

光学学报

浮游藻类细胞显微多聚焦图像融合方法

贾仁庆^{1,2}, 殷高方^{2*}, 赵南京^{1,2*}, 徐敏², 胡翔³, 黄朋³, 梁天泓², 朱余⁴, 陈晓伟², 甘婷婷², 张小玲⁵

¹中国科学技术大学环境科学与光电技术学院, 安徽 合肥 230026;

²中国科学院合肥物质科学研究院安徽光学精密机械研究所中国科学院环境光学与技术重点实验室, 安徽 合肥 230031;

³合肥学院, 安徽 合肥 230601;

⁴安徽省生态环境监测中心, 安徽 合肥 230061;

⁵安徽大学, 安徽 合肥 230601

摘要 以鱼腥藻、栅藻和盘星藻为分析对象, 通过采集多个焦平面的显微图像, 基于拉普拉斯能量与引导滤波以及图像 HSV 颜色空间饱和度分量分别检测显微图像聚焦区域和失焦区域, 研究浮游藻类细胞显微多聚焦图像融合方法, 并与小波变换、拉普拉斯金字塔以及脉冲耦合神经网络融合方法进行对比分析。结果表明: 鱼腥藻、栅藻和盘星藻融合图像的边缘信息保持度、空间频率、平均梯度分别为 0.3529、8.9654、0.0055, 0.3778、7.0058、0.0023 和 0.2940、1.5445、0.0005, 均优于对比融合方法, 具有更好的边缘信息传递能力及更高的图像清晰度, 有效实现了浮游藻类细胞显微多聚焦图像融合, 为获取浮游藻类细胞的全景深显微图像提供了思路。

关键词 图像处理; 浮游藻类细胞; 显微; 多聚焦图像融合; 聚焦区域检测; 失焦扩散效应

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1 引言

浮游藻类细胞监测是水质生物评价的重要组成部分, 传统的利用显微镜检测浮游藻类细胞需要专业人员操作, 且耗时费力, 因此探索浮游藻类细胞图像的自动测量方法具有十分重要的意义^[1-3]。基于图像识别的浮游藻类细胞监测技术一般可分为图像采集、图像分割和图像识别 3 个步骤, 其中采集清晰的浮游藻类细胞图像是进行识别分类的首要环节。然而, 由于高倍显微镜的景深有限, 同一视野下位于景深范围外的浮游藻细胞图像比较模糊^[4]。一方面, 有些藻细胞体积较大或形态结构呈现丝状, 如鱼腥藻的长度可达几百微米, 显微成像时藻细胞在景深方向的距离容易超过显微镜的景深范围, 导致显微图像中位于景深范围外的区域出现由失焦引起的模糊问题; 另一方面, 对于藻细胞体积较小的藻种, 如栅藻的长度只有 7 μm 左右, 同一视野下多个藻细胞在景深方向的距离也容易超过显微镜的景深范围, 导致采集的藻类显微图像中部分藻细胞较为模糊。因此, 在载物台的不同高度采集同一视野的多聚焦显微图像, 并利用多聚焦图像融合方法实现浮游藻类细胞图像的多聚焦图像融合来获得全景深的清晰图像, 具有十分重要的意义。

多聚焦图像融合是将同一视野多幅原始图像的聚焦区域保留在融合图像中, 丢弃原始图像的非聚焦区域^[5]。常用的多聚焦图像融合方法有拉普拉斯金字塔 (LP) 法^[6-7]、小波变换 (WT) 法^[8]、脉冲耦合神经网络 (PCNN) 法^[9-10]等。其中: LP 法将原始图像分解成多个具有不同分解参数的分解层, 按融合规则融合各分解层的参数, 并通过拉普拉斯逆变换重构融合图像, 然而 LP 变换不包含方向信息, 导致融合图像丢失了方向细节信息^[11]; WT 法在水平、垂直、对角 3 个方向上均能较好地提取图像特征和边缘信息, 但 WT 法不具备平移不变性, 导致融合图像边缘容易产生伪影^[11]; 神经网络法如 PCNN 法在多聚焦图像融合中得到较多应用, 然而由于模型参数多, 图像融合耗费时间长, 无法满足实时性要求^[12]。目前已有的研究主要集中在自然图像的多聚焦图像融合领域, 而显微图像中存在着自然图像中少有的失焦扩散效应^[13]。基于像素点的空间域图像融合方法在多幅原始图像结构相似时具有较好的融合效果^[11]。一幅浮游藻类细胞的显微图像可由聚焦区域、由失焦扩散效应引起的失焦区域和背景 3 个部分组成, 若直接将现有的图像融合方法应用到浮游藻类细胞的显微多聚焦图像融合中, 失焦扩散效应会严重影响多聚焦浮游藻类细胞显微图像的融合质量。

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通信作者: *gfyin@aiofm.ac.cn; **njzhao@aiofm.ac.cn

