
Introduction to Biology

The text has been written for the "purpose of presenting southern plants and animals to students and teachers of southern high schools." Its subject matter is divided into eight parts: Introduction, The Simplest Animals, Plants without Seeds, The Seed-bearing Plants, Animals with Jointed Feet, Animals with Backbones, Structure and Function in Plants, and Structure and Function in Animals. There is a fairly complete glossary and an index at the end of the book. The 331 figures are mainly photographs and add much to the value of the book; some of the drawings, as the author admits, are amateurish.

The discussion is essentially a brief, not too technical, descriptive account of the plant and animal kingdoms. There is very little on physiological processes, even in the last two parts (though there is a good chapter on heredity), and there is either nothing at all or only incidental mention through the text of such subjects as ecology, conservation, and evolution. The experimental approach is not used, and there is little to arouse student thinking or to suggest student activities or projects. The book contains no bibliographic references or suggested supplementary readings.

The treatment of individual subjects, though of necessity brief in this sort of text, is in some cases so sketchy as to be misleading; this is particularly true in some of the chapters on insects. There are a few erroneous statements in the book: e. g., on p. 208 the copulatory apparatus of a male dragonfly is said to be on the fourth abdominal segment, when it is on the second; a photograph (fig. 244) of a museum skin of a swallow is labeled a horned lark skin.

As a high school text giving a brief survey of the plant and animal kingdoms, this book is probably satisfactory, but as an introduction to the general principles of biology it leaves much to be desired.—*D. J. Borror.*

An Introduction to Biology, by J. C. Cross, Ph.D. xviii+507 pp. St. Louis, The C. V. Mosby Company, 1941. \$1.90.

Introducing Insects

This authoritative little book comes from the pen of one who is gifted in presenting to the layman the fundamentals of a usually regarded technical subject. With his own inimitable style he delves into some of our major insect problems and presents this information under the following headings: Why Study Insects; How to Study Insects; Butterflies; Dragonflies; Grasshoppers and Crickets; Leafbugs and Leafhoppers; Common Caterpillars; Common Leaf-eating Beetles; Scale Insects and Aphids; Mosquitoes; Insects that Eat Our Foods, Woolens, Fruits and Nuts; Carnivorous Insects; Bees, Indoors and Out; The Control of Insect Pests; How to Begin an Insect Collection; How to Rear Insects; Suggestions for Use of the Book. An index is included at the end of the book.

He uses only common names for the insects discussed and stresses the value of knowing their life history and habits in order to properly prescribe control measures. The illustrations which accompany the text should be of great aid to the user of the book, especially the beginner interested in entomology. The author is to be congratulated on the manner in which he is attempting to get scientific information on this subject before the public. Publications of this kind should be encouraged.—*R. H. Davidson.*

Introducing Insects, by James G. Needham. v+129 pp. Jaques Cattell Press, Lancaster, Penna., 1940. \$1.50.