

JOURNAL REVIEW

Journal of Chemical Ecology: ed. by R. M. SILVERSTEIN and J. B. Simeone, Vol. I, No. 1, January 1975. \$35 per annum (4 issues).

The announcement of this new journal would no doubt be frowned upon by those eleven eminent chemists who recently complained about the proliferation of new commercial journals (see *Chem. in Britain* (1974) 10, 32); personally, I believe they were misguided in their views, especially in their suggestions that journals will survive in fields where they are not required and that science librarians will purchase new journals irrespective of their quality and value and of the interests of their readers. Since the publication of the chemists' letter, the economic situation has generally become more difficult and the launching of a new journal, whether it is by a Learned Society or a Commercial Publisher, is inevitably a very risky venture so that the appearance of this newcomer is doubly welcome. Chemical ecology is a rapidly developing interdisciplinary field of research of considerable practical importance, overlapping between organic and analytical chemistry, zoology, entomology and plant

science. It deserves to have its own journal and this new medium should be a useful means of collecting together papers which otherwise would appear in a wide variety of single discipline journals.

Inevitably this first issue reflects the research interests of the two editors and is dominated by papers on insect pheromones (6 out of 12) but there are also accounts of defensive toxins in Whirligig beetles and of social odours in black-tailed deer. The only wholly plant paper is on allelopathy, on the microbial decomposition of ferulic acid in the soil. No doubt future issues will be more balanced and representative of the field as a whole. Appropriately and pleasingly, this first issue has a frontispiece photograph of the late Ernest Sondheimer, who was co-editor with J. B. Simeone of the first major textbook on Chemical Ecology. This issue is attractively produced and the papers are copiously illustrated with diagrams and figures. It deserves to command a wide readership.

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