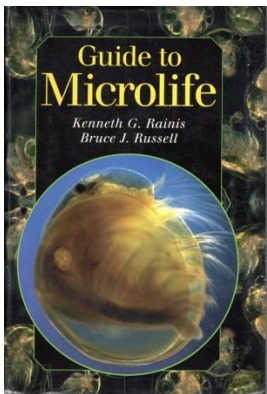


IN MY LIBRARY...

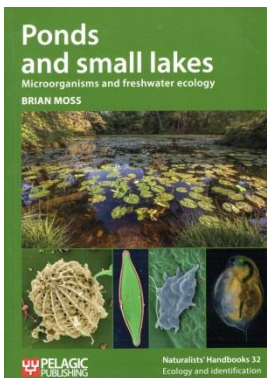
I have a fairly large library. A small section is filled with novels (Arthur C. Clarke, Isaac Azimov, Frank Herbert, Dan Brown...). A larger section is about paleontology and geology. A big section is made up of books about natural history, such as a fair number of Peterson Field Guides. Another big section is about photography. And then there is a small shelf on top with a few books about microscope, microscopy, and microorganisms. I would like it to be bigger, but good books about microorganisms are not that common to start with. Sure, one can always find needed informations on the Web, but there is something to be said about the *feeling* one gets when opening a book, with pages that you turn, an index to help you find what you're looking for, and no need for power or logging in. On top of it, the Web may be full of useful informations but it's often a challenge to find the needle in the haystack of useless or worthless gibberish.

Being fully bilingual does give me an advantage: I can find references in both French and English (and a little bit of Spanish, as I have one book of the fossils of Costa Rica...). So let me walk you through that section of my library that may be of interest to Micscape readers...

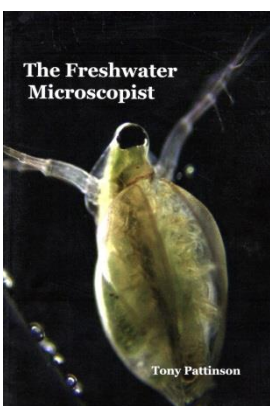


Guide to Microlife, by Kenneth G. Rainis and Bruce J. Russell. Published in 1996, it's still in print. New copies can be pricey (at least in North America), but it can be found easily on the used market. That's where I found my own copy.

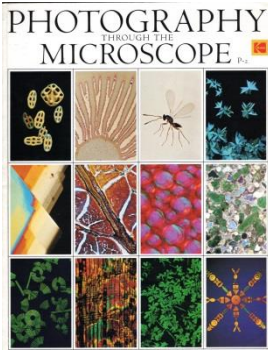
This is my Bible when comes the time to identify microorganisms. It's well organized, with excellent photographs that reflect what you may see yourself when looking through the microscope. Part of the book is organized around the type of environments that could be explored (soil and sands, yard, forest, quiet waters and moving waters, and more, but nothing from the sea). They also suggest sampling techniques and equipment that could be made to collect samples. I highly recommend it.



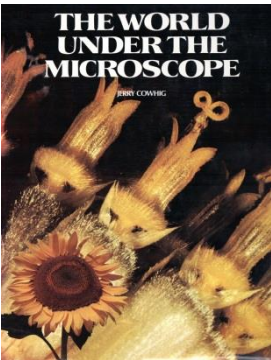
Ponds and small lakes, Microorganisms and freshwater ecology, by Brian Moss, published in 2017 is affordable and came highly recommended by some reviewers, but I must admit that it left me a bit disappointed. While there is a section on identification of microorganisms, most of the book concerns the ecology of ponds and small lakes. It makes for an interesting read, but very limited when trying to identify something found in fresh water habitat.



