor of \(v\). Now, since \(b_{\text{count}}(v) = b_{\text{count}}(u) + b_{\text{count}}(w)\), Lemma \ref{lem:3.22} implies that \([(u, p(u)), (v, p(v)), (w, p(w))]\) is a 3-cut. Thus, the correctness of Algorithm 11 is established.

To prove that Algorithm 11 runs in linear time, we will count the number of times that we access the array \(\text{lowestW}\) during the while loop in line 7. Specifically, we will show that, by the time
the algorithm is terminated, the \( v \) entry of lowest\( W \), for every vertex \( v \), will have been accessed at most once in line 7. We will prove this inductively, using the inductive proposition: \( \Pi(v) \equiv \) after processing \( v \), we have that \( \forall v' < v \) lowest\( W[v'] \) has been accessed at most once in line 7 during the course of the algorithm so far and \( \forall v' \leq v \) we have that every \( w \in T(v', \text{lowest} W[v')] \) has lowest\( W[w] \geq \text{lowest} W[v'] \). Thus, (the first part of) \( \Pi(n) \) implies the linearity of Algorithm 11. Now, suppose that \( \Pi(v - 1) \) is true for a \( v \in \{1, \ldots, n\} \) (observe that \( \Pi(0) \) is trivially true). We will prove that \( \Pi(v) \) is also true. Thus we have to show that: after we have processed every \( u \in \text{stack} U[v] \), we have that \( \forall v' < v \) lowest\( W[v'] \) has been accessed at most once in line 7 during the course of the algorithm so far and \( \forall v' \leq v \) we have that every \( w \in T(v', \text{lowest} W[v']) \) has lowest\( W[w] \geq \text{lowest} W[v'] \) (1). Now, suppose that this was a case for a specific \( \tilde{u} \in \text{stack} U[v] \). We will show that it is still true for the successor \( u \) of \( \tilde{u} \) in \( \text{stack} U[v] \). (Of course, due to the inductive hypothesis, (1) is definitely true before we have begun processing the elements of \( \text{stack} U[v] \), and therefore we may also have that \( u \) is the first element of \( \text{stack} U[v] \) in what follows.) Let \( \tilde{w} \) be the value of lowest\( W[v] \) after the assignment in line 8, during the processing of \( u \). Thus, all vertices that we traversed during the execution of the while loop, during the processing of \( u \), are contained in \( T[v, \tilde{w}] \). Now let \( v' < v \) be a vertex with the property that lowest\( W[v'] \) has been accessed once in line 7 during the course of the algorithm before the processing of \( u \), and let \( \tilde{v} \) be the vertex during whose processing we had to access lowest\( W[v'] \) in the while loop. We will show that lowest\( W[v'] \) will not be accessed during the execution of the while loop (since the traversal in while loop will not reach vertices lower than \( \tilde{w} \), and when it reaches \( \tilde{w} \) it will terminate). We note that, since the \( v' \) entry of lowest\( W \) was accessed during the execution of the while loop during the processing of \( \tilde{v} \), we have that lowest\( W[\tilde{v}] \) is an ancestor of lowest\( W[v'] \), and therefore a proper ancestor of \( v' \). Now, if \( \tilde{v} = v \), then lowest\( W[v] \) was assigned lowest\( W[\tilde{v}] \), in line 8, during the processing of a predecessor of \( u \) in \( \text{stack} U[v] \). Thus, when we begin processing \( u \), \( w \) is assigned a proper ancestor of \( v' \) in line 6, before entering the while loop, and so the \( v' \) entry of lowest\( W \) will not be accessed during the execution of the while loop. So let’s assume that \( \tilde{v} < v \). Initially, the variable \( w \) is assigned lowest\( W[v] \) in line 6. We claim that lowest\( W[v] \) is either a descendant of \( \tilde{v} \) or a proper ancestor of \( v' \). To see this, suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that lowest\( W[v] \) is in \( T(\tilde{v}, v') \). Then, we have \( \tilde{v} \in T(v, \text{lowest} W[v]) \), and therefore, since (1) is true for \( \tilde{u} \) (the predecessor of \( u \) in \( \text{stack} U[v] \)), we have that lowest\( W[\tilde{v}] \geq \text{lowest} W[v] \). Since lowest\( W[\tilde{v}] \) is a proper ancestor of \( v' \), this implies that \( v' > \text{lowest} W[v] \), contradicting the supposition lowest\( W[v] \leq v' \). Thus, before executing the while loop, we have that \( w \) is either a descendant of \( \tilde{v} \) or a proper ancestor of \( v' \). Now suppose that the while loop has been executed 0 or more times, and \( w \) is assigned a descendant of \( \tilde{v} \) or a proper ancestor of \( v' \). We will show that if we execute the while loop once more, \( w \) will either be assigned a descendant of \( \tilde{v} \) or a proper ancestor of \( v' \). Of course, if \( w \) is a proper ancestor of \( v' \), the same is true for lowest\( W[w] \). Moreover, if \( w = \tilde{v} \), then, as noted above, we have that lowest\( W[w] \) is a proper ancestor of \( v' \). So let’s assume that \( w \) is a proper descendant of \( \tilde{v} \), and suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that lowest\( W[w] \) is in \( T(\tilde{v}, v') \). Then, since \( \tilde{v} \in T(w, \text{lowest} [w]) \), due to the inductive hypothesis we have that lowest\( W[\tilde{v}] \geq \text{lowest} W[w] \). Since we also have \( v' > \text{lowest} W[\tilde{v}] \), this contradicts the supposition lowest\( W[w] \geq v' \). Thus, if \( w \) is a proper descendant of \( \tilde{v} \), lowest\( W[w] \) is either a descendant of \( \tilde{v} \) or a proper ancestor of \( v' \). In any case, then, during the execution of the while loop, \( w \) will be assigned either a descendant of \( \tilde{v} \) or a proper ancestor of \( v' \), and thus the \( v' \) entry of lowest\( W \) will not be accessed.

