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CORALS OF THE MAL PASO FORMATION (ALBIAN-EARLY CENOMANIAN) OF THE
HUETAMO REGION, SOUTHWESTERN MEXICO.

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The Mal Paso Formation contains an abundant and diverse assemblage of reef corals. Most of the corals species from the Mal Paso Formation are from exposures of the upper part of the carbonate upper member at a locality known as Las Latas, in Guerrero, just northwestern of Chumbitaro, Michoacán. The corals in the Mal Paso Formation strata at Las Latas include several species with large, massive, colonial growth forms. These coral colonies primarily occur *in situ* in fairly thin and laterally this continuous units that is interpreted to be a well-developed, coral-dominated reef facies. The spatial distribution of *in situ* coral colonies within this horizon is patchy. A lateral pattern of coral colonies within this coral species distribution, or biozonation, is evident within this coral-rich horizon and is inferred to have been induced by local paleoenvironmental variation in wave energy, water depth, and stage of substrate colonization. The initial stage of coral reef facies development included substrate colonization by an astrocoeniid species tentatively identified as *Astrocoenia* sp. cf. *A. globosa* (Fromentel). Development continued by additional colonizations of other corals and stromatoporoids in fore-reef areas. The reef-core facies consists of a taxonomically diverse coral fauna which exhibit both massive and ramose coralla. The major reef-building species, in order of decreasing abundance, are tentatively identified as: *Phyllocoenia* sp. (a large, *Montastrea*-like species which lacks a columella); *Baryphyllia* sp.; *Dendraraea* sp.; and *Latomeandra* sp.. The coral-reef facies at Las Latas apparently was not very extensive since its outcrop can be recognized over only a relatively small area. Laterally equivalent facies toward the west and south are of deeper water origin. At least 13 coral species occur in the strata at Las Latas and adjacent areas. The coral fauna includes: *Astrocoenia* sp. cf. *A. globosa* (Fromentel); *Stylosmilis* sp.; *Latomeandra* sp.; *Baryphyllia* sp.; *Dendraraea* sp.; and *Phyllocoenia* sp.. Additionally, several indeterminate form, including a few species with solitary coralla and a few with dendroid branching coralla, also occur in the Mal Paso Formation.