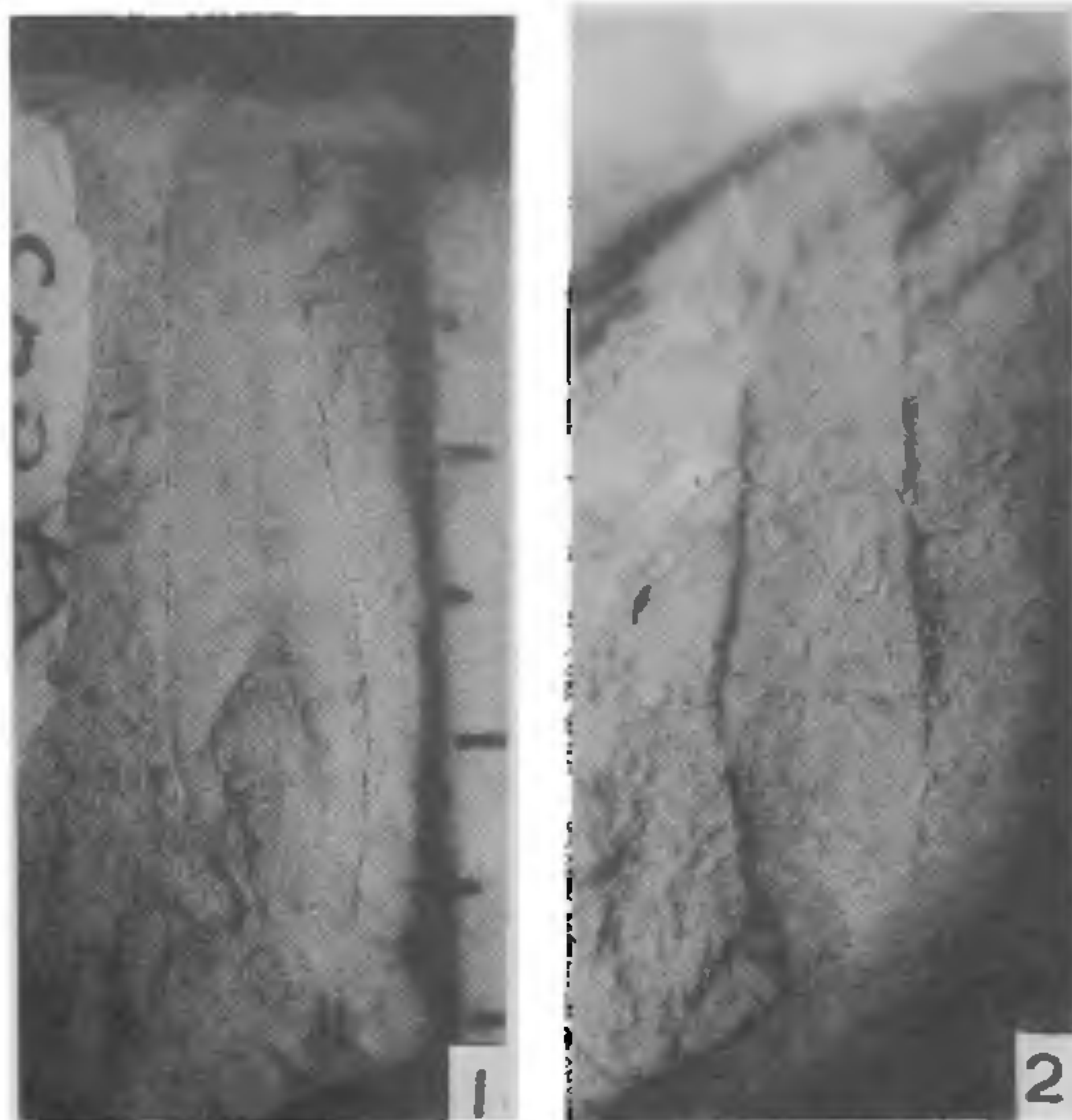


Occurrence of *Pityospermum* Nathorst in the Sriperumbudur Formation, Tamil Nadu

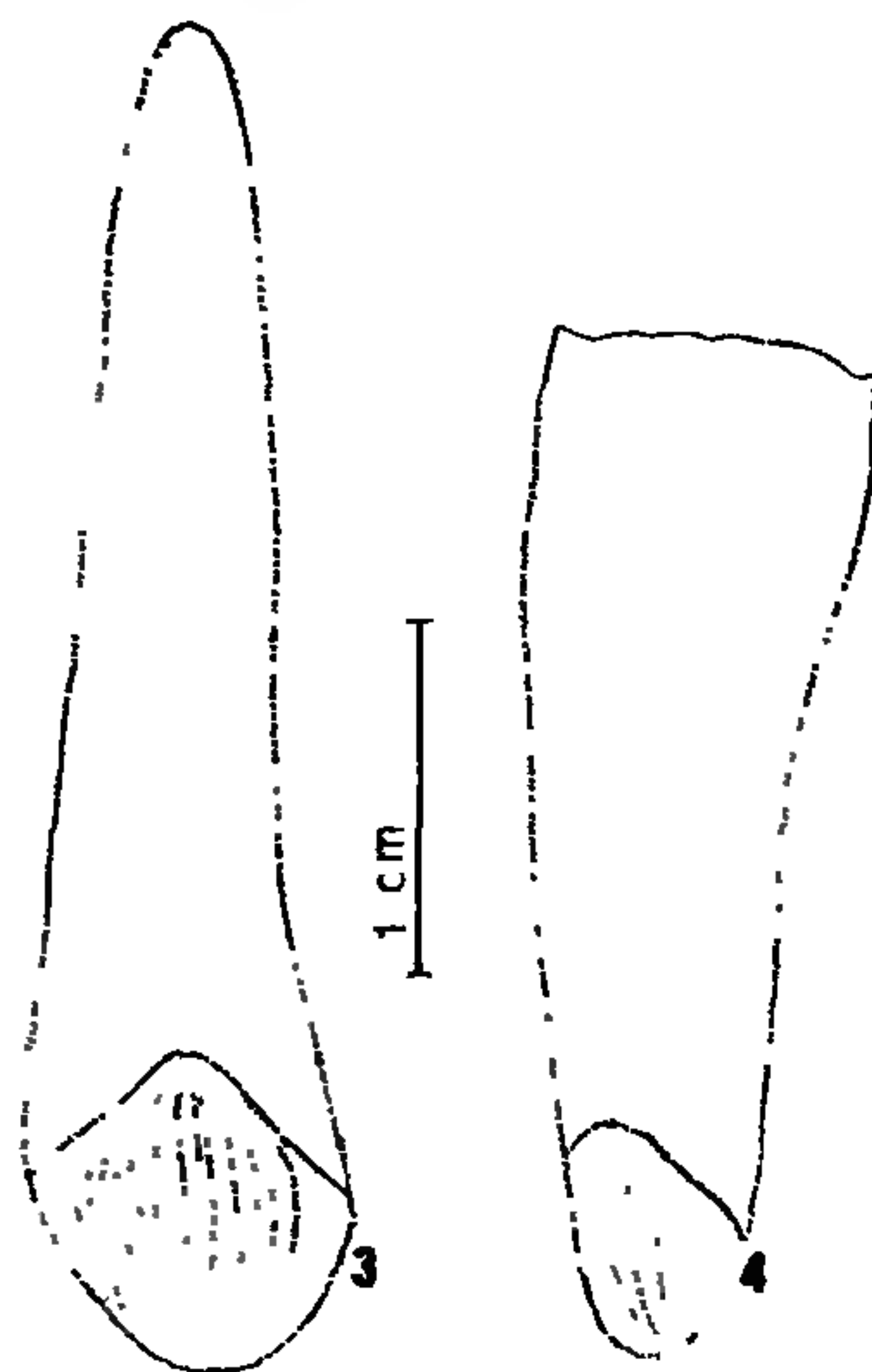
On a collection trip to the village Vadagal, located near the village Vallakottai along the road running between Sriperumbudur and Singaperumal Koil in Chengai M. G. R. district, Tamil Nadu, India, two impressions with counterparts were collected. Similar impressions had also been collected from Vallakottai earlier. The impressions are on buff-coloured argillaceous soft shales recovered from a recently dug water well. The impressions are devoid of any venation that precludes the possibility of their being detached leaflets of cycadophyte or coniferalean foliage. At one end of the impressions there is a convex structure which appears concave in the counterparts. These compare well with winged coniferalean *Pityospermum* Nathorst seeds of abietaceous affinity.

The holotype, SPR/VGL/187 B (Figure 1) and its counterpart SPR/VGL/187 A (Figure 2) is a 3 cm long narrow elliptical impression with 10 mm long seed with a body at one end. The wing is 7 mm broad at the widest region above the seed body and gradually tapers to 5 mm at the tip, which is blunt. The isotype SPR/VGL/199 B (Figure 3) and its counterpart SPR/VGL/199 A, also show a complete winged seed, though the seed body is not as distinct as in the holotype. Specimen SPR/VKT/142 (Figure 4) without a counterpart, shows an incomplete impression, wherein the upper part of the wing is not preserved.

