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Edited by J. M. Baker and W. J. Wolff

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## **Biological surveys of estuaries and coasts**

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Estuarine and brackish-water sciences association handbook

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## Biological surveys of estuaries and coasts

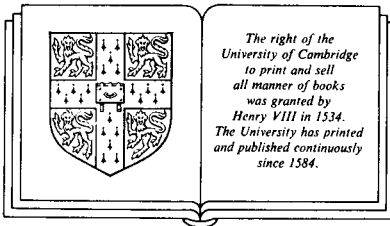
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## Preface

Recent years have seen a growth in demand for biological surveys for a variety of practical purposes, such as environmental impact assessment and surveillance, management of amenity, and identification of sites for conservation priority. Biological surveys are concerned with investigating the distribution and abundance of organisms. They involve decisions about location of sampling sites; types, numbers, and sizes of samples; equipment; and data processing. They also usually include the collection of physical and chemical data as aids to interpretation. From the scientific point of view, Harper (1982) warns against 'excessive preoccupation with the distribution of taxa (cartography for taxomists)' but recognizes that it is natural that the first stages in the growth of any science should consist of the description and ordering of the material for study. Much estuarine and coastal biology is still at this stage.

For the purpose of this book, estuaries are defined as semi-enclosed and coastal bodies of water that have free connections with the open sea and within which sea water is measurably diluted with fresh water derived from land drainage (Cameron & Pritchard, 1963). Coasts are defined as the zone where estuary or sea water meets the land. They include the intertidal zone, nearshore waters and subtidal areas, and cliffs rising directly from the shore. The book is intended to give an introduction to techniques (together with their advantages and limitations) for these different habitats and the main groups of organisms to be found in them. The material is mainly European but should be relevant to many parts of the world (excluding specifically tropical features such as mangroves and coral reefs). It is hoped that the bringing together in one volume of techniques for a great diversity of organisms and habitats will be useful for those planning broadly based surveys and may also encourage some cross fertilization of methodology between different specializations.

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J. M. Baker and W. J. Wolff