

Preface

Algae inhabiting river habitats have never been approached in a single book but only as parts of more general publications dealing with ecology, taxonomy and bio-assessment of freshwater algae. As a result, river algae have been treated among other organisms and ecological topics of river ecosystems or as part of publications dealing with freshwater algae in general. The basic aim of this book is to provide a comprehensive approach of some relevant topics on algae inhabiting rivers. *River Algae* is focused on benthic communities aiming to show the importance of their role in the structure and function of communities in river ecosystems. Although the content is not formally divided into sections, the book covers two basic aspects: (a) the taxonomy of river-inhabiting algal groups, including phylogeny, distribution, collection, preservation and description of the most representative genera of algae in river benthic algal communities, and (b) the ecology of river algae, including ecological factors influencing abundance, distribution and diversity of river benthic algal communities and their use as bio-indicators. The book comprises 11 chapters written by renowned experts from Europe, North and South America providing updated information on taxonomy, ecology, methodology and uses of benthic river algae. The book is of potential interest to a wider audience, including researchers, students and professionals in diverse fields such as freshwater algae, limnology, aquatic biology, water quality assessment and biodiversity in river ecosystems.

São José do Rio Preto, SP, Brazil

Orlando Necchi Jr.

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Necchi Jr., O. (Ed.)

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