It remains to show that, after the processing of \( u \), for every \( w \in T(v, \tilde{w}) \) we have lowest\( W[w] \geq \tilde{w} \). Due to the inductive hypothesis, this is definitely true for every \( w \in T(v, \text{lowest} W[v]) \) (where lowest\( W[v] \) here has the value after the processing of \( \tilde{u} \) and before the processing of \( u \), since
lowest \( W[v] \geq w \), and every such \( w \) has \( lowest[W[w] \geq lowest[W[v]] \). Now let’s assume that \( w \in T[lowest[W[v], w]] \), and suppose, for the sake of contradiction, that \( lowest[W[w] < w \). Then it cannot be that case that \( w = lowest[W[v] \), since \( w < lowest[W[lowest[W[v]] \) (for the existence of a \( w \in T[lowest[W[v], w]] \) implies that \( w \neq lowest[W[v]] \). Now, since \( lowest[W[v]] > w > w \), there must exist a \( w' \) such that \( w' \in T[lowest[W[v], w]] \), \( lowest[W[w']] < w \) and \( lowest[W[w']] \geq w \). Since \( lowest[W[w]] < w \), we cannot \( w' = w \). Then, \( w \in T(w', lowest[W[w']]) \), and thus, due to the inductive hypothesis, we have \( lowest[W[w] \geq lowest[W[w']] \). Since \( lowest[W[w']] \geq w \), this implies that \( lowest[W[w]] \geq w \), contradicting the supposition \( lowest[W[w] < w \). Thus, every \( w \in T(v, w) \) has \( lowest[W[w] \geq w \). The proof that (1) is true for \( u \) is complete. Due to the generality of \( u \in stackU[v] \), this implies that \( \Pi(u) \) is true. This shows, by induction, that \( \Pi(n) \) is true, and the linearity of Algorithm 11 is thus established.

\[ \square \]

4 Computing the 4-edge-connected components in linear time

Now we consider how to compute the 4-edge-connected components of an undirected graph \( G \) in linear time. First, we reduce this problem to the computation of the 4-edge-connected components of a collection of auxiliary 3-edge-connected graphs.

4.1 Reduction to the 3-edge-connected case

Given a (general) undirected graph \( G \), we execute the following steps:

- Compute the connected components of \( G \).

- For each connected component, we compute the 2-edge-connected components which are subgraphs of \( G \).

- For each 2-edge-connected component, we compute its 3-edge-connected components \( C_1, \ldots, C_\ell \).

- For each 3-edge-connected component \( C_i \), we compute a 3-edge-connected auxiliary graph \( H_i \), such that for any two vertices \( x \) and \( y \), we have \( x \equiv_4 y \) if and only if \( x \) and \( y \) are both in the same auxiliary graph \( H_i \) and \( x \equiv_4 y \).

- Finally, we compute the 4-edge-connected components of each \( H_i \).

