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R. S. Shults, E. V. Gvozdev: Osnovy obshchey gelmintologii (Fundamentals of general helminthology), volume II, The Biology of Helminths. Publishing House NAUKA, Moscow 1972, 515 pp., 170 figs.

The first, successful, volume of the series "Fundamentals of general helminthology", published in 1970, is followed by volume two "The Biology of Helminths". In this new book, the authors present a complete survey of concepts and studies on life cycles, with characteristics of the processes involved, and of the physiology of helminths.

The introductory chapters deal with the system of the supertype Scolecida enabling the definition of helminths as scolecida living as parasites during a certain phase of their life. The twofold external environment of helminths, i.e., the system: parasite-host-environment, is discussed on p. 8—22. This phenomenon involves problems of the endo- and exoecology of helminths. The chapter dedicated to host categories and to studies on the ontogenesis of helminth is of utmost importance. It is logically followed by an evolution of epidemiological aspects. In the chapter on host categories arranged in accord with the degree of natural susceptibility of the hosts to helminths, the authors have demonstrated, on a number of examples host-parasite relationships and possibilities of their evolution in connection with the factors determining the organism to be utilized as the host of the parasite, and the phenomenon of the exchange of hosts. The general lay-out of these introductory chapters offers a good orientation throughout the problems solved in this book.

The next part deals with problems of general biology (p. 23—182). The individual chapters discuss the various forms of helminths in relation to the external environment. An evaluation is given of the degree of bonds between the helminth and its environment (ecto- and endohelminths), the possibilities of the release of the helminth or its developmental stages into the external environment, their movements (migration), the routes and mechanisms of entering their hosts (from a general point of view). Attention has been given to the migration of endohelminths in the organism of vertebrates (cavity- and tissue migration), and to the various forms of tissue migration. In addition, brief characteristics are given of the migration of monogeneans and that of helminths in the organism of invertebrates. In conclusion, a comprehensive survey is given of the phenomenon of migration of helminths in the organism of their hosts. The following chapter contains data on the location of the helminths in vertebrates and invertebrates, on the duration of development and longevity of the helminths, on fertilization and fertility. A separate chapter is dedicated to variability and to morphological anomalies in helminths, which are important for a better understanding of several taxonomic problems. Cases of hyperparasitism are illustrated in a number of examples, and brief reference is made to palaeohelminthic findings.