

Editor's foreword

The student of biological sciences at Advanced level or in the first year of an undergraduate course is expected to be aware of the changing nature of biology. New research is published in a variety of specialised journals and even if these journals are available they are likely only to confuse students. Review articles often assume a detailed background knowledge of the subject and hence are of limited value. Such articles are written with little knowledge of the information contained in most Advanced level textbooks. In addition, it is no longer possible for a single text to cover the whole field of biology while remaining up to date. Teachers and students at school, college or university who try to keep abreast with advances are thus likely to be faced with a perplexing and often conflicting array of information. The aim of 'Modern Views in Biology' is to review the information contained in Advanced level texts while presenting more current ideas in the fields where significant advances have been made.

The difficulty of dividing a course into a number of volumes is vast and opinion will undoubtedly differ on how it is best done. In devising 'Modern Views in Biology' the amount of overlap has been reduced to a minimum. Each volume consists of a number of articles on closely related topics and can thus be used in isolation or in any sequence with the others. Collectively, the volumes provide an up-to-date coverage of the biology studied at Advanced level and thus are likely to be of tremendous value to teachers and students.

Articles have been written by research workers in association with an experienced Advanced level teacher. In this way the current state of knowledge in a particular field is reviewed while the basic conceptual framework encountered in Advanced level textbooks is not forgotten. In addition, authors have been asked to outline the likely direction of future research together with any possible applied aspects which may result from such work. A concerted effort has been made by authors and editor to maintain a constant level of presentation. However, each author has been encouraged to approach his own subject in his own way in order that the author's enthusiasm might be communicated to the reader.

Barry King