

P. Kovář: ECOSYSTEM AND LANDSCAPE ECOLOGY – text version (in Czech) [Ekosystémová a krajiná ekologie – textové teze], Karolinum Press, Charles University, Prague 2008, 89 pp., ISBN 978-80-246-1507-3.

This new textbook provides a brief introduction to the general principles of ecosystem and landscape ecology, albeit while putting greater emphasis on the latter area. The book covers all basic topics of landscape ecology, such as spatial organization of the ecosystem, landscape dynamics and data visualization. A great deal of the book is also focused on such practical applications as urban ecology, landscape management, restoration ecology, landscape planning and so on.

Basic principles are elucidated using numerous examples, which help the reader to understand individual general principles. One can hope that an illustrated version will appear soon, as illustration and more detailed explanation of examples will make the book even more useful and understandable also for readers not having fundamental backgrounds in biology or the environment.

Much of the book is directed to the development of human perception with regard to ecosystems and to nature in general and its reflection in many aspects of human culture. Considerable attention is given also to elucidating the history of how our knowledge has developed about ecology in general and landscape ecology in particular. This information is presented in inserted boxes, which guide the reader through ecology's development over time. This is a truly unique approach that helps students to understand that science is not a static sum of knowledge that they have to master, but, rather, that it is a dynamic, long-term process of gradually improving our understanding of nature.

I greatly appreciate this last aspect of the textbook, and I hope it may stimulate the next generation of students to become part of this never-ending journey of discovering our world.

Jan Frouz