
Book review

Freedman, H.I.; Strobeck, C. (eds.): Population Biology. Proceedings of the International Conference held at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada 1982. Lecture Notes in Biomathematics, Vol. 52. Berlin, Heidelberg, New York, Tokyo: Springer 1983. XVII/440 pp. Soft bound \$ 24,10.

In these proceedings, the contributions given at the International Conference on Population Biology (Edmonton 1982) are grouped into eight areas: Population genetics, life history strategies, population growth, competitive systems, predator-prey systems, community ecology, resource management, and epidemiology and immunology. Considering the expanse of the field, the large number of papers presented appears appropriate, and brevity of representation is the price to be paid (57 of the 91 originally presented papers are included).

As the editors put it, "the main objectives of this conference were: to bring mathematicians and biologists together so that they may interact for their mutual benefit . . .". The formulation of this objective already reveals the regrettable situation population biology still seems to be found in: that

biology and (bio-)mathematics have to be brought together as a meeting of separate fields instead of forming a natural unit engaged in meeting the challenges of modern biology. The proceedings corroborate this by the number of reports which concentrate primarily on the mathematics of population biology; papers reporting experimental findings and their interpretations are very few. The actual outcome of the conference might, therefore, be more appropriately characterized under the heading 'the mathematics of population biology'.

Taking this into consideration, the proceedings provide a valuable survey of the present state of theoretical population biology. This state shows an at least slight tendency to reconsider the prevalent modelling efforts with emphasis on producing more generally applicable types of models that are also more rigorous and explicit in their basic biological assumptions.

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Announcement

14. International Botanical Congress

The next International Botanical Congress will be held under the auspices of the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUPS) at the "International Congress Centre" Berlin (West) from July 24th until August 1st 1987. The intention is that there will be an opportunity for discussion of all branches of plant science, and particularly of interdisciplinary subjects.

One of the divisions of the congress programme will be devoted to "Genetics and Plant Breeding", of which Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. K. Esser is the convener, while at the same time the chairman of the organizing committee.

More information: Secretariat 14. International Botanical Congress, c/o Botanischer Garten und Botanisches Museum, Königin-Luise-Straße 6-8, D-1000 Berlin 33, Federal Republic of Germany.