

## BOOK REVIEW

**Natural Products for Innovative Pest Management.** Edited by D. L. Whitehead and W. S. Bowers. Pergamon Press, Oxford 1983. 586 pages. U.S. \$140.00.

There is nothing new in most chapters of this book, but what makes it unusual and worthwhile is the breadth with which it covers the topic.

This book is the second in a series on *Current Themes in Tropical Science* with Prof. T. R. Odhiambo, Director of the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE), as the Chief Editor. It is the product of the separate symposia held at ICIPE in 1979 and 1980: The International Technical Workshop on Appropriate Industrial Technology for the Control of Tropical Insect Pests and Disease Vectors, and The Scientific Working Group on the Use of Naturally Occurring Plant Products in Pest and Disease Control.

The special thing about the book is that it brings together authoritative surveys covering the ecology of insect/plant relations, the range of plant chemicals of potential value in pest control, studies on the impact of these chemicals on pests (mostly insects), their mode of action and present use in pest control, and the industrial development of chemicals for pest control including the necessity and problems of patenting and registration. Pyrethrins and pyrethroids get relatively extensive coverage, because their development is the real success story in this field. This is *not* just another book about pheromones; they hardly get a mention. It is essentially concerned with plant products for use against insects although there are chapters on antifungal compounds and nematocides.

The surveys are necessarily superficial, but they are mostly lucid and informative. Although it is more than 3 years since the papers were given, the delay in publication is not critical because they are, in general, broad brush approaches and the views of the authors are unlikely to have altered significantly in the interim.

In all, the book contains 35 chapters contributed by roughly equal numbers of industrialists, university lecturers and researchers from government laboratories. The balance is good, but there is a good deal of repetition, presumably resulting partly from the need to include all the papers from the two meetings. No doubt this also accounts for one or two irrelevant-seeming papers. Some of the papers are followed by discussions which contain useful points, and there is a short index. The book is well-produced with few typographical errors apart from the introductory sections.

The book will be particularly interesting to the considerable number of natural products chemists and biologists in universities and research institutes who are involved in this field, but who commonly lack the background about the commercial approach to life. Unfortunately, the length of the book will deter many readers from sitting down and reading it from cover to cover, but that is what it demands.

R. F. CHAPMAN Overseas Development Administration  
Tropical Development and Research Institute  
College House, Wrights Lane  
London W8 5SJ, England