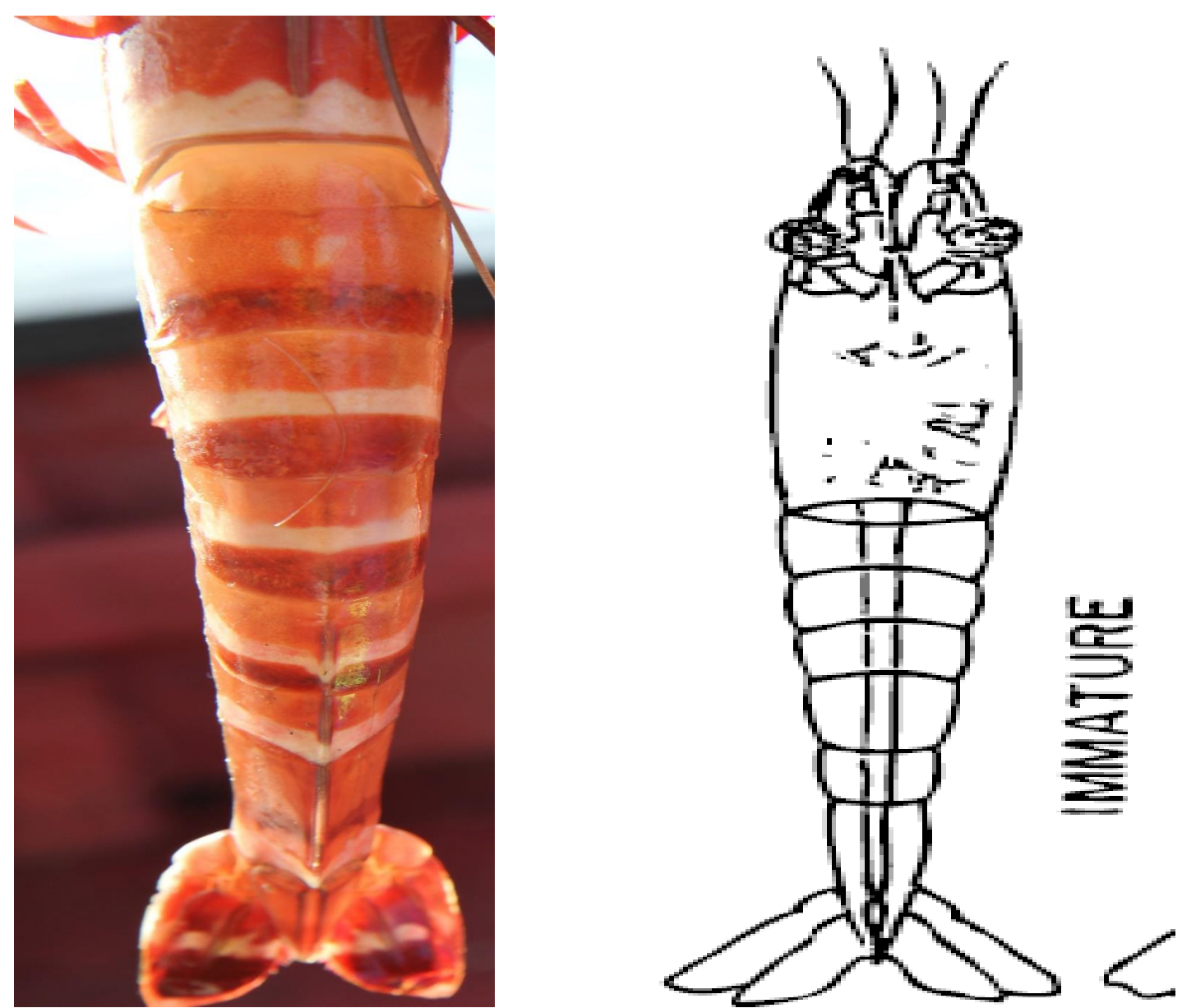


# Ovarian Maturation Stages

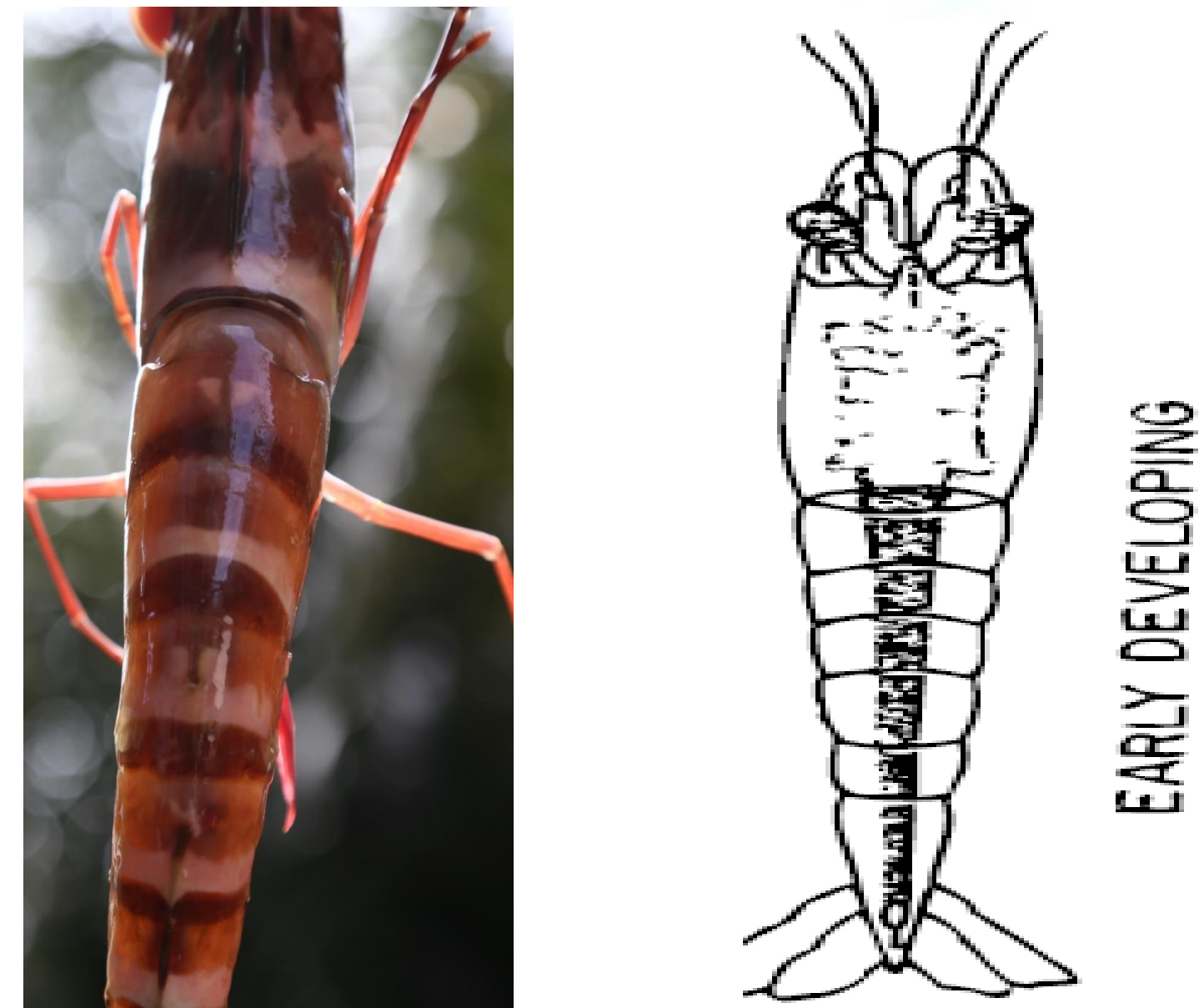
This maturation stage is based on the external appearance of *Penaeus monodon* ovaries at different stages of maturity as seen through the dorsal exoskeleton (modified from Primavera, 1983)

