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Microbiology Today: Book Reviews:

NODULATION IN LEGUMES

J.I. Sprent

Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (2001)

There are about 18,000 species of legumes, and the majority form root nodules containing nitrogen-fixing bacteria called rhizobia. Most nodulation research is devoted to a handful of crop species, but Janet Sprent is interested in the others, and this book distils a lifetime of experience. It provides a comprehensive account of our present knowledge of the taxonomic distribution of nodulation, but it is not just a dry list of species. Sprent is the undisputed expert on the diversity of nodule structures and their development, and has included a chapter on this, as well as chapters on legumes and on rhizobia, covering their taxonomy, physiology and ecology, and on the evolution of the symbiosis. All this material is presented in a highly accessible style that will ensure that this book is essential reading for beginners as well as an inspiration for field studies and an authoritative reference for advanced researchers.

Peter Young, University of York

£27.00

pp. 146

ISBN: 1-84246-013-7

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