

Book Reviews

Michael Emsley
Department Editor

MICROBIOLOGY

MICROBIOLOGY OF THE PHYLLOSPHERE

ed. by N.J. Fokkema & J. van den Heuvel. 1986. Cambridge University Press (32 East 57th St., New York, NY 10022). 392 p. \$54.50 hardback.

The phyllosphere is the ecosystem of the leaf. The microorganisms that inhabit this environment are numerous and diverse. This volume contains 23 review papers presented at the Fourth International Symposium of the Microbiology of the Phyllosphere, held in September 1985 in Wageningen, the Netherlands, by 32 authorities drawn from around the world.

The five sections cover subjects as diverse as: New Techniques, Ecology of Epiphytic Fungi, Endophytic Leaf Fungi, Plant-Pathogenic and Saprophytic Prokaryotes, and Biological Control on Aerial Plant Surfaces. Each section contains four to six well written chapters covering some aspect of that specific topic.

This reference book for professionals and graduate students in plant pathology, mycology and microbial ecology was written so that those with a casual interest in microbial-phyllosphere interactions would be able to understand and learn as much from reading any or all of the sections.

The chapters on hyperparasites (fungi that are parasitic on fungi that are parasitic on plants) and adaptations of microorganisms to climatic conditions were outstanding. In both instances the literature was reviewed systematically and illustrated by examples from nearly 100 selected references, and they contained excellent scanning electron micrographs and ample descriptions. Each chapter in this volume provides a similarly thorough coverage of the topic written in clear, understandable language.

While the audience for this book may be limited because the topic is not widely explored in the classroom, it is

an excellent reference. It is recommended for anyone who may have an interest in microbial-plant interactions.

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CHILDREN'S BOOKS

THE MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY BASIC LIST OF CHILDREN'S SCIENCE BOOKS 1986

ed. by Bernice Richter & Duane Wenzel. 1986. American Library Association (50 East Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611). 68 p. \$6.95 paperback.

In 1973, the Museum of Science and Industry held its first annual Children's Science Book Fair. In the ensuing years, thousands and thousands of teachers, librarians, parents and children have attended these fairs and used the annual bibliographic information designed to serve as a record of the event.

Eventually, the museum and the American Library Association issued a joint publication, a retrospective edition, *The Museum of Science and Industry Basic List of Children's Science Books 1973-1984*. (\$9.75) This annotated bibliography, which spans the 12-year period with brief book summaries and evaluations, was aimed at an audience wider than that of book fair attendees.

The 1986 edition is the first annual supplement designed to be used in conjunction with the original publication. The majority of books reviewed in this new issue were published between 1983 and 1986 and none appeared in the first book list. The compilers view this list as a selection tool for parents, teachers and librarians and attempt to eliminate out-of-print materials by cross checking with *Books in Print*.

The museum solicits from approximately 250 children's book publishers and the staff estimates they receive 75 to 80 percent of all children's science literature. The 1986 supplement contains about 460 listings for books of pre-school through twelfth grade level which were received for the 1985 fair. All titles were in print and the prices current as of the fall of 1986.

Books are listed alphabetically by title within 17 broad subject groupings derived in part from the Library of Congress classification scheme. Each book is independently evaluated by the museum reviewers and a final rating, ranging from AA (excellent) to D (not recommended), is assigned

based on the book's strengths and weaknesses.

Each entry contains a complete bibliographic description, a summary of the general content, the reading level (based on publisher-supplied information), a rating symbol and, when available, citations of other publications where additional reviews of the book may be found. Although books appropriate for pre-school through junior high comprise the majority of the list, some written at the high school level are also included.

In addition to the 17 main subject divisions, there is a list of adult resource books, a list of children's science magazines, a list of major review journals and a directory of book publishers. Both a title and an author index complete the volume. If you have any interest in selecting trade science books for children, this is a valuable resource.

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ECOLOGY

METHODS IN PLANT ECOLOGY

ed. by P.D. Moore & S.B. Chapman. 2nd ed., 1986. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Inc. (667 Lytton Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94301). 589 p. \$57.00 hardback, \$36.00 softback.

This textbook should be on the shelf of every field biologist. It will not necessarily be used all the time, because it is not primarily a cook-book, but it will be referred to regularly.

Michael Emsley is editor of the Book Review section of aBT. He is professor of biology at George Mason University and is on the editorial board of the George Mason University Press. Emsley, who holds a B.S. and Ph.D. in zoology from the University of London, is an insect taxonomist currently working on a project to identify and classify a genus of katydids found only in Central and South America. The project, begun in 1958, includes examining the sound producing mechanism of the insects. Emsley is the author of *Butterfly Magic*, *Insect Magic* and *Cloudforests and Rainforests*. His address is: **Biology Department, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA 22030**. This month's book reviews were obtained by the previous department editor.