

Palynological Analysis of Sidewall Cores between 3012.1m to 3057.1m in Gudgeon-1 Gippsland Basin

by

Alan D. Partridge

Biostrata Pty Ltd A.C.N. 053 800 945

Biostrata Report 1995/10 31 May 1995

CONTENTS

INTERPRETATIVE DATA

Introduction	Ĺ
Palynological Summary of Gudgeon-1	L
Geological Comments2	2
Biostratigraphy	3
References 6	3
Table 1: Interpretative Palynomorph Data for Gudgeon-1	7
*Confidence Ratings	7
BASIC DATA	
Table 2: Basic Sample Data for Gudgeon-1	3
Table 3: Basic Palynomorph Data for Gudgeon-1	}
Table 4: Species List for Gudgeon-1.)
Table 4: Species List for Gudgeon-1 cont 10)
RELINGUISHMENT LIST - PALYNOLOGY SLIDES	L

INTERPRETATIVE DATA

Introduction

Nine sidewall cores between 3012.1m to 3057.1m from across the top of Latrobe in Gudgeon-1 have been analysed to compliment the results obtained from a cuttings sample at 3045-55m and core samples between 3064m to 3078m reported on by Partridge (1995). The following table summarises both sets of analyses.

Palynological Summary of Gudgeon-1

AGE	UNIT/FACIES	SPORE-POLLEN ZONES (DINOFLAGELLATE ZONES)	DEPTHS mKB
MIOCENE TO OLIGOCENE	SEASPRAY GROUP	P. tuberculatus (F. leos)	3012.1-3036.1 (3036.1)
EOCENE? TO PALEOCENE	LATROBE GROUP Glauconitic sandstone	Indeterminate sample (T. evittii)	3053.6 (3055.0)
MAASTRICHTIAN	LATROBE GROUP Undifferentiated	Indeterminate sample Upper T. longus (M. druggii)	3057.1 3064.0-3078.0 (3072.0)

An average of 10 grams of the sidewall cores were split, cleaned where practical, then forwarded to Laola Pty Ltd in Perth for processing to prepare the palynological slides for analysis. The material was forwarded to Laola Pty Ltd on 10 May, returned on 18 May and the provisional report on results provided on 22 May. The interpretative data with zone identification and Confidence Ratings are recorded in Table 1 and basic data on residue yields, preservation and diversity are recorded on Tables 2 and 3.

Overall the residue yields on the samples were low from the Seaspray Group and very low to barren from Latrobe Group. Palynomorph concentration in productive samples was moderate to high. Preservation of palynomorphs varied from poor to good. From the Seaspray Group total spore-pollen diversity was 42+ species with an average diversity of 17+ species per sample, whilst total microplankton diversity was 24+ species with an average of 14+ species per sample. Diversity of the samples from the Latrobe Groups is much lower because of the lower recoveries. All species which have been identified with binomial names are

tabulated in the text or on Table 4. The relinquishment list for palynological slides is provided at the end of the report. No palynological residues remained after preparation of the slides.

Geological Comments

- 1. Of the nine samples analysed six are from the Seaspray Group. These are Early Oligocene in age and are referred to the *P. tuberculatus* Zone and *Operculodinium* Superzone. The other three samples are from the underlying Latrobe Group but only the middle sample contained a diagnostic assemblage assigned to the *T. evittii* microplankton Zone giving an Early Paleocene (Danian) age.
- 2. The Fromea leos microplankton Zone originally erected in Blackback-3 has been found in the deepest available sidewall sample from the Seaspray Group indicating the presence of the "Early Oligocene wedge" in Gudgeon-1. The sample at 3036.1m also contains the spore Cyatheacidites annulatus indicative of the P. tuberculatus Zone which suggests a position high in the F. leos Zone. As previously discussed by Partridge (1994) Fromea leos is considered to characterises a part of the Early Oligocene which appears to be only rarely preserved in the offshore portion of the Gippsland Basin.
- 3. Of the two samples of glauconitic sandstone supplied from the top of the Latrobe Group at 3053.6m and 3055m only the deeper sample contained an assemblage which is both *insitu* and datable. The *T. evittii* Zone assemblage recorded from this sample can be correlated to the Cretaceous/Tertiary boundary shale which forms the seal to the Flounder field reservoirs. In the adjacent Pilotfish-1A well the upper part of the this shale between approximately 2915m to 2935m becomes significantly glauconitic and contains both the *T. evittii* and the younger *P. pyrophorum* microplankton Zones (Macphail 1983, and subsequent analysis).
- 4. Although the shallower glauconitic sandstone at 3053.6m did not yield a reliable assemblage it shows greater lithological similarity to the Gurnard Formation than the deeper sample. Considering that a few typical Eocene dinoflagellates were recorded from the cuttings analysed over the interval 3045-55m (Partridge 1995, table 4) it is possible that a thin sliver (<2 metres) of Eocene may have been deposited at the Gudgeon-1 location.
- 5. The new age datings on the sidewall cores now leave an undated gap of only 9 metres between the *T. evittit* Zone top of the Upper *T. longus* zone identified in the cores from 3064m.

