

## Widespread occurrence of two carbon fixation pathways in tubeworm endosymbionts: lessons from hydrothermal vent associated tubeworms from the Mediterranean Sea

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2           **tubeworm endosymbionts: lessons from hydrothermal vent**  
3           **associated tubeworms from the Mediterranean Sea**

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27 Running title: carbon fixation in tubeworm endosymbionts

28

29 **ABSTRACT**

30 Vestimentiferan tubeworms (siboglinid polychaetes) of the genus *Lamellibrachia* are common  
31 members of cold-seep faunal communities and have also been found at sedimented hydrothermal  
32 vent sites in the Pacific. As they lack a digestive system, they are nourished by chemoautotrophic  
33 bacterial endosymbionts growing in a specialized tissue called the trophosome. Here we present  
34 the results of investigations of tubeworms and endosymbionts from a shallow hydrothermal vent  
35 field in the Western Mediterranean Sea. The tubeworms, which are the first reported vent-  
36 associated tubeworms outside the Pacific, are identified as *Lamellibrachia anaximandri* using  
37 mitochondrial ribosomal and cytochrome oxidase I (COI) gene sequences. They harbor a single  
38 gammaproteobacterial endosymbiont. Carbon isotopic data, as well as the analysis of genes  
39 involved in carbon and sulfur metabolism indicate a sulfide-oxidizing chemoautotrophic  
40 endosymbiont. The detection of a hydrogenase gene fragment suggests the potential for  
41 hydrogen oxidation as alternative energy source. Surprisingly, the endosymbiont harbors genes  
42 for two different carbon fixation pathways, the Calvin-Benson-Bassham (CBB) cycle as well as  
43 the reductive tricarboxylic acid (rTCA) cycle, as has been reported for the endosymbiont of the  
44 vent tubeworm *Riftia pachyptila*. In addition to RubisCO genes we detected ATP citrate lyase  
45 (ACL – the key enzyme of the rTCA cycle) type II gene sequences using newly designed primer  
46 sets. Comparative investigations with additional tubeworm species (*Lamellibrachia luymesii*,  
47 *Lamellibrachia* sp. 1, *Lamellibrachia* sp. 2, *Escarpiella laminata*, *Seepiophila jonesi*) from multiple  
48 cold seep sites in the Gulf of Mexico revealed the presence of *acl* genes in these species as well.  
49 Thus, our study suggests that the presence of two different carbon fixation pathways, the CBB  
50 cycle and the rTCA cycle, is not restricted to the *Riftia* endosymbiont, but rather might be  
51 common in vestimentiferan tubeworm endosymbionts, regardless of the habitat.

52

53 **INTRODUCTION**

54 Vestimentiferan tubeworms are often dominant members of chemosynthetic communities  
55 present at reduced environments such as hydrothermal vents and cold seeps (Vrijenhoek, 2010).  
56 So far, hydrothermal vent-associated tubeworms have not been found outside the Pacific. In  
57 contrast, seep-associated tubeworms have been found in the Gulf of Mexico (GoM), the  
58 Mediterranean Sea and the margins of the Atlantic Ocean (Cordes et al., 2009; Vrijenhoek,  
59 2010).

60 The Mediterranean Sea is the world's largest enclosed sea, and represents a hot spot of  
61 biodiversity with a considerable number of endemic species (Myers et al., 2000). Its only  
62 connection to the Atlantic Ocean is the narrow and shallow Strait of Gibraltar, which is the sole  
63 route for exchange of propagules between these two water bodies. The only vestimentiferan  
64 tubeworms documented to date in the Mediterranean Sea belong to the genus *Lamellibrachia* and  
65 specimens from several Mediterranean mud volcanoes were recently described as the new  
66 species *Lamellibrachia anaximandri* (Southward et al., 2011). The genus *Lamellibrachia* has a  
67 worldwide distribution, and occurs in several types of chemosynthetic environments from the  
68 shallow to the deep sea (e.g. Kojima et al., 2002). Within the Mediterranean Sea, *Lamellibrachia*  
69 spp. have been discovered in the vicinity of mud volcanoes in the Alboran Sea at 572 m depth  
70 (Hilário et al., 2011), from several mud volcanoes in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea at a depth of  
71 about 3,000 m (Olu-Le Roy et al., 2004; Bayon et al., 2009; Duperron et al., 2009; Southward et  
72 al., 2011) and also from two sunken ship wrecks in the Eastern and Western Mediterranean  
73 (Hughes and Crawford, 2008; Gambi et al., 2011) (Figure 1).

74 Hydrocarbon seep communities in the Gulf of Mexico (GoM) were among the first seep  
75 communities to be discovered, are extensively studied, and have a high diversity of tubeworm  
76 species (Kennicutt et al., 1985; Miglietta et al., 2010). The Louisiana Slope in the northern GoM  
77 area extends from the continental shelf to the salt deformation edge of the Sigsbee Escarpment,  
78 and ranges from about 300 to 3,000 m in depth. This area is home to at least six known  
79 morphospecies of vestimentiferan tubeworms (Miglietta et al., 2010), including the most  
80 commonly studied seep tubeworms, *Lamellibrachi luymesii* (van der Land and Nørrevang, 1975)  
81 and *Seepiophila jonesii* (Gardiner et al., 2001).

82 In contrast to the well-known hydrothermal vent tubeworm *Riftia pachyptila*, which inhabits  
83 hard substrate in hot sulfidic environments, members of the genus *Lamellibrachia* live in  
84 sedimented areas and are most common in cold seep environments. Seep habitats are generally  
85 much less dynamic than vent habitats and may be stable for centuries (Fisher et al., 1997).  
86 Compared to vent environments, emanating seep fluids are cooler, often enriched in methane and  
87 concentrations of dissolved sulfide may be quite low (Southward et al., 2011). *Lamellibrachia*  
88 tubeworms can obtain sulfide from the underlying sediments using the buried, permeable  
89 posterior region of the tube termed the "root" (Julian et al., 1999; Freytag et al., 2001). Since  
90 *Lamellibrachia*, like other siboglinid polychaetes, lack a digestive tract, they are dependent on

91 their endosymbionts for nutrition. Sulfide is transported via hemoglobin molecules in the blood  
92 to the trophosome, a large organ that harbors dense populations of gammaproteobacterial  
93 endosymbionts (reviewed by Childress and Fisher, 1992). These endosymbionts oxidize the  
94 sulfide to obtain energy and reducing power for autotrophic carbon fixation. A portion of the  
95 synthesized organic matter serves in turn as energy source for the host tubeworm (Bright et al.,  
96 2000; Stewart and Cavanaugh 2006). *Lamellibrachia* spp. are not only found at cold seeps, but  
97 also at sediment covered hydrothermal sites, e.g. *Lamellibrachia barhami* along the Juan de Fuca  
98 Ridge (Juniper et al., 1992), *Lamellibrachia columna* near hydrothermal vents in the Lau Basin  
99 in the southwest Pacific (Southward, 1991) and *Lamellibrachia satsuma* at hydrothermal sites off  
100 southern Japan (Miake et al., 2006). Even though the so-called “vent” and “seep” tubeworm  
101 genera are clearly specialized for their preferred *in situ* conditions, they have been found at the  
102 same site, sometimes occurring only meters apart e.g., the seep tubeworm *L. barhami* and the  
103 vent species *Ridgeia piscesae* at Middle Valley in 2,400 m depth in the northeast Pacific Ocean  
104 (McMullin et al., 2003).

105 Vestimentiferan endosymbionts form a monophyletic cluster within the gammaproteobacteria.  
106 They have been shown to cover very large geographic ranges, with nearly identical 16S rRNA in  
107 hosts separated by thousands of kilometers. Within the endosymbiont cluster four different  
108 groups (one "vent"-group, three "seep"-groups) are distinguishable. So-called ‘vent’  
109 endosymbionts appear to be specific for vent vestimentiferan hosts (e.g. *Riftia*, *Tevnia*, *Ridgeia*,  
110 and *Oasisia*), while three different 16S rRNA gene clusters (groups 1-3), possibly representing  
111 different strains, were found only in ‘seep’ vestimentiferans (Nelson and Fisher, 2000; McMullin  
112 et al., 2003). Site depth has been postulated to be a factor in defining which of the three  
113 endosymbiont strains is found in a particular ‘seep’ host, with "group 3" occurring only in  
114 shallow water host specimens (McMullin et al., 2003).

115 The best-studied tubeworm endosymbiont is *Candidatus* Endoriftia persephone, the  
116 gammaproteobacterial endosymbiont of the vent-associated tubeworm *Riftia pachyptila*. Its  
117 metabolic capacities have been subject of detailed metagenomic, proteomic and enzymatic  
118 studies (Felbeck 1981; Felbeck et al., 1981; Markert et al., 2007, 2011; Robidart et al., 2008;  
119 Gardebrecht et al., 2012). *Candidatus* Endoriftia persephone is a sulfide-oxidizing  
120 chemoautotroph. Sulfide is oxidized to sulfate via sulfite and adenosine phosphosulfate (APS).  
121 The enzymes involved in the so-called APS pathway are dissimilatory sulfite reductase (DsrAB,

122 working in reverse as sulfide oxidase), APS reductase (AprAB) and ATP sulfurlyase (Markert et  
123 al., 2007, 2011). Quite surprising is the presence of two alternative carbon fixation pathways in  
124 the *Riftia* endosymbiont, the Calvin-Benson-Bassham (CBB) cycle as well as the reductive  
125 tricarboxylic acid (rTCA) cycle (Felbeck, 1981; Markert et al., 2007). Both pathways show  
126 unique features. The CBB cycle seems more energy-efficient due to modified enzyme equipment  
127 (Markert et al., 2011; Gardebrecht et al., 2012; Kleiner et al., 2012) while the rTCA cycle  
128 harbors a novel type of ATP citrate lyase (Hügler and Sievert, 2011). In contrast to the *Riftia*  
129 endosymbiont there are no genomic, proteomic or metabolomic studies of the endosymbiont(s)  
130 of *Lamellibrachia* spp..

131  
132 This study reports the recovery of vestimentiferan tubeworms from the Palinuro volcanic  
133 complex, a submarine volcano in the Tyrrhenian Sea (Western Mediterranean Sea), north of  
134 Sicily (Figure 1). The Palinuro complex is part of the active Aeolian Island Arc and consists of  
135 several volcanic edifices aligned over a strike length of 55 km (Petersen et al., 2008; Passaro et  
136 al., 2010). The volcanic complex is up to 25 km wide at its base and its shallowest portion rises  
137 from 3,000 m to a water depth of less than 100 meters. Iron and manganese-bearing precipitates  
138 were first documented at Palinuro by Kidd and Ármannson (1979) providing the first evidence  
139 for hydrothermal activity in the area. Hydrothermal sulfides were described by Minniti and  
140 Bonavia (1984) and Puchelt and Laschek (1987) within sediment sampled from the most  
141 westerly summit of Palinuro. The discovery of living vestimentiferan tubeworm colonies on top  
142 of the main volcanic edifices in this western summit in 2006 as well as temperatures of up to  
143 60°C in sediment cores recovered from the seafloor indicated that active hydrothermal venting  
144 was taking place at the time although black smoker style venting has not been observed (Petersen  
145 et al., 2008; Monecke et al., 2009). Two colonies of these tubeworms were sampled in spring  
146 2011.

147 We describe the results from detailed analyses of the Palinuro tubeworms and their  
148 endosymbionts, which are the first reported vent-associated tubeworms outside the Pacific  
149 Ocean. For comparison, several seep tubeworm species from the Gulf of Mexico were also  
150 analyzed (Figure 2), providing deeper insights into the geographic dispersal, phylogeny, and  
151 metabolic potential of tubeworms and their endosymbionts.

