



## BOOK REVIEWS

**Biogéographie des milieux aquatiques**, Gabriel Rougerie, 1993. Paris: Armand Colin, 252p. \$CAN 68.40. ISBN 2-200-21477-4.

"Biogéographie des milieux aquatiques" is a book whose author, Gabriel Rougerie, honorary professor at Université Paris VII, is well known in his field. The book completes a series of three books published by the same editor. In the first one, entitled "Géographie de la Biosphère", the author presents the vegetation cover of emerged lands; in the second, entitled "Montagnes dans la Biosphère", he focuses on the problems posed by these geographical entities to the shifting of flora and fauna; in the present book, he completes his overview with all of the aquatic environments.

Generally, the book addresses the following overall difficulties encountered in the study of aquatic environments: (1) the tri-dimensional distribution of species, (2) food chains often little dependent on the substrate resources, (3) several environments varying from the smallest and most confined such as ponds, to the very large such as oceans and very elongated such as lakes and rivers.

After a foreword which places the reader in context, the book is divided in two parts. The first part (7 chapters), entitled "Le berceau dépassé" (The obsolete cradle) deals first with the history of the appearance of life, the liberation of certain species from water and the ecological structure of the oceans. It also deals with the differentiation of oceanic species according to their nutritional richness and their zonal location, *i.e.*, (1) the marine "deserts" of the Tropics, (2) the rich areas of the upwellings and ocean fronts, (3) the complex areas of the cold seas or those of the mid latitudes and even (4) of the abyssal zones which are little known. The second part (5 chapters), entitled "Les gradients de l'espace" (The gradients of space) deals with the water bodies near or in transition towards the terrestrial environment. The author discusses successively the basic characteristics of: (1) the inland seas such as the Black,

the Baltic and the Caspian Seas, (2) the so-called "stagnant water bodies" such as soft or salt water lakes, lagoons, ponds, and marsh environments, (3) water courses, estuaries and fjords and, finally, (4) the river areas, neither terrestrial nor aquatic. At the end of the book, the reader will find a glossary and a bibliography with international references cited in the text.

The book is well written, well printed in a soft cover binding, and the subject is complete and well structured. Unfortunately the editor places lists of contents and figures at the end of the book which is now obsolete. Another problem is that the references in the bibliography are regrouped not by chapter but thematically. This procedure is advantageous for those wishing to have an overall picture of a particular theme, but is quite impractical for those wishing to establish a rapid correspondence between the name of an author cited in the text and the description of a document mentioned in the bibliography. Also, figures are badly drawn even if they are clear and informative, and the chapters vary quite extensively in length, between 7 and 33 pages with an average of 18, and each is poorly illustrated with 3 or 4 tables or figures.

In spite of the later formal comments, the book is well worth its price for teachers and professionals, but is rather expensive for use by students.

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**Oil Spill Response in the Marine Environment**, J.W. Doerffer, 1992. New York: Pergamon, 391p. \$120.00. ISBN 0-08-04-1000-6.

While this welcome book covers the issues involved in oil spill response in the marine envi-