Biostratigraphy

Zone and age determinations are based on the spore-pollen zonation scheme proposed by Stover & Partridge (1973), subsequently modified by Helby, Morgan & Partridge (1987), and a dinoflagellate zonation scheme which has only been published in outline by Partridge (1975, 1976).

Author citations for most spore-pollen species can be sourced from Stover & Partridge (1973, 1982), Helby, Morgan & Partridge (1987) or other references cited herein. Author citations for dinoflagellates can be found in the index of Lentin & Williams (1993) or other references cited herein. Species names followed by "ms" are unpublished manuscript names.

Proteacidites tuberculatus Spore-Pollen Zone:

3012.1-3036.1 metres Early Oligocene.

The six samples assigned to the zone all contain the key index species Cyatheacidites annulatus. Other index species are rare but include an as yet undescribed species of Densoisporites and Foveotriletes lacunosus at 3020m. This latter species suggests a generally younger Late Oligocene age but is interpreted as a contaminant as the sample also contains the notably younger dinoflagellate Tuberculodinium vancampoae. Overall the assemblages are of moderate diversity dominated by long ranging spores and pollen. Nothofagidites spp. dominates most counts with Araucariacites australis and Podocarpidites spp. the next most frequent types.

Operculodinium Microplankton Superzone:

3012.1-3036.1 metres Oligocene-Miocene.

All samples analysed from the Seaspray Group are dominated by dinoflagellates characteristic of the *Operculodinium* Superzone which has a broad Oligocene to Miocene age range. Total microplankton abundance ranges from 60% to 82% with an average of 74% indicating an open marine environment. The assemblages are all dominated by *Spiniferites* spp. and *Operculodinium centrocarpum* (Table 4). Unfortunately most of the key species in the microflora are still undocumented and are identified by manuscript names. Currently only two zones have been formally defined from the base of the superzone and of these only the *F. leos* Zone is recorded in Gudgeon-1.

Fromea leos Microplankton Zone:

3036.1 metres Early Oligocene.

This is a new zone defined by Partridge (1994) as the interval above the acme of *Phthanoperidinium comatum* to the Last Appearance Datum (LAD) of *Fromea leos* ms. The assemblages recorded is similar compositionally to those in Blackback-3 with abundant *Spiniferites* spp. (55%) and *Operculodinium centrocarpum* (21%) but only frequent *Fromea leos* (4%). The assemblages is distinguished from the more usual *Operculodinium* Superzone microfloras found in the basal Seaspray Group in lacking the consistent and often common occurrence of the species *Dapsilidinium pseudocolligerum*, *Protoellipsodinium simplex* ms and *Pyxidinopsis pontus* ms. Additional taxonomic descriptive work needs to be done to fully document the microplankton assemblages in this zone.

SWC 24 at 3053.6 metres.

Residue recovery from this glauconitic sandstone was sufficient to make only one kerogen slide and one half coverslip oxidised slide. The kerogen slide contained what was interpreted as poorly preserved biodegraded terrestrially derived kerogen whilst the oxidised slide contained what appeared to be the indeterminate reaction product from the chemical processing. The recorded assemblage listed below was very limited and considering the sample was originally poorly cleaned and mud penetrated it is not believed the assemblage is either zone or age diagnostic.

