

A practical general point is the timing of the PKU tests in infants. Though the elevation in the blood phenylalanine is the earliest chemical change yet the alteration is minimal at birth but rises steadily thereafter, reaching a peak at 24 days. Thus the earlier a PKU infant is screened, the more likely it is that the blood phenylalanine will not be elevated and the condition missed. Furthermore there is a sex difference, coupled with the drive for earlier and earlier screening (which in turn stems from the desire for early initiation of a phenylalanine free diet) probably accounts for the recently discovered predominance of male PKU infants over females. Where the surveys are carried out on retarded PKU children there are equal numbers of males and females with PKU.

However beyond this tricky period immediately after birth, an increased phenylalanine level in the blood is a reliable diagnostic criterion for PKU or one of its variants.

A useful feature is that the authors were given the opportunity of updating their sections at the proof stage by the inclusion of addenda, but the whole book was for me a most welcome refresher course—roll on the next volumes, where we can anticipate such topics as the lethal neonatal chondrodystrophies (not so long ago a muddle) and advances in pre-natal genetic diagnosis.

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CURRENT TITLES IN THE BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES: BIOLOGY 83. Stephen Edwards, Managing Editor. Association of Systematics Collections and Allen Press, Lawrence, Kansas. 1983-84. Volumes 1-4. Pp. 839. PB. Prices: in USA; individuals \$40.00, Institutions \$80.00. Canada; \$50.00/\$95.00 (US). Elsewhere; \$55.00/\$95.00 (US)

This is a useful citation system published four times per year. In each issue all publications are listed alphabetically by senior author and also by general subject area, e.g., behaviour, and by taxonomic grouping, e.g., Arthropoda. Within the subject and taxonomic listings, each paper is again listed alphabetically by senior author without the full citation but with a series of key-words, some of which refer to other sections in both indices. It is therefore very easy to identify current papers in a specific area.

This journal series is aimed primarily at systematists but any geneticist working in the area in which evolution, population biology, ecology, systematics and behaviour overlap should find it useful but it will be of little use to microbial or molecular geneticists. Although the indexing system appears complicated at first sight, it is very efficient and with practice easy to use. At a time of increasing pressures on funds for journals, it is not clear whether any library would be able to justify the expense of this series for such a narrow area, let alone whether an individual could afford it.

Shortly after writing this review, I received a letter from the publishers announcing that the series had been discontinued because they had been unable to attract sufficient subscriptions to maintain publication. However, complete sets of the 1983 issue will still be available from the publishers.

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