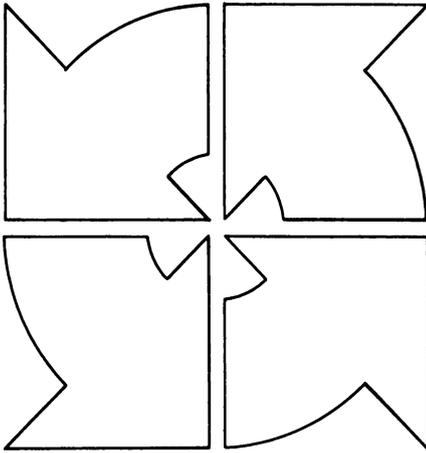


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Outline

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Editors' Foreword

Both in its theoretical and applied aspects, ecology is developing rapidly. In part because it offers a relatively new and fresh approach to biological enquiry, but it also stems from the revolution in public attitudes towards the quality of the human environment and the conservation of nature. There are today more professional ecologists than ever before, and the number of students seeking courses in ecology remains high. In schools as well as universities the teaching of ecology is now widely accepted as an essential component of biological education, but it is only within the past quarter of a century that this has come about. In the same period, the journals devoted to publication of ecological research have expanded in number and size, and books on aspects of ecology appear in ever-increasing numbers.

These are indications of a healthy and vigorous condition, which is satisfactory not only in regard to the progress of biological science but also because of the vital importance of ecological understanding to the well-being of man. However, such rapid advances bring their problems. The subject develops so rapidly in scope, depth and relevance that textbooks, or parts of them, soon become out-of-date or inappropriate for particular courses. The very width of the front across which the ecological approach is being applied to biological and environmental questions introduces difficulties: every teacher handles his subject in a different way and no two courses are identical in content.

This diversity, though stimulating and profitable, has the effect that no single text-book is likely to satisfy fully the needs of the student attending a course in ecology. Very often extracts from a wide range of books must be consulted, and while this may do no harm it is time-consuming and expensive. The present series has been designed to offer quite a large number of relatively small booklets, each on a restricted topic of fundamental importance which is likely to constitute a self-contained component of more comprehensive courses. A selection can then be made, at reasonable cost, of texts appropriate to particular courses or the interests of the reader. Each is written by an acknowledged expert in the subject, and is intended to offer an up-to-date, concise summary which will be of value to those engaged in teaching, research or applied ecology as well as to students.

Studies in Ecology

Modelling

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