Spore-Pollen

Araucariacites australis	1 specimen
Foraminisporis sp. cf. F. dailyi	(reworked?)
Microplankton	
Cyclopsiella vieta	1 specimen
Operculodinium centrocarpum	1 specimen

Spiniferites spp. 3+ specimens

Trithyrodinium evittii Microplankton Zone:

3055.0 metres Early Paleocene.

Only sufficient residue was recovered from the sample to prepare small filtered and unfiltered fractions of the residue for a single kerogen slide.

The assemblage contained the following species:

Spore-Pollen

=	
Araucariacites australis	1 specimen
Cupressacites pollen	3 specimens (contaminants?)
Dilwynites granulatus	2+ specimens
Gleicheniidites circinidites	1 specimen
Latrobosporites amplus	1 specimen
Lygistepollenites florinii	1 specimen
Nothofagidites emarcidus	1 specimen
Nothofagidites endurus	1 specimen
Phyllocladidites mawsonii	2+ specimens
Podocarpidites spp.	3+ specimens
Proteacidites spp.	3+ specimens
Stereisporites antiquisporites	1 specimen
Microplankton	
Areoligera senonensis	4 fragmented specimens
Deflandrea speciosus	1 fragmented specimen
Histiocysta sp.	2 specimens
Operculodinium sp. cf. O. centrocarpum	1 specimen
Palaeoperidinium pyrophorum	1 specimen
Palambages sp.	1 specimen
Spinidinium sp.	l specimen

This limited assemblage of between 50-60 specimens can be assigned to the *T. evittii* Zone on the abundance of the eponymous species (>20% of assemblage) supported by the occurrence of a single specimen of *Palaeoperidinium pyrophorum*. The associated spore-pollen assemblage is not zone diagnostic.

1 specimen

12+ specimens

SWC 22 at 3057.1 metres.

Spiniferites ramosus

Trithyrodinium evittii

The 6.2 grams of the sidewall core processed gave a meagre yield sufficent to prepare only a single 1/2 coverslip kerogen slide. The slide contained mainly large $(50\text{-}200\mu\text{m}$ diameter) irregular black opaque to semitransulcent kerogen mixed with fine (<10 μ m diameter) irregular blebs which looked like chemical reaction product, together with very minor (<5% of total kerogen on slide)

terrestrial kerogen including palynomorphs. The following limited assemblage was recorded:

Spore-Pollen

Araucariacites australis	l specimen
Haloragacidites harrisii	l specimen
Lygistepollenites balmei	l specimen
Proteacidites clinei ms	1 specimen
Stereisporites antiquisporites	1 specimen

Microplankton

Operculodinium sp. cf. O. centrocarpum 1 specimen Spiniferites sp. 1 specimen

As this assemblage is a mixture of typical Oligocene, Eocene, Paleocene and Maastrichtian species it is very likely most, if not all, specimens are introduced contaminants from the mud penetrating the friable and poorly cleaned sample. No reliable age determination is possible based on this assemblage.