Stage 1



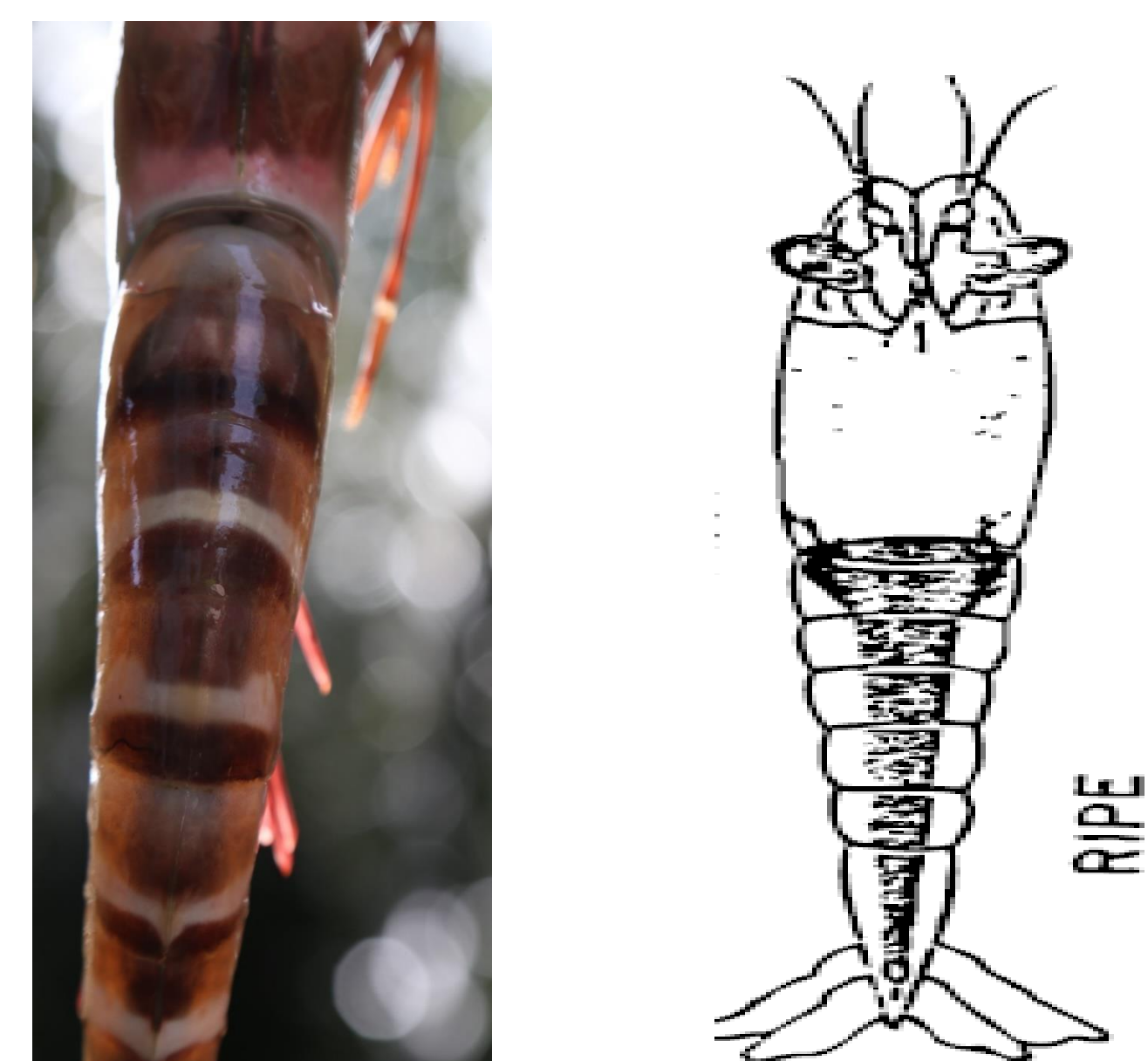
*Stage I and V (undeveloped and spent stages).* Ovaries are thin, transparent, and not visible through the dorsal exoskeleton.

