

PREFACE

Because this book is intended to be an introductory text, I have made it as comprehensible and self-sufficient as possible. However, I cannot pretend that anyone will find it easy reading. The writing is too compressed for that. There is too much that must be said and too few pages to say it in. The major problem is that few readers will have a background in both biology and philosophy. In fact, many are liable to have a background in neither. Anyone who has ever taught a course in Philosophy of Biology knows how difficult it is to teach philosophy to biology students while at the same time teaching biology to philosophy students. The strategy which I have adopted in this book is to introduce the necessary biology in the early pages of the book and then to ease gradually into the more philosophical issues. I have also tried to define each technical term, whether biological or philosophical, when it is first introduced. Space limitations have prevented my repeating these definitions when the terms recur.

To the extent that this book is both comprehensible and informative, I owe a strong note of thanks to numerous philosophers and biologists who have read various versions of the manuscript. Among them I wish to express special thanks to Morton Beckner, Dorothy Grover, Helen Heise, Richard Levins, Ernst Mayr, R. E. Monro, Rosario Morales, Michael Ruse, Kenneth Schaffner, Leigh Van Valen, Mary Williams, William Wimsatt, and the students in my Philosophy of Biology courses. I also wish to thank Elizabeth and Monroe Beardsley both for their editorial suggestions and for the opportunity to write this volume for their series. Dawn Klemme, Dorothy Wilson, and Linda Erich typed and retyped the manuscript. The research for this book was done in part under National Science Foundation Grants GS-1971 and GS-3102 and a summer research grant from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

David L. Hull