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## 155 **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### 156 **Sampling site, sample collection and processing of Palinuro tubeworms**

157 Vestimentiferan tubeworm specimens were retrieved from two different colonies termed colony  
158 #1 and #2 on the western summit of the Palinuro volcanic complex (Mediterranean Sea,  
159 39°32.44'N, 14°42.38'E, depth: 630 m) during the Pos412 cruise of R/V *Poseidon* in spring  
160 2011. Sampling was conducted using a Mohawk-type remotely operated vehicle (ROV) supplied  
161 by Oceaneering Inc. (Aberdeen, UK) fitted with a robotic arm. Locations of the tubeworm  
162 collections are given in Table 1.

163 The ROV was also equipped with a fluid sampling system (Kiel in situ pumping system, KIPS,  
164 Garbe-Schönberg et al., 2006) capable of acquiring four 550 mL water samples per dive with *in*  
165 *situ* filtration. Parallel to the sampling nozzle was a temperature probe attached to a data logger.  
166 Fluids and temperatures around the colonies were sampled using KIPS and the temperature  
167 probe by maneuvering the ROV's robotic arm into the fluid in close proximity to the living  
168 tubeworms. Live tubeworms were sampled using the ROV's robotic arm. Immediately after  
169 tubeworm sampling, the dive was terminated and the ROV was recovered. Upon recovery, the  
170 tubeworms obtained from colony #1 were put into sterile petri dishes using sterile tweezers  
171 followed by dissection with a sterile scalpel. The animal was then separated from the tube;  
172 subsamples were recovered from vestimentum (host tissue free of symbionts) and trophosome  
173 (endosymbiont) tissue, and then were stored at -20°C until further molecular analysis. Samples  
174 from colony #2 were immediately stored at -20°C until further processing in the home  
175 laboratory. As the tubeworms from colony #2 exhibited several morphotypes, these were stored  
176 in separate vials.

177

### 178 **Gulf of Mexico tubeworm sample collection and preparation**

179 Gulf of Mexico vestimentiferan tubeworms were sampled from hydrocarbon seep sites during  
180 several research cruises between 1997 and 2011 (Table 2, Figure 2). *Lamellibrachia luymesii* and  
181 *Seepiophila jonesi* were collected using the Johnson Sea Link submersible from two sites on the  
182 Upper Louisiana Slope from about 540 m depth. *Lamellibrachia* sp. 1 and *Lamellibrachia* sp. 2  
183 as well as *Escarpiella laminata* were collected from three sites on the Lower Louisiana Slope  
184 ranging in depth from 1,975 m to 2,604 m. While on board the research vessel, tubeworms were

185 dissected and vestimentum (host tissue free of symbionts) and trophosome (endosymbiont) tissue  
186 was preserved at -80°C or in 95% ethanol solution. All tissue samples were transported to the  
187 Pennsylvania State University where whole genomic DNA was obtained using a modified  
188 version of the high salt extraction protocol and ethanol precipitation as in Liao et al., 2007.  
189 Isolated DNA is currently stored at -80°C at the Pennsylvania State University.

190

### 191 **DNA extraction, PCR amplification, cloning and sequencing**

192 Genomic DNA was extracted from the trophosome and vestimentum tissues of the  
193 vestimentiferan tubeworms. The tubeworms were dissected and washed three times in 0.2 µm  
194 filtered seawater prior to DNA extraction. DNA of Mediterranean tubeworm samples was  
195 isolated using the MoBio Power Biofilm Kit (Mo Bio Laboratories, Carlsbad, CA, USA)  
196 according to the protocol provided. DNA of Gulf of Mexico tubeworm samples was extracted  
197 following the protocol of Liao et al. (2007). Cytochrome c oxidase I (COI) genes, mitochondrial  
198 and bacterial ribosomal (16S rRNA) genes, as well as *cbbM* and ACL type II genes were  
199 analyzed from all individuals. Further functional genes and eukaryotic ribosomal (18S rRNA)  
200 genes were analyzed from one individual of colony #1 from the Palinuro volcanic complex.

201 For all gene amplifications of Mediterranean samples PCR reactions were conducted using  
202 Ready-To-Go PCR Beads (GE Healthcare, Munich, Germany) in a total volume of 25 µL. PCR  
203 from GoM samples were conducted using 1U BioBasic TaqPolymerase (BioBasic Inc.,  
204 Markham Ontario, Canada) and 1x Thermopol Buffer (NEB Inc., USA) in a total volume of 50  
205 µL. If not stated otherwise 10 pmol of each primer and 100 ng template DNA was used. For all  
206 amplifications, initial denaturation was 2 min at 94°C, final annealing was 1 min at annealing  
207 temperature and final elongation 5 min at 72°C. For the cycles denaturation was 40 sec at 94°C,  
208 annealing duration 40 sec at the respective annealing temperature and elongation was 1 min at  
209 72°C. If not stated otherwise, 35 PCR cycles were applied. Fragments of the tubeworms' 18S  
210 rRNA and mitochondrial 16S rRNA as well as COI genes were amplified using the (i) primer  
211 pairs 5'-start (5'-GGT TGA TCC TGC CAG-3') and 1753rev (5'-GCA GGT TCA CCT ACG G-  
212 3') targeting the 18S rRNA gene (30 cycles, 50°C annealing temperature), (ii) primer pair  
213 16Sar/16Sbr (Palumbi et al., 2002) targeting the mitochondrial 16S rRNA gene (30 cycles, 50°C  
214 annealing temperature) and (iii) primers LCO 1490 (5'-GGT CAA CAA ATC ATA AAG ATA  
215 TTG G-3') and HCO 2198 (5'-TAA ACT TCA GGG TGA CCA AAA AAT CA-3') (40 cycles,



216 47°C annealing temperature (Folmer et al., 1994)) using DNA extracted from the symbiont-free  
217 vestimentum tissue. Gene fragments of the endosymbiont were amplified using DNA extracted  
218 from trophosome tissue as the template. Bacterial 16S rRNA gene fragments were amplified in a  
219 30-cycle PCR at an annealing temperature of 50°C with the general bacterial primer set 27F and  
220 1390R (Palinuro samples; 5'-GAC GGG CRG TGT GTA CAA-3') or 1492R (GoM samples)  
221 (Lane, 1991). Amplification for fragments of *dsrA* and *aprA* genes was performed using the  
222 primer sets *rdsrA240F/rdsrA403R* and *aps1F/aps4R*, respectively (Lavik et al., 2009; Meyer and  
223 Kuever, 2007b). Fragments of *soxB* were amplified using the primers *soxB432F/soxB1446B* (10  
224 cycles with 55°C annealing temperature and 25 cycles with 47°C annealing temperature (Petri et  
225 al., 2001). For the amplification of fragments of the genes coding for the large subunit of  
226 RubisCO form I and II, the primer sets *cbbLF/cbbLR* and *cbbMF/cbbMR* were used (both  
227 include two initial cycles of 2 min annealing at 37°C and 3 min elongation at 72°C, as well as  
228 additional 35 cycles of 53°C and 58°C annealing temperature for *cbbL* and *cbbM* respectively  
229 (Campbell and Cary, 2004)). A fragment of the large subunit of the putative type II ATP citrate  
230 lyase gene was amplified using the newly designed primer *acl2F1* (5'-CGT CGC CAA GGA  
231 AGA GTG GTT C-3') and *acl2R1* (5'-GGC GAT GGC CTC AAA GCC GTT-3') in a 30 cycle  
232 PCR with annealing temperatures of 45-56°C (gradient). Fragments of the hydrogen uptake  
233 hydrogenase gene *hupL* were amplified with the primer set HUPLX1/HUPLW2 (Csaki et al.,  
234 2001). A fragment of the *norCB* gene for nitric oxide reductase subunits C and B was amplified  
235 using the primer set *norC21mF* and *norB6R* (Tank, 2005) in a 35 cycle PCR using annealing  
236 temperatures of 60°C-50°C (10 touchdown cycles 60°C/-1°C, 25 cycles of 50°C).  
237 Additional primer pairs used in this study include: F2/R5 and 892F/1204R for the two subunits  
238 of ATP citrate lyase (Hügler et al., 2005; Campbell et al., 2003); MxaF1003, MxaR1555,  
239 MxaR1561 for methanol dehydrogenase gene *mxoF* (Neufeld et al., 2007; Kalyuzhnaya et al.,  
240 2008); *mmoXA/mmoXB* for genes encoding the conserved alpha-subunit of the hydroxylase  
241 component of the cytoplasmic soluble methane monooxygenase (sMMO) (Auman et al., 2000);  
242 and A189F/MB661R for the particulate methane monooxygenase (pMMO) genes present in  
243 methanotrophs (Costello and Lidstrom, 1999).  
244 All PCR products were purified via gel-extraction using QIAquick gel extraction kit (QIAGEN,  
245 Hilden, Germany) for Mediterranean samples, and BioBasic EZ-10 spin columns (BioBasic Inc.,  
246 Markham, Ontario, Canada) for GoM samples respectively, and either directly sequenced by

247 Sanger sequencing (18S rRNA gene fragments, COI and functional gene fragments) or cloned  
248 into pCR4-TOPO vectors with the TOPO-TA cloning kit (Invitrogen, Carlsbad, CA, USA) as  
249 described by the manufacturer before sequencing (16S rRNA gene fragments). Sequencing was  
250 conducted using amplification primers and additional internal primers in the case of 16S rRNA  
251 genes (342F, 534R (Muyzer et al. 1996); 790F (Thiel et al. 2007)). Amplification and sequencing  
252 of clones was conducted using vector specific primers M13 forward and M13 reverse (PCR) and  
253 T3 and T7 (sequencing), respectively. Sanger sequencing was performed using the BigDye  
254 Terminator v1.1 sequencing kit in a 3730xl DNA Analyzer (Applied Biosystems, Carlsbad, CA,  
255 USA) as specified by the manufacturer. Sequencing was conducted by the Institut für Klinische  
256 Molekularbiologie (IKMB), Universitäts-Klinikum Schleswig-Holstein (UK-SH), Kiel, Germany  
257 and the sequencing core facility at The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA,  
258 USA.

259

### 260 **Phylogenetic analysis**

261 All sequences were edited with ChromasPro c.c1.33 and compared to the NCBI database using  
262 BLAST (Altschul et al., 1997). Functional gene sequences nucleotides were also compared with  
263 the non-redundant protein sequence database using the blastx algorithm. The endosymbiont 16S  
264 rRNA gene sequences were aligned with the ARB software ([www.arb-home.de](http://www.arb-home.de)) using the ARB  
265 FastAligner utility (Ludwig et al., 2004). The sequence alignment was manually refined based on  
266 known secondary structures. Sequences of functional genes as well as mitochondrial rRNA  
267 genes were aligned using Clustal X (Thompson et al., 1997) and manually adjusted using  
268 BioEdit (Hall, 1999). Maximum-Likelihood based trees and 100 bootstrap replicates were  
269 constructed using PhyML (Guindon and Gascuel, 2003). In order to verify the tree topology,  
270 further phylogenetic analyses using Neighbor-Joining and Maximum-Parsimony algorithms were  
271 conducted using MEGA5 (Tamura et al., 2011).

272

### 273 **Microscopy**

274 The morphology of endosymbiotic bacteria in trophosome tissue of the tubeworms was  
275 examined using light microscopy and scanning electron microscopy (SEM). Samples for light  
276 microscopy were prepared by removing small pieces of tissue from different parts of the

277 trophosome and subsequent squeezing preparation in a drop of particle-free seawater and  
278 examined under 100fold magnification using a Zeiss Axiophot Epifluorescence Microscope.  
279 Samples for SEM were prepared by disrupting small trophosome samples in 0.2  $\mu\text{m}$ -filtered  
280 seawater, and then concentrated by filtration on to 0.2  $\mu\text{m}$  polycarbonate membrane filters  
281 followed by dehydration through ascending concentrations of ethanol. Subsequently, the samples  
282 were critical-point-dried using a Balzers CPD 030 and  $\text{CO}_2$  as a transition medium. The filters  
283 were sputter-coated with gold-palladium using a Balzers SCD 004 and observed with a Zeiss  
284 DSM 940 electron microscope.