因此,若能定位显微图像的失焦区域,在多聚焦图像融合的过程中丢弃失焦区域,将有助于提高浮游藻类细胞显微图像的融合质量。

浮游藻类细胞中含有丰富的色素成分^[14-15],使得浮游藻类细胞的显微图像具有十分明显颜色特征,如蓝藻呈现蓝色、绿藻呈现绿色等。即使是在失焦扩散的场景下,浮游藻类细胞的显微图像仍然有较明显颜色特征。因此,本文利用拉普拉斯能量和引导滤波度量浮游藻类细胞图像的局部聚焦程度,并通过二值化确定浮游藻类细胞显微图像的聚焦区域;利用浮游藻类细胞显微图像HSV色彩空间的颜色饱和度S分量可定位到藻细胞所在的区域^[16],结合S分量和聚焦区域检测显微图像的失焦区域,对多幅显微图像进行空间域融合,选择聚焦区域中聚焦程度值大者为输出像素值,失焦区域不参与融合,背景区域取平均值为融合输出结果,从而实现浮游藻类细胞显微多聚焦图像的空间域融合,并将所提方法与其他常见的融合方法进行对比分析。实验结果验证了所提方法在保持融合质量的同时较好地去除了失焦扩散效应对融合结果的影响,具有明显的优势。

2 方 法

2.1 聚焦区域检测

图像的拉普拉斯能量是空间域图像融合方法中首选的聚焦度量方法^[17-18]。拉普拉斯算子可以表征图像边缘的清晰度^[19],拉普拉斯能量可通过图像拉普拉斯算子的局部平均获得,即原始图像 I_n 的局部聚焦度 F_n^0 可定义为

$$F_n^0 = H \otimes (\nabla^2 \times I_n), \quad (1)$$

$$\nabla^2 \times I_n = \frac{\partial^2 I_n}{\partial x^2} + \frac{\partial^2 I_n}{\partial y^2}, \quad (2)$$

式中: H 为均值滤波器; ∇^2 为拉普拉斯算子; $n=1, 2, \dots, N$,为待融合原始图像的索引。将浮游藻细胞显微图像的灰度图像经过式(1)处理后,即可得到图像的初始局部聚焦信息。由于未考虑融合图像的空间一致性,使用引导滤波^[18]对初始聚焦度 F_n^0 进行优化,即

$$F_n = f_{GF}(F_n^0, I_n), \quad (3)$$

式中: f_{GF} 为引导滤波函数。对经引导滤波处理的聚焦度 F_n 进行大津法(OTSU)二值化处理,在二值化图像中像素值大于0的像素点集合 P_n 即为聚焦区域:

$$A_{PF_n} = P_n \in f_{OTSU}(F_n) > 0. \quad (4)$$

2.2 失焦区域检测

受显微镜景深的限制,位于显微镜景深范围以外的浮游藻类细胞显微图像会出现较为明显的失焦扩散效应,仅通过拉普拉斯能量虽然可确定显微图像的聚焦区域,但仍无法分离浮游藻类细胞显微图像的失焦区域和背景区域,从而导致在多聚焦图像融合的过程中,失焦扩散区域严重影响了融合图像的质量。浮游

藻类细胞中含有丰富的色素成分,因此在显微图像中具有明显的颜色特征。本实验通过浮游藻类细胞图像的饱和度S分量定位显微图像中的浮游藻类细胞所在的区域 A_{PS_n} ,并将其与聚焦区域相结合来确定失焦区域,即

$$A_{PD_n} = A_{PS_n} - A_{PF_n} \circ \quad (5)$$

而失焦区域 A_{PD_n} 被定义为聚焦区域 A_{PF_n} 在 A_{PS_n} 中的补集,即

$$A_{PS_n} = P_n \in f_{OTSU}(S_n) > 0, \quad (6)$$

式中: A_{PS_n} 为在饱和度二值化图像 S_n 中像素值大于0的像素点构成的集合。原始图像 I_n 的背景区域即可以认为是点集合 P_n 中除了聚焦区域、失焦区域的其他像素点构成的集合,即

$$A_{PB_n} = A_{P_n} - A_{PD_n} - A_{PF_n} \quad (7)$$

2.3 图像空间域融合

通过对图像进行上述处理,可检测出浮游藻类细胞显微图像中聚焦区域像素点集合 A_{PF_n} 、失焦区域像素点集合 A_{PD_n} 和背景像素点集合 A_{PB_n} 。融合方法的流程如图1所示,为了降低失焦扩散效应对融合方法的影响,失焦区域 A_{PB_n} 不参与多聚焦图像的融合,将聚焦区域中聚焦程度值大者为融合输出图像。若 N 幅原始图像中失焦区域有共同的交集,同样取聚焦程度 F_n 值大者为融合输出图像。针对背景区域 A_{PB_n} ,取原始图像的平均值作为输出结果。

