

November 11, 1965

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Dear Dr. Záruba:

Your letter of October 22 is a very interesting one and full of good, valuable information. I must say I enjoy reading your letters and your discussions of the problems concerning the Ostreidae.

To help you along with the distinction between aragonite and calcite in the shells of the Ostreidae, a package of recently killed Crassostrea virginica (Gmelin, 1791) is being shipped to you. This common and commercially useful species lives on the east coast of North America from Canada to Mexico. The specimens sent to you were bought in a fish market in Houston and are probably from Galveston Bay in Texas.

In this species the calcitic shell layer directly beneath the aragonite pad of the adductor muscle is colored a deep purple. This purple color can be seen through the aragonite pad, because the pad is very thin and semitransparent. If you want to check the composition of the aragonite pad, you will have to scrape pieces off without cutting too deep, that is, without cutting into the underlying calcitic shell layer. We had no real difficulty in doing that. If more material is needed, please call on me for help.

Very good illustrations of the cavities produced in oyster shells when the aragonite of the hypostracum is leached are shown, especially on pl. 4, fig. 7, in Sohl, N.F., & Kauffman, E.G., 1964, Giant Upper Cretaceous oysters from the Gulf Coast and Caribbean: U. S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 483-H. If this work is not in your local library, you might write a letter to Dr. Erle Kauffman, c/o U. S. National Museum, Division of Invertebrate Paleontology, Washington 25, D. C., U. S. A., or to Dr. Norman Sohl, c/o U. S. National

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Museum, Room E-501, Washington, D. C., 20242, U. S. A. You might mention my name; both are very kind persons and specialize in the Ostreidae. In their work they were not aware that the aragonite had been leached from these shells and that the original adductor muscle scar was no longer preserved.

Recently, I wrote to Dr. Mesgaros at Cluj, Romania, about the Gryphaea esterhazyi Pavay, 1871, from the Eocene of Transylvania, but have received no reply so far. Do you know perhaps how one could obtain specimens of that species, which is common in the Cluj Basin? However, the species has been illustrated very well so that there is no real difficulty with it; perhaps it is not needed.

With best wishes for your work and please give my regards to Dr. Kriz.

Sincerely yours,

H. B. Stenzel

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