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This series of short texts provides accessible accounts of a range of essential topics in chemistry and chemical engineering. Written with the needs of the student in mind, the Oxford Chemistry Primers offer just the right level of detail for undergraduate study, and will be invaluable as a source of material commonly presented in lecture courses yet not adequately covered in existing texts. All the basic principles and facts in a particular area are presented in a clear and straightforward style, to produce concise yet comprehensive accounts of topics covered in both core and specialist courses.

This concise text provides a straightforward introduction to the chemistry involved in the biosynthesis of natural products. The first chapter explains the connections between primary and secondary metabolites, outlines the chemistry mediated by the major enzyme cofactors, and describes the methods for the elucidation of biosynthetic pathways. The various classes of secondary metabolites—including fatty acid derivatives, polyketides, the isoprenoids, metabolites derived from shikimate, and the alkaloids—are then dealt with in turn, with emphasis throughout on the pharmacological and toxicological significance of the various compounds. The final chapter offers an insight into the ecological significance of a wide variety of natural products.

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