以原始图像数目 $N=2$ 为例,令 $I_f(x, y)$ 为融合图像 (x, y) 处的像素值,定义失焦区域的交集为 $A_{PD} = A_{PD_1} \cap A_{PD_2} \cap \dots \cap A_{PD_N}$,则所提的图像融合方法如式(8)所示:

$$I_f(x, y) = \begin{cases} I_1(x, y), F_1(x, y) > F_2(x, y), P(x, y) \in A_{PF_1} \cup A_{PD} \\ I_2(x, y), F_1(x, y) < F_2(x, y), P(x, y) \in A_{PF_2} \cup A_{PD} \\ I_2(x, y), P(x, y) \in A_{DF_1}, P(x, y) \notin A_{DF_2} \\ I_1(x, y), P(x, y) \in A_{DF_2}, P(x, y) \notin A_{DF_1} \\ 0.5I_1(x, y) + 0.5I_2(x, y), \text{else} \end{cases} \quad (8)$$

3 结果与分析

通过控制精密位移载物台在景深方向的移动获取浮游藻类多聚焦显微图像,显微镜的放大倍数为40 \times 。实验以鱼腥藻(*Anabaena* sp.,长度大于100 μm)、栅藻(*Scenedesmus* sp.,长度约为7 μm)和盘星藻(*Pediastrum* sp.,长度约为20 μm)为研究对象,从主观视觉效果和客观定量评价两个方面对所提方法与常见融合方法进行对比分析。

3.1 主观视觉效果对比

精密位移台在景深方向自下而上每移动1 μm 采集一幅浮游藻类显微图像,图2和图3所示分别为精密

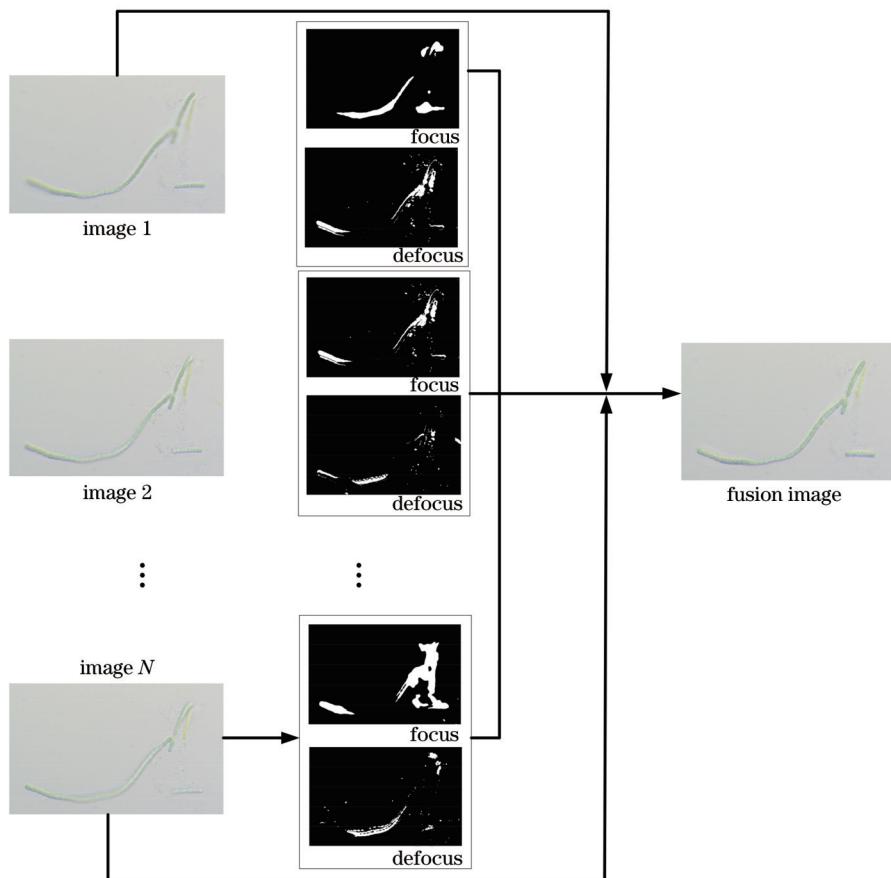
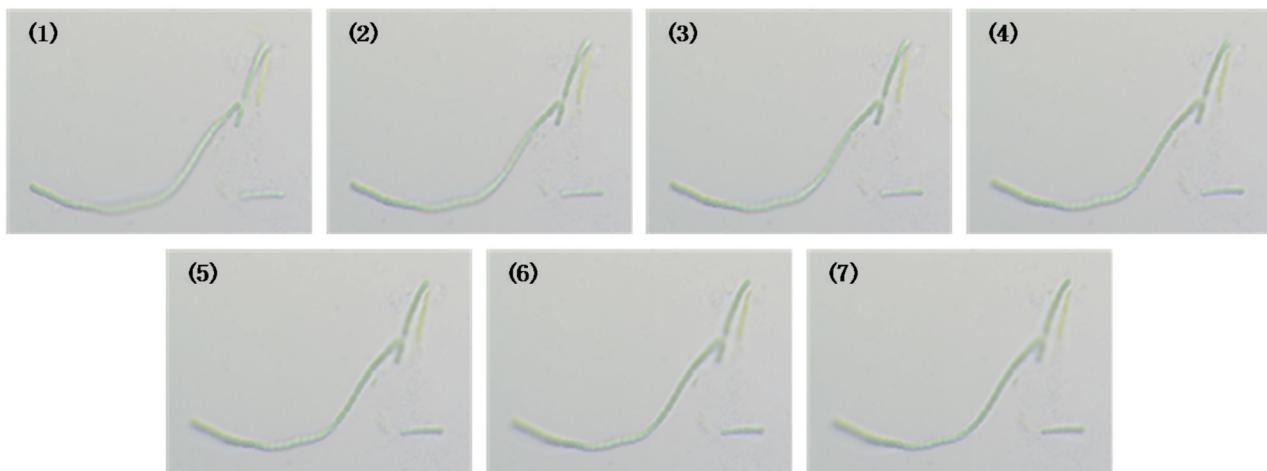


