

BOOKS

Advances in Ecological Research. Vol. 21. M. Begon, A.H. Fitter, A. Macfadyen, eds. Academic Press, London, U.K.; 1991. 403 pp. (ISBN 0-12-013921-9) £42.50/\$89.00 hardcover.

This is Volume 21 of a series of books dealing with ecological research. This volume contains five reviews. One reviewer describes the origin and spread of the salt marsh grass *Spartina anglica*. The result of a hybridization at the close of the last century, this genetically uniform species has been extremely successful in its particular niche and has a fascinating biology. A second reviewer stresses the importance of the interaction between the gene and the environment in life history theory in contrast to emphasis on the resource constraints of the optimization approach. In another paper, Chanway and his colleagues examine the evidence for the importance of interactions between plants and microorganisms in the rhizosphere in determining the outcome of plant competition and the establishment of community structure. Finally, mycorrhizal associates of plants and the diversity of tropical soils are reviewed. This book is recommended as a library reference.

Ceramic Transactions. Nuclear Waste Management IV. George G. Wicks, Dennis F. Bickford, and L. Roy Bunnell, eds. The American Ceramic Society, Inc., Westerville, OH; 1991. 799 pp. (ISBN 0-944904-45-9) hardcover.

This volume contains the text of papers presented at the 1991 Conference of the American Ceramic Society. Although the title implies the inclusion of chemical waste, the symposium was overwhelmingly dedicated to nuclear waste. A chapter of the volume is dedicated to microwave applications in waste management. Like its predecessors, this volume contains papers of high scientific quality and those of less significance, making it necessary for the reader to critically evaluate the papers.

The Chemical Industry—Friend to the Environment. J.A.G. Drake, ed. Royal Society of Chemistry, Cambridge,

U.K.; 1992. 192 pp. (ISBN 0-85186-477-5) £37.50 hardcover.

"The Chemical Industry—Friend to the Environment?" was a symposium organised by the Royal Society of Chemistry of the U.K. This volume contains papers presented at that symposium. The public has mixed views about the Chemical Industry. People appreciate the material comforts the industry provides, such as textiles, ceramics, steel, specialty chemicals, drugs, and prosthetics. However, many people feel that their comfort is spoiled by the chemical poisoning of the environment through slag heaps, beaches, and countryside littered with nonbiodegradable unsightly plastic containers, poor air quality through NO_x, CO₂ and chlorofluorocarbon emissions and nuclear waste. The occasional spillage of hazardous chemicals through road, rail, and sea accidents increases the distrust of the industry. The majority of these topics are addressed in this volume. Although there is an agreement that chemical waste will always be produced, determining the fine line between what are acceptable and what are potentially dangerous thresholds is a continuing challenge to both the industry and the public. Recycling has gone beyond the fashionable stage and is now a serious option for plastics. Plastics must be recycled, used as a fuel, or be biodegradable. The idea that the polluter must pay is receiving general acceptance, but not so readily accepted is the notion that the costs of cleanup may have to be reflected in the price of consumer goods. Emergency preparedness for the chemical industry, much like the system used in nuclear power plants is now being seriously considered by large chemical establishments. This book is recommended as a personal copy.

Neurotoxicity. Identifying and Controlling Poisons in the Nervous System. U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment. Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York; 1992. 361 pp. (ISBN 0-442-01047-8) £36.50 hardcover.

This report is a comprehensive review of the adverse effects of exposure to certain chemicals. There has been recent evidence linking exposure to certain