

McLusky, D.S., Elliot, M.: **The Estuarine Ecosystem. Ecology, Threats, and Management.** - Oxford University Press, Oxford 2004. 214 pp. GBP 28.50 (softcover). ISBN 0-19-852508-7.

Estuaries represent a special type of ecosystems worldwide distributed in coastal sites where freshwater from rivers flows into the ocean forming a body of water with fluctuating gradients of salinity, turbidity and sediment deposition. The estuaries are highly productive ecosystems because of rich nutrient supply, and their function as feeding area for many species of animals and plants is highly important. This is why biologists have recently been interested in study of the estuarine ecosystems with increasing intensity. Their work also contributed substantially to our basic understanding of processes controlling biological productivity at different trophic levels.

The reviewed book, which is now issued in its third edition, represent not only an invaluable source of information for all interested in this fascinating piece of nature, but also an excellent textbook on general problems of an ecosystem functioning, including human-induced changes. The exceptionally high pedagogical value is obvious from clear, logical structure of the whole book and each of the eight chapters. Many summary tables and flow charts are included, definitions and detail explanation of all special terms used are provided. A lot of additional information is presented in included boxes.

The first chapter is devoted to description of the main

features of estuarine physico-chemical environment, and to the basic rules and types of water mixing and sedimentation processes in estuaries. The life processes are treated in the next four chapters, starting from general description of estuarine food web and limiting factors changing its functioning (Chapter 2), to the subsequent description of organisms and processes at distinct trophic levels (primary producers, primary consumers, secondary consumers). In this new edition relatively large space devoted is to the problems connected with impact of human activity on estuaries – both the direct (various modes of their use), and the indirect (deterioration caused by polluted freshwater inflow). Description of different methodical approaches to the detection of human-induced changes in estuaries is particularly useful. The last chapter is devoted to description of basic principles on which protection and management of these endangered segments of nature should be based.

This concise and very readable book will be undoubtedly of continuous interest not only to students of biological disciplines and keen naturalists, but also to professional biologists, managers and practitioners responsible for nature conservancy as an invaluable source of basic information.

J. GLOSER (*Brno*)

Schlegel, R.H.J.: **Encyclopedic Dictionary of Plant Breeding and Related Subjects.** - Food Products Press, Binghamton 2003. XIII + 563 pp. ISBN 1-56022-950-0.

Plant breeding is a complex subject, which takes advantage of many other scientific and technological disciplines such as agronomy, horticulture, genetics, biotechnology, biochemistry, botany, cytology, ecology, *etc.*

This dictionary provides a comprehensive compilation of specific terms of plant breeding and terms adjusted from related disciplines with the aim to overcome high specialization and fragmentation of most dictionaries and glossaries.

The introductory part of the book includes besides the useful User's Guide also Abbreviations of scientific disciplines and categories related to particular terms. It enables the precise allocation of identical terms often used by plant breeders and specialized scientists in different meanings.

The main part – Dictionary of Terms – contains short explanations of the wide range of particular terms in

alphabetical order. It is properly supplemented by the three following sections. The list of important crop plants and other plants of the world enables precise classification of plants, in texts often inscribed with their common names. In most cases a chromosome number, genome constitution, DNA content and other details are included.

Also 35 tables and 41 figures in two other supplementary parts help significantly to better understanding of the specialized terms.

This book can be recommended not only for students and scientists dealing with plant breeding but it may be useful also for those who work in other research fields.

As an explanatory dictionary it is especially suitable for the readers whose first language is other than English and will be certainly appreciated by editors of biological journals.

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