

— Shell disease in the gold lip pearl oyster, —



A description is provided of the anomalous conchiolin deposits which are formed by *Pinctada maxima* and which are associated with unusual mortalities. Comparisons are made with brown ring disease found in *Ruditapes philippinarum* and juvenile *Crassostrea virginica*. In *P. maxima*, the deposits are not organized into a ring but rather are broad-based and result in retraction of the mantle with the deposits lying outside the edge of the mantle. *Vibrio* sp. have been implicated in causing the diseases of *P. maxima* and *R. philippinarum* whereas the etiological agent of the disease in *C. virginica* is unknown. It is suggested that the coccoid bodies formed in the mantle of *C. virginica*, but not in affected *P. maxima* and *R. philippinarum*, are sequestered portions of cytoplasm formed as a result autophagocytosis. Stimuli which could be responsible for inducing sequestration are discussed. The ultrastructure of the presumptive autophagosomes is described and compared to similar bodies found in *C. gigas* infected with a herpes-like virus.

Auteurs du document : Frank O. Perkins

Obtenir le document : EDP Sciences

Mots clés : shell disease, conchiolin, ultrastructure, light microscopy, maladie de la coquille, conchioline, ultrastructure, microscopie optique

Thème (issu du Text Mining) : SANTE - HYGIENE - MICROORGANISME PATHOGENE

Date : 1996-04-15

Format : text/xml

Source : <https://doi.org/10.1051/alr:1996019>

Langue : Anglais

Télécharger les documents : <https://www.alr-journal.org/10.1051/alr:1996019/pdf>

Permalien : <https://www.documentation.eauetbiodiversite.fr/notice/shell-disease-in-the-gold-lip-pearl-oyster0>

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