



Photomorphogenesis in Plants

R. E. Kendrick

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It is perhaps not surprising that plants have evolved a mechanism to sense the light environment about them and to modify growth for optimal use of the available 'life-giving' light. Green plants, and ultimately all forms of life, depend on the energy of sunlight fixed during photosynthesis. Unlike animals that use behaviour to find food, sedentary plants use physiology to optimize their growth and development for light absorption. By appreciating the quality, quantity, direction and duration of light, plants can control such complex processes as germination, growth and flowering. To perceive the light environment several receptor pigments have evolved, including the red/far-red reversible phytochrome and the blue/UV-absorbing photoreceptors (Part 1). The quantification of light (Part 2) and importance of instrumentation for photomorphogenesis research are introduced in Part 3. Isolation and characterization of phytochrome is a classic example of how photobiological techniques can predict the nature of an unknown photoreceptor. Current knowledge of the phytochrome photoreceptor family is given in Part 4 and that of blue/UV receptors in Part 5. Part 6 deals with the coaction of photoreceptors. The light environment and its perception is addressed in Part 7. Molecular and genetic approaches and the photoregulation of gene expression compose Part 8. Part 9 contains further selected topics: photomodulation of growth phototropism, photobiology of stomatal movements, photomovement, photocontrol of flavonoid biosynthesis, photobiology of fungi and photobiology of ferns. The 28 chapters written by leading experts from Europe, Israel, Japan and the USA, provide an advanced treatise on the exciting and rapidly developing field of plant photomorphogenesis.

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