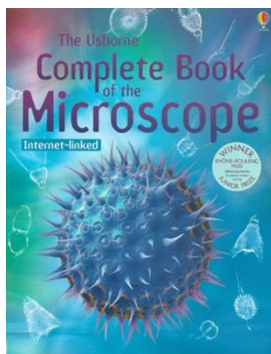
The Freshwater Microscopist, by Tony Pattinson. First published in 2015, it's the first of five books that the author has published on Blurb. Some may find them a bit pricey of their size (something to be expected from Blurb books), but I found them chockfull of interesting informations written in a simple style by a keen microscopist and an excellent photographer. A lot of the book relates personal experiences of the author and deals at length with the collecting and mounting of water fleas, one of his interests. So far, I have only the first book of the series, but I plan on getting the others.



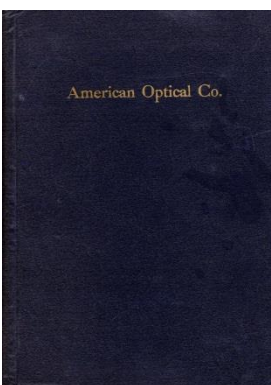
Photography Through the Microscope, written by John Gustav Delly, published by Kodak in 1980. As far as I know, it's only available as a used book, and it starts to show its age. Many of the microscopy techniques described will be of little use to most people. On top of it, the photography aspect is from the film era; being published by Kodak, it's not surprising that a fair part of the book deals with various films, filters, and processing. For the technically inclined, this book is full of the theoretical and optical aspects of microscopy.



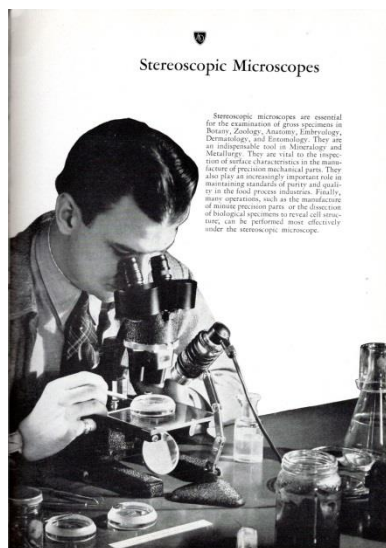
The World Under the Microscope, by Jerry Cowhig, was published in 1973, and so can only be found on the used market. While some of the photographs may look a bit dated by modern standards, it remains an excellent book to see the wonders of the microscopic world. Most shots were made with an optical microscope, only a few with electronic microscope, so what you see in that book could also be seen by the average amateur. As a matter of fact, many of my own pictures look a lot like what I see in that book. It's an excellent book to inspire one to look around.



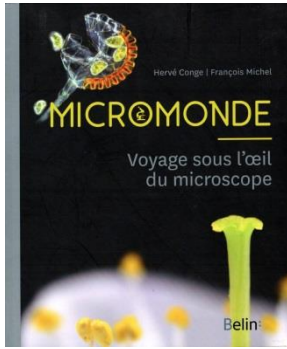
The Complete Book of the Microscope, by Kirsteen Rogers and Paul Dowswell, published by Usborne, last printed in 2006, it seems to be out of print. While it contains some interesting information (especially concerning the dangers of playing with bacteria cultures!), my main critique concerns the choice of using mostly electron microscope photographs, so most of what you see in this book cannot be seen with optical microscopes. Aimed at a younger crowd, it is linked to Web pages that offer more information.



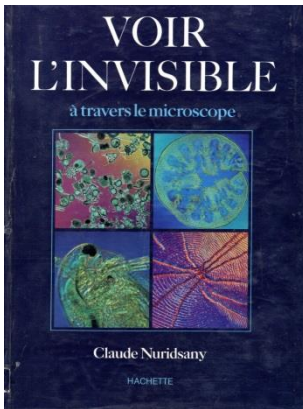
American Optical Co. is particular. It's not so much a book as it is a catalogue of the equipment offered by the company. While no publishing date can be found, it has to be from the 1960's. The binding has become fragile with age, and its usefulness limited (unless you're looking for old microscopes), but it can be seen as an interesting collector's item. I received it as a gift from one of my former suppliers, after buying two microscopes and a few lenses... I would love to find something similar for Zeiss...



