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A review of: "Comparative Invertebrate Neurochemistry"

Peter D. Evans

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Book Review

COMPARATIVE INVERTEBRATE NEUROCHEMISTRY. Eds. G. G. Lunt and R. W. Olsen, Croom Helm, London.

This book attempts to provide an overview of the current status of invertebrate neurochemistry to highlight significant advances in this area and to point out their general and their applied relevance in the production of novel pesticides. In general the presentation is of a high standard, but like all multiauthored volumes, there is a great inconsistency in the standard of writing and accuracy of the facts presented in each chapter. I found the acetylcholine and biogenic amine chapters particularly annoying since they contained a considerable number of factual errors and inaccurate interpretations of the literature.

The book is divided into seven chapters. Five of these deal with major neurotransmitter classes in invertebrates, namely acetylcholine, glutamate, GABA, biogenic amines and neuropeptides. Of these the glutamate and neuropeptide chapters are particularly well written and provide critical comprehensive overviews of their fields at the time of writing. The last two chapters deal with the use of neuronal cultures and with the exciting field of neurotoxins. The latter field is receiving increased attention at present due to the identification of some of the target sites for specific neurotoxins.

The book is aimed at advanced students or researchers in zoology, neuroscience or pharmacology. However, because of the very detailed nature of many of the chapters, I expect it will be of more use to the latter than the former.

PETER D. EVANS
13 January 1989