Three species of *Pityospermum*, viz. *P. lundgreni* Nathorst, *P. nilssoni* Nathorst and *P. nanseni* Nathorst are listed by Seward¹. Of these, *P. lundgreni* and *P. nanseni* are small seeds about 12 mm long, whereas *P. nilssoni* is described as possessing a wing length of 2.7 cm. As Nathorst's original publication is not available, further comparison between the present specimens and the ones reported by Nathorst is not feasible at this stage. However, it is interesting to record the occurrence of *Pityospermum*, from the



Figures 1 and 2. 1, *Pityospermum*: Specimen no. SPR/VGL 187 B (×); 2, Counterpart of figure 1, SPR/VGL 187 A (×).



Figures 3 and 4. 3, *Pityospermum*. Specimen no. SPR/VGL 199 B, camera lucida sketch; 4, An incomplete specimen no. SPR/VKT 142, camera lucida sketch.

Sriperumbudur sediments which form part of the early Cretaceous outcrops along the East Coast. It is noteworthy that there are no reports of such winged seeds from any of the Upper Gondwana localities in the Indian subcontinent so far².

1. Seward, A. C., *Fossil Plants*, 1919, vol IV, pp. 396-398.

2. Venkatachala, B. S. and Rajanikanth, A., *Palaeobotanist*, 1987, 36, 183-196.

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