

ESSENTIAL MATERIAL NEEDED FOR STORING AND DISPLAYING INSECTS

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Storage Boxes

You need at least one specially designed and constructed container for short/long term insect storage (a.k.a. insect collection boxes, Schmitt' boxes). The lid is tightly fitted to the box to help prevent entry of scavenger insects which feed on dead insect specimens. Cigar boxes make excellent containers for temporary storage of pinned insect specimens; however, they are poor storage containers for storage over long periods of time.



Insect box

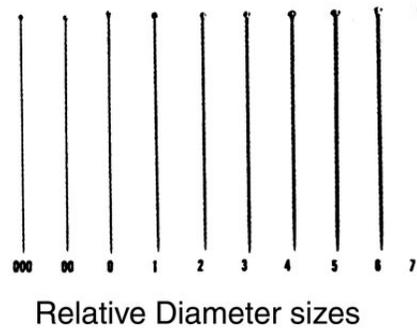


Schmitt' boxes

For extended storage and for display, tighter containers are essential. Add naphthalene crystals (a.k.a. moth balls), placing them into a small container in one corner of each display box to prevent damage to your specimens.

Insect Pins

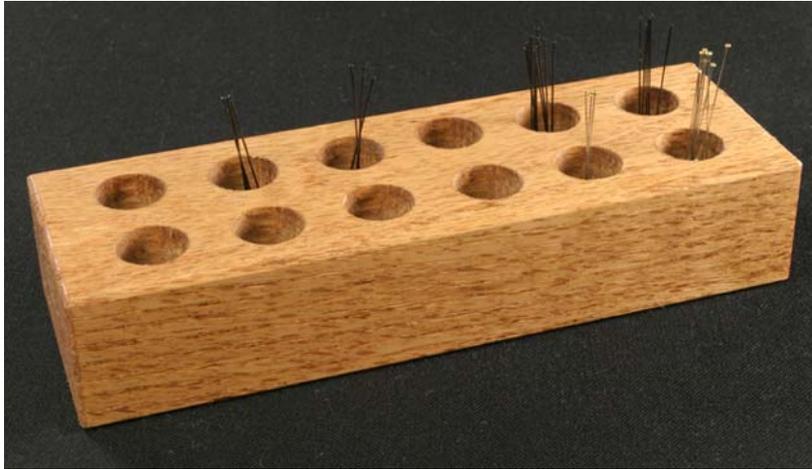
Special pins are needed to pin insects. They come in several sizes from 00 through 7, the size of the pin increasing with each number. Number 2 & 3 insect pins are the best for most purposes. Insect pins are purchased from biological supply houses (see Handout 1). Avoid using common pins. They will get rusty.



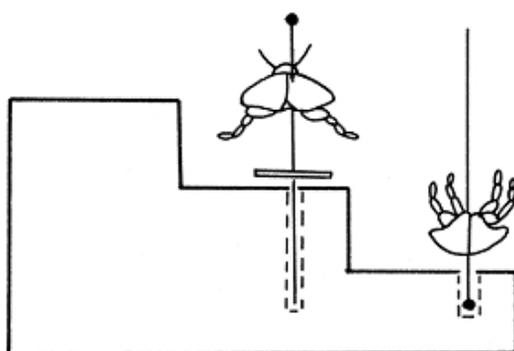
Relative Diameter sizes

Pinning Storage Rack/holders and Pinning Block

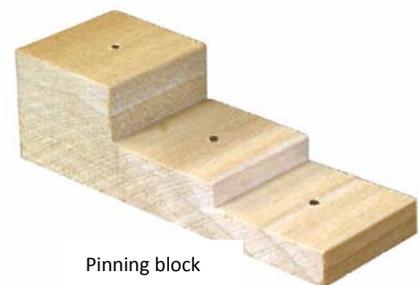
The pinning storage holders are convenient for keeping several sizes of insect pins labeled and easily accessible. You can choose from the ones pictured below.



Larger insects should be mounted using a wooden pinning block, a simple piece of equipment. A very small hole is bored almost through the bottom in the middle



of each step. A simpler pinning block can be made by drilling three holes—1, 3/4, and 1/2 inch deep—into a



small wooden block. Proper use of a pinning block will result in an attractive collection with the insect, collection and identification labels in uniform position.

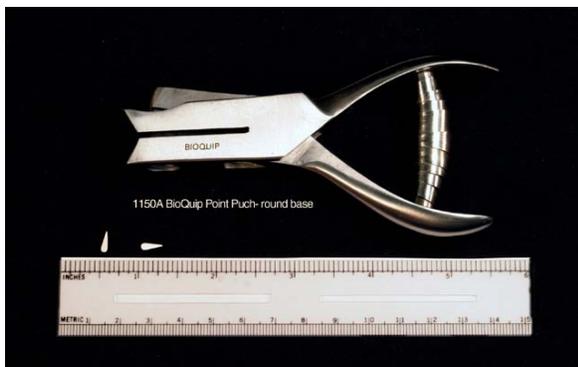
Spreading Board

Mounting butterflies and moths is a special technique that requires a spreading board. The spreading board is usually made of soft pine with a piece of balsa or cork underneath the center groove to receive insect pins. They can also be made of Styrofoam. An acceptable spreading board can be made from balsa wood or cardboard strips, 2 heavy paper clasps, four corks and four common pins. Spreading boards can also be ordered from biological supply houses and hobby stores.



Point punches

Point punches are invaluable aids in mounting very small insects. Standard size points, with either round or square base, are 1/4" (6mm) long. Larger size points, 1/2" (13mm) with either round or square base, are also available. Points are punched from card stock or clear acetate, and specimens are then glued to the points.



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