

## **Photography of Snow Grains in the Field**

Shinji Ikeda

*Graduate School of Science & Technology, Niigata University /Argos INC., Myoko, Japan*

Have you ever been in doubt about how to distinguish snow grains? Have you ever wanted to record snow grains' images? This is possible by using the collimate method. This method is not a new invention, rather it is a general method used in star watching and bird watching, but it isn't commonly used when looking at snow grains. The equipment used is a loupe for the slide film (8-15 times), a compact digital camera (which has a close-up feature for objects closer than 25 cm) and snow crystal screen.

The merits of this method are as follows:

- It works in narrow spaces (about 50°-50 cm).
- It works even in moderate-strong wind conditions.
- It can be used by ski patrol and mountain guides as well as recreationalists, and is not just for scientists (The equipment is inexpensive, compact, easy to handle and most probably you already have it).
- These photographs are optimal for educational purposes (different from the microphotographs, used to take photographs of snow grains with the same sight as you would see it in snow pit observations).