References

- HELBY, R., MORGAN, R. & PARTRIDGE, A.D., 1987. A palynological zonation of the Australian Mesozoic. *Mem. Ass. Australas. Palaeontols 4*, 1-94.
- LENTIN, J.K. & WILLIAMS, G.L., 1993. Fossil Dinoflagellates: Index to genera and species, 1993 Edition. *AASP Contribution Series No.* 28, 1-856.
- MACPHAIL, M.K., 1983. Palynological analysis of Pilotfish-1A, Gippsland Basin. *Esso Aust. Ltd. Palaeo. Rept.* 1983/20, 1-14.
- PARTRIDGE, A.D., 1975. Palynological zonal scheme for the Tertiary of the Bass Strait Basin (Introducing Paleogene Dinoflagellate Zones and Late Neogene Spore-Pollen Zones). Geol. Soc. Aust. Symposium on the Geology of Bass Strait and Environs, Melbourne, November, 1975. Esso Aust. Ltd. Palaeo. Rept. 1975/17 (unpubl.).
- PARTRIDGE, A.D., 1976. The geological expression of eustacy in the early Tertiary of the Gippsland Basin. *APEA J. 16* (1), 73-79.
- PARTRIDGE, A.D., 1994. Palynological analysis of sidewall cores from Blackback-3, Gippsland Basin. *Biostrata Report 1994/6*, 1-23.
- PARTRIDGE, A.D., 1995. Palynological analysis of core and cuttings near top of Latrobe in Gudgeon-1, Gippsland Basin. *Biostrata Report 1995/8*, 1-10.
- STOVER. L.E. & PARTRIDGE, A.D., 1973. Tertiary and late Cretaceous spores and pollen from the Gippsland Basin, southeastern Australia. *Proc. R. Soc. Vtct.* 85, 237-286.

Table 1: Interpretative Palynomorph Data for Gudgeon-1.

Sample	Depth Metres	Spore-Pollen Zone (Microplankton Zone)	*CR	Comments and Key Species Present
SWC 59	3012.1	P. tuberculatus (Operculodinium Superzone)		Microplankton 76%. Several specimens of spore Cyatheacidites annulatus recorded.
SWC 57	3014.0	P. tuberculatus (Operculodinium Superzone)	B2	Microplankton 78%.
SWC 52	3020.0	P. tuberculatus (Operculodinium Superzone)	B2	Microplankton 66%. Foveotriletes lacunosus and Tuberculodinium vancampoae present but possible contaminants.
SWC 48	3024.1	P. tuberculatus (Operculodinium Superzone)	B2	Microplankton 82%. Protoellipsodinium simplex 4%.
SWC 44	3030.1	P. tuberculatus (Operculodinium Superzone)	B2	Microplankton 82%. Pyxidinopsis pontus ms recorded with P. simplex at 3%.
SWC 39	3036.1	P. tuberculatus (Fromea leos)	B2	Microplankton 60%. Cyatheacidites annulatus still present.
SWC 24	3053.6	Indeterminate		Very low yield sample with all recorded palynomorphs being derived from drilling mud contamination.
SWC 23	3055.0	(T. evittii)	B2	Common Trithyrodinium evittii with very rare Palaeoperidinium pyrophorum in very low recovery sample.
SWC 22	3057.1	Indeterminate	···	Very low yield sample with only seven fossils recorded and all are likely contaminants.

*Confidence Ratings

Alpha codes: Linked to sample type

A Core

B Sidewall core

C Coal cuttings

D Ditch cuttings

E Junk basket

F Miscellaneous/unknown

G Outcrop

Numeric codes: Linked to fossil assemblage

1 Excellent confidence: High diversity assemblage recorded with key zone species.

2 Good confidence: Moderately diverse assemblage recorded with key zone species.

3 Fair confidence: Low diversity assemblage recorded with key zone species.

4 Poor confidence: Moderate to high diversity assemblage recorded without key

zone species.

5 Very low confidence: Low diversity assemblage recorded without key zone species.

BASIC DATA

Table 2: Basic Sample Data for Gudgeon-1, Gippsland Basin.