285

### 286 **Fluid chemistry**

287 After recovery of the ROV Mohawk all KIPS fluid samples were immediately transferred to the  
288 on-board ship lab and sub-sampled for subsequent analyses. Both pH and Eh of the fluids were  
289 determined immediately after sub-sampling using electrochemical techniques after calibration  
290 with certified standards. Dissolved oxygen was determined using standard Winkler titration  
291 protocols modified for small volumes. The concentration of dissolved sulfide was determined in  
292 1 mL aliquots using a zinc acetate gelatin solution, which precipitates the dissolved sulfide as  
293 colloidal zinc sulfide. Subsequently, the color agent, N,N-dimethyl-1,4-phenylenediamine-  
294 dihydrochloride, and a catalyst, iron chloride solution, were added to form methylene blue  
295 (Cline, 1969). After 1 h, the solutions were measured photometrically at a wavelength of 660 nm  
296 using a Genesys Spectra 10 spectrophotometer. The detection limit was 1  $\mu\text{mol/L}$ . Potential  
297 oxidation of dissolved hydrogen sulfide during sampling and sample recovery cannot be ruled  
298 out, but is likely minimal. Nonetheless, hydrogen sulfide concentration data given in this paper  
299 should be considered minimum values. Aliquots for the analysis of nutrients were stored in  
300 polypropylene bottles, sealed and stored in the dark at 4°C until analysis. Aliquots for cation and  
301 trace element analysis were pressure-filtrated through 0.2  $\mu\text{m}$  Nucleopore polycarbonate (PC)  
302 membrane filters using Sartorius PC filtration units and high purity nitrogen. Samples were  
303 acidified with subboiled nitric acid to  $\text{pH} < 2$  and stored in perfluoralkoxy (PFA) bottles until  
304 analysis. Multielement analysis for major ion composition (Cl, B, Si, Na, K, Ca, Mg, Fe, Mn) of  
305 the water samples was performed with a SPECTRO Ciros SOP ICP-OES spectrometer after  
306 10fold dilution and using Y for internal standardization. Trace elements (As, Li, W)  
307 were determined by ICP-MS (Agilent 7500cs at University of Kiel) after 12.5fold dilution using

308 both In and Re for internal standardization. Certified reference materials NIST1643e, NASS-5,  
309 and IAPSO were used for validation and accuracy checks.

310

### 311 **Carbon isotope signature**

312 The organic carbon isotopic composition of tubeworm tissue ( $\delta^{13}\text{C}_{\text{ORG}}$ ) was determined via  
313 continuous flow EA-IRMS using an elemental analyzer interfaced to a ThermoFinnigan Delta  
314 Plus isotope ratio mass spectrometer. Briefly, about 40-60  $\mu\text{g}$  of freeze-dried worm tissue was  
315 weighed in tin capsules, combusted to  $\text{CO}_2$ , and chromatographically purified carbon dioxide  
316 was transferred to the mass spectrometer in a He gas stream. Results are reported in the standard  
317 delta notation as per mil difference to the Vienna Pee Dee Belemnite. Sample measurements  
318 were done in duplicate, and analytical performance was monitored with international reference  
319 materials (USGS 24; USGS 40) and lab standards (anthracite; brown coal) and the  
320 reproducibility was generally better than  $\pm 0.15$  ‰.

321 The carbon isotopic composition of dissolved inorganic carbon ( $\delta^{13}\text{C}_{\text{DIC}}$ ) from vent fluids was  
322 measured using a ThermoFinnigan GasBench coupled to a ThermoFinnigan Delta Plus XL.  
323 Briefly, 0.5 – 1.0 mL of hydrothermal fluid was injected into an exetainer that contained  
324 phosphoric acid, liberating DIC as carbon dioxide. Prior to sample injection, the exetainer was  
325 flushed with helium.  $\text{CO}_2$  was flushed from the exetainer with a stream of helium and injected  
326 into the mass spectrometer. Results are reported in the standard delta notation as per mil  
327 difference to the Vienna Pee Dee Belemnite. Sample measurements were done in duplicate, and  
328 analytical performance was monitored with a sodium carbonate lab standard.

329

### 330 **Nucleotide sequence accession numbers**

331 The sequence data have been submitted to EMBL/GenBank/DDBJ databases under accession  
332 numbers HE9744464-85, HE978212-46 and HE983327-53.

333

## 334 **RESULTS**

### 335 **Biogeochemical characterization of the tubeworm habitat at Palinuro**

336 For the present study, two colonies of vestimentiferan tubeworms as well as their  
337 biogeochemical environment were sampled by means of a remotely operated vehicle (ROV). The  
338 tubeworms occurred within a sediment-filled depression at the western summit of the Palinuro  
339 volcanic complex in water depths of around 630 m and formed small bushes, up to 1 m<sup>2</sup> in  
340 diameter, mainly on sedimented surfaces but some patches also occurred in areas where volcanic  
341 rocks were present at the seafloor. Frequently, shimmering water was observed rising above the  
342 tubeworm colonies suggesting active fluid emanation. The first colony (colony #1) appeared to  
343 be comprised mainly of equally sized animals. The second colony (colony #2), however,  
344 consisted of animals of different sizes, indicating different ages or variation in exposure to  
345 hydrothermal fluid at different places within the colony.

346 ROV assisted measurements of water temperature across and within the tubeworm colonies  
347 revealed a maximum recorded temperature of 19.4°C, about 5°C above ambient seawater  
348 temperatures of 14°C (Table 1). Diffusely venting warm hydrothermal fluids reached a  
349 maximum temperature of 58.4°C within small depressions in close proximity to the tubeworms.  
350 Chloride concentrations in these fluids were significantly higher than in ambient seawater  
351 indicating influx of hydrothermal brine eventually leading to the formation of small stratified  
352 brine pools in these depressions. Chemical analyses of vent and pore fluids sampled from  
353 sediment cores collected in the same area revealed that local hydrothermal fluids were anoxic,  
354 H<sub>2</sub>S-rich, acidic and displayed an elevated salinity. Concentrations of dissolved alkali and alkali  
355 earth elements (potassium, calcium, lithium, cesium), silica, arsenic and tungsten (“Fluid  
356 endmember” in Table 3) were significantly higher when compared to normal bottom seawater.  
357 Fluid samples confirmed that this hydrothermal fluid was highly diluted with ambient seawater  
358 as it passed through the two tubeworm colonies leading to partly oxygenated waters (139 and  
359 227 µmol/L dissolved O<sub>2</sub>, Table 3) and reduced levels of sulfide. Still, dissolved sulfide  
360 concentrations of 32 and 72 µmol/L were measured in water samples from among the tubes in  
361 the tubeworm colonies. In contrast, a maximum concentration of dissolved sulfide of 5,172  
362 µmol/L was measured for the “hottest” hydrothermal fluids (58°C) sampled at Palinuro.

363

### 364 **Characterization of the tubeworms**

365 *Characterization of Palinuro tubeworms*

366 A wide range of sizes of vestimentiferan tubeworms were collected from the Palinuro volcanic  
367 complex (Figure 3). The tubes of the collected animals ranged up to 15 cm in length with a  
368 maximum exterior diameter of 3 mm at the anterior end, decreasing slightly to the posterior end.  
369 The anterior region was banded reddish brown and white, whereas the posterior region was a  
370 more uniform brownish color. The tube walls were thick and rigid in the anterior region,  
371 becoming thinner and more flexible in the posterior regions. The vestimentiferan tubeworm hosts  
372 were identified by molecular analyses of the 18S rRNA gene as well as the mitochondrial genes  
373 for ribosomal 16S rRNA and the cytochrome c oxidase I (COI). All three genes were amplified  
374 from DNA extracted from tubeworm vestimentum, which is free of endosymbionts. Based on  
375 COI and mitochondrial 16S rRNA nucleotide analyses, all individuals analyzed from tubeworm  
376 colony #1 and the four individuals exhibiting different morphologies from tubeworm colony #2  
377 obtained from the Palinuro volcanic complex belonged to the same species. The maximum  
378 difference between the COI gene fragments sequences was 2 bases (total investigated length 650  
379 bp) and 1 base for the mitochondrial 16S rRNA gene (total investigated length 529 bp). In  
380 accordance with 18S rRNA gene, mitochondrial 16S rRNA gene and COI sequence the  
381 tubeworm could be identified as the newly described species *Lamellibrachia anaximandri*  
382 (Southward et al., 2011).

383

384 *Characterization of Gulf of Mexico tubeworms*

385 Gulf of Mexico tubeworm samples were identified using mitochondrial 16S rRNA genes  
386 amplified from DNA extracted from the endosymbiont free vestimentum tissue. Phylogenetic  
387 results confirmed the initial morphological characterizations of *Lamellibrachia*  
388 *luyesi/Lamellibrachia* sp.1 (van der Land and Nørrevang, 1975), *Lamellibrachia* sp. 2,  
389 *Escarpia laminata* (Jones, 1985) and *Seepiophila jonesi* (Gardiner et al., 2001) (Table 2, Figure  
390 4).

391

392 **Characterization of the tubeworm endosymbionts**

393 *Endosymbionts of L. anaximandri from Palinuro*

394 Microscopic studies on the Palinuro *L. anaximandri* revealed high numbers of coccoid bacterial  
395 cells in broken trophosome tissue. These endosymbiotic bacterial cells varied considerably in

396 size (2 – 10 µm diameter) and shape (spherical to irregularly coccoid). The color in the light  
397 microscope ranged from light to dark brown. Different modes of cell division were observed:  
398 equal division, unequal division and budding (Figure 5). The cell surface of many  
399 endosymbionts showed a characteristic pattern of small invaginations (0.2 – 0.5 µm diameter),  
400 while others had a completely smooth surface. Frequently it was observed that cells in the  
401 process of budding or unequal cell division had a structured surface in the larger (older) part of  
402 the cell, while the bud was smooth (Figure 5).

403 The bacterial endosymbionts of the tubeworms were identified by constructing 16S rRNA gene  
404 clone libraries from DNA extracted from the trophosome tissue of 11 tubeworm individuals. For  
405 each specimen at least 20 clones were sequenced and analyzed. The bacterial 16S rRNA gene  
406 sequences of each specimen had > 99% sequence identity, thus representing a single OTU. The  
407 consensus sequences (OTUs) from the different individuals were identical (100% sequence  
408 identity over a total length of 1387 bp), indicating that only one bacterial endosymbiont  
409 phylotype was present in the Palinuro tubeworms. BLAST analysis revealed the  
410 gammaproteobacterial sulfide-oxidizing “phylotype 2” bacterial endosymbiont of *L.*  
411 *anaximandri* from the Eastern Mediterranean mud volcanoes as the closest relative (FM165438,  
412 99,7% sequence identity, 5 nucleotides differences over a total length of 1387 bp, (Duperron et  
413 al., 2009)). Other closely related sequences originate from other *Lamellibrachia* spp. and seep  
414 vestimentiferan endosymbionts from outside the Mediterranean (Figure 6). The endosymbionts  
415 of hydrothermal vent tubeworms *Riftia pachyptila* and *Tevnia jerichonana* were more distantly  
416 related and clustered on a separate branch within the 16S rRNA gene tree (Figure 6).

417

#### 418 *Phylogeny of seep vestimentiferan endosymbionts from the Gulf of Mexico*

419 Bacterial endosymbionts from Gulf of Mexico tubeworm specimen were identified by  
420 amplification and direct sequencing of 16S rRNA genes from DNA extracted from the  
421 trophosome tissue.

