

## Dissection - Equipment

### *Microscope*

For dissection purposes this should be binocular, giving magnifications of either 15x and 30x, or 20x and 40x, or have zoom magnification ranging from (typically) 7x to 45x. Eyepieces supplied are usually 10x. The lighting system supplied is usually fine for working with specimens but not so good for photography. Compound microscopes reveal much finer detail when examining slides, but see the image 'upside down', so are not suitable for dissections.

### *Tool Roll*

A few basic tools are needed, which can be bought or in some cases hand-made. Here are some suggestions:

**Needles, brushes, probes** These can be made from matches or cocktail sticks to create handles. Carefully saw a groove into one end of the stick and insert a fine pin. Glue this in place and bind it with cotton. Once dry, Apply a coat of varnish. Create a number of these with a variety of pins (available from ALS), some straight and others bent or hooked at the tip. Brushes can be made in the same way, traditionally from snipe feathers but failing these experiment with other materials. The length of the handle should not be too long as this would magnify movements.

### *Excavated Blocks*

Used for working on the dissection at the microscope or for staining baths.

*Pipette, Glass Tubes, Glass Slides and Cover Slips*, a variety of which will prove useful.

### *KOH warmer*

Potassium Hydroxide if cool may take many hours to soften an abdomen but this time can be greatly reduced if the solution is hot. A glass tube touching a 40w bulb will give an ideal temperature without boiling and will reduce times to around 30 - 40 minutes for a small noctuid and around 20 minutes for a small micro.

**Warning! - KOH is highly caustic, boiling may cause it to leap from the tube and onto your skin or eye!**

**Warning! - putting liquid near electrics is not a good plan!**

The idea is to safely warm the tube so the liquid is hot, but not boiling.

