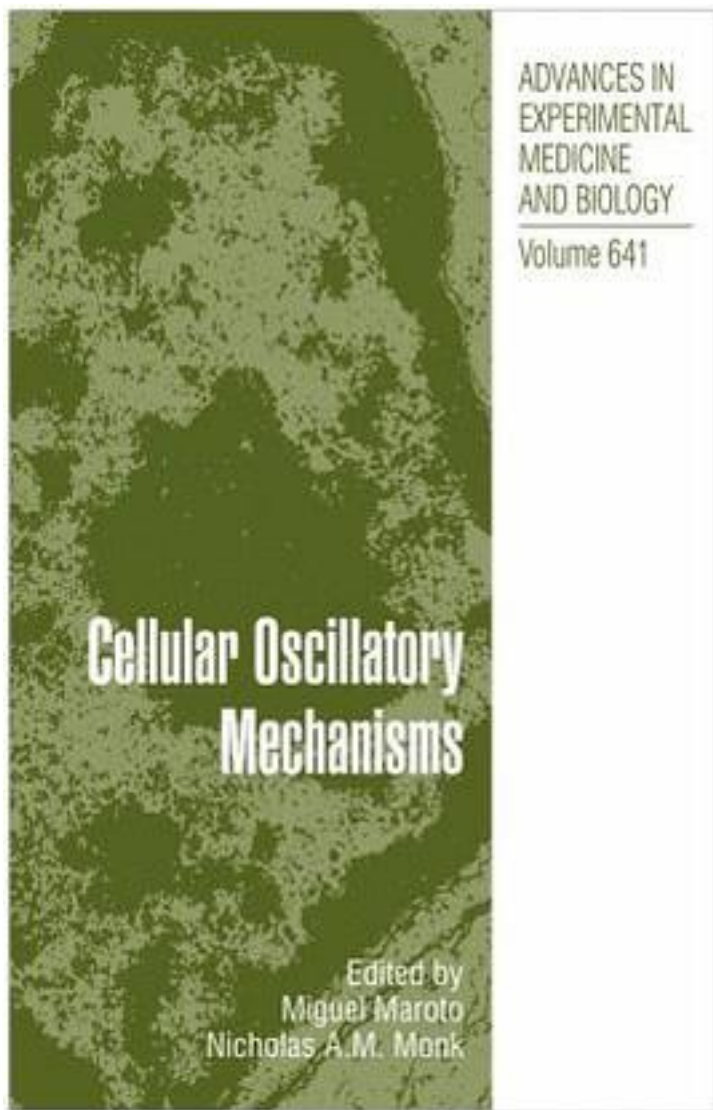


Cellular Oscillatory Mechanisms



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The chapters in this book provide an introduction to a range of both well known and less familiar cellular oscillations and serve to illustrate the striking richness of cellular dynamics. The contributions focus particularly on elucidating the basic mechanisms that underlie these oscillations. The essentially quantitative nature of oscillations has long made them an attractive area of study for theoretical biologists, and the application of complementary modelling and experimental approaches can yield insights into oscillatory dynamics that go beyond those that can be obtained by either in isolation. The benefits of this synergy are reflected in the contributions appearing in this book. The current resurgence in interest in interdisciplinary approaches to cell and molecular biology stems in part from the increasing availability of system-wide data on the state of the components of cellular regulatory networks. A limiting factor in these approaches is often the lack of suitable ways of characterising a network state in terms of summary quantitative features. Without such features, it is typically difficult to gain new qualitative insight into the operating logic of all but the simplest networks. In this regard, oscillatory phenomena provide ideal exemplars for systems approaches, since oscillations have clear summary features that prove invaluable in combining mathematical models with experimental data.

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