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The introductory chapter "Direction in evolutionary biology" is written by R.C. Lewontin. The readers of *Biologia Plantarum* will be mainly interested in the reviews "Development and function of the angiosperm female gametophyte" (G.N. Drews and R. Yadegari), "Specificity of spontaneous mutations" (H. Maki), "Genetic engineering using homologous recombination" (D.L. Court *et al.*), "Chromosome rearrangements and transposable elements" (W.-E. Lönnig and H. Saedler), and "Genetics of RNA silencing" (M. Tijsterman *et al.*). Other reviews covered in this volume: "Genetic parentage in fishes", "Spirochete motility and chemotaxis", "Recombination in evolutionary genomics", "Phenotype of the ribocyte", "Conditional gene inactivation", "Gene regulation by DNA topology", "Recombination and segregation in *Drosophila*", "X chromosome inactivation", "Genetics of influenza viruses",

"Spliceosome activation", "Genetics of sensory mechanotransduction", "*Drosophila* ovarian actin cytoskeleton", "Transvection effects in *Drosophila*", "Genetics of *Cryptococcus neoformans*", "DNA checkpoints and genome stability", "Feline genome project", "Learning memory and synaptic plasticity", and "Estimating F-statistics".

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