

Insect Hormones

INSECT HORMONES

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Preface to the First Edition

Research into insect hormones is a biological discipline which has appeared only during the last twenty years and has only become fully developed since the nineteen-fifties. The number of papers on insect hormones has increased geometrically over the last few years. It is therefore a rather difficult task to present a systematic review of the current state of our knowledge in such a rapidly enlarging subject. New information is accumulating at a surprising rate and new theories appear almost daily. An attempt, however incomplete it may be, to summarize and synthesize the present state of our knowledge has nevertheless a use in encouraging the profitable orientation of future research. In the case of insect hormones such a review may be of additional benefit as the data are important in other biological disciplines, especially in general biology, endocrinology and various branches of entomology including the applied field.

It is clear that, with a literature on insect hormones including more than 1500 papers, it is impossible to attempt even an approximately complete survey of the available references. The author's aim has been rather to summarize as many as possible of the most important papers, to review the overall picture from a single viewpoint, and to list all the available references.

An attempt has been made to deal objectively with all the most important aspects of the subjects discussed, including some conflicting views whether or not the author considers them correct. This does not mean, however, that the author has limited himself merely to reproducing the views of others without reference to his own conclusions, which appear to him to be well founded. Where possible the author has evaluated the available information and has developed further the conclusions quoted from other scientists, particularly from the point of view of the prospects for further research. The author is fully aware that many of his conclusions can only be regarded as provisional working hypotheses with the present limited state of our knowledge. He is, however, convinced that even the contradiction or modification of a wrong hypothesis will do more to further progress in a field such as insect

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

hormones at the present stage of development than a non-critical accumulation of apparently objective facts.

In the field of endocrinology, the facts and conclusions have often been regarded as being inconsistent with the principles of animal evolution. It is, however, the facts about insect hormones which themselves most clearly demonstrate the fallacy of this conclusion. The number of papers dealing with insect hormones from the point of view of phylogeny has increased rapidly, especially in the last few years, and they make an important contribution to a better understanding of animal evolution. One of the chief aims of the present review has been to summarize these papers, enlarging on their approach. This perhaps makes the book at least partly worthy of such an important event in modern biology as the centenary of the first appearance of Charles Darwin's most important work – *On The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* – and the 150th anniversary of his birth.

Last, but not least, the author wishes to express his sincere thanks to all those who took part in making this book possible by their comments, criticism or technical assistance, also to those who made the author's task easier by supplying reprints of their papers. The author is particularly pleased respectfully to acknowledge his debt to his former teacher Dr Karel Wenig, Professor of Animal Physiology at Prague University, for all the care he has taken in his capacity as scientific editor with the compilation and improvement of this book both from the point of view of the subject-matter as well as with the style and language.

The opportunity is equally welcome to record gratitude to the most important and distinguished contributor to the field of insect hormones, Professor V. B. Wigglesworth, F.R.S., under whose guidance the author started his study of the subject as a British Council scholar in 1948–1949 in the department of zoology at Cambridge University.

The author is similarly grateful to Professor Ivan Málek, Fellow of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and Director of the Biological Institute, and to Professor Otto Jirovec, Fellow of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, for their continued interest in his work and numerous encouraging discussions about this book. Thanks are also due to Dr Vladimír Landa for a careful revision of the typescript as well as for many useful comments, and to Dr Viktor Janda, jr., and Dr Jaroslav Veber for reading the typescript and providing helpful criticism and suggestions. The author is indebted to Mr Kinský and Mrs Kohnová for the careful translation of the manuscript into German and to Professor Fiala for the excellent microphotos. Special thanks are due

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

to my wife for her valuable help with typing the manuscript, for preparing the index and many other time-consuming tasks connected with the preparation of this book.

V. J. A. N.

Prague,

20 March 1958

Preface to the Second Edition

The fact that the first edition of this book was out of print within a few months of its appearance demonstrates the vivid interest of specialists in the results of research on insect hormones. The number of papers dealing with this subject has increased markedly in the short space of less than two years since the first edition went to press. Many of these papers represent important contributions to our knowledge of insect hormones.

The publishers' aim was to meet the orders of those who missed the first edition as soon as possible. This has made it impossible to incorporate the new information in the original text. The only alternative has been to include all the new data in a special chapter at the end of the book. This will be an advantage to readers of the first edition who will find all the additions in Chapter XI.

The limited time available prevented a more complete survey of the new findings or a balanced assessment of the most important papers. The considerable number of papers, more than 200 in less than two years – including a few earlier references – demonstrates the increasing interest in insect hormones not only of entomologists but also of physiologists and biologists generally.

