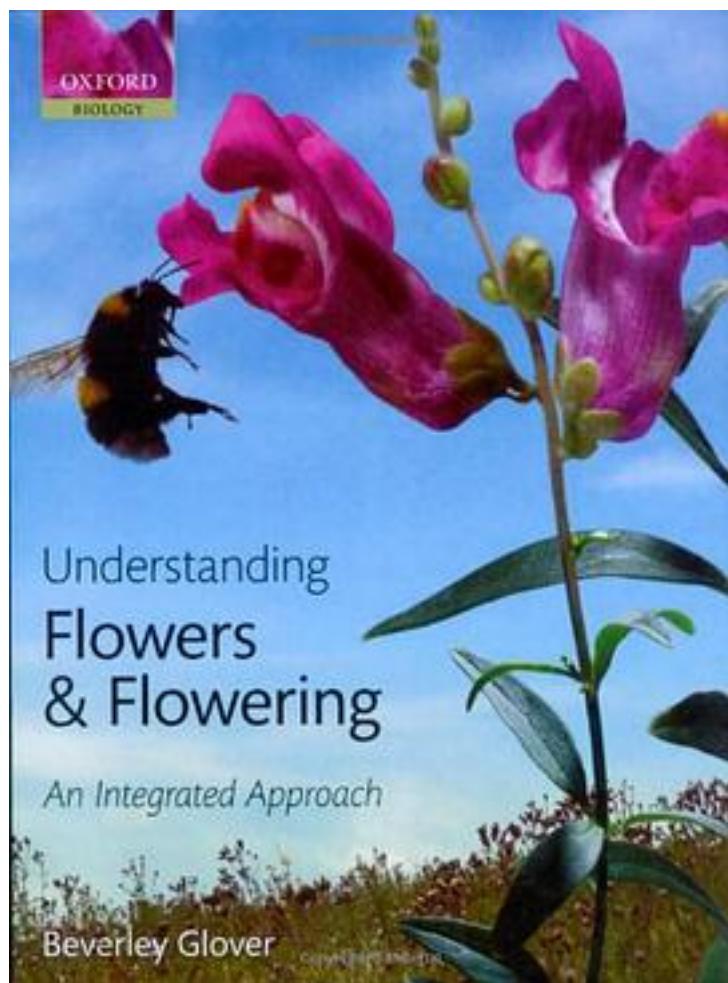


Understanding Flowers and Flowering



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出版者:

出版时间:2008-1

装帧:

isbn:9780198565963

Flowers are the beautiful and complex reproductive structures of the angiosperms, one of the most diverse and successful groups of living organisms. The underlying thesis of

this book is that to fully understand plant development (and why flowers differ in shape, structure and colour), it is necessary to understand why it is advantageous for them to look like they do. Conversely, in order to fully understand plant ecology, it is necessary to appreciate how floral structures have adapted and evolved. Uniquely, this book addresses flowers and flowering from both a molecular genetic perspective (considering flower induction, development and self-incompatibility) and an ecological perspective (looking at the selective pressures placed on plants by pollinators, and the consequences for animal-plant co-evolution). Understanding Flowers and Flowering first considers the evolution of flowers and the history of research into their development. This is followed by a detailed description of the processes which lead to flower production in model plants. The book then examines how flowers differ in shape, structure and colour, and how these differences are generated. Finally it assesses the role of these various aspects of floral biology in attracting pollinators and ensuring successful reproduction. In so doing, it provides the first truly integrated study of the topic - one that discusses both the how? and why? of flowering plant reproductive biology. The breadth of coverage and integrated approach makes this advanced textbook an ideal choice for anyone interested in any aspect of floral biology. It will be particularly suitable for graduate level students taking courses in plant development, ecology, evolution, and reproductive biology.

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