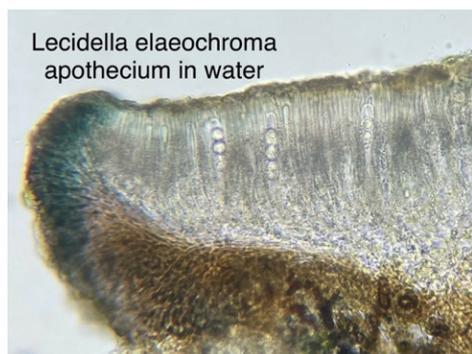


Microscopy Zoom Groups for Autumn 2023



Feedback from the 2022 sessions included: “I’m simply a lot more comfortable using the microscope and I think the group has considerably pushed me up the learning curve.”

The sessions aim to build confidence with microscopy so that you can continue to develop your skills more independently. The groups offer informal opportunities to share learning with others rather than being formal courses.

Email zoom-microscopy@britishlichensociety.org.uk if you are interested in joining either the Basics or Improvers group, or for more information. Group size will be a maximum of six people, so that everyone has time to contribute to each session.

For the Basics group, you will need to already have both a dissecting microscope and a high-powered compound microscope with magnification to at least x400, and to know how to view specimens (for example a single leaf from a moss, or scales from a moth’s wing), and ideally you will already have had a go at cutting sections, even if with only limited success. The sessions will be mostly aimed at learning how to cut thinner sections and how to interpret them, rather than on how to use the microscopes, or species identification.

For the Improvers group, you will already be able to cut sections reasonably well but will be looking to extend your skills.

Each session has a main theme. Group members are strongly encouraged to have a go at the focus topic in advance, and to share and discuss photos of their work – practice makes all the difference. All meetings are on Monday evenings at 7pm on Zoom and will run for about an hour and a half.

Essential reading: the BLS website page “Microscope Work”, especially the two links to information about cutting sections, written by John Skinner and Mark Powell.

<https://britishlichensociety.org.uk/learning/microscope-work>

Autumn Basics programme:

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| 25.09.23 | Using squashes of tiny, tiny bits of apothecia to look for spores (don’t panic if you don’t find any) and an introduction to cutting sections - dark spores (for example <i>Rinodina</i> , <i>Physcia</i> , <i>Rhizocarpon</i>) tend to be easier to see |
| 23.10.23 | Cutting and interpreting apothecial sections - <i>Lecidella elaeochroma</i> is easy to find and is colourful in section |
| 20.11.23 | Cutting and interpreting apothecial sections of <i>Lecanora</i> species (optionally using polarised light) |
| 18.12.23 | Cutting and interpreting apothecial sections – using K/ink staining |

Autumn Improvers programme:

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|---------|---|
| 9.10.23 | Cutting and interpreting more awkward fruiting bodies, such as lirellae, or crustose apothecial sections - optionally embedding in PVA or Gum Arabic – for example <i>Opegrapha</i> species, <i>Lecidella scabra</i> , <i>Lecidella stigmatea</i> |
| 6.11.23 | Cutting and interpreting perithecial sections, optionally using embedding in PVA or Gum Arabic - for example <i>Verrucaria nigrescens</i> |
| 4.12.23 | Depending on participants’ interests this might include looking at pycnidia for example in <i>Xanthoria parietina</i> or <i>Lecidella elaeochroma</i> , and/or soredia/isidia |

I am a fairly recent convert to lichens, with some experience of using microscopes for looking at fungi, and now lichens too. Di Napier – session organiser – email zoom-microscopy@britishlichensociety.org.uk