

## Preparing Moth Specimens for Dissection

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These instructions explain how to prepare moth specimens for confirmation of identification (ID) by microscopic examination. These are my own preferences, but other workers will probably accept specimens prepared in this way. ID often requires examination of both external and internal features so the whole specimen should be preserved in a near perfect condition as possible. Dissection of the genitalia requires removal of the abdomen and separation of the reproductive organs and their arrangement on a microscope slide. This is only possible if the specimen is completely dessicated since the presence of any moisture will result in decay and the growth of moulds obscuring the features required for ID. Traditionally specimens were presented set on pins in a perfectly dehydrated state ready for examination.