

plasmid

An extrachromosomal genetic element consisting generally of a circular duplex of DNA which can replicate independently of chromosomal DNA. R-plasmids are responsible for the mutual transfer of antibiotic resistance among microbes. Plasmids are used as vectors for cloning DNA in bacteria or yeast host cells.

Source:

PAC, 1992, 64, 143 (*Glossary for chemists of terms used in biotechnology (IUPAC Recommendations 1992)*) on page 162