

Books reviewed 2: recent Qukett publications

L Woolnough – *Understanding and using the stereomicroscope*. London: Qukett Microscopical Club, 2010. Pbk, pp.88. ISBN 978-0-9564591-0-7. Subsidised list price £6.

[Club members should purchase from the Sales Officer].



This is an attractively-produced small (A5) book, fully illustrated in colour, and clearly set out in colour-coded sections. An introduction on how objects are actually seen is followed by a section on how microscopes work, and the kinds of instrument available – all relatively non-technical and easily followed. Following this, working with stereo instruments is described and discussed to just about the right depth for the beginner. The informative illustrations are printed in large sizes, and the diagrams are clear. Some ‘exercises’ are included, and if these were to be followed by absolute beginners in microscopy, progress would have been made.

There are some imperfections – such as using ‘depth of vision’ (p.30) for what is properly to be called depth of field: and a few commas are scattered about a bit, as on p.48. ‘Some of the light given off by an object or reflected from it’ as written by the author has the capacity to confuse, and so has the use of ‘top lighting’ where reflected illumination should properly be used. The shorter phrase has of course been current in the Qukett for years, but is nonetheless not to be perpetuated in print.

All that said, this is a useful book sold at a low price: it may remind the more experienced reader of things known but not properly formulated, while it will help the tyro to get the most out of an instrument especially suited to the needs of a beginner. At its price manufacturers might helpfully include a copy with a stereo instrument when they sell one, especially if supplied to a primary school.

When it is reprinted (as it is very likely it will be), if the points mentioned above are taken care of, it will be even better.

Brian Bracegirdle
Steve Gill

B. Bracegirdle – *A History of Photography with the Light Microscope*. London: Qukett Microscopical Club, 2010. Hbk, pp.221. ISBN 978-0-9564591-1-4. Subsidised list price £24.50.

Available only from the Qukett sole sales agent – Savona Books (www.savonabooks@savonabooks.free-online.co.uk).

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It would be impossible to calculate how many photomicrographs have been published to support the communication of scientific results, or to under-estimate the importance of the technique in validating what was reported. It is therefore perhaps surprising that the history of photomicrography has not previously been documented to any full extent; *A History of Photography with the Light Microscope* corrects