
Preface

The third edition of *The Fungal Community* has been compiled by a new set of editors. The three of us were impressed with the quality and content of the previous two editions and hope that we have matched the work of George Carroll and Don Wicklow in this new volume.

The aims and objectives of this volume are explained in our introductory chapter, but in brief, we have tried to address some of the current discussions in ecology (diversity and function, scaling issues, disturbance, invasive species) from a fungal perspective. In order to be able to address these issues, we need appropriate techniques to identify fungi, determine their abundance, determine their associations among themselves and other organisms, measure their individual and community function, and be able to scale these measures from the microscopic level of the individual hyphal or fungal cell through local to landscape and ecosystem levels. The chapters of this edition have advanced toward addressing these aspects of mycology and beyond, but they are by no means all-encompassing. We apologize if some areas are missing, but the size of this volume speaks for the complexity and dimension of aspects relating to the functional role of fungal communities in ecosystems, and this book would be overwhelmingly large if we included more. There is a huge body of literature in both mycological and ecological journals that pertains to the themes contained herein, and we praise our authors for their extensive bibliographies, which will steer interested readers to some of the most recent publications in their specific areas.