422 The GoM vestimentiferan tubeworm’s endosymbionts were affiliated with the three  
423 monophyletic groups of seep vestimentiferan tubeworm endosymbiont sequences described by  
424 McMullin et al, (2003). Three specimens from GoM site DC673 (*Lamellibrachia* sp. 1,  
425 *Lamellibrachia* sp. 2, and *E. laminata* (DC673\_1211, DC673\_1209, DC673\_1170) shared the  
426 identical (100% 16S rRNA gene sequence) "group 2" endosymbiont, very closely related to the

427 sequences from *Lamellibrachia* sp. 1 and sp. 2 endosymbionts at site GC852 (GC852\_L4,  
428 GC852\_L1, GC852\_L5) and *E. laminata* endosymbiont sequence from WR269 (WR269\_E10).  
429 However, the endosymbiont sequence derived from an *E. laminata* specimen at site AC601  
430 (AC601\_E6) differed and clustered with "group 1" sequences. In two other tubeworm specimens  
431 (*E. laminata* and *Lamellibrachia* sp. 2) from site AC601 (AC601\_L1, AC601\_L20) we detected  
432 two different endosymbionts, one clustering with "group 1" (AC601\_L1-PT1, AC601\_L20-PT1)  
433 and the other with "group 2" (AC601\_L1-PT2, AC601\_L20-PT2). Endosymbiont sequences  
434 derived from *S. jonesi* and *L. luymesi* tubeworms from the shallower sites GC234 (GC234\_4587,  
435 GC234\_L7), and GC184 (GC184\_L9) clustered with "group 3" sequences (Figure 6).

436

#### 437 *Genes involved in endosymbiont energy metabolism*

438 In order to determine the potential energy-generating pathways for chemoautotrophic growth of  
439 the endosymbiont from the Palinuro *L. anaximandri*, we tried to amplify fragments of genes  
440 coding for key enzymes involved in the oxidation of sulfur compounds, hydrogen and methane.

441 The genetic potential for sulfur oxidation of the endosymbiont was analyzed by amplifying gene  
442 fragments coding for dissimilatory sulfite reductase (*dsrAB*), APS reductase (*aprA*) – both  
443 enzymes of the APS pathway – and sulfate thiohydrolase (*soxB*), an essential component of the  
444 Sox multienzyme complex (Friedrich et al., 2001). Fragments of all three genes (*dsrAB*, *aprA*,  
445 *soxB*) were recovered supporting a sulfide-oxidizing chemotrophic energy metabolism of the  
446 endosymbiont. Sequence similarities as well as phylogenetic analysis showed them to be very  
447 similar to the endosymbionts of other *L. anaximandri* (*apr* within symbiont cluster) and the  
448 vestimentiferans *Riftia pachyptila* and *Tevnia jerichonana* from hydrothermal vents on the East  
449 Pacific Rise (*dsrAB*, *soxB*) (Figure 7). The 397 bp *aprA* sequence showed highest similarity  
450 (97% nucleotide similarity, 100% amino acid similarity) to *L. anaximandri* endosymbiont  
451 "phylotype 1" described from seep specimens at the Amon mud volcano in the Eastern  
452 Mediterranean (Duperron et al., 2009). Phylogenetic analysis places the *Lamellibrachia aprA*  
453 sequences in a cluster of oxidizing lineage II APS reductase gene sequences of endosymbiotic  
454 and free-living beta- and gammaproteobacteria including endosymbionts of *Riftia* and *Tevnia*  
455 (Meyer and Kuever, 2007a; Markert et al., 2011; Gardebrecht et al., 2012). The *dsrAB* gene  
456 fragment (987 bp) was most closely related to dissimilatory sulfite reductase genes from the



457 *Riftia/Tevenia* endosymbiont (NZ\_AFZB01000023, EGW53672 and EGV52261, 80% nucleotide  
458 and 84% amino acid sequence similarity, Figure 7).

459 Likewise, the 986 bp *soxB* fragment from *L. anaximandri* from Palinuro showed highest  
460 similarities to *soxB* from *Candidatus* Endoriftia persephone (EF618617, EGV50931 and  
461 EGW54296, 84% nucleotide similarity, 90% amino acid similarity).

462 A fragment of the *hupL* gene, encoding the large subunit of a [NiFe] uptake hydrogenase was  
463 amplified using the primer set W1 and Wxy. BLAST search as well as phylogenetic analysis  
464 demonstrated highest similarity with reference sequences from the *Riftia/Tevenia* endosymbiont  
465 (EGV51840, EGW53439, 82 % nucleotide identity, 93 % amino acid identity). This enzyme has  
466 been shown to be involved in the oxidation of molecular hydrogen for energy generation  
467 (Petersen et al., 2011; Kleiner et al., 2012).

468 Key genes for enzymes of methane oxidation (*mxoF*, *mmoX*, *pmoA*) were not successfully  
469 amplified with the different primer sets (MxoF1003, MxoR1555, MxoR1561, *mmoXA*, *mmoXB*,  
470 A189F, MB661R (Costello and Lidstrom, 1999; Auman et al., 2000; Neufeld et al., 2007;  
471 Kalyuzhnaya et al., 2008) used in this study.

472

#### 473 *Genes involved in Nitrate reduction*

474 A nitric oxide reductase (*norCB*) gene sequence was successfully amplified and sequenced from  
475 the Palinuro *L. anaximandri* endosymbiont indicating the potential to reduce nitrate. The closest  
476 relative was again the endosymbiont of *Riftia/Tevenia* (EMBL entry ZP\_08818090) with 95%  
477 amino acid sequence similarity. In the metagenomes of the *Riftia* and *Tevenia* endosymbionts, all  
478 genes needed for a complete respiration of nitrate to dinitrogen gas have been detected, and it has  
479 been suggested that the endosymbionts of these species could possibly use nitrate as alternative  
480 electron acceptor (Gardebrecht et al., 2012).

481

#### 482 *Genes involved in carbon fixation*

483 To investigate the autotrophic potential of the endosymbionts, we tried to amplify key genes of  
484 two carbon fixation pathways, the Calvin-Benson-Bassham (CBB) cycle and the reductive  
485 tricarboxylic acid (rTCA) cycle.

486 The CO<sub>2</sub> fixing enzyme ribulose 1,5-bisphosphate carboxylase/oxygenase (RubisCO) is the key  
487 enzyme of the CBB cycle. In Proteobacteria, two different types are known, form I, encoded by

488 the *cbbL* gene, and form II encoded by *cbbM*. In accordance with other studies on  
489 *Lamellibrachia* spp. endosymbionts (Elsaied and Naganuma, 2001; Elsaied et al., 2002), we  
490 failed to amplify *cbbL* from the Palinuro tubeworm endosymbiont. In contrast, a fragment of the  
491 *cbbM* gene was detected supporting the usage of the CBB cycle for carbon fixation by the  
492 endosymbiont as was also previously demonstrated for other *Lamellibrachia* spp. endosymbionts  
493 (Elsaied and Naganuma, 2001; Elsaied et al., 2002; Vrijenhoek et al., 2007). The *cbbM* sequence  
494 displayed high similarity (96% nucleotide similarity, 100% amino acid similarity) to the bacterial  
495 endosymbiont of *L. anaximandri* from the Eastern Mediterranean (FM165442 and CAQ63473,  
496 Duperron et al., 2009), but was quite different from *cbbM* sequences of *Riftia/Tevnia*  
497 endosymbionts (AF047688, 78% nucleotide similarity, 75% amino acid similarity).  
498 Based on genomic, proteomic, enzymatic as well as isotopic data, the *Riftia pachyptila*  
499 endosymbiont uses the rTCA cycle in addition to the CBB cycle for autotrophic carbon fixation  
500 (Markert et al., 2007, 2011; Gardebrecht et al., 2012). Yet a novel type of ATP citrate lyase (type  
501 II ACL) might be active in this case (Hügler and Sievert, 2011).  
502 Newly designed primers were used to amplify a putative type II ACL from the endosymbionts of  
503 the Palinuro tubeworms. Unexpectedly, amplified fragments of this type II ACL gene indicate  
504 additional use of the rTCA cycle for carbon fixation in the Palinuro *L. anaximandri*  
505 endosymbiont as well. BLAST results with sequence similarities of 78% amino acid identities, as  
506 well as the phylogenetic analysis indicate the gene to be most closely related to the *Riftia* and  
507 *Tevnia* endosymbiont (NCBI entry ZP\_08829917 and ZP\_08817421). In contrast genes coding  
508 for a conventional ACL could not be detected using previously published primers for either  
509 subunits (*aclA* or *aclB*, Campbell et al., 2003; Hügler et al., 2005).

510

#### 511 *Carbon fixation genes in seep vestimentiferan endosymbionts from the Gulf of Mexico*

512 The discovery of ACL genes in the *L. anaximandri* endosymbiont from the Palinuro volcanic  
513 complex raised the question about the further distribution of these genes in tubeworm  
514 endosymbionts, especially seep species. Thus we analyzed endosymbionts from 13 tubeworms  
515 from six different sites in the Gulf of Mexico. We discovered the type II ACL genes in all  
516 tubeworm endosymbionts investigated, regardless of their host species identity or site in the  
517 GoM (Table 2). Sequence analysis revealed the type II ACL gene to be highly conserved  
518 between the different GoM tubeworm endosymbionts. Three different phylotypes were found to

519 be present in the 13 tubeworm samples in the GoM, and all three differed from the sequences  
520 found in the Palinuro *L. anaximandri* endosymbionts (Figure 8A). All GoM endosymbionts of  
521 host specimens from the sites DC673, WR269, and GC852 (DC673\_1211, DC673\_1209,  
522 DC673\_1170, WR269\_E10, GC852\_L4, GC852\_L1, GC852\_L5) shared identical (100% AA  
523 similarity) type II ACL gene sequences (cluster 2) regardless of host species identity.  
524 Endosymbionts of GoM host specimens from the shallower Green Canyon sites GC234 and  
525 GC184 (GC234\_4587, GC184\_L9, GC234\_L7) also bear one single type II ACL gene sequence  
526 (cluster 3) (100% AA similarity), which differed from the deep water site sequence in 14 AA.  
527 The third sequence type (cluster 1) was retrieved from endosymbionts of Alaminos Canyon site  
528 AC601 (AC601\_E6, AC601\_L1, AC601\_L20). Within AC601\_L1 and AC601\_L20 a second  
529 ACL sequence type identical to the sequences of cluster 2 was also retrieved. In phylogenetic  
530 analysis, the GoM tubeworm endosymbiont ACL type II sequences formed a cluster together  
531 with the Mediterranean *L. anaximandri* endosymbiont sequences, and were clearly separated  
532 from the *Riftia/Tevnia* sequences (Figure 8A).

533 In addition to the *acl* genes, we also amplified the *cbbM* gene of the GoM tubeworm  
534 endosymbionts. As expected, all endosymbionts harbored a *cbbM* gene in addition to the *acl*  
535 gene. Similar to the 16S rRNA and *acl* genes, the *cbbM* genes from the GoM endosymbionts  
536 formed three different clusters (Figure 8B). Cluster 1 comprises the sequences of Alaminos  
537 Canyon site AC601 specimens, AC601\_E6, AC601\_L1, and AC601\_L20. The *cbbM* sequences  
538 of DeSoto Canyon, Walker Ridge and Green Canyon specimens DC673\_1211, DC673\_1209,  
539 WR269\_E10, GC852\_L4, GC852\_L1, GC852\_L5 form a second cluster (cluster 2), while the  
540 *cbbM* sequence of sample DC673\_1170 falls in between these two clusters. Cluster 3 (Green  
541 Canyon samples GC234\_4587, GC184\_L9, GC234\_L7) is clearly separated from the others. The  
542 *cbbM* sequences from the Mediterranean tubeworm endosymbionts form a separate cluster. Quite  
543 interestingly, the *cbbM* sequences of the *Riftia/Tevnia* endosymbionts are only distantly related  
544 (Figure 8B).

