

A NEW FIND OF THE ICHNOFOSSIL PHAGOPHYTICHNUS EKOWSKII VAN AMEROM

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ABSTRACT

The ichnofossil *Phagophytichnus ekowskii* Van Amerom, known to occur in the Upper Carboniferous of Spain and in the Permo-Carboniferous of South Africa, is described for the first time from the Westphalian C of Northern France.

During a fieldtrip to Northern France in May 1969, a *Paripteris*-leaf was found by the second author, showing strange defects at the edges, which can not easily be attributed to mechanical causes (see fig. 1). These defects can be described as follows:

DESCRIPTION

They consist of semicircular excisions, cutting into the leaf edges. Along the border of these areas a pronounced thickened ridge can be distinguished. The specimen shows at least two such clearly defined excisions at the base of the pinnule. The top of the pinnule seems to be missing, apparently damaged during the process of fossilization.

DISCUSSION

This description seems to correspond well to the definition of the tracefossil *Phagophytichnus ekowskii*.

kii Van Amerom, which is known from the Upper Carboniferous of Spain and from the Permo-Carboniferous of South Africa. In the present note *Phagophytichnus ekowskii* is reported from the Westphalian C of Northern France. This find is therefore the second in Europe and is of some importance with regard to its occurrence.

The diagnosis and the motivation of the specific designation of the pinnule, is as follows:

Length of the pinnule over 22 mm with a maximum width of 12 mm. The lateral edges are virtually parallel. The basis, although partially preserved, is pedicellate. The venation shows a midvein, reaching halfway up the fragment and giving off secondary veins at an acute angle. The secondary veins dichotomize several times in their arcuate course towards the margin. Their angle with the margin is almost perpendicular.

Up to the present time 16 species with neuropteroid pinnules have been described from the Westphalian C of Northern France (Laveine, 1967, p. 299, tab. B). Of these species *Paripteris pseudogigantea* H. Potonié strikingly resembles the present specimen (compare Laveine, 1967, textfig. 43^b and pl. 74, fig. 2), and this is therefore considered to be identical.

The holotype of *Phagophytichnus ekowskii* has been found on a leaf of *Neuropteris praedentata* Gothan from Spain, whereas the South African specimens are observed on *Glossopteris*-leaves. Is it coincidence that the new find again occurs on Pteridospermean leaves or is a certain preference for this kind of plants demonstrated?

