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978-0-521-54935-6 - The Ecological Consequences of Environmental Heterogeneity

Edited by Michael J. Hutchings, Elizabeth A. John and Alan J. A. Stewart

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# The Ecological Consequences of Environmental Heterogeneity

*The 40th Symposium of the British Ecological Society  
held at the University of Sussex  
23–25 March 1999*

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## History of the British Ecological Society

The British Ecological Society is a learned society, a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. Established in 1913 by academics to promote and foster the study of ecology in its widest sense, the Society currently has around 5000 members spread around the world. Members include research scientists, environmental consultants, teachers, local authority ecologists, conservationists and many others with an active interest in natural history and the environment. The core activities are the publication of the results of research in ecology, the development of scientific meetings and the promotion of ecological awareness through education. The Society's mission is:

To advance and support the science of ecology and publicize the outcome of research, in order to advance knowledge, education and its application.

The Society publishes four internationally renowned journals and organizes at least two major conferences each year plus a large number of smaller meetings. It also initiates a diverse range of activities to promote awareness of ecology at the public and policy maker level in addition to developing ecology in the education system, and it provides financial support for approved ecological projects. The Society is an independent organization that receives little outside funding.

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## Preface

This book comprises an introduction and eighteen chapters that represent the contents of talks given at a Symposium on The Ecological Consequences of Environmental Heterogeneity. The Symposium was held at the University of Sussex, UK, from 23 to 25 March 1999. Our intention in holding the meeting was two-fold. Firstly, we wanted to assemble a record of the progress that has been made, since the publication of seminal books on environmental heterogeneity in the early 1990s (e.g. Shorrocks & Swingland (1990) *Living in a Patchy Environment*, Oxford University Press, Oxford; Kolasa & Pickett (1991) *Ecological Heterogeneity*, Springer-Verlag, New York), in understanding its ecological effects. Secondly, we wanted to bring together plant and animal scientists, working at all scales and on all levels of organization, ranging from organisms and populations to communities, to discuss their mutual interests. Our hope was that discussion of new developments in each area of specialization would broaden minds and generate an atmosphere in which new research collaborations might be created. To the editors, it appeared that the mixture of plant and animal scientists with a common interest in the ecological consequences of environmental heterogeneity was highly beneficial, and we thank all participants in the symposium for contributing to a lively and stimulating meeting. We thank Catherine Stead, from the University of Sussex Conference Office, Philip Gassmann and David Chick from the University of Sussex Catering Services, and many student helpers for ensuring that everything ran smoothly during the meeting. We are also greatly indebted to Hazel Norman, Pauline Kemp and Amanda Thomas of the British Ecological Society for their handling of the Symposium booking arrangements and finances, and for dealing with all enquiries at the Conference desk during the meeting. Malcolm Press gave much valuable advice during the planning of this meeting and at many times since. We thank the many reviewers who helped us during the preparation of the manuscripts, and Ian Sherman, Delia Sandford and Cee Brandson of Blackwell Science, for their professionalism and friendly help in producing the book. Finally, we thank the Symposium speakers, who also wrote the chapters for this book. We greatly appreciated their commitment to the meeting and to the production of this book, and for dealing — mostly very promptly — with the numerous bothersome requests from the editors for clarification and alteration of their written texts.

*Michael J. Hutchings  
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