Sample Type	Depth (Metres)	Rec (cm)	Lithology	Sample Wt (g)	Residue Yield
SWC 59	3012.1	4.5	Medium grey claystone. Sample badly broken with salt efflorescence and some mud penetration. Approx. 15mm split off, poorly cleaned.	8.4	Low
SWC 57	3104.0	4.0	Light grey brittle claystone with white flecks (foraminifera?). Sample broken, approx. 10mm of sample split, moderately well cleaned.	9.5	Low
SWC 52	3020.0	4.0	Medium grey claystone. Sample broken into small pieces and powder, which could not be cleaned. Approx. 1/3 split for processing.	11.9	Low
SWC 48	3024.1	5.0	Medium grey brittle claystone. Sample partially broken and mud penetrated, poorly cleaned. Approx. 20mm split for processing.	12.9	Moderate
SWC 44	3030.1	<4.0	Light-medium grey soft claystone. Sample partially broken, minor mud penetration, moderately well cleaned. Approx. 20mm of mainly broken pieces split for processing.	10.8	Very low
SWC 39	3036.1	<4.0	Medium grey claystone. Sample broken, could not be cleaned. Approx. 1/3 split for processing.	8.8	Low
SWC 24	3053.6	>2.5	Glauconitic sandstone with approx. 50% glauconite and 5-10% disseminated pyrite including pyrite nodules. Approx. 1/2 sample split, avoiding pyrite - well cleaned.	7.8	Very low
SWC 23	3055.0	<4.0	Friable glauconitic sandstone with <20% glauconite. Sample all broken-up and could not be cleaned. Approx. 1/3 taken for processing.	13.2	Very low
SWC 22	3057.1	<2.5	Light-medium grey sandstone with clay matrix. Most of sample broken, poorly cleaned. Approx 1/2 taken for processing.	6.2	Very low

Table 3: Basic Palynomorph Data for Gudgeon-1, Gippsland Basin.

				<u> </u>	A A	
Sample Type	Depth (Metres)	Palynomorph Concentration	Palynomorph Preservation	Number S-P Species	Microplankton Abundance	Number MP Species
SWC 59	3012.1	High	Poor-good	16+	Abundant	14+
SWC 57	3104.0	Moderate	Poor-fair	17+	Abundant	13+
SWC 52	3020.0	High	Poor-good	19+	Abundant	14+
SWC 48	3024.1	High	Poor-fair	15+	Abundant	15+
SWC 44	3030.1	Moderate	Poor	12+	Abundant	13+
SWC 39	3036.1	High	Poor-good	25+	Abundant	14+
SWC 24	3053.6	Very low	Poor	1+	Rare	3+
SWC 23	3055.0	Low	Very poor-fair	12+	Moderate	9+
SWC 22	3057.1	Very low	Poor-good	5+	Rare	2+

Table 4: Species List for Gudgeon-1, Gippsland Basin.

	SWC 59	SWC 57	SWC 52	SWC 48	SWC 44	SWC 39
Species	3012.1	3014.0	3020.0	3024.1	3030.1	3036.1
SPORE-POLLEN						
Araucariacites australis	С	>15%	<5%	F	>10%	10%
Baculatisporites spp.	X	Х		Х		X
Cyatheacidites annulatus	Х	X	Х	Х	Х	8%
Cyathidites paleospora	F	Х	>5%	Х	15%	8%
Dacrycarpites australiensis					Х	
Densolsporites n.sp.		Х				Х
Dictyophyllidites arcuatus			Х			
Didecitriletes ericianus RW		X				
Dilwynites granulatus	F	<10%	<5%	F	Х	6%
Dilwynites tuberculatus				Х		
Ericipites crasslexinus			Х			
Foveotriletes lacunosus			Х			
Gleicheniidites circinidites	X		Х	X	>10%	X
Granulatisporites trisinus RW						X
Haloragacidites harrisii		5%	>5%	X	-	2%
Ischyosporites irregularis ms	X	X		Х	Х	
Laevigatosporites ovatus	X					4%
Lycopodiumsportes spp.		X				
Lygistepollenites florinii	X	X	>20%	X		4%
Malvacipollis subtilis			Х			Х
Matonisporites ornamentalis		X	X	X		X
Microcachryldites antacticus	Х					
Milfordia homeopunctatus			Х			
Myrtaceidites parvus/mesonesus	X					
Nothofagidites asperus						X
Nothofagidites brachyspinulosus				Х		4%
Nothofagidites deminutus 6	X		Х			
Nothofagidites emarcidus/heturus	A	X	>10%	>30%	>10%	33%
Nothofagidites falcatus	X					X
Nothofagidites flemingii				Х		-
Periporopellenites polyoratus					!	X
Peromonolites vellosus						X
Phyllocladidites mawsonii	c	<10%	Х		х	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Podocarpidites spp.	С	>15%	>15%		Х	6%
Podosporites microsaccatus						X
Proteacidites spp.		5%	>5%			
Pseudowinterapollis couperi					Х	

Table 4: Species List for Gudgeon-1, Gippsland Basin cont...