Steps 1–3 take overall linear time [19, 22]. We describe step 5 in the next section, so it remains to give the details of step 4. Let \( H \) be a 2-edge-connected component (subgraph) of \( G \). We can construct a compact representation of the 2-cuts of \( H \), which allows us to compute its 3-edge-connected components \( C_1, \ldots, C_\ell \) in linear time [6, 22]. Now, since the collection \( \{C_1, \ldots, C_\ell\} \) constitutes a partition of the vertex set of \( H \), we can form the quotient graph \( Q \) of \( H \) by shrinking each \( C_i \) into a single node. Graph \( Q \) has the structure of a tree of cycles [2]; in other words, \( Q \) is connected and every edge of \( Q \) belongs to a unique cycle. Let \( (C_i, C_j) \) and \( (C_i, C_k) \) be two edges of \( Q \) which belong to the same cycle. Then \( (C_i, C_j) \) and \( (C_i, C_k) \) correspond to two edges \( (x, y) \) and \( (x', y') \) of \( G \), with \( x, x' \in C_i \). If \( x \neq x' \), we add a virtual edge \( (x, x') \) to \( G[C_i] \). (The idea is to attach \( (x, x') \) to \( G[C_i] \) as a substitute for the cycle of \( Q \) which contains \( (C_i, C_j) \) and \( (C_i, C_k) \).)

Now let \( \bar{C}_i \) be the graph \( G[C_i] \) plus all those virtual edges. Then \( \bar{C}_i \) is 3-edge-connected and its 4-edge-connected components are precisely those of \( G \) that are contained in \( C_i \) [2]. Thus we can compute the 4-edge-connected components of \( G \) by computing the 4-edge-connected components of the graphs \( \bar{C}_1, \ldots, \bar{C}_\ell \) (which can easily be constructed in total linear time). Since every \( \bar{C}_i \) is 3-edge-connected, we can apply Algorithm 12 of the following section to compute its 4-edge-connected
components in linear time. Finally, we define the multiplicity \( m(e) \) of an edge \( e \in \tilde{C}_i \) as follows: if \( e \) is virtual, \( m(e) \) is the number of edges of the cycle of \( Q \) which corresponds to \( e \); otherwise, \( m(e) \) is 1. Then, the number of minimal 3-cuts of \( H \) is given by the sum of all \( m(e_1) \cdot m(e_2) \cdot m(e_3) \), for every 3-cut \( \{e_1,e_2,e_3\} \) of \( \tilde{C}_i \), for every \( i \in \{1,\ldots,l\} \) [2]. Since the 3-cuts of every \( \tilde{C}_i \) can be computed in linear time, the minimal 3-cuts of \( H \) can also be computed within the same time bound.

4.2 Computing the 4-edge-connected components of a 3-edge-connected graph

Now we describe how to compute the 4-edge-connected components of a 3-edge-connected graph \( G \) in linear time. Let \( r \) be a distinguished vertex of \( G \), and let \( C \) be a minimum cut of \( G \). By removing \( C \) from \( G \), \( G \) becomes disconnected into two connected components. We let \( V_C \) denote the connected component of \( G \setminus C \) that does not contain \( r \), and we refer to the number of vertices of \( V_C \) as the \( r \)-size of the cut \( C \). (Of course, these notions are relative to \( r \).)

Let \( G = (V,E) \) be a 3-edge-connected graph, and let \( C \) be the collection of the 3-cuts of \( G \). If the collection \( C \) is empty, then \( G \) is 4-edge-connected, and \( V \) is the only 4-edge-connected component of \( G \). Otherwise, let \( C \in C \) be a 3-cut of \( G \). By removing \( C \) from \( G \), \( G \) is separated into two connected components, and every 4-edge-connected component of \( G \) lies entirely within a connected component of \( G \setminus C \). This observation suggests a recursive algorithm for computing the 4-edge-connected components of \( G \), by successively splitting \( G \) into smaller graphs according to its 3-cuts. Thus, we start with a 3-cut \( C \) of \( G \), and we perform the splitting operation shown in Figure 8. Then we take another 3-cut \( C' \) of \( G \) and we perform the same splitting operation on the part which contains (the corresponding 3-cut of) \( C' \). We repeat this process until we have considered every 3-cut of \( G \). When no more splits are possible, the connected components of the final split graph correspond (by ignoring the newly introduced vertices) to the 4-edge-connected components of \( G \).

To implement this procedure in linear time, we must take care of two things. First, whenever we consider a 3-cut \( C \) of \( G \), we have to be able to know which ends of the edges of \( C \) belong to the same connected component of \( G \setminus C \). And second, since an edge \( e \) of a 3-cut of the original graph may correspond to two virtual edges of the split graph, we have to be able to know which is the virtual edge that corresponds to \( e \). We tackle both these problems by locating the 3-cuts of \( G \) on a DFS-tree \( T \) of \( G \) rooted at \( r \), and by processing them in increasing order with respect to their \( r \)-size. By locating a 3-cut \( C \in C \) on \( T \) we can answer in \( O(1) \) time which ends of the edges of \( C \) belong to the same connected component of \( G \setminus C \). And then, by processing the 3-cuts of \( G \) in increasing order with respect to their size, we ensure that (the 3-cut that corresponds to) a 3-cut \( C \in C \) that we process lies in the split part of \( G \) that contains \( r \).