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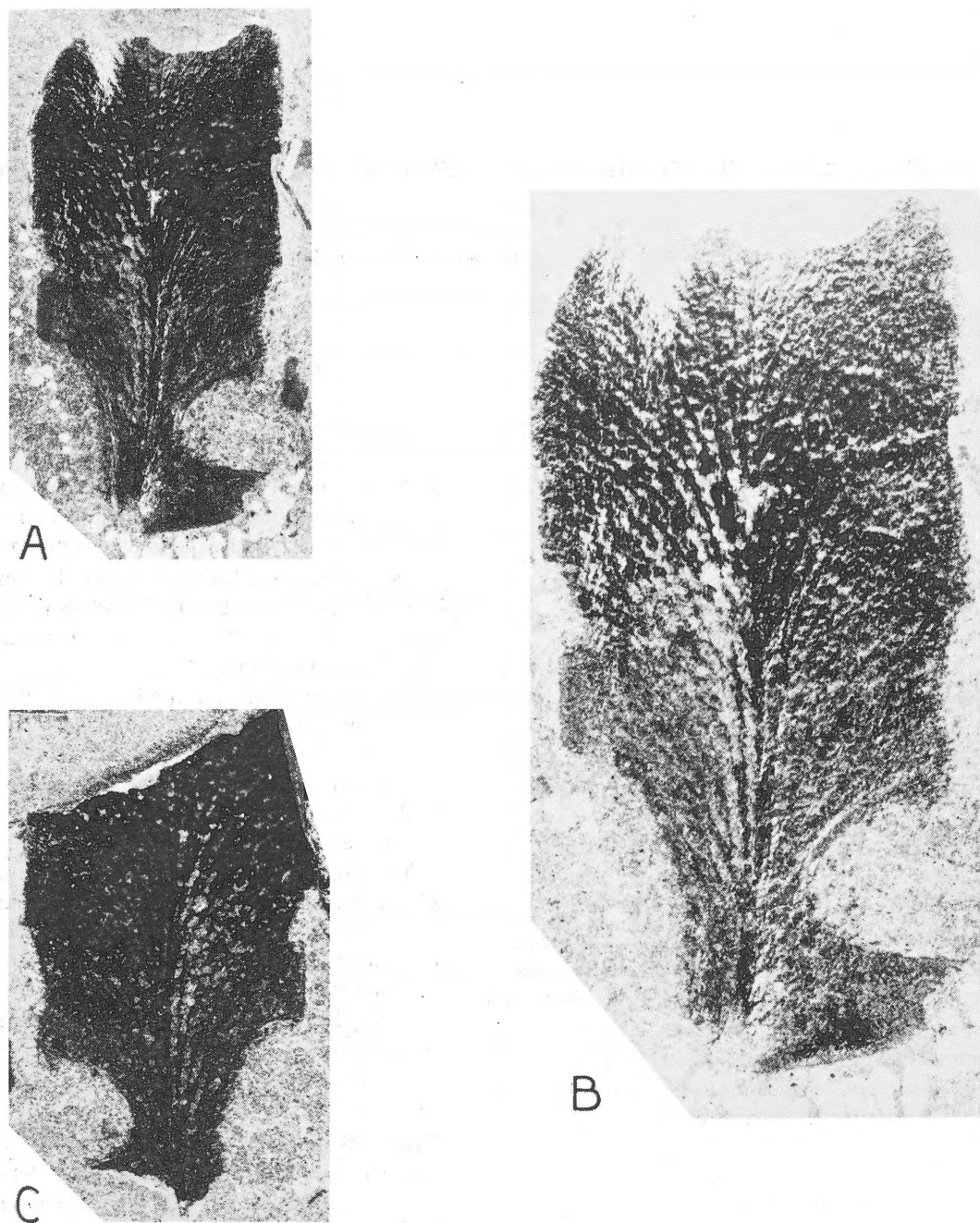


Fig. 1

Phagophytichnus ekowskii Van Amerom, on a leaf of *Paripteris pseudo-gigantea* H. Potonié. A. Specimen enlarged 3X. B. The same as A enlarged 5X, thickened ridge visible. C. Counterpart of A, enlarged about 3X.

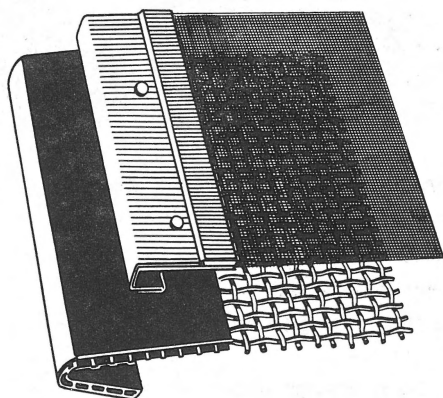
OCCURRENCE

The present specimen has been found on a spoil tip of two coalmines (Méricourt, Siège 4 and 5) north east of Arras (Northern France). According to Messrs. Dr. J. Chalard and L. Dussart of the "Service Géologique, Houillères du Bassin du Nord et du Pas-de-Calais (oral communication) the specimen comes from the Assise de Bruay (= Westphalian C). The specimen is kept in the collection of the Palaeobotanical Department of the Botanical Museum and Herbarium, State University of Utrecht, The Netherlands.

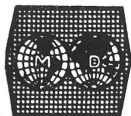
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