Fishery Technology
1994, Vol. 31(1) pp: 83

A Low Cost Staining Apparatus

K.C John
Zoology Research Centre
Catholicate College, Pathanamthitta, Kerala, India

In our research laboratories and post-graduate Life Science departments the high cost of chemicals has been one of the major problems hindering research work. The prices of most of the high grade chemicals are much more than what an ordinary laboratory can afford. This has very much affected the quality of work especially in histology, histochemistry and cytology where the use of absolute alcohol, special stains and other costly hydrocarbons are inevitable.

During staining procedure, stains and other chemicals are usually taken in coplin jars which need a minimum quantity of 50 ml working solution. After staining a few slides, most of these chemicals loose their strength and are discarded.

In order to save the staining solutions a simple stain holding jar with a capacity of 10 ml which can accommodate 5 slides at a time has been developed (Fig. 1). The jar is modifed from a plastic container, used for storing stained slides, available with the laboratory suppliers. These jars can be fixed vertically in suitable slots made on a platform of wood or thermocole. The whole ascending and descending staining series jars can be placed in an area of 24 x 8 cm which ordinarily requires ten times more space if conventional jars are used.

The advantages of the new jar are low cost, savings in chemicals and compactness which makes it a cost saving substitute for large volume coplin jars currently used for staining.

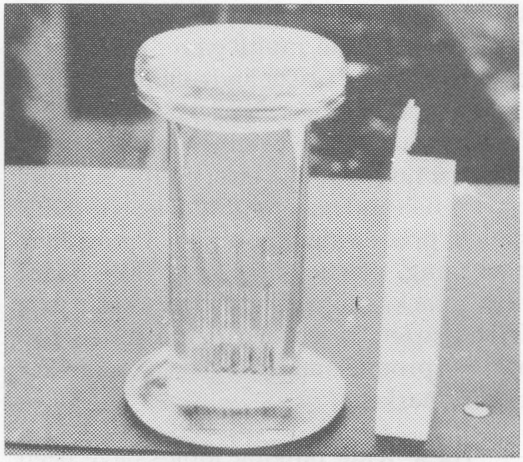

Fig. 1. An ordinary coplin jar compared with the improvised one on right.