Now, due to the analysis of the preceding sections, we can distinguish the following types of 3-cuts on a DFS-tree \( T \) (see also Figure 1):

- (I) \( \{(v,p(v)),(x_1,y_1),(x_2,y_2)\} \), where \( (x_1,y_1) \) and \( (x_2,y_2) \) are back-edges.
- (IIa) \( \{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(x,y)\} \), where \( u \) is a descendant of \( v \) and \( (x,y) \in B(v) \).
- (IIb) \( \{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(x,y)\} \), where \( u \) is a descendant of \( v \) and \( (x,y) \in B(u) \).
- (III) \( \{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(w,p(w))\} \), where \( w \) is an ancestor of both \( u \) and \( v \), but \( u,v \) are not related as ancestor and descendant.
- (IV) \( \{(u,p(u)),(v,p(v)),(w,p(w))\} \), where \( u \) is a descendant of \( v \) and \( v \) is a descendant of \( w \).
Let \( r \) be the root of \( T \). Then, for every 3-cut \( C \in \mathcal{C} \), \( V_C \) is either \( T(v) \), or \( T(v) \setminus T(u) \), or \( T(w) \setminus (T(u) \cup T(v)) \), or \( T(u) \cup (T(w) \setminus T(v)) \), depending on whether \( C \) is of type (I), (II), (III), or (IV), respectively. Thus we can immediately calculate the size of \( C \) and the ends of its edges that lie in \( V_C \). In particular, the size of \( C \) is either \( ND(v) \), or \( ND(v) - ND(u) \), or \( ND(w) - ND(u) - ND(v) \), or \( ND(u) + ND(w) - ND(v) \), depending on whether it is of type (I), (II), (III), or (IV), respectively; \( V_C \) contains either \( \{v, x_1, x_2\} \), or \( \{p(u), v, x\} \), or \( \{p(u), v, y\} \), or \( \{p(u), p(v), w\} \), or \( \{u, p(v), w\} \), depending on whether \( C \) is of type (I), (Ia), (Ib), (III), or (IV), respectively.

Algorithm 12 shows how we can compute the 4-edge-connected components of \( G \) in linear time, by repeatedly splitting \( G \) into smaller graphs according to its 3-cuts. When we process a 3-cut \( C \) of \( G \), we have to find the edges of the split graph that correspond to those of \( C \), in order to delete them and replace them with (new) virtual edges. That is why we use the symbol \( v' \), for a vertex \( v \in V \), to denote a vertex that corresponds to \( v \) in the split graph. (Initially, we set \( v' \leftarrow v \).) Now, if \((x, y)\) is an edge of \( C \) with \( x \in V_C \), the edge of the split graph corresponding to \((x, y)\) is \((x', y')\). Then we add two new vertices \( v_C \) and \( v_{v_C} \) to \( G \), and the virtual edges \((x', v_C)\) and \((v_C, y')\). Finally, we let \( x \) correspond to \( v_C \), and so we set \( x' \leftarrow v_C \). This is sufficient, since we process the 3-cuts of \( G \) in increasing order with respect to their size, and so the next time we meet the edge \((x, y)\) in a 3-cut, we can be certain that it corresponds to \((v_C, y')\).
Algorithm 12: Compute the 4-edge-connected components of a 3-edge-connected graph $G = (V, E)$

1. Find the collection $C$ of the 3-cuts of $G$
2. Locate and classify the 3-cuts of $G$ on a DFS-tree of $G$ rooted at $r$
3. For every $C \in C$, calculate $\text{size}(C)$ (relative to $r$)
4. Sort $C$ in increasing order w.r.t. the size of its elements
5. **foreach** $v \in V$ do Set $v' \leftarrow v$
6. **foreach** $C = \{(x_1, y_1), (x_2, y_2), (x_3, y_3)\} \in C$ do
   7. Find the ends of the edges of $C$ that lie in $V_C$ // **Let those ends be** $x_1, x_2$ and $x_3$
   8. Remove the edges $(x'_1, y'_1), (x'_2, y'_2), (x'_3, y'_3)$ from $G$
   9. Introduce two new vertices $v_C$ and $\tilde{v}_C$ to $G$
   10. Add the edges $(x'_1, v_C), (x'_2, v_C), (x'_3, v_C), (v_C, y'_1), (v_C, y'_2), (v_C, y'_3)$ to $G$
   11. Set $x'_1 \leftarrow v_C, x'_2 \leftarrow v_C, x'_3 \leftarrow v_C$
12. end
13. Output the connected components of $G$, ignoring the newly introduced vertices
References