图1 显微多聚焦图像融合方法的流程图

Fig. 1 Flow of proposed microscopic multi-focus image fusion method

位移台在景深方向连续移动 $7 \mu\text{m}$ 时采集的鱼腥藻和栅藻细胞显微多聚焦图像, 图4所示为精密位移台在景深方向连续移动 $15 \mu\text{m}$ 采集的盘星藻显微多聚焦图

像。受到显微镜景深的限制, 同一视野的不同藻细胞位于不同的焦平面上, 导致采集的每幅显微图像都存在不同的清晰区域和模糊区域。

图2 精密位移台连续移动 $7 \mu\text{m}$ 时采集的鱼腥藻多聚焦显微图像Fig. 2 *Anabaena* sp. multi-focus microscopic images obtained by moving the platform to $7 \mu\text{m}$

基于WT法、LP法、PCNN法以及所提多聚焦融合方法对鱼腥藻、栅藻和盘星藻多聚焦显微图像进行融合, 结果如图5所示, 从主观视觉角度上对比各融合方法的效果。由图5可知, WT、LP和PCNN方法的融

合结果仍然存在局部模糊区域, 受失焦扩散影响较为严重。本文方法较好地保持了原始图像的清晰度, 有效去除了失焦扩散导致的模糊。

残差图可以在视觉上评价原始图像传递给融合图

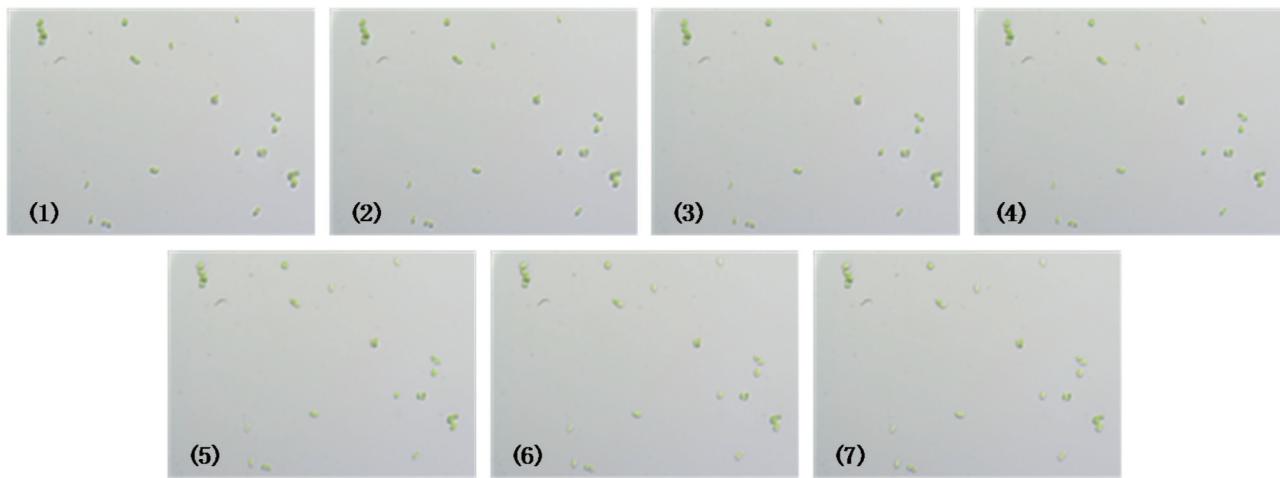