Thanks are due to the scientific editor, Professor K. Wenig, and the reviser, Dr V. Landa, for many helpful comments; also to Dr G. Petersen (Deutsches Entomologisches Institut, German Academy of Agricultural Sciences) for his careful corrections of the language.

V. J. A. N.

Prague,
30 January 1960

Preface to the Third [First English] Edition

The number of papers dealing with insect hormones has increased out of all proportion in the last three years and many important new findings have appeared since the second edition was published. The aim of the author has been to include as many of them as possible into the new edition. However, the more rapidly a branch of science develops the more difficult it becomes to make a complete survey up to a particular date. The material in Chapter XI of the second edition has been incorporated in the appropriate sections of the book. The material in the new edition has been rearranged in several places, particularly in Chapter III. Care has been taken to make a clear distinction between views which are generally accepted and the views and conclusions personal to individual authors, including the author of this book. Thanks are due to all who have helped the author to improve the language and to make this new edition as good and complete as possible.

The preparation of the typescript for print took more time than was originally expected. During this period a large number of new papers on the subject appeared, many of them of primary importance. Since, as in the second edition, even a brief treatment of them could not be incorporated in the text, a new chapter has been added containing the additions for the years 1963 to 1965 referring to the papers available to the author until about 1 June 1965.

V. J. A. N.

Prague,
18 August 1965

Preface to the Fourth [Second English] Edition

Since the last, i.e. the third, edition of this book was published in 1966, very many more studies dealing with various aspects of insect hormones have appeared. Apart from earlier reasons, interest in this subject has received a new, strong stimulus with the discovery of the juvenoids (juvenile hormone analogues). Hundreds of papers have since been published by both chemists and biologists on the production, testing and investigation of over 1000 new substances with juvenile hormone activity. More recently, a number of studies related to field trials of these substances has also appeared. Since the first edition of this book was published in 1958, the number of references has more than quadrupled (from 1500 to over 6000).

Concomitantly, there has been a similar increase in the number of papers dealing with various theoretical aspects of the subject. New substances alleged to possess endocrine activity, as well as new effects of previously described hormones, have been reported. Important advances have been made in the elucidation of the chemical structure of these substances and in our knowledge of their mechanism of action. Similarly, we now know more about the specific features of the endocrines in different groups of insects. This has further augmented interest in insect hormones, as can be seen not only from the number of new studies, but also from the increase in the number of reviews on various aspects of this subject.

Interest in insect hormones and their various effects is not limited to students of entomology (either theoretical or applied), but is spreading more and more among workers engaged in research in different fields of general and evolutionary biology. Findings on insect hormones have contributed both to our understanding of the problem of morphogenesis in general and of some of its particular aspects, such as regeneration, blastomogenesis, ultrastructure, etc. The structure of the endocrine system in various groups of insects has proved to be an important criterion in the determination of phylogenetic relationships. Many important conclusions have been reached on the mechanism of action

of hormones in general, and on other important questions of general endocrinology.

The rapid accumulation of papers and data on insect hormones makes it increasingly difficult to keep surveys of this type within reasonable bounds without omitting anything of importance, yet providing as complete and up-to-date a list of references as possible. Obviously, it is quite impossible to give the whole of the bibliography from the very beginning. Since the preceding edition is presumably available in most of the relevant libraries, it was decided that it would probably be the lesser evil to drop all references up to the end of 1964, except for reviews, and instead, to compile as complete a list as possible of references not included in the previous edition (apart from a few at the beginning of 1965). Thus almost all references since 1965 are given, although, of course, only the most important of them are actually discussed. Where their significance merits it, special attention has been paid to papers by authors from Czechoslovakia and other countries less well known to readers in the West.

It was the author's aim to adhere as closely as possible to the previous division of the subject-matter, with only a few supplements and emendations. For example, a new chapter on substances with moulting hormone and juvenile hormone activity (4 - The Entocones) and various aspects of their research had to be included. It also seemed more rational to divide the original Chapter 3 (The Metamorphosis Hormones) into two separate chapters, one for the three main hormones and related substances (3), the other for the principles of metamorphosis and morphogenesis in general (5). On the other hand, it was found reasonable to amalgamate the addenda for the years 1963 to 1965 with the corresponding sections, so that Chapter II could be abolished, thereby bringing the total number of chapters to twelve.

As in the previous editions, care has been taken all through the book to make the survey as comprehensive, handy and useful for the reader as possible. Consequently, the author does not simply record the conclusions and opinions of the authors of the papers cited, ignoring reciprocal contradictions, but attempts to maintain a consistent synthetic approach. He has been very careful to keep his own conclusions strictly separate from those of other authors, however, so that the reader has an opportunity of forming his own conclusions on each question.

