

HYDROFLUORIC ACID FOR MARKING SLIDES.

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Various methods have been described for labeling slides in a series, or for keeping track of them while staining. The principle of etching glass with hydrofluoric acid has been known for a long time, and use has been made of it in various ways, but it does not seem to have been employed to any extent by biologist for marking slides.

The writer has tried a number of methods recently published for marking slides, but for one reason or another they were not very satisfactory. Generally the mark became so obliterated in passing through the stains and grades of alcohol that they were beyond recognition.

Through a suggestion offered by Miss Lumina C. Riddle it occurred to me that hydrofluoric acid might be suitable for this purpose. Very satisfactory results were obtained by the following method:

Take a thoroughly cleaned slide, dip one end into paraffin and let it cool. Take a needle and make whatever mark is desired, and then with a toothpick, or a similar piece of wood, apply a drop of hydrofluoric acid to the mark. Let this remain from two to five minutes; then melt the paraffin and clean the slide. Any number of slides may be marked at a time and the method is nearly as rapid as that with ink and much more reliable. Ordinary precautions must be taken in handling the hydrofluoric acid.