图3 精密位移台连续移动7 μm时采集的栅藻多聚焦显微图像

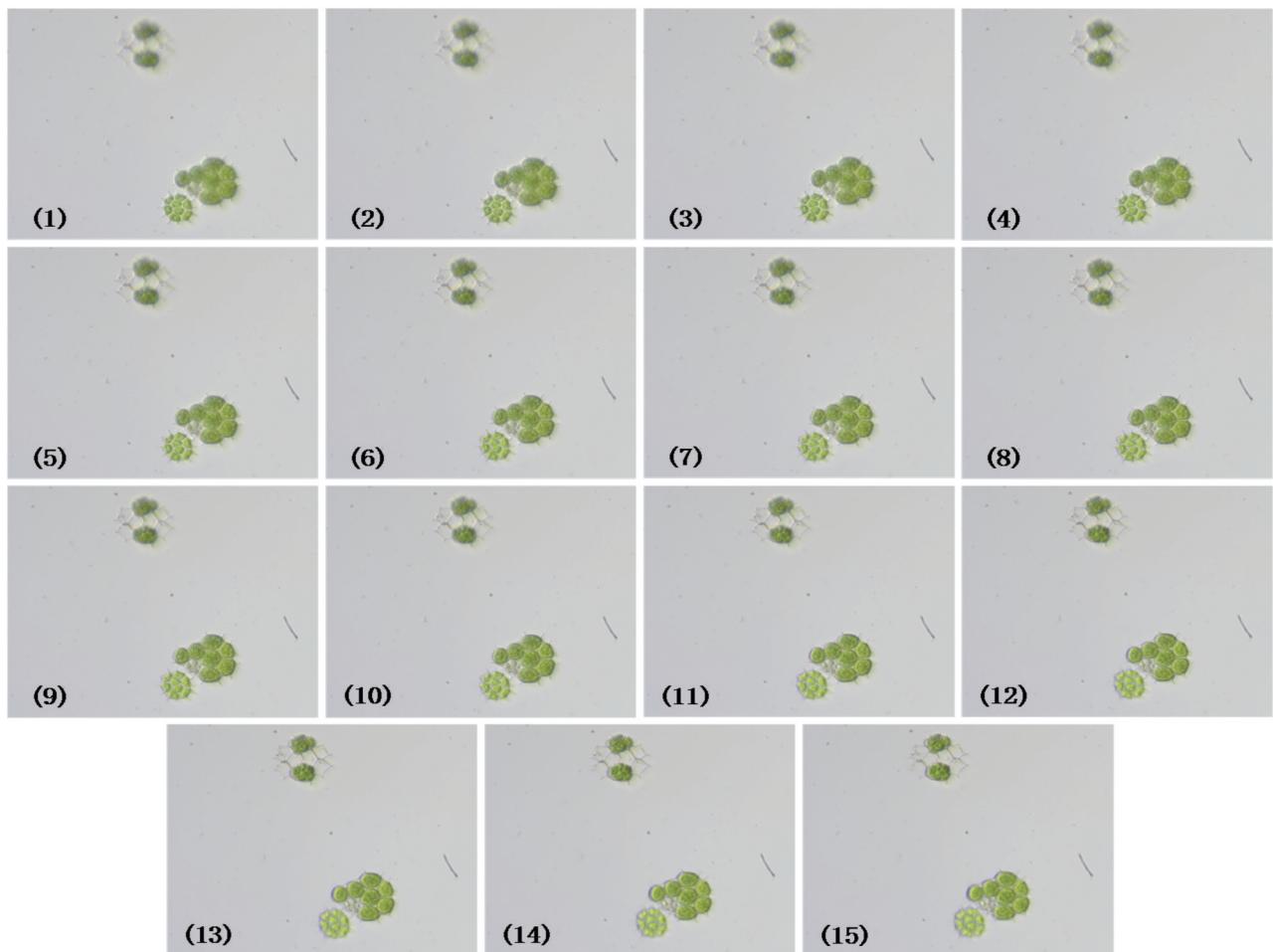
Fig. 3 *Scenedesmus* sp. multi-focus microscopic images obtained by moving the platform to 7 μm

图4 精密位移台连续移动15 μm时采集的盘星藻多聚焦显微图像

Fig. 4 *Pediastrum* sp. multi-focus microscopic images obtained by moving the platform to 15 μm

像的信息量。为了更加直观地对比不同方法的融合效果,对残差图的像素进行如下锐化处理^[20],即

$$\xi_{\text{RE}}^*(x, y) = 2 \times \xi_{\text{RE}}(x, y) + 50, \quad (9)$$

式中: $\xi_{\text{RE}}(x, y)$ 为残差图在 (x, y) 位置的像素值; $\xi_{\text{RE}}^*(x, y)$ 为相应像素值的锐化结果。

图6所示为鱼腥藻、栅藻和盘星藻的多聚焦融合图像分别与图2(7)、图3(7)和图4(15)之间的残差,其中红色框区域为聚焦区域。对于聚焦区域,残差值越小,表明原始图像传递给融合图像的效果越好。由图6可知:利用WT方法获得的残差图无法区分浮游