The author would like to take this opportunity to express his indebtedness to all his colleagues and others who helped to make this review as complete and as well supplied with illustrations and references as was

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

possible within the short space of time available. He specially wishes to thank Mrs Schierlová, B.A., London, for her careful revision of the English, Mr J. Holubec, member of the Czechoslovak Academy of Arts, for redrawing the illustrations, and last, but not least, his wife, who had the onerous task of drawing up the bibliography and indexes and of the technical editing and retyping of the manuscript.

The author hopes that readers will find this book useful and that it will stimulate their interest in this field of modern biology which has such a promising future. If so, he will be more than satisfied.

V. J. A. N.

Prague,
June 1974

Contents

	<i>page</i>
Preface to the First Edition	vii
Preface to the Second Edition	x
Preface to the Third [First English] Edition	xi
Preface to the Fourth [Second English] Edition	xii
Plates	xxi
1 Introduction	1
History, definition and classification	1
Neurosecretion	5
Survey of insect hormones	6
Theoretical importance of insect hormone research	9
Practical perspectives of insect hormone research	10
2 Methods and techniques in insect hormone research	12
Preparation of the experimental insect material	12
The operating instruments	15
Removal of hormone sources	17
Introduction of hormones into the organism	20
Evaluation of the secretory activity of an endocrine gland	25
Isolation of a hormone	27
Tissue culture	29
Tissue culture <i>in vivo</i>	34
The histology of endocrine glands	35
Physiological methods in insect hormone research	37
3 The metamorphosis hormone	39
Terminology	39
Abbreviations	46
The activation hormone (AH)	47
The neurosecretory cells of the brain	50
The corpora cardiaca (cc)	57
The direct effects of AH	61
	xv

CONTENTS

The indirect effects of AH	69
The control of AH production	70
Chemical characteristics of AH	73
The mode of action of AH	76
 The moulting hormone (Ecdysone) (MH)	77
The apolytic glands (agl)	80
The prothoracic glands (pgl)	81
The ventral glands (vgl)	89
The pericardial glands	94
The peritracheal glands	94
The ring gland (rgl)	96
The direct effects of MH	99
The indirect effects of MH	105
The control of MH production	111
Chemical characteristics of MH	113
The mode of action of MH	116
 The juvenile hormone (Neotenin) (JH)	118
The corpora allata (ca)	120
The direct effects of JH	129
The indirect effects of JH	141
Is there more than one corpus allatum hormone?	153
The control of JH production	155
The mode of action of JH	166
Chemical characteristics of JH	168
 4 Entocones, natural and synthetic substances with insect hormone activity	170
Ecdysoids or ecdysones: moulting hormone derivatives (MHd)	171
<i>Zooecdysoids</i>	171
<i>Phytoecdysoids</i>	172
<i>Synthetic ecdysoids</i>	174
<i>Antiecdysoids</i>	174
Testing methods for MH activity	175
The effects of MHd	178
Action on other animals and plants	180
Incidence in the insect organism	181

Biosynthesis of ecdysoids in the insect organism	183
Prospects for the practical utilization of MHD	184
Juvenoids or juvenile hormone analogues (JHa)	185
History of their discovery	185
Chemical characteristics	187
Occurrence in nature	190
Testing methods for JH activity	191
Effects of JHa	194
Chemical structure and JHa activity	204
The utilization of JHa in insect pest control	205
5 Hormones and morphogenesis	208
Insect development	208
Morphogenetic aspects of the moulting process	208
Hormones and embryogenesis	219
Larval development and metamorphosis	225
Various concepts of metamorphosis	228
Reproduction and metagenesis	240
Various abnormalities of metamorphosis	244
Phylogenetic abnormalities of metamorphosis	247
The hypothesis of the gradient-factor (GF)	249
The gradient-factor	252
The gradient-factor theory of insect metamorphosis	258
The principle and outline of the concept	258
Determination and transdetermination in relation to differentiation and dedifferentiation	268
The origin and evolution of insect metamorphosis	270
Interrelationships in the morphogenesis of Articulata	277
The origin of the pupal instar in the phylogeny of Holometabola	280
Molecular aspects of the action of hormones and morphogenesis	283
The action of AH at the cellular and subcellular level	283
MH action and molecular aspects of the moulting process	284
Molecular aspects of JH action	287
Hormones and puffing patterns	289
General conclusions on morphogenesis	298
Morphogenesis in animals	298
The gradient-factor theory of morphogenesis	301
The mechanism of tumour growth	306

CONTENTS

6	Hormones and diapause	309
	Diapause characteristics and types	309
	The physiology of diapause	312
	Metabolism	312
	Determination and photoperiodism	315
	Termination of diapause	317
	The hormonