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BOOK REVIEW

HILL, T. A.: **The Biology of Weeds.** — Studies in Biology No 79, Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd., 1977. 64 pp. £ 1.50.

The history of many weeds is closely connected with the history of grain crops, the importance of both plant groups for mankind thus being quite evident. However, this excellently written book is not merely a document of weed aggressivity and of econnomic necessity of weed-killing. It simultaneously presents a very interesting description of physiological and genetic mechanisms of adaptation of weed plants to conditions unacceptable to other plants. The problematics of flower induction, seed dormancy, vegetative propagation, resistance to extreme cultivation conditions — high or low temperatures, drought, soil salinization or, on the other hand, elution of necessary mineral nutrients, the problematics of the part of cross-pollination and allodiploidy in the formation of new species — are the topics of the individual chapters. The final directions for simple physiological experiments emphasize the didactic design of the book; very useful is the nomenclature index containing both Latin and common names. The good quality of print and of figures and the well arranged division of the text enhance the standard of a book valuable from both the scientific and popular points of view.

Z. OPATRNÝ (*Praha*)