545

#### 546 **Isotopic signature**

547 Bulk organic carbon isotopes analyses of gill tissue from two Palinuro tubeworms resulted in  
548  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  values of -22.5 and -23.4‰, which are in accordance to previous measurements of  
549 Mediterranean *Lamellibrachia* spp. (Olu-Le Roy et al., 2004; Carlier et al., 2010) but more

550 positive than most *Lamellibrachia* spp. from non-Mediterranean hydrocarbon seeps (Becker et  
551 al., 2011). The carbon isotopic composition of dissolved inorganic carbon in emanating diffuse  
552 fluids sampled at the tubeworm colonies display  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  values of -0.39 and -0.68‰. The  $\delta^{13}\text{C}_{\text{DIC}}$   
553 values of additional samples of shimmering water in the area range from -1.62 to +1.76‰.

554

555

## 556 **DISCUSSION**

### 557 **Phylogeny and biogeography of the Mediterranean tubeworms**

558 The discovery of living vestimentiferan tubeworm colonies associated with active hydrothermal  
559 venting during a seafloor survey of the Palinuro volcanic complex (Mediterranean Sea) in July  
560 2006 (Petersen et al., 2008; Monecke et al., 2009) came as a surprise, as until then, vent-  
561 associated tubeworms were only known from the Pacific Ocean. Living individuals of the  
562 tubeworms were sampled during a research cruise in 2011 and this communication is the first  
563 description of the worms and their endosymbionts. Phylogenetic analyses of 18S rRNA, COI and  
564 mitochondrial 16S rRNA genes showed that the tubeworms from Palinuro are *Lamellibrachia*  
565 *anaximandri* recently described from mud volcanoes of the Eastern Mediterranean (Southward et  
566 al., 2011). The highest *in vivo* temperatures measured among the tubes in tubeworm aggregations  
567 at the Palinuro hydrothermal vent field were 15.6 – 19.4°C, elevated by as much as 5.4°C from  
568 the surrounding Mediterranean Seawater (14°C) and the previously published tubeworm-bearing  
569 locations in the Eastern Mediterranean (13 – 14°C), extending the previously described  
570 temperature range of the species (Southward et al., 2011). *L. anaximandri* has also been detected  
571 in a mud volcano field in the Western Mediterranean (Hilário et al., 2011), as well as on two ship  
572 wrecks in the Eastern Mediterranean (110 km southeast of Crete, Hughes and Crawford, 2008)  
573 and the Southern Tyrrhenian Sea (Gambi et al., 2011) (Figure 1). Even though this species has  
574 not been detected in the Northeastern Atlantic it has been hypothesized to occur at the West  
575 African and Lusitanian margins as well (Hilário et al., 2011).

576 The high diversity of habitats for the Mediterranean *Lamellibrachia* species is in accordance  
577 with *Escarpia* spp. and other *Lamellibrachia* spp.. Originally regarded as seep species, they were  
578 subsequently found in several non-seep habitats, i.e. at sediment covered hydrothermal sites in  
579 the Pacific (Juniper et al., 1992; Fujikura et al. 2006; Miake et al., 2006; Miura and Kojima,  
580 2006), as well as ship wrecks (Dando et al., 1992) and whale falls (Feldman et al., 1998).

581 Considering the high diversity of so called seep-tubeworm habitats a high site-flexibility of these  
582 organisms becomes apparent and supports the importance of different non-seep habitats in their  
583 geographic distribution and the stepping stone hypothesis (Kimura and Weiss, 1964; Smith and  
584 Kukert, 1989; Black et al., 1994; Olu et al., 2010). Larval survival of at least three weeks and  
585 about five weeks has been demonstrated for the vestimentiferans *Riftia pachyptila* and  
586 *Lamellibrachia luymeri* respectively, suggesting potential dispersal distances on the order of 100  
587 km for seep and vent vestimentiferans (Young et al., 1996; Marsh et al., 2001; Tyler and Young,  
588 2003). A variety of reducing habitats, functioning as dispersal stepping-stones separated by days  
589 or weeks and connected by currents or shared water masses could facilitate the large species  
590 ranges described for many vestimentiferans, including the seep species *L. barhami*, which has  
591 been found in seep and low activity vent sites spanning at least 4,000 – 6,000 km of geographical  
592 distance (McMullin et al., 2003).

593

#### 594 **Phylogeny of endosymbionts**

595 The trophosome of the *L. anaximandri* specimens from Palinuro analyzed in this study harbored  
596 a single gammaproteobacterial phylotype regardless of collection site or morphotype. The  
597 endosymbiont was closely related (99.7%) to the phylotype 2 found in *L. anaximandri* from the  
598 Amon mud volcano east of the Nile deep-sea fan (Duperron et al., 2009). The dominating  
599 endosymbiont (phylotype 1) of the seep specimen from the Amon mud volcano was not found in  
600 the tubeworms at the Palinuro hydrothermal vents.

601 This study is the first to characterize vestimentiferan tubeworm endosymbionts of shallow  
602 hydrothermal vents in the Mediterranean Sea. The gammaproteobacterial endosymbiont clusters  
603 with endosymbionts of other seep-associated tubeworms and are clearly distinct from the  
604 endosymbionts of vent-tubeworms like *Riftia* and *Tevnia* (Fisher et al., 1997; Nelson and Fisher,  
605 2000; McMullin et al., 2003; Vrijenhoek et al., 2007). The phylogenetic affiliation of the  
606 Palinuro *L. anaximandri* endosymbiont with "group 3" endosymbiont 16S rRNA gene  
607 sequences, as well as the affiliation of the dominating phylotype of *L. anaximandri* specimen  
608 obtained from 1,157 m depth at Amon mud volcano with "group 1", suggest separation by depth,  
609 as suggested for other seep-vestimentiferan endosymbionts (McMullin et al., 2003). However,  
610 both Mediterranean phylotype sequences show considerable differences to the "group 1" and  
611 "group 3" cluster sequences in signature nucleotide positions (Suppl. Table S1) and

612 Mediterranean and GoM tubeworms do not share identical endosymbiont phylotypes. Further, in  
613 the Amon mud volcano specimen, phylotypes of "group 1" and "group 3" are present, yet in  
614 assumed different abundances (deduced from the numbers of sequences in the clone libraries  
615 (Duperron et al., 2009)). Endosymbionts of different groups are also present in individuals of  
616 *Lamellibrachia* sp. 2 (AC601\_L20) and *E. laminata* (AC601\_L1) tubeworms from the GoM site  
617 AC601 (this study). Thus separation by depth alone cannot explain these observations and  
618 further studies are needed in order to reveal the question how endosymbionts are selected by  
619 their vestimentiferan hosts.

620

### 621 **Metabolic characteristics of the endosymbiont**

622 Based on the functional gene analyses of this study, the endosymbiont of *Lamellibrachia*  
623 *anaximandri* from Palinuro is a sulfide-oxidizing chemoautotroph.  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  values measured in this  
624 study are in consistence with previous studies of *L. anaximandri* from Eastern Mediterranean  
625 mud volcano fields (Olu-Le Roy et al., 2004; Carlier et al., 2010), and together with delta  $\delta^{15}\text{N}$   
626 and  $\delta^{34}\text{S}$  from previous studies support a chemoautotrophic endosymbiont based nutrition for the  
627 host tubeworm (Carlier et al., 2010). Due to the presence of *dsrAB* and *aprA* genes, sulfide  
628 oxidation most likely is carried out via the APS pathway with sulfite and adenosine  
629 phosphosulfate as intermediates. As in the *Riftia pachyptila* endosymbiont, *soxB* is also present  
630 in the endosymbiont of *L. anaximandri* from Palinuro. In thiosulfate-utilizing bacteria, SoxB  
631 functions as sulfate thiohydrolase. However, since tubeworm endosymbiont carbon fixation is  
632 not stimulated by thiosulfate, its function in the tubeworm endosymbionts remains uncertain  
633 (Fisher et al., 1989; Markert et al., 2011).

634 Although high methane fluxes were noted in the habitat of *L. anaximandri* in mud volcano  
635 habitats (Olu-Le Roy et al., 2004), genes of methane oxidation were not successfully amplified  
636 with the primer sets used in this study. In contrast, the potential to use hydrogen as an energy  
637 source was suggested by the detection of the key gene for hydrogen oxidation, *hupL* in the  
638 endosymbiont from the Palinuro *L. anaximandri*. The *hupL* gene was most similar to the  
639 respective genes of the *Riftia* and *Tevnia* endosymbionts, where it is even expressed *in situ*  
640 (Markert et al., 2011; Petersen et al., 2011). Hydrogen concentrations have not been measured in  
641 the hydrothermal fluids from Palinuro volcano complex. However, hydrogen is present in the  
642 fluids at many hydrothermal vents, and elevated hydrogen contents are present at vent systems

643 associated with ultramafic (mantle) rocks, or e.g. following a volcanic eruption (Wetzel and  
644 Shock, 2000; Allen and Seyfried, 2003; Kumagai et al., 2008, Petersen et al., 2011). Such H<sub>2</sub>-  
645 rich fluids found at vent systems associated with ultramafic rocks have recently been shown to  
646 be used as an energy source by the endosymbionts of a mussel, *Bathymodiolus puteoserpentis*  
647 (Petersen et al., 2011). The endosymbionts in *Bathymodiolus* spp. mussels are located on the  
648 external edge of the cells of gill filaments that are themselves only 2 cells thick. As a result,  
649 passive diffusion of the energy source (hydrogen, sulfide, and/or methane in different species) is  
650 sufficient to fuel the chemoautotrophic life style of these animals (Childress and Fisher, 1992). In  
651 contrast, the endosymbionts in tubeworms are deep in an interior tissue and must rely on the host  
652 blood to supply the electron donor for chemoautotrophy. Sulfide is transported in millimolar  
653 concentrations to the trophosome, bound to hemoglobin molecules in vestimentiferan  
654 tubeworms. Transport molecules for hydrogen or methane have not been found in these animals  
655 and thus both hydrogen and methane are unlikely to contribute significantly to the metabolism of  
656 the intact symbiosis in most environments (Childress and Fisher, 1992). However, the  
657 gammaproteobacterial endosymbiont might use hydrogen as potential energy source in its free-  
658 living stage. Thus, the potential for use of hydrogen by tubeworm endosymbionts deserves  
659 additional study.

660 Detection of *cbbM* sequences coding for a form II RubisCO in all vestimentiferan tubeworms  
661 reviewed in this study indicates that the potential to fix CO<sub>2</sub> via the CBB cycle is widespread in  
662 vestimentiferan tubeworms (Elsaied and Naganuma, 2001; Elsaied et al., 2002; Naganuma et al.,  
663 2005; Vrijenhoek et al., 2007; Duperron et al., 2009) and the detection of all genes of this cycle  
664 in the metagenome of the *Riftia* endosymbiont suggest this pathway is fully functional in  
665 vestimentiferans (see Markert et al., 2011 for further details). Enzyme activity measurements of  
666 RubisCO and phosphoribulokinase add further evidence to the usage of the CBB cycle in *Riftia*  
667 and *Lamellibrachia* endosymbionts (Felbeck, 1981; Felbeck et al., 1981). Up to now, there is no  
668 evidence for the presence of RubisCO form I (*cbbL*) in either the *Riftia/Tevnia* or any  
669 *Lamellibrachia* endosymbiont (this study; Elsaied and Naganuma, 2001; Elsaied et al., 2002;  
670 Naganuma et al., 2005; Duperron et al., 2009).

671 In addition, *acl* genes, coding for ATP citrate lyase, the key enzyme of the rTCA cycle were  
672 recovered from the Palinuro *L. anaximandri* endosymbiont using newly designed primers,  
673 suggesting the presence of the rTCA cycle as alternate carbon fixation pathway. The operation of

674 the rTCA cycle in addition to the CBB cycle was first shown for the *Riftia* and *Tevnia*  
675 endosymbiont using a combination of metagenomic, proteomic and enzymatic approaches  
676 (Markert et al., 2007; Robidart et al., 2008; Gardebrecht et al., 2012). In the case of the  
677 *Riftia/Tevnia* endosymbiont, citrate cleavage is accomplished by an unusual type of ATP citrate  
678 lyase, tentatively named ACL type II (Hügler and Sievert, 2011). The recovered *acl* sequence  
679 from the Mediterranean Palinuro *L. anaximandri* endosymbiont showed high similarities to the  
680 sequence of the *Riftia/Tevnia* endosymbiont (Figure 8A). Subsequent analyses of seep  
681 vestimentiferan (*Escarpia*, *Seepiophila* and *Lamellibrachia*) endosymbionts from different sites  
682 at the Gulf of Mexico showed the presence of type II ACL genes there as well. This implicates a  
683 wider distribution of these genes than previously thought. The presence of two different carbon  
684 fixation pathways – the CBB cycle and the rTCA cycle – in a single bacterium seems not  
685 restricted to the *Riftia/Tevnia* endosymbiont, but rather seems to be a common feature of  
686 vestimentiferan tubeworm endosymbionts, regardless of genus or habitat.

687 Despite the still rather scarce dataset of type II ACL gene sequences, these sequences appear to  
688 be monophyletic in tubeworm endosymbionts (Figure 8A). Similarly, ribosomal genes as well as  
689 *aprA* genes support a monophyletic origin for the tubeworm endosymbionts (Figures 6, 7). In  
690 contrast, a monophyletic origin of the *cbbM* gene of tubeworm endosymbionts is not clearly  
691 supported by the phylogenetic analyses performed here (Figure 8B). This could mean that the  
692 rTCA cycle is the evolutionary older CO<sub>2</sub> fixation pathway in the endosymbionts, and the *cbbM*  
693 gene is acquired afterwards, e.g. via lateral gene transfer. This evolutionary aspect clearly  
694 requires further studies.

695 The presence of two different carbon fixation pathways increases the metabolic versatility of the  
696 tubeworm endosymbionts. In case of the *Riftia/Tevnia* endosymbiont proteomic data suggest the  
697 usage of both pathways simultaneously (Markert et al., 2007, 2011; Gardebrecht et al., 2012).  
698 This is also supported by the isotopic signature of the *Riftia* tubeworms (Markert et al., 2007).  
699 The carbon isotopic fractionation associated with the rTCA cycle is generally smaller than the  
700 one observed for the CBB cycle (House et al., 2003). Considering the carbon isotopic  
701 composition of ca. -23 ‰ measured for plume tissue of two *L. anaximandri* tubeworms from  
702 Palinuro low temperature diffuse vent sites and a respective carbon isotopic composition of  
703 dissolved inorganic carbon ( $\delta^{13}\text{C}_{\text{DIC}}$  between -0.7 and -0.4 ‰), the isotopic difference would be  
704 consistent with the operation of the CBB cycle for autotrophic carbon fixation. Neither a greatly



705 attenuated isotopic fractionation characteristic for the rTCA cycle nor an isotopic signature  
706 reflecting a substantial contribution from methane-derived carbon is discernible at the site  
707 studied here. Yet, one has to keep in mind, that the isotopic signature provides only indirect  
708 evidence and neither the actual fractionation by the enzymes involved in the rTCA cycle present  
709 in tubeworm endosymbionts, nor fractionation during uptake and transport of DIC to the  
710 endosymbionts are known. Thus future studies are needed in order to determine the conditions  
711 for the usage, as well as the regulation of the two different carbon fixation pathways in  
712 vestimentiferan tubeworm endosymbionts (Hügler and Sievert, 2011).

713

## 714 **CONCLUSIONS**

715 In this study we characterize vestimentiferan tubeworms and their endosymbionts from the  
716 Mediterranean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico. The tubeworms retrieved from a shallow water  
717 hydrothermal vent field in the Western Mediterranean – Palinuro volcanic complex – represent  
718 the first vestimentiferan tubeworms found associated with hydrothermal venting outside the  
719 Pacific Ocean. Our molecular studies of marker genes (18S rRNA, mitochondrial 16S rRNA and  
720 COI) identify the tubeworms as the recently described species *L. anaximandri*, the only  
721 vestimentiferan species described from the Mediterranean Sea to date.

722 Based on 16S rRNA gene surveys we conclude that the Palinuro *L. anaximandri* harbor a single  
723 gammaproteobacterial endosymbiont, closely related to endosymbionts of other *Lamellibrachia*  
724 spp. (Figure 6). Carbon isotopic data and the analysis of functional genes suggest a sulfide-  
725 oxidizing chemoautotrophic lifestyle. Energy can be generated by oxidizing reduced sulfur  
726 compounds via the APS pathway involving dissimilatory sulfite reductase and APS reductase.  
727 Due to the presence of a *hupL* gene one can speculate that the endosymbiont has the potential to  
728 use hydrogen as a supplemental energy source. Nitrate could potentially serve as alternative  
729 electron acceptor for the endosymbiont, as we detected a nitric oxide reductase gene sequence  
730 (*norCB*) and it was shown, that the metagenome of the *Riftia/Tevnia* endosymbiont includes all  
731 genes needed for the complete reduction of nitrate to dinitrogen gas (Gardebrecht et al., 2012).

732 Surprisingly, we were able to detect the key genes of two alternative carbon fixation pathways,  
733 namely *cbbM*, encoding RubisCO form II, the key enzyme of the CBB cycle, and a gene coding  
734 for ATP citrate lyase type II, the key enzyme of the rTCA cycle. Newly designed primers were  
735 used to amplify a gene sequence of the type II ACL. The presence of the rTCA cycle in addition

736 to the CBB cycle for carbon fixation was previously shown for the endosymbiont of the vent  
737 associated tubeworms *Riftia pachyptila* and *Tevnia jerichonana* (Markert et al., 2007;  
738 Gardebrecht et al., 2012). However, before this study, only the CBB cycle was documented as a  
739 carbon fixation pathway for *Lamellibrachia* spp. (Felbeck, 1981; Felbeck et al., 1981; Elsaied  
740 and Naganuma, 2001; Elsaied et al., 2002; Vrijenhoek et al., 2007). We also demonstrate the  
741 presence of the key genes of both carbon cycles in the endosymbionts from *Lamellibrachia*  
742 *luymesii*, *Lamellibrachia* sp. 1, *Lamellibrachia* sp. 2, *Escarpia laminata*, and *Seepiophila jonesi*  
743 from the Gulf of Mexico. These results suggest that the occurrence of two carbon fixation  
744 pathways in one bacterium may be a common feature of vestimentiferan tubeworm  
745 endosymbionts, which in turn indicates that this feature is more widely distributed than  
746 previously considered. It has already been shown, that carbon fixation through the rTCA cycle is  
747 important at deep-sea hydrothermal vent sites (cf. Hügler and Sievert 2011 and references  
748 therein). Our study indicates that the rTCA cycle could play an important role at seep sites as  
749 well.

750

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770

771 **FIGURE LEGENDS**

772 Figure 1: Map with locations of vestimentiferan tubeworms of the genus *Lamellibrachia*  
773 described from previous studies (black circles) and this study (red circle) within the  
774 Mediterranean Sea.

775 Figure 2: Map of sampling locations for tubeworm specimens in the Gulf of Mexico included in  
776 this study. Scale is in degrees longitude; one degree = 111.12 km

777 Figure 3: *Lamellibrachia* sp. tubeworms recovered from the Palinuro volcanic complex  
778 (Mediterranean Sea). (A) in their natural habitat (photo obtained at Palinuro during cruise  
779 Pos340), (B) directly after ROW Mohawk recovery (Pos412) onboard, (C) individual  
780 from colony #1 dissected from its tube (not used for further analysis), (D) stere-  
781 micrograph of plume region, (E) stereo-micrograph of trophosome region.

782 Figure 4: Phylogenetic relationship of vestimentiferan tubeworms based on mitochondrial 16S  
783 rRNA gene sequences. The Maximum Likelihood tree was calculated using the GTR  
784 model. Numbers at the nodes indicate the proportion of occurrences in 100 bootstrap  
785 replicates. The scale represents 0.01 substitutions per nucleotide site.

786 Figure 5: Microscopic images of Palinuro *Lamellibrachia* sp. specimen endosymbionts. (A and  
787 B) Light micrographs showing trophosome content with large spherical prokaryotic cells  
788 (dark) of different size and shape. Various stages of equal and unequal cell division as  
789 well as budding can be recognized. (C, D, E, F) Scanning electron micrographs showing  
790 endosymbionts with characteristically structured cell surface. Probable budding stages (C  
791 and D) and unequal cell division (E and F).

792 Figure 6: Phylogenetic relationship of tubeworms endosymbionts based on 16S rRNA gene  
793 sequences. The Maximum Likelihood tree was calculated using the GTR model.  
794 Numbers at the nodes indicate the proportion of occurrences in 100 bootstrap replicates.  
795 The scale represents 0.01 substitutions per nucleotide site.

796 Figure 7: Phylogenetic tree based on *dsrA* (A) and *aprA* (B) protein sequences. The Maximum  
797 Likelihood tree was calculated using the JTT model. Numbers at the nodes indicate the  
798 proportion of occurrences in 100 bootstrap replicates.. Sequences obtained in the present

799 study are depicted bold and colored. The scale represents 0.1 substitutions per amino acid  
800 position.

801 Figure 8: Phylogenetic tree based on *aclA* (A) and *cbbM* (B) protein sequences. The Maximum  
802 Likelihood tree was calculated using the JTT model. Numbers at the nodes indicate the  
803 proportion of occurrences in 100 bootstrap replicates.. Sequences obtained in the present  
804 study are depicted bold and colored. The scale represents 0.1 substitutions per amino acid  
805 position.

806 Table 1: Position of tubeworm colonies sampled during RV *Poseidon* cruise Pos412 at Palinuro  
807 volcanic complex, Tyrrhenian Sea and temperatures measured within colonies.

808 Table 2: Sample identity, geographic origin and gene sequences accession numbers of tubeworm  
809 specimens and their endosymbionts included in this study.

810 Table 3: Composition of seawater-hydrothermal fluid mixtures inside tubeworm colonies #1 and  
811 #2.

812 Table S1: Signature nucleotide of tubeworm endosymbiont 16S rRNA gene sequences from  
813 vent- and seep vestimentiferan tubeworms. "Vent" vestimentiferan group includes  
814 endosymbiont rRNA gene sequences of *Riftia pachyptila*, *Tevnia jerichonana* and  
815 *Osasisia alvinae*. "Seep" vestimentiferan tubeworm endosymbiont cluster "seep-(1-3)"  
816 refer to grouping according to McMullin et al. (2003). PT-1 and PT-2 refer to  
817 *Lamellibrachia anaximandri* endosymbionts, phylotype 1 and phylotype 2 according to  
818 Dupperon et al. (2009). Pos412 refers to the *Lamellibrachia anaximandri* endosymbiont  
819 rRNA gene sequence phylotype obtained from the Palinuro volcanic complex during  
820 cruise Pos412 of RV *Poseidon* in this study. The position numbers refer to *E. coli* gene  
821 sequence positions.

822

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Figure 1.TIF



Thiel et al Figure 1

Figure 2.TIF

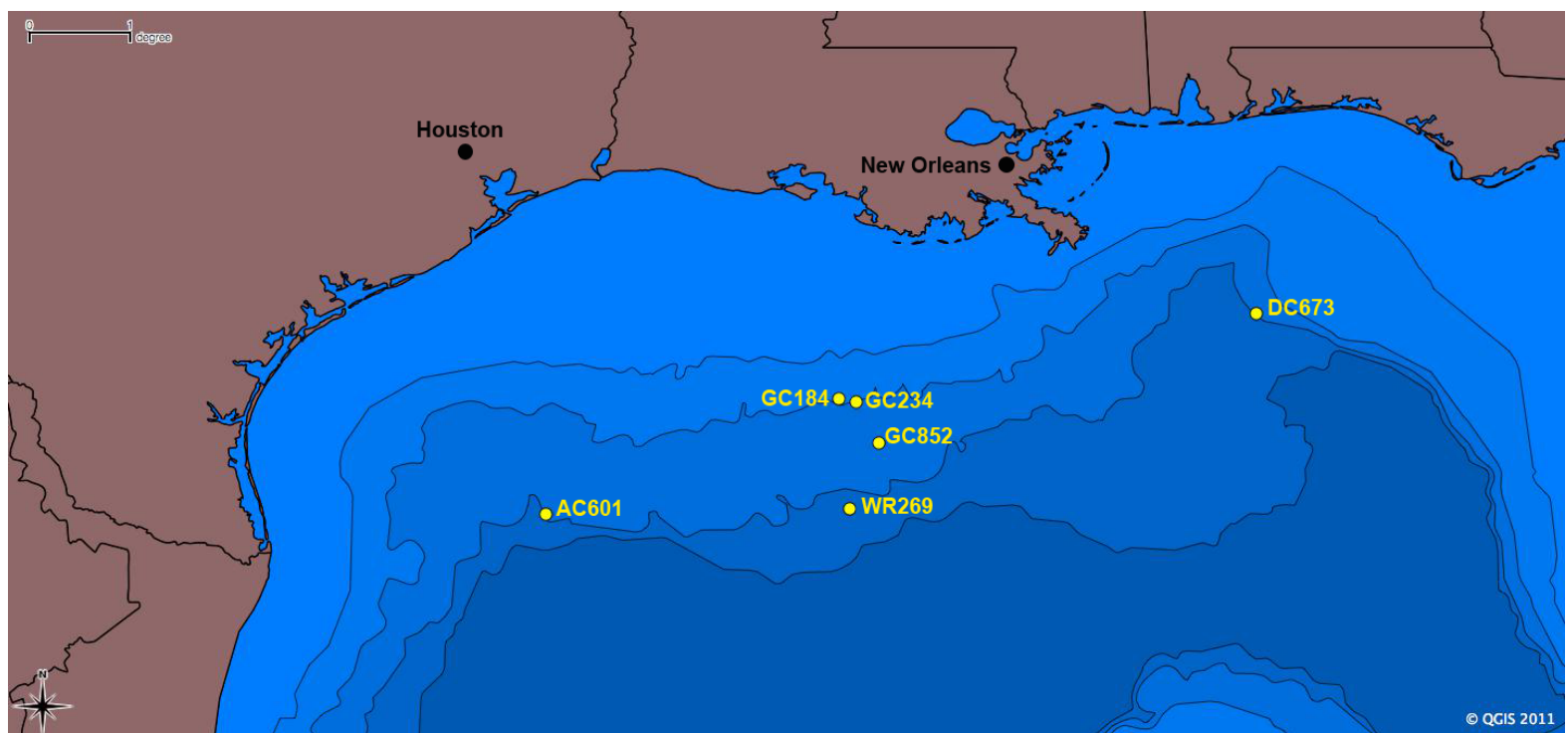


Figure 3.TIF

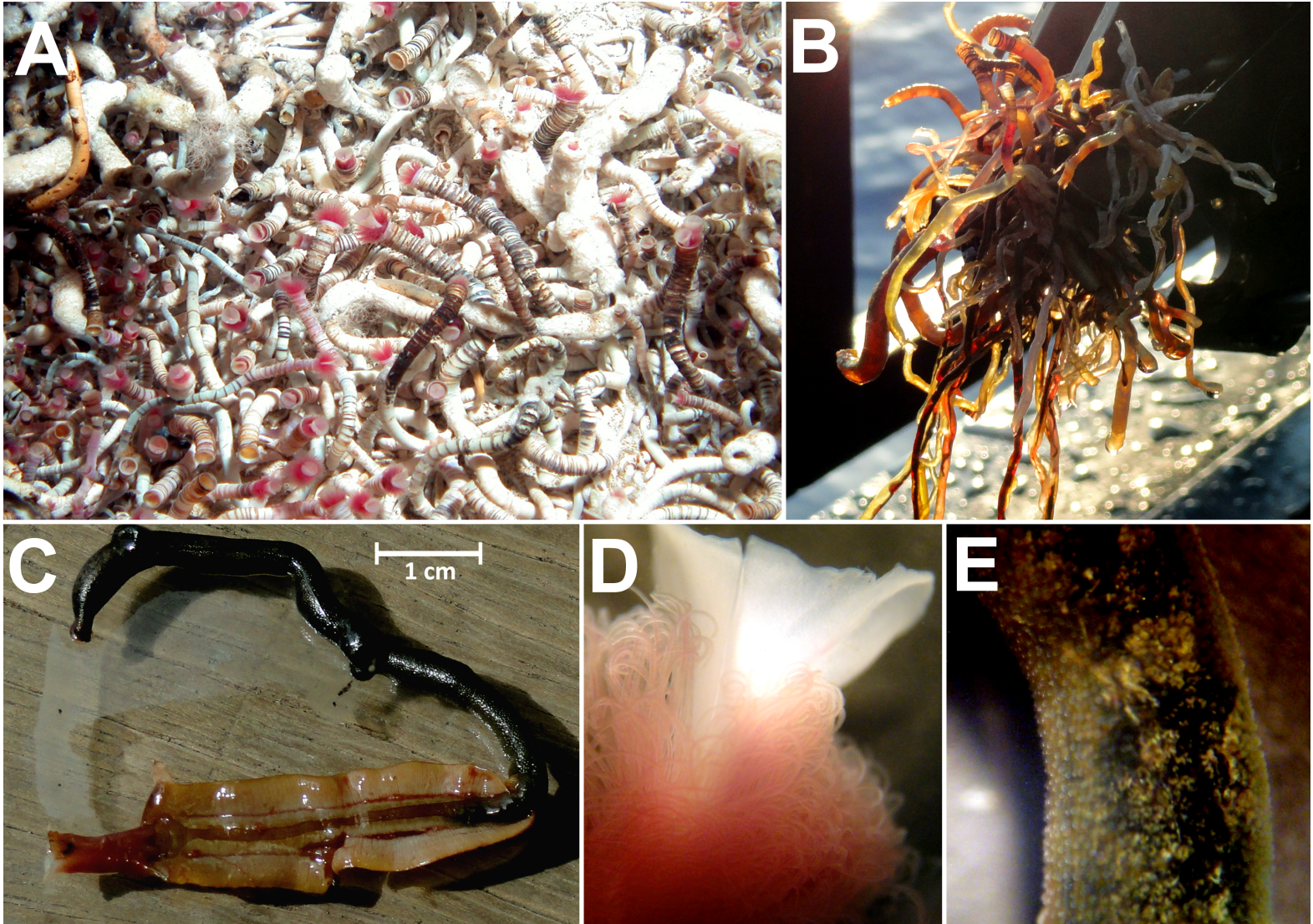




Figure 4.EPS

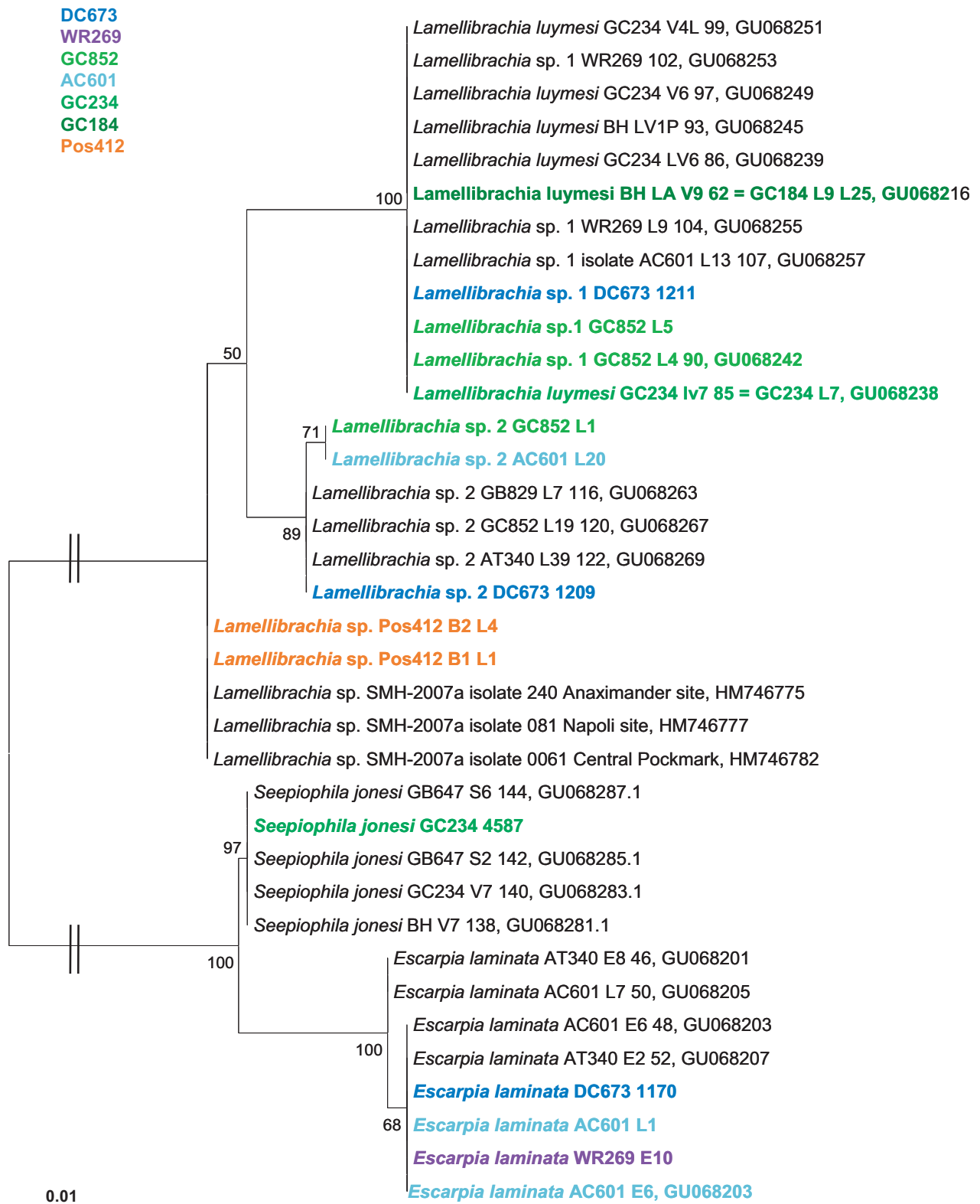


Figure 5.TIF

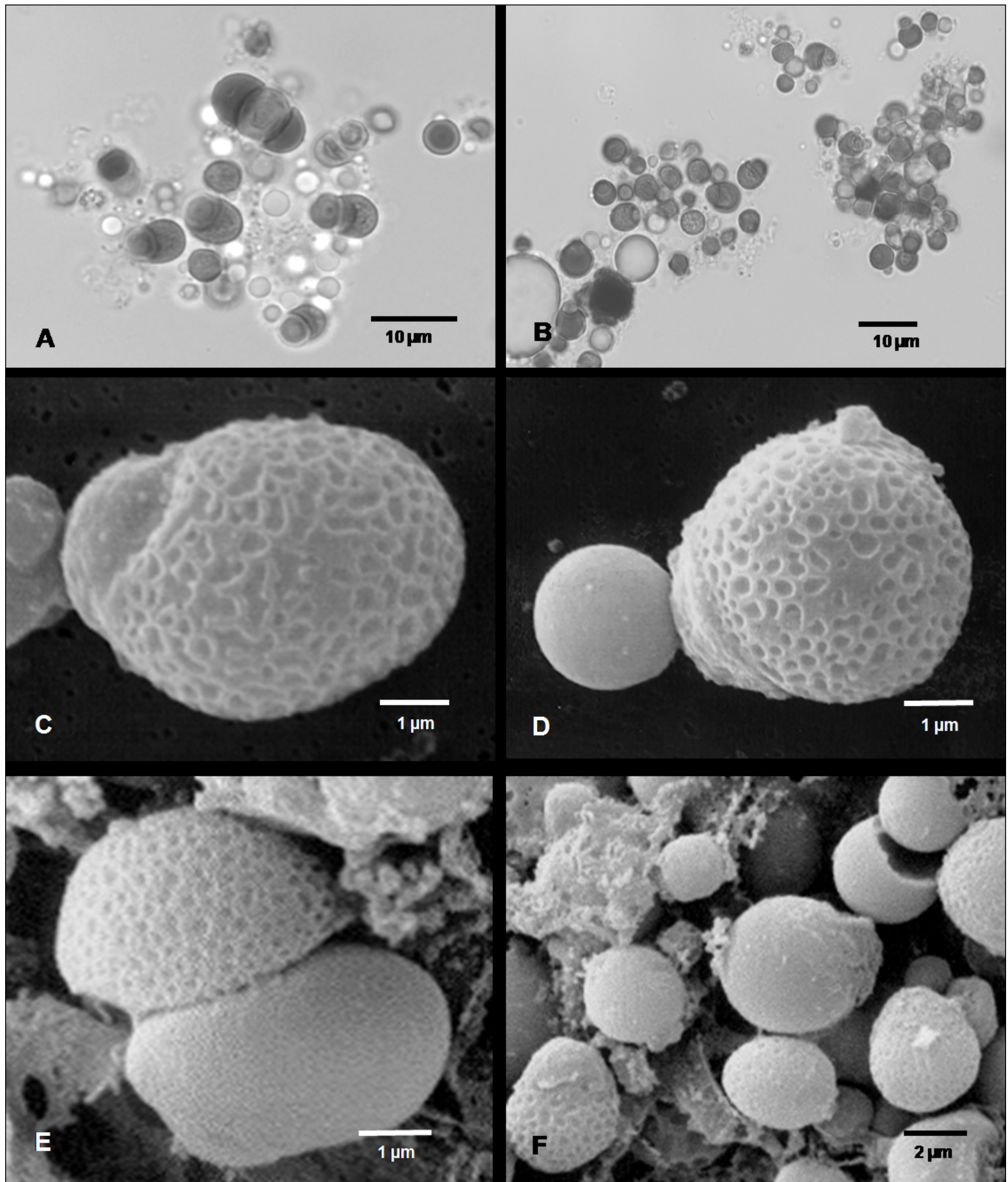


Figure 6.EPS

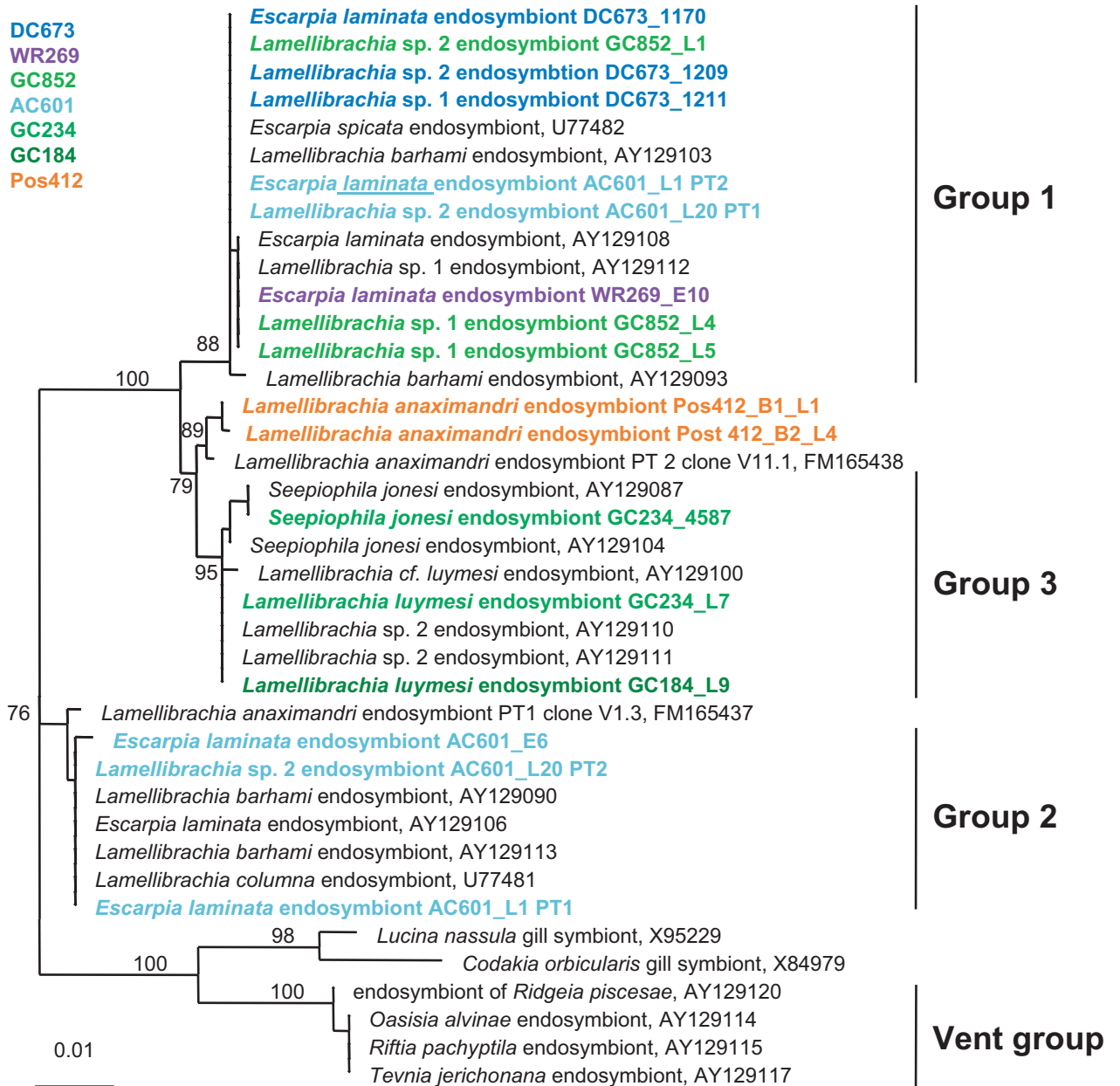


Figure 7.EPS

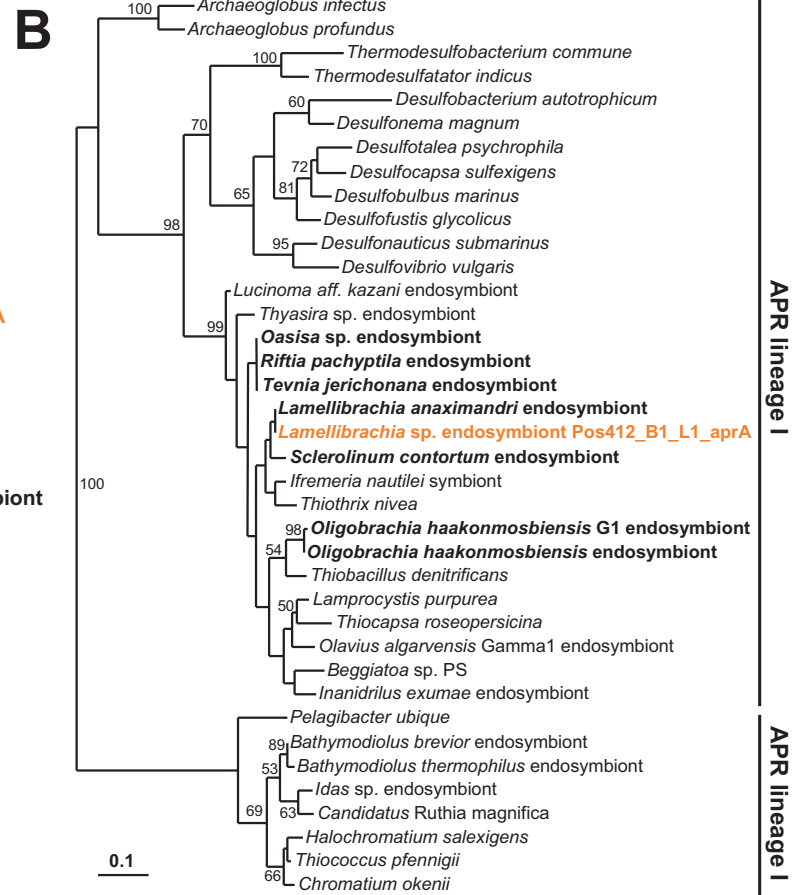
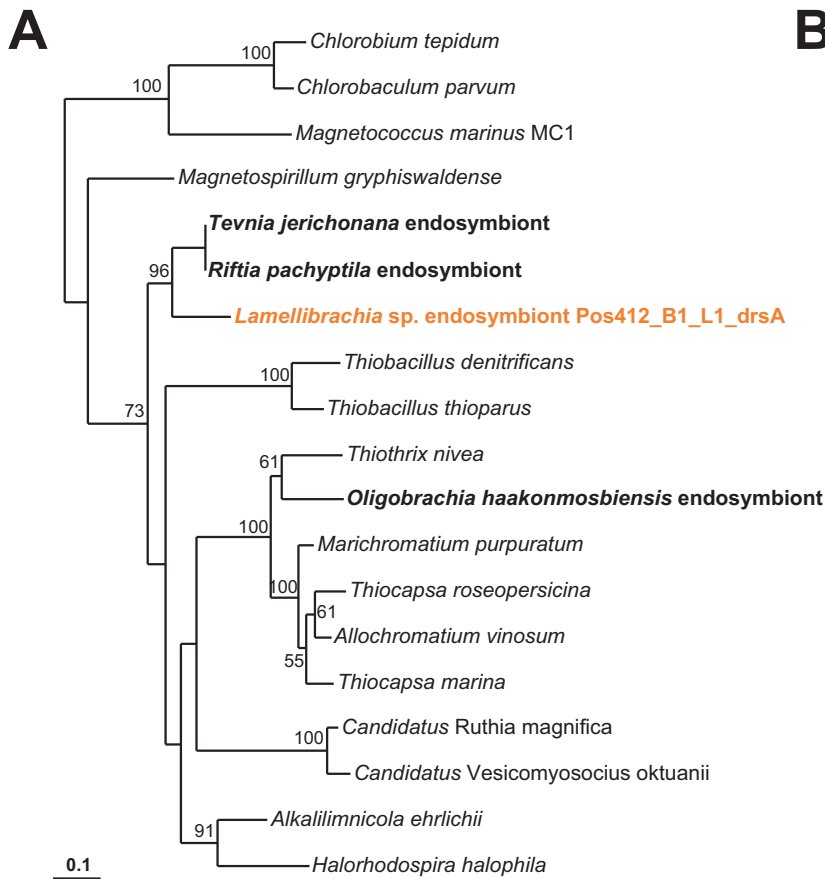


Figure 8.EPS