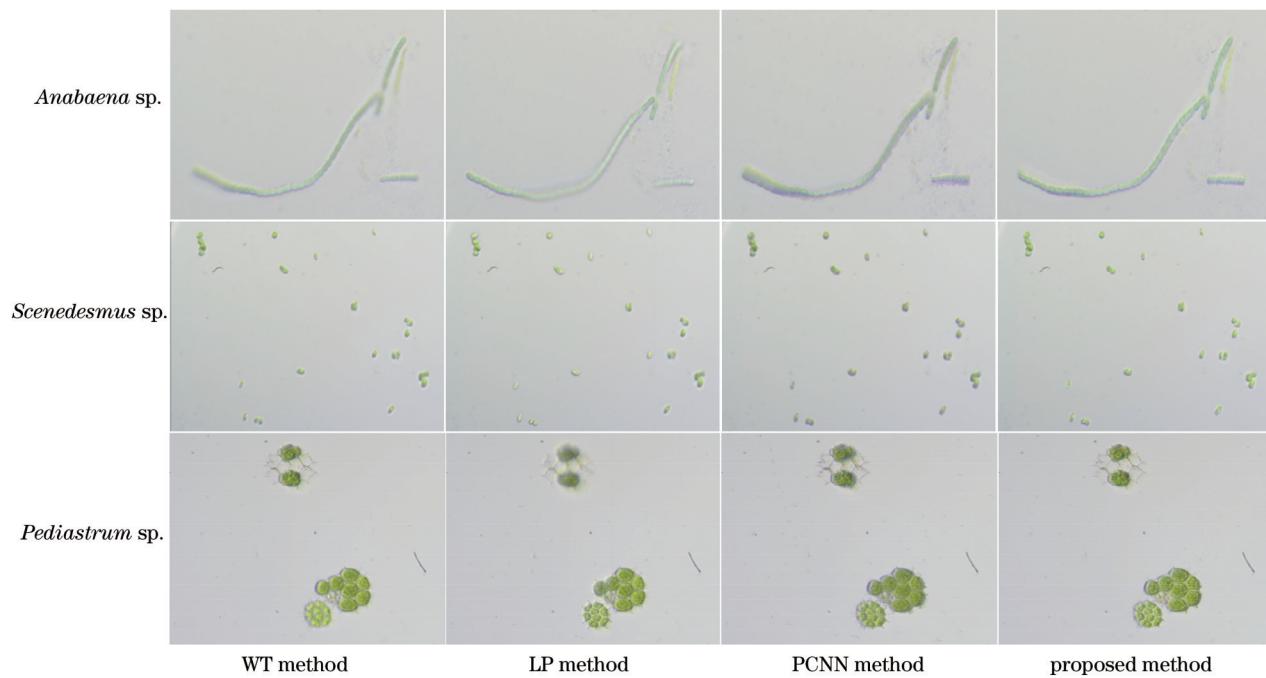


图5 WT、LP、PCNN与所提方法融合结果的视觉对比
Fig. 5 Visual comparison of fusion results for WT, LP, PCNN, and proposed methods

藻类细胞显微图像的聚焦区域和非聚焦区域,融合图像视觉效果差;利用LP和PCNN方法获得的残差图在聚焦区域均出现明显的边缘,原始图像传递给融合

图像的信息不够完整;本文研究方法在聚焦区域无明显轮廓,在主观视觉上证明了所提融合方法可有效地将原始图像聚焦区域完整保留至融合图像。

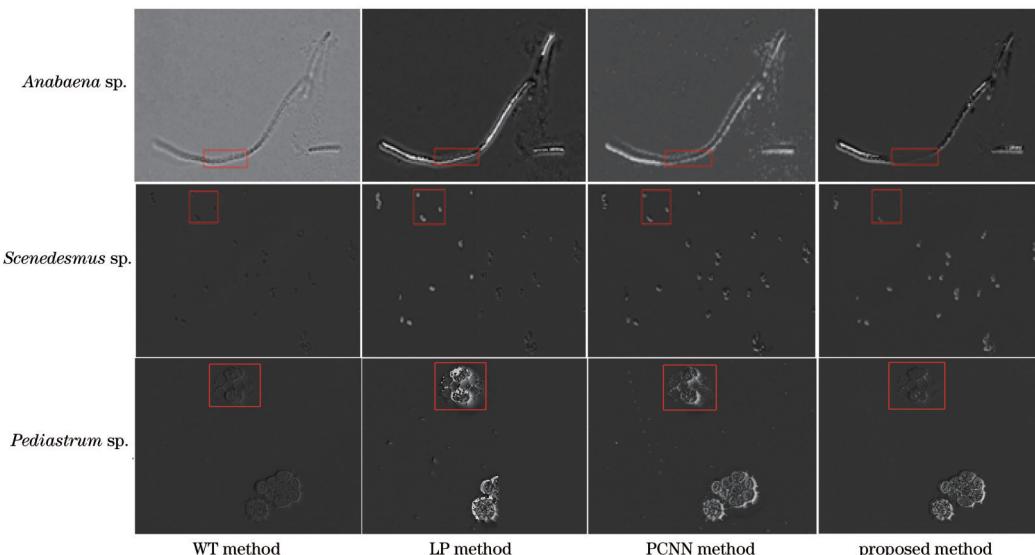


图6 WT、LP、PCNN与所提方法的残差对比
Fig. 6 Comparison of residual errors of WT, LP, PCNN, and proposed methods

