

Table 2. CORRELATION BETWEEN COLONIAL MORPHOLOGY AND POLY- β -HYDROXYBUTYRIC ACID CONTENT IN *Pseudomonas solanacearum*

Strain	Colony type	Fluidal (smooth)			Non-fluidal (rough)		
	Age of cultures (hr.)	Cell dry weight (mgm./plate)	Polymer (mgm./plate)	Percentage polymer in cell (dry weight)	Cell dry weight (mgm./plate)	Polymer (mgm./plate)	Percentage polymer in cell (dry weight)
F2 (from tomato)	24	16.3	3.3	20.2	23.0	3.0	13.0
	48	40.0	14.3	35.7	29.5	8.5	28.8
	72	40.7	19.3	47.4	30.5	8.8	28.9
RE (from banana)	36	17.3	4.0	23.1	21.0	3.3	15.7
	60	32.8	13.0	39.6	28.3	7.5	26.5
	84	37.1	18.0	48.5	28.8	7.0	24.3

Poly- β -hydroxybutyric acid was extracted with chloroform from the acetone-dried cells obtained from the surface of three or four 20-ml. quantities of solid medium in 9 cm. diameter Petri dishes inoculated over the whole surface. Incubation temperature, 30° C. Concentration of sucrose in medium, about 20 mgm./ml. (see text for complete composition).

The following medium was found to be satisfactory for detection of poly- β -hydroxybutyric acid and observation of colony variants in *P. solanacearum* (amounts in gm./litre of distilled water): sucrose (B.D.H., Ltd., laboratory reagent), 20.0; peptone (Oxo, Ltd., London), 5.0; dipotassium hydrogen phosphate, 0.5; crystalline magnesium sulphate, 0.25; agar powder (Davis), 20.0, pH adjusted to 7.2-7.4 with 40 per cent sodium hydroxide, autoclaved at 15 lb. pressure for 20 min.

In systematic bacteriology detection of poly- β -hydroxybutyric acid has proved to be a valuable ancillary test; in plant pathology there may also be applications. The milky exudate from the infected vascular bundles of potato, tomato, and banana, from which almost pure cultures of *P. solanacearum* have since been obtained, has been shown to be intensely sudanophilic. The technique may prove useful, for example, in differentiating in plant tissue the three bacterial pathogens of potato: *P. solanacearum* causing brown rot, *Erwinia carotovora* var. *atroseptica* causing blackleg, and *Corynebacterium sepedonicum* causing ring rot, and possibly in the field diagnosis of other diseases.

Previous work has shown that poly- β -hydroxybutyrate inclusions are not formed in representative species of several genera of the Enterobacteriaceae, to which in the present work the genus *Erwinia* is added^{2,10}. The absence of the polymer from all but one strain of one species of *Agrobacterium* contrasts with *Rhizobium*, in which massive inclusions are formed both in culture and in the bacteroids of root nodules^{3,9}.

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True's Beaked Whale from the South-East Coast of South Africa

Mesoplodon mirus True, True's beaked whale, is known from fourteen stranded specimens from the shores of the North Atlantic, the most northerly specimen being from the Outer Hebrides and the most southerly from Florida¹. On May 21, 1959, a 17 ft. 6 in. beaked whale was washed up at Wilderness, 170 miles eastwards along the coast from Cape Agulhas, the southernmost tip of Africa. The skeleton of this whale was saved from the axes of the health authority's disposal squad by Mr. B. L. Cairncross, a local naturalist, and presented to the South African Museum. This whale proves to be an adult male True's whale. Dr. F. C. Fraser has kindly compared photographs of this specimen with the example of True's whale in the British Museum (Natural History), and confirms this identification, stating, however, that the lower jaw of the South African specimen appears deeper and more massive than the British Museum example.

Moore and Wood¹ have regarded this species as primarily a western Atlantic species, occurring north of latitude 35° N., and consider the single Florida specimen (latitude 29° 28' N.) reported by them as probably a stray carried southward of its normal range by the south-flowing current inshore of the Gulf Stream. The finding of the present specimen in the Indian Ocean greatly extends the range of the species, possibly indicating a southern variety. It also shows, however, that the beaked whales are so little known, particularly in areas where coast lines are very poorly covered for strandings as is the case over most of the Indian Ocean, that any generalizing as to distribution is really guesswork at present.

This specimen will be fully described and figured elsewhere.

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A Bivalve Gastropod

IN *Nature* of March 12, p. 749, Drs. L. R. Cox and W. J. Rees reviewed a paper by the Japanese authors Kawaguti and Baba on a bivalved gastropod they had described under the generic name *Tamanovalva*. I should like to put on record a further occurrence of this remarkable group of molluscs. A single left valve (now in the Stanford University Collection, California) of what is probably a new species, with the