rangiophore length (85 μm), zoospore diameter (7.8 ± 1.1 μm; n = 80) and flagellum length (27.33 ± 1.1 μm; n = 30) compared with the UK isolate may probably lead to the possibility of existence of an altogether new *Cyllamyces* sp. in India. The answer lies in molecular characterization studies of the Indian isolates[7], which are under progress.

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Ostracod fauna from the non-marine Inter-trappean bed of Mohgaon-Haveli, Chhindwara District, Madhya Pradesh

This correspondence records a rich and interesting ostracod assemblage from the non-marine Inter-trappean sedimentary bed associated with Deccan basalt (Late Cretaceous, Maastrichtian) exposed in a well, under excavation near Mohgaon-Haveli (21°38′15″N; 78°44′15″E) near Singpur, Sausar Taluka (Tehsil), Chhindwara District, Madhya Pradesh (MP). The fossiliferous locality is about 10 km west of Sausar town on the Nagpur–Chhindwara road (Figure 1). The sedimentary bed comprises about 1.5 m thick, green fossiliferous clay, interbedded in basalts at about 6 m below the surface (Figure 2). The well did not touch the groundwater table, which enabled one of us (M.L.N.) to descend into it and collect three samples from near the base, middle and top of the sedimentary bed. The sample (M/1) from the basal part yielded abundant ostracods, which were rare in the other two samples (M/2–3) from the middle and upper parts. In all, 16 species were recorded from these samples.

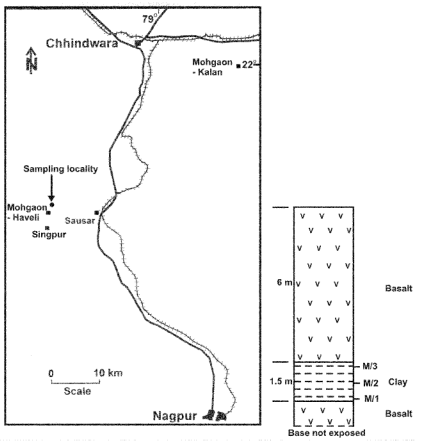

Figure 1. Location map of Mohgaon-Haveli and the well section studied.

The Inter-trappean beds of Sausar Taluka are familiar to the scientific community for their plant fossils[1–3]. Recently, Samant *et al.*[4] have recorded Maastrichtian palynomorph assemblage from the Inter-trappean beds of Singpur. As far as is known to the authors, there is no reported work on ostracods from the Inter-trappean beds in this area. However, from a distant locality 0.5 km west of Mohagaonkala (Mohgaon-Kalan) (22°1′N; 79°11′E), also in Chhindwara District, Whatley *et al.*[5] have described nine species from the Inter-trappean beds from a spoil heap, produced by digging of an unlined well. Three of these species, viz. *Gomphocythere paucisulcatus*, *Cypridopsis elachistos* and *Zonocypris labyrinthicos* were new. The other recorded species are: *Cypria cyrtonidion* Whatley and Bajpai, *Eucypris intervolcanus* Whatley and Bajpai, *Eucypris pelasgicos* Whatley and Bajpai, *Frambocythere tumiensis lakshmiae* Whatley and Bajpai, *Mongolianella* sp. and *Paracypretta bhatiai* (Khosla and Sahni).

Of the 16 ostracod species recorded from Mohgaon-Haveli, ten have been assigned to previously described taxa. These are: *Darwinula torpedo* Whatley *et al.*,

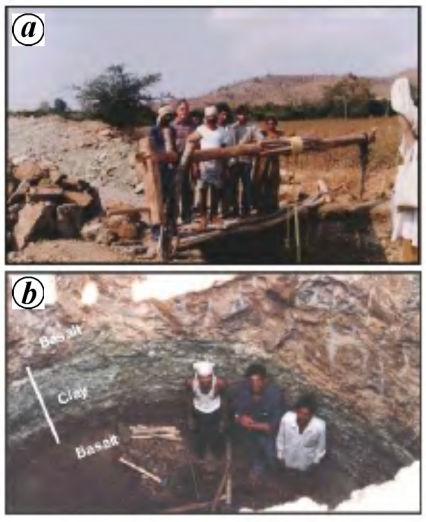

Figure 2. Field photographs of Inter-trappean bed in a well near Mohgaon-Haveli, Sausar Taluka, Chhindwara District. ***a***, Generalized view of the well. ***b***, Close-up view of Inter-trappean bed.