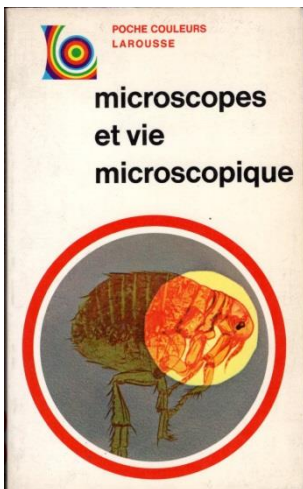
Now, for the bilingual crowd out there...



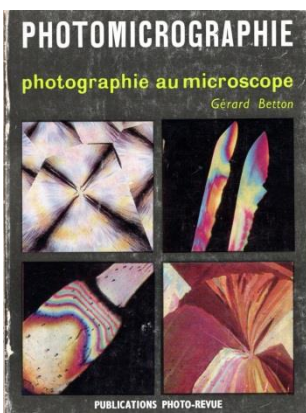
Micromonde, Voyage sous l'œil du microscope, by Hervé Conge and François Michel; published in 2014, it can be pricey when bought new, but can be found used. Here is another book to inspire the amateur to get out there and look at something new. The authors show us various cells, from unicellular or pluricellular organisms, from plants and animals, found in soil, water, the sea, or tree trunks... Throughout, they explore different environments, including the mineral domain. The photography is excellent and the text lively. This is a book I like to open every now and then to inspire me.



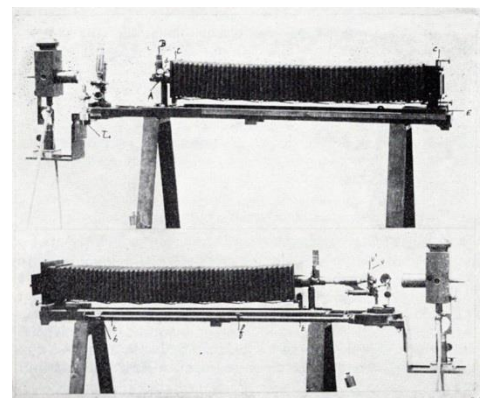
Voir L'invisible à travers le microscope, by Claude Nuridsany. Long out of print, this is one of the first books about microscopy that I ever bought. The author is a photographer and filmmaker known for his award winning film "Microcosmos"; this film is worth a look whether or not you speak French as there are hardly any spoken words in it. It's a masterpiece of a macrophotography, an exploration of a prairie during a single day. As for the book, it covers a multitude of microscopic subjects, from things found around the house, to crystals, to plants, to insects, and things found in water puddles. It ends with some explanations of how the pictures were made and suggestions on how to prepare various subjects for microscopic observation.



Microscopes et vie microscopique, by P. Healey. I bought this one when I was a teenager. Published in 1970, good luck finding it... It was an excellent introduction to the young kid that I was, but now I keep it mostly as a souvenir. There are some items of interest (like the various types of microscopes and how to adjust phase contrast microscopes), but most of it can be found in other books of my collection. There are no photographs, only illustrations, but at least they are in color.



PHOTOMICROGRAPHIE, photographie au microscope, by Gérard Betton, was published in 1969, so you can guess that the photographic techniques presented are out of date... I found it in a used book store and bought it mainly for some historical informations and photographs of antique systems; I'm glad to work with modern equipment... That said, the schematics on optics and microscopy are still valid.



Not seen here are a few books I kept from high school, books on biology and ecology that include some information on microorganisms and cells. The details may be slightly out of date, but the basics are still valid. Also not seen, is a binder where I keep prints of all my instruction manuals for the microscopes in my collection. I'm still missing instructions for my rare Zeiss Stativ XV ...

What books can be found in your own library? Or maybe do you prefer to find your informations on the Web? Whatever your sources of informations may be, I'd like to know. So drop a note to Micscape and share the informations with the rest of us...

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