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BOOK REVIEW

FRENCH, N. R. (ed.): PERSPECTIVES IN GRASSLAND ECOLOGY. Ecological Studies 32. Pp. 204. Springer-Verlag, New York—Heidelberg—Berlin 1979. US \$ 29.70.

The thirty-second volume of this well-known series brings comprehensive data on the main features and functions of the North American grasslands, which were collected in the Grassland Biome Program and constituted a considerable part of the U.S. contribution to IBP. The book is the outcome of large-scale cooperative interdisciplinary researches rooted in comparisons of field and experimental investigations and some model studies that lead to practical considerations of the grassland management. Ten chapters of the book deal with various characters of the biomass production by different grassland types. They are devoted to distributional patterns and dynamics of primary production, the effects of ecological factors (e.g. annual temperature changes, precipitation, solar energy input, soil water potential), some ecological stresses (e.g. effects of fertilization and irrigation), biomass decomposition, biomass trophic pyramids, the factors controlling primary and secondary production (producer-environment relationships, producer interrelations, consumer relationships), etc. All results are fairly documented with numerous tables, diagrams and figures.

The book compiles not only valuable quantitative information but it also gives — in a modeling framework — a notion on major functional aspects of grassland primary production. It enhances the understanding of native grasslands and allows a good confrontation of the North American grassland ecosystems with those of the world.

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