Limnocythere bhatiai Bajpai *et al.*, *Frambocythere tumiensis anjarensis* Bhandari and Colin, *Paracypretta jonesi* Bhatia and Rana, *Zonocypris gujaratensis* Bhandari and Colin, *Zonocypris spirula* Whatley and Bajpai, *Paracandona firmamentum* Whatley and Bajpai, *Cyclocypris amphibolos* Whatley *et al.*, *Cypria cyrtonidion* Whatley and Bajpai, and *Cyprois rostellum* Whatley and Bajpai. Six species are left in open nomenclature: *Cypridopsis* sp. A, *Cypridopsis* sp. B, *Eucypris* sp. A, *Eucypris* sp. B, *Eucypris* sp. C and *Limnocythere* sp. These ostracods are associated with abundant charophytic flora and rare fish teeth.

The ostracod fauna of Mohgaon-Haveli shows affinity to the ostracod assemblages recorded from the Inter-trappean beds of Anjar[6,7], Lakshmipur[8] and Kora[9], all in Kachchh District, Gujarat; Takli, Nagpur, Maharashtra[10,11]; Chandarki and Yanagundi, Gulbarga District, Karnataka[12]; Mamoni, Kota District, Rajasthan[13]; Mohgaokala, Chhindwara District[5] and Phulsagar, Mandla District, MP[14].

The non-marine Inter-trappean beds of Peninsular India have been by and large assigned a Late Cretaceous, Maastrichtian age based on localities whose absolute age is known from radiometric dates obtained on the basalt flows that constrain them. Most modern studies on the age of the Deccan Traps, based on radiometric analyses, indicate that the volcanic activity was initiated during the Maastrichtian, at about 68 My and ceased during the early Palaeocene at around 60 My, with the major pulse at 65 My[15–18].

So far as palaeoecology of the ostracod fauna recorded from Mohgaon-Haveli is concerned, except for the genera *Eucypris* and *Cyprois*, which are indicative of temporary pool environment, all other genera, viz. *Limnocythere*, *Frambocythere*, *Cypria*, *Cypridopsis*, *Cyclocypris*, *Paracypretta*, *Zonocypris*, *Darwinula* and *Paracandona* are suggestive of existence of permanent pond waters during deposition of Inter-trappean bed at Mohgaon-Haveli.

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Parkia Powder Agar – A new medium for fungal culture

Parkia biglandulosa Weight & Arn. (subfamily Mimosoideae and family Leguminosae) is a tree species distributed in tropical regions of South America, Asia and Africa[1,2]. In India, it is found in parks and as avenue trees. Pods attain maturity during March to May and hang from the peduncle in clusters. The pods produce a creamy-white powder with flour-like texture. Experiments were conducted to test the ability of the powder to serve as nutritive source in microbiological media and its suitability to culture fungi. The results revealed that the powder supported fungal growth. A new medium was formulated and named as *Parkia* Powder Agar (PPA) and reported here.

Ten mature and dried pods collected from Mangalore, Goa and Gulbarga University campuses were surface-cleaned by swabbing with cotton dipped in alcohol. Pods were gently opened and using a clean brush, the powder was harvested onto a petri plate. The quantity of powder harvested per pod was 3.5 g from Mangalore followed by 1.3 and 1.0 g in Goa and Gulbarga respectively. The powder as well as the pods emitted a characteristic odour. Total carbohydrate and protein content of pooled powder sample was estimated using the method of Anthrone[3] and Lowry[4], respectively. Concentration of carbohydrate was 80 to 85 g/100 g of powder and that of protein was 5.3 g/100 g.

Twenty grams of *Parkia* pod powder was mixed well with distilled water by stirring in a beaker under constant heating. After the powder was mixed well, 20 g of agar–agar was added. Stirring and heating continued till the solution became homogenous. Final volume of the solution was made up to 1000 ml. pH