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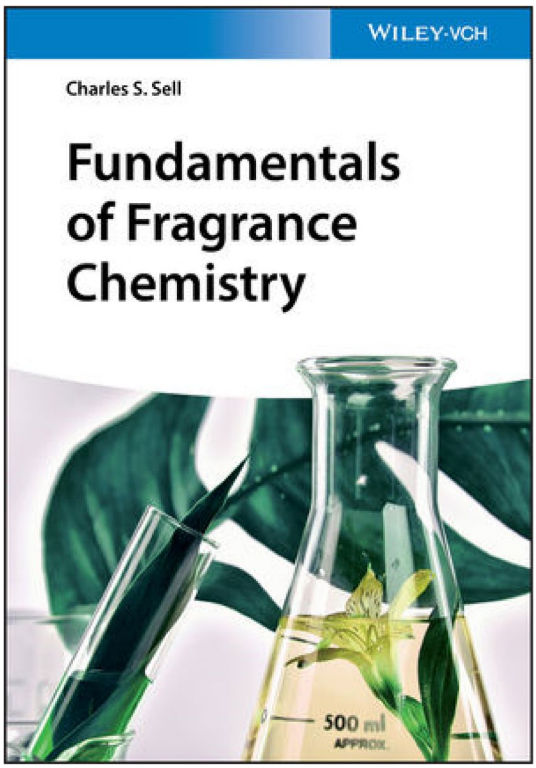
BOOK REVIEW

Fundamentals of Fragrance Chemistry: Charles S. Sell

Wiley-VCH 2019, ISBN 978-3-527-34577-9, pp xiii + 395, Price $110



Although slightly less than 400 pages this is physically a large A5 book weighing in at over 0.8 kg. It is copiously illustrated in black and white but the author has missed an opportunity to make the book more attractive by including some colour pictures of various plants noted for their fragrance such as lavender.

The introductory chapter is on the structure of matter (after Linus Pauling) followed by a number of chapters on various aspects of organic chemistry and analysis relevant to fragrance chemistry; chromatography figures largely in the latter but this chapter also covers such things as melting and boiling points and optical spectroscopic methods including IR and UV analysis, NMR and MS. Much of this information is available in standard textbooks so it seems somewhat superfluous here. It is not until Chapter 8, page 147 that the book begins to get down to the topic of perfumes and even then it seems to lack some direct relevance. The book does improve significantly as it progresses with chapters such as perfume structure and the chemistry of olfaction. Pheromones, so important for many insects, get mentioned in Chapter 13 and again in Chapter14. There are no references but each chapter ends with a set of "Review Questions" to ensure that the reader has assimilated the given information.

This is something of a "Curates Egg" of a book, full of arcane information and a large amount of organic chemistry, so much so that it could act as a textbook for the latter. It is reasonably priced and represents an excellent purchase for information on many interesting and important topics.

E. R. Adlard.