MALACOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE OYSTERS _CRASSOSTREA GRYPOIDES_ (SCHLOTHEIM) AND _CRASSOSTREA MADRASENSIS_ PRESTON.

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The differences in malacological characters between _Crassostrea gryphoides_ (Schlotheim) and _C. madrasensis_ Preston are tabulated. In many characters _C. gryphoides_ is closer to _C. vergiae_ Gmelin.

The author has reported the distinguishing conchological characters in the two backwater oysters of India viz., _Crassostrea gryphoides_ (Schlotheim) and _C. madrasensis_ Preston (Durve, 1967). These oysters were earlier synonymized by Hornell (1918, 1921, 1949 and 1951), Annandale and Kemp (1916) and Patil (1954). Kundu (1965) probably collected _C. gryphoides_ the common oyster of Okha but reported it as _O. (C.) madrasensis_ (Refer Durve, 1967). In the present study, samples of _C. gryphoides_ and _C. madrasensis_ were examined for their malacological characters and the differences found are reported below.

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<th><strong>C. gryphoides</strong></th>
<th><strong>C. madrasensis</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Adductor muscle roundish, bean-shaped, rarely oblong and elliptical.</td>
<td>Adductor muscle elliptical or oblong.</td>
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<td>Mantle pigmented black</td>
<td>Mantle without or with slight pigmentation.</td>
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<td>Pigmentation of the mantle pronounced on the edge of the outer and inner lobes. The Pigmentation also extends on the surface of the inner lobe.</td>
<td>Pigmentation if present, is mainly on the middle and inner lobes. It does not or rarely extends on the surface of the inner lobe.</td>
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<td>Anal portion of the rectum 1 to 2 mm in length and markedly directed outwards</td>
<td>Anal portion of the rectum ½ to 1 mm in length and slightly directed outwards.</td>
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<td>The anal tip is simple, at times slightly funnel-shaped</td>
<td>The anal tip with variously folded collar.</td>
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Anal opening situated at the corner of the posterior and ventral margins of the adductor muscle.

These malacological differences further separate the two backwater oysters of India viz., \textit{C. gryphoides} and \textit{C. madrasensis} into two distinct species. It is interesting to note here that many of the malacological characters of \textit{C. gryphoides} come much closer to those of \textit{C. virginica} (Durve, 1973).

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