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Book Review

Metals in Biochemistry, P.M. Harrison and R.J. Hoare. Publ. Chapman & Hall, London and New York 1980, 78 pp + index. Price £2.45

This little soft-back book in the "Outline Studies in Biology" series provides a useful introduction to the variety of essential functions which metal ions perform in living organisms. It is directed mainly to biochemists but the authors express the hope that it will also be of interest to biologists and chemists. Your chemist reviewer, certainly found it of interest, but would have welcomed more chemistry.

The book is well written and very clear, eminently suitable for third year chemistry undergraduates, especially those with a grounding in biology. A short glossary of the less generally known biological and biochemical terms, such as "coccolith" and "erythroblast", would have helped your reviewer, and is recommended as a possible addition to any future edition. Nevertheless it is a good and useful book for chemists and I strongly recommend it, especially to coordination chemists who want to acquire quickly a general elementary background to the functions of metal ions in biological systems and an outline of the present state of knowledge of the biochemical and chemical mechanisms of metal ion catalysis in biological processes. I congratulate the authors on the selection and organisation of their material and its clarity of exposition.

The book gives suggestions for further reading to monographs and comprehensive texts as well as 74 detailed references to data quoted in the body of the book. It has a useful index of 2 pages.

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