

Preface

The response of one of my colleagues, when told that I was writing a book about the colonisation of land, summed up the problem: he replied that it sounded 'an ambitious and open-ended project'. After more than 10 years work on the book, I have to agree that the scope of the subject is far beyond the capacity of one individual. However, it may be that the single-author approach has some justification. I have tried to make comparisons both between and within animal groups, and to infer general principles where appropriate. I have also tried to maintain some kind of similarity in coverage when discussing different animal groups, in terms of morphological, physiological and behavioural adaptations. In many cases, however, research emphasis has been towards a few topics in particular, and I have allowed this to influence my accounts so that different chapters do have different slants.

With a topic so vast I have not attempted to produce complete coverage, or to quote all the relevant literature. I hope, however, that the works quoted do give a fair picture of the situation as it stands. In trying to represent authors' views correctly, I am indebted to a large number of experts who have allowed themselves to be coerced into commenting upon individual chapters. Very many people have been helpful, including those who, when asked for permission to use their material in illustrations, kindly brought me up to date on the subject. For their comments, and without holding them in any way responsible for the final text, I would particularly like to thank: Drs J. Moore and R. Gibson for their comments on nemertines; Dr A. E. Dorey, on flatworms; Dr E. B. Andrews and Professor A. Graham, on molluscs; Dr R. S. K. Barnes and Dr S. P. Hopkin, on crustaceans; Dr R. S. Wilson, on chelicerates; Dr J. G. E. Lewis, on myriapods; Professor C. Bareth, on diplurans; Dr R. G. Davies and Dr G. Vannier, on insects; and Dr A. L. Panchen, on vertebrates. Above all, I would like to thank Dr R. S. K. Barnes, who has encouraged me from the start, and has waded through the entirety of the first draft, plying his correcting pen and helping to reduce the errors and idiocies in the final account.

The figures are almost all adaptations of published work, and I am grateful to the authors and publishers concerned for permission to use them here. Acknowledgement of the source is given in each case. They have all been redrawn, and I hope that the present versions will meet with the approval of their originators. The photographs have all been taken especially for the book, and here I have been helped by grants from the Royal Society, the British Museum and the British Council, which have allowed me to visit Papua New Guinea and New Zealand. Wherever possible the photographs have been taken in the field, and not in simulated natural conditions in the laboratory. I realise that this has not helped in photographic terms, but hope that because of it the animals are in natural poses. For most of the photography I have been lucky enough to be advised and helped by my wife, P. E. Stirling, who has also encouraged me enormously in the preparation of the whole book. To her I am particularly grateful for help and forbearance while 'the book' has been my major preoccupation.

The technical problems involved in producing a final copy have been greatly reduced for me by Mrs J. Cochran, who typed the initial draft, and by Mrs J. Ablett, who undertook the herculean task of sorting out the reference list and also produced an excellent index. At the same time, the seemingly endless process of hunting for appropriate literature has been made almost a pleasure by the helpfulness of successive librarians in the Botany-Zoology Library at Bristol. I would like to thank all these people for making the book possible.

Lastly, to all those slighted authors whom I have either misquoted, or not quoted at all, I extend my apologies. I hope that they will feel able to write and let me know of my errors.

Colin Little
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