



The Optics of Life: A Biologist's Guide to Light in Nature

Sönke Johnsen

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Optics--a field of physics focusing on the study of light--is also central to many areas of biology, including vision, ecology, botany, animal behavior, neurobiology, and molecular biology. *The Optics of Life* introduces the fundamentals of optics to biologists and nonphysicists, giving them the tools they need to successfully incorporate optical measurements and principles into their research. Sönke Johnsen starts with the basics, describing the properties of light and the units and geometry of measurement. He then explores how light is created and propagates and how it interacts with matter, covering topics such as absorption, scattering, fluorescence, and polarization. Johnsen also provides a tutorial on how to measure light as well as an informative discussion of quantum mechanics.

The Optics of Life features a host of examples drawn from nature and everyday life, and several appendixes that offer further practical guidance for researchers. This concise book uses a minimum of equations and jargon, explaining the basic physics of light in a succinct and lively manner. It is the essential primer for working biologists and for anyone seeking an accessible introduction to optics.

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