Stage 2



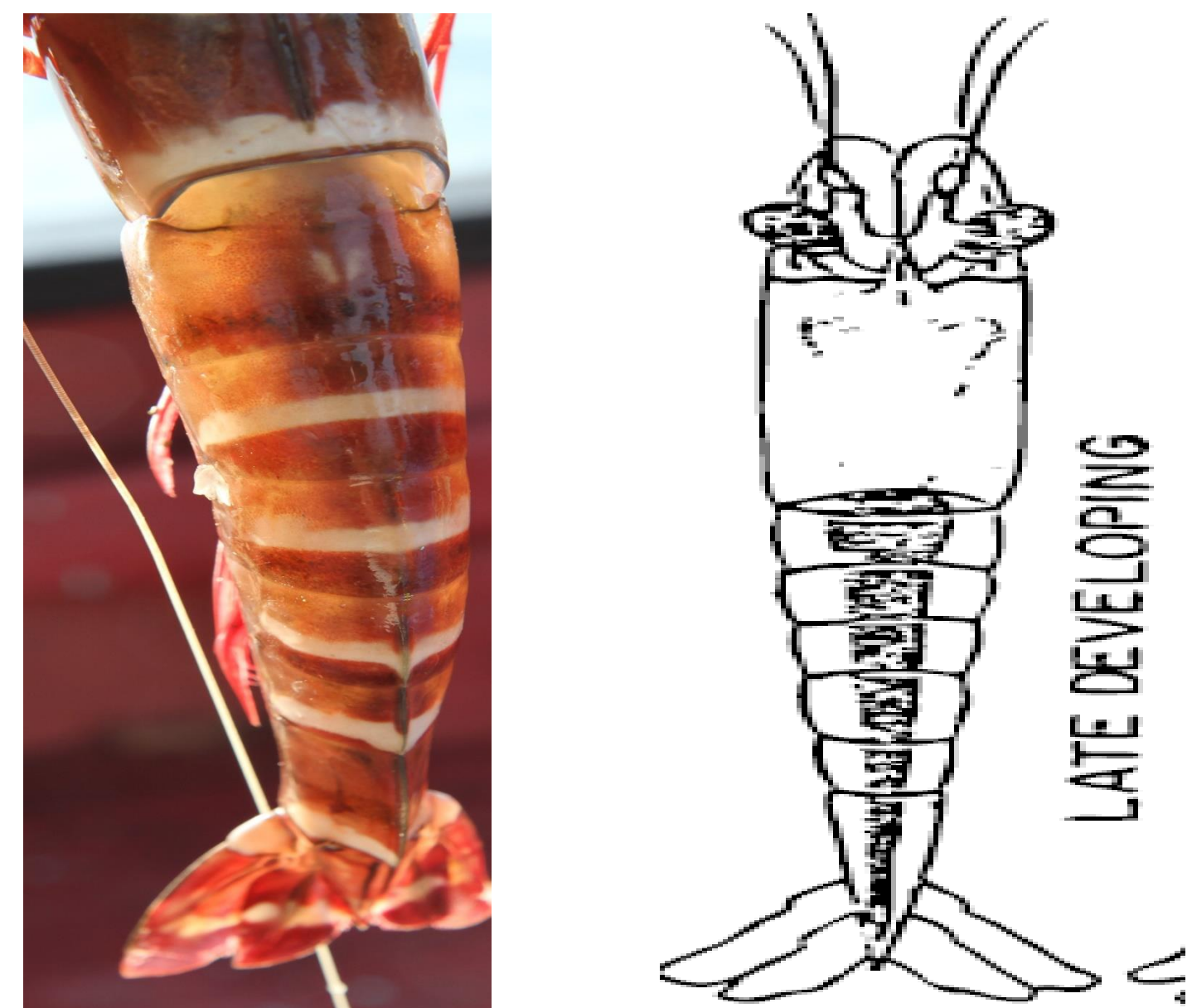
*Stage II (developing stage).* Referred to as early maturing stage the ovaries are flaccid and white to olive green in color, and discernible as a linear band through the Exoskeleton.

Stage 4



*Stage IV (ripe stage).* The ovary classified as ripe (mature) stage is diamond-shaped, expanding through the exoskeleton of the first abdominal segment. The isolated ovary appears dark olive green, filling up all the available space in the body cavity.

Stage 3



*Stage III (nearly ripe stage).* Ovaries have glaucous color with the anterior portion thick and expanded. They are very visible through the exoskeleton, particularly at the first abdominal segment, when viewed against the light.