3.2 客观定量评价

自然图像的客观评价标准需要对整幅图像的所有区域进行计算,而在浮游藻类细胞的显微图像中包含藻细胞所在的区域和其他背景区域,通常只关注显微图像中的浮游藻类细胞所在区域是否清晰。若直接引用自然图像的客观评价标准,则需要计算整幅图像的清晰度,将背景区域也计算在内,这显然会存在较大的

误差。因此,本文以藻细胞所在区域的客观评价指标为标准,对比分析不同融合方法的效果。

所有原始图像聚焦区域的并集 $A_{PF} = A_{PF_1} \cap A_{PF_2} \cap \dots \cap A_{PF_N}$ 构成了期望在融合图像中具有较好融合效果的区域。为定量分析所提方法的效果,将 A_{PF} 区域认定为藻细胞所在区域,计算该区域的熵(entropy)、标准差(standard deviation)、平均梯度

(average gradient)、空间频率(spatial frequency)、 $Q^{AB/F}$ 来定量对比分析不同融合方法的效果,其中:熵、标准差、平均梯度和空间频率用于描述融合图像中 A_{PF} 区域的微小细节反差能力^[21],值越大,融合图像越清晰; $Q^{AB/F}$ 表征原始图像 A_{PF} 区域中传递给融合图像的边缘信息量, $Q^{AB/F}$ 值越大,融合图像从原始图像中获得

的边缘信息越丰富,融合质量越好^[20-21]。此外,将每两幅原始图像的平均融合时间作为融合方法的融合时间。**表1**给出了WT、LP、PCNN方法,以及所提融合方法对鱼腥藻、栅藻和盘星藻多聚焦显微图像融合的客观评价对比结果。

表1 WT、LP、PCNN与所提方法的客观指标对比

Table 1 Comparison of objective indicators for WT, LP, PCNN, and proposed methods

Sample	Indicator	WT	LP	PCNN	Proposed
<i>Anabaena</i> sp.	Entropy	5.6142	5.4930	5.7676	5.9804
	Average gradient	0.0028	0.0030	0.0038	0.0055
	Spatial frequency	4.5093	4.8050	6.1187	8.9654
	Standard deviation	5.7135	5.0338	7.4390	6.0689
	$Q^{AB/F}$	0.2683	0.2275	0.2261	0.3529
	Time /s	5.55	1.83	52.70	2.23
<i>Scenedesmus</i> sp.	Entropy	6.4140	6.5952	6.4580	6.5273
	Average gradient	0.0013	0.0015	0.0015	0.0023
	Spatial frequency	3.9649	4.4937	4.7897	7.0558
	Standard deviation	7.7412	7.6470	8.5040	7.7291
	$Q^{AB/F}$	0.3290	0.3141	0.2750	0.3778
	Time /s	5.50	1.82	47.50	2.33
<i>Pediastrum</i> sp.	Entropy	4.0154	3.9114	3.9404	4.0134
	Average gradient	0.0004	0.0004	0.0004	0.0005
	Spatial frequency	1.3795	1.3187	1.4559	1.5445
	Standard deviation	12.9384	12.6871	15.1042	13.6266
	$Q^{AB/F}$	0.2348	0.2003	0.2030	0.2940
	Time /s	4.70	1.70	45.10	2.10

由**表1**可知:与WT、LP、PCNN方法相比,利用所提方法得到的融合图像的平均梯度、空间频率均最大,熵与最大值接近,表明融合图像具有更丰富的细节信息,且在融合图像清晰度上更具有优势,与主观视觉评价结果一致;所提方法的 $Q^{AB/F}$ 最大,表明所提方法具有更好的边缘保持能力,有效地将原始图像中边缘信息传递至融合图像。此外,所提方法的融合时间较短。因此,所提图像融合方法能更加有效地实现浮游藻类细胞显微多聚焦图像的融合。

4 结 论

为解决浮游藻类细胞显微图像采集过程中由失焦扩散效应导致的图像模糊问题,采用拉普拉斯能量和引导滤波检测显微图像的聚焦区域,利用浮游藻类细胞图像的颜色特征明显的特点,通过结合HSV颜色空间饱和度分量检测显微图像中由失焦扩散效应导致的失焦区域,在空间域图像融合过程中依据聚焦区域的聚焦程度选择输出图像。结果表明,所提融合方法有效实现了浮游藻类细胞显微多聚焦图像的融合,融合图像具有更高的清晰度,且能够更加有效地将原始图像边缘信息传递至融合图像,可为获取浮游藻类细胞

的全景深显微图像提供思路。

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Multi-Focus Image Fusion Method for Microscopic Algal Images

