Some of the activities will be of direct interest to workers in other areas. Unfortunately, you will find the book very difficult to use as a reference volume. The individual contributions carry no summaries, and there is no index. I suspect that this is a cunning device to prevent an over-casual review. At least, that is my excuse to the Editor of this journal, who understandably has been complaining that I have been slow to produce it.

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Genetics and Evolution of the Domestic Fowl. By LEWIS STEVENS. Cambridge University Press. 1991. Pp. 306. Hardback £50.00 ($89.95). ISBN 0 521 40317 0.

This book meets a need which is easily neglected, but where success will help ensure the future growth of science in this area. Students of genetics, molecular biology, development or quantitative genetics are offered a glimpse of the unique potential of poultry as study material.

Specialists in this subject have been endowed with two great landmarks of progress. Hutt's *Genetics of the Fowl* (1949) marked the prominent role of poultry studies in early genetics, and was so comprehensive that it remained the standard text for four decades. *Poultry Breeding and Genetics* (edited by R. D. Crawford, 1990) brought together authorities in every aspect of the subject. The synthesis of molecular, Mendelian and quantitative genetics is unique among vertebrate species.

Non-specialists too often complete their education unaware of the relevance of the fowl to their studies. This book offers a stimulating description of how the most advanced technologies can be applied to a species which has a long tradition in science, a vast knowledge base and great scientific and commercial value.

Dr Stevens writes, in the tradition of F. B. Hutt, as an enthusiast as well as an expert. The strongest chapters are those on 'The transmission of inherited characters' and 'Immunogenetics of the domestic fowl'. The appendix on 'Oncogenes' deserves to be developed into a full chapter. The only obvious weakness is in molecular embryology, where the readily accessible embryo is widely used to study gene expression in development.

The book should be recommended to biology students from agriculture to molecular biology. By offering such students a bridge into the specialist poultry literature, *Genetics and Evolution of the Domestic Fowl* will help to ensure that studies of poultry will stay at the forefront of vertebrate genetics.

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