	SWC 59	SWC 57	SWC 52	SWC 48	SWC 44	SWC 39
Species	3012.1	3014.0	3020.0	3024.1	3030.1	3036.1
Stereisporites antiquisporites		Х	>5%			Х
Stereisporites australis						Х
Tricolpites spp.						4%
Triletes tuberculiformis				Х		Х
TOTAL SPORE-POLLEN COUNT	27	24	42	24	26	52
MICROPLANKTON undiff.	4%	3%	<2%	9%	<3%	5%
Achomosphaera alcicornu	1					Х
Achomosphaera ramulifera	2%	4%	<2%	2%	Х	6%
Apteodinium australiense	11%	X			X	
Botryococcus sp.			Х			Х
Crassosphaera concinnia	X			<1%		X
Cyclonephelium n.sp.	1	Х		11%	X	X
Dapsilidinium pseudocolligerum	5%	11%	7%	9%	>1%	
Fromea leos ms						4%
Hystrichokolpoma rigaudae	12%		3%	<1%	2%	
Impagidinium spp.		Х		Х	1%	
Lejeunecysta sp.						X
Lingulodinium machaerophorum	<1%	Х	3%	<1%	6%	<2%
Lingulodinium solarum			Х	Х	Х	
Nematosphaeropsis balcombiana	X	1.5%	4%	1%		X
Nematosphaeropsis rhizoma ms	4%	6%	Х	1%		<2%
Operculodinium centrocarpum	11%	11%	16%	6%	62%	21%
Protoellipsodinium clavatus ms	X					
Protoellipsodinium simplex ms.	<3%			4%	3%	
Pyxidinopsis pontus ms					Х	
Selemophemphix nephroides						X
Spiniferites spp.	46%	59%	62%	54%	21%	55%
Systematophora placacantha				<1%		
Tectatodinium scabroellipticus ms	<3%	X	Х			
Tectatodinium spp.		Х	X			Х
Tuberculodinium vancampoae			Х			
TOTAL MICROPLANKTON COUNT	114	123	128	139	162	108
OTHER PALYNOMORPHS						
Fungal spores & hyphae	1%		3%			
Microforaminiferal liners	5%		8%			Х
Scolecodonts	1%		<1%		Х	
TOTAL COUNT	149	157	192	169	198	179

RELINQUISHMENT LIST - PALYNOLOGY SLIDES

WELL NAME & NO:

GUDGEON-1

PREPARED BY:

A.D. PARTRIDGE

DATE:

30 MAY 1995

Sheet 1 of 1

		OO WHILL I	
SAMPLE TYPE	DEPTH (M)	CATALOGUE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
SWC 59	3012.1	P196688	Kerogen slide filtered/unfiltered fractions
SWC 59	3012.1	P196689	Oxidised slide 2 - 1/2 cover slip
SWC 57	3014.0	P196690	Kerogen slide filtered/unfiltered fractions
SWC 57	3014.0	P196691	Oxidised slide 2 - 1/2 cover slip
SWC 52	3020.0	P196692	Kerogen slide filtered/unfiltered fractions
SWC 52	3020.0	P196693	Oxidised slide 2 - 1/2 cover slip
SWC 48	3024.1	P196694	Kerogen slide filtered/unfiltered fractions
SWC 48	3024.1	P196695	Oxidised slide 2
SWC 48	3024.1	P196696	Oxidised slide 3
SWC 44	3030.1	P196697	Kerogen slide filtered/unfiltered fractions
SWC 39	3036.1	P196698	Kerogen slide filtered/unfiltered fractions
SWC 39	3036.1	P196699	Oxidised slide 2
SWC 24	3053.6	P196700	Kerogen slide filtered/unfiltered fractions
SWC 24	3053.6	P196701	Oxidised slide 2 - 1/2 cover slip
SWC 23	3055.0	P196702	Kerogen slide filtered/unfiltered fractions
SWC 22	3057.1	P196703	Kerogen slide filtered fraction - 1/2 cover slip