Jia Renqing^{1,2}, Yin Gaofang^{2*}, Zhao Nanjing^{1,2**}, Xu Min², Hu Xiang³, Huang Peng³,
Liang Tianhong², Zhu Yu⁴, Chen Xiaowei², Gan Tingting², Zhang Xiaoling⁵

¹School of Environment Science and Optoelectronic Technology, University of Science and Technology of China,
Hefei 230026, Anhui, China;

²Key Laboratory of Environment Optics and Technology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Anhui Institute of Optics
and Fine Mechanics, Hefei Institutes of Physical Science, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Hefei 230031, Anhui,
China;

³Hefei University, Hefei 230601, Anhui, China;

⁴Anhui Ecological Environment Monitoring Center, Hefei 230061, Anhui, China;

⁵Anhui University, Hefei 230601, Anhui, China

Abstract

Objective Clear microscopic images of algae are the basis of accurate identification. However, the microscopic images of algae located outside the depth of field are blurred due to the limited depth of field of the high-power microscope. On the one hand, some algal cells are large or filamentous in morphology. For example, the length of *Anabaena* sp. can reach hundreds of microns, and the depth distance of the algal cells can easily exceed the depth of field range of the microscope during microscopic imaging, and thus the area outside the depth of field range in the microscopic image is blurred due to defocus. On the other hand, the length of algal species with small cell size such as *Scenedesmus* sp. is only about seven microns, and the depth distance between multiple algal cells in the same field can easily exceed the depth of field of the

microscope, which results in blurred algal cells in the collected microscopic algal images. Therefore, it is of great value to collect multi-focus microscopic images of the same field at different heights of the objective table and use the multi-focus image fusion method to realize multi-focus image fusion of algal cell images, so as to obtain clear images with panoramic depth.

Methods In this paper, the focus area, defocus area, and background area of the microscopic images of the algal cell are detected, and then the multi-focus microscopic images are fused by using a spatial domain image fusion method. First, Laplacian energy and guided filtering are used to measure the local focus degree of algal cell images, and the focus area of microscopic algal cell images is determined after binarization, as shown in Eq. 4. Because the area where the algal cell is located can be detected by the S channel of HSV color space of the microscopic algal cell image, the defocus area of the microscopic image can be detected by combining the S channel with the focus area. The remaining parts are defined as background areas. Then the multiple microscopic images are fused in the spatial domain (Eq. 8), or in other words, the output pixel value is selected from the focus area with a larger focus degree. The defocus area does not participate in the fusion, and the average value of the background area is taken as the fused output, so as to realize the spatial domain fusion of the multi-focus microscopic algal cell images.

Results and Discussions One microscopic image of algal cells is acquired by moving the precision displacement objective table every 1 μm in the direction of the depth of field. *Anabaena* sp., *Scenedesmus* sp., and *Pediastrum* sp. are used as experimental objects. The multi-focus microscopic images of *Anabaena* sp., *Scenedesmus* sp., and *Pediastrum* sp. are continuously acquired by moving 7, 7, and 15 μm in the direction of the depth of field of the objective table, respectively. There are different clear areas and defocus areas in each microscopic image due to the limitation of the microscope's depth field. The fusion effects of the wavelet transform, Laplacian pyramid, and pulse coupled neural network (PCNN) methods are compared with the proposed method in terms of subjective vision and objective quantitative evaluation. It can be seen from Fig. 5 and Fig. 6 that the proposed method can better transfer the focus area in the source image to the fusion image in subjective vision and has a better fusion effect. In terms of objective quantitative evaluation, Table 1 shows the edge information retention, spatial frequency, and average gradient of the fused images of *Anabaena* sp. (0.3529, 8.9654, and 0.0055), *Scenedesmus* sp. (0.3778, 7.0558, and 0.0023), and *Pediastrum* sp. (0.2940, 1.5445, and 0.0005), respectively, which are better than those of the compared methods. The proposed method effectively fuses the multi-focus microscopic images of algae and provides a method for obtaining the microscopic images of algae with panoramic depth.

Conclusions In order to solve the problem of image blurring caused by the defocus diffusion effect in obtaining microscopic algal cell images, a spatial-domain multi-focus image fusion method is proposed in this paper. Laplace energy and guided filtering are used to detect the focus area of microscopic images, and obvious color characteristics of algal cell images are used to detect the defocus area by combining the S channel of HSV color space with the focus area. Then, the output image is selected according to the focus degree of the focus area in the spatial domain image fusion process. The experimental results show that the proposed fusion method can effectively fuse multi-focus microscopic images of algal cells. The fused image has better clarity, and the edge information of the source image is more effectively transmitted to the fused image. This work proposes a new method for obtaining microscopic images of algal cells with panoramic depth and provides technical support for the development of automatic monitoring instruments for algal cells.

Key words image processing; algal cell; microscopic; multi-focus image fusion; focus area detection; defocus diffusion effect