

## RIVER WEED GROWING EPIZOICALLY ON FRESHWATER MUSSELS

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River weed, *Podostemon ceratophyllum* (Podostemaceae), is a macrophyte typically found growing attached to rocks in swiftly flowing water (Fasset, 1940; Nelson and Couch, 1985; Philbrick and Novelo R., 1995). The plant lacks roots and attaches itself to the substratum with holdfasts (Graham and Wood, 1975; Hill and Webster, 1984). The species occurs throughout the eastern United States, reaching the western edge of its range in far southeastern Oklahoma (Nelson and Couch, 1985; Philbrick and Crow, 1983). In July 2000, we observed river weed growing on the shells of live unionid mussels (Bivalvia: Unionidae) in the Ouachita River, Montgomery County, Arkansas, and the Saline River, Saline County, Arkansas. In the Ouachita River, river weed occurred on the mucket, *Actinonaias ligamentina* (Fig. 1). In the Saline River, river weed was found on the Ouachita kidneyshell, *Ptychobranchus occidentalis*. In each instance, *P. ceratophyllum* holdfasts were attached on the posterior end of both shell valves, surrounding the siphon (Fig. 1). While filamentous algae are commonly

found growing on the shells of mussels (Vaughn and Hakenkamp, 2001), these are the first records of angiosperms growing epizoically on live mussels.

*Resumen*—*Podostemon ceratophyllum* (Podostemaceae) es una macrófita que se encuentra creciendo típicamente pegada a rocas en aguas rápidas. Observamos esta especie habitando en las conchas de mejillones vivos (Bivalvia, Unionidae) en los Ríos Ouachita y Saline en Arkansas. Son los primeros registros de angiospermas creciendo como epífitos en mejillones vivos.

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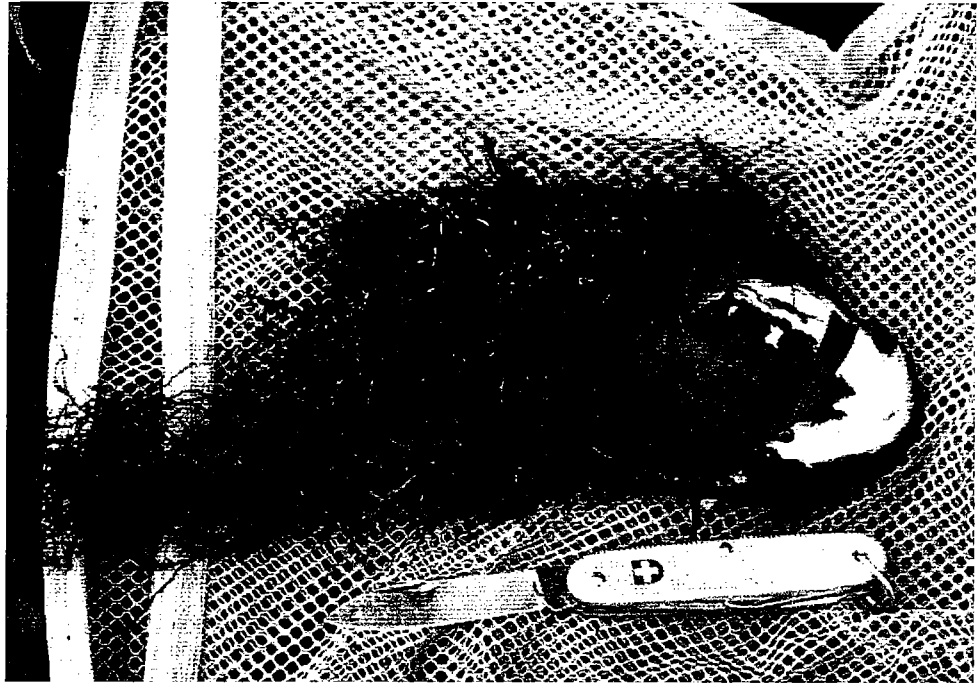


FIG. 1—*Podostemon ceratophyllum* growing epizoically on *Actinonaias ligamentina*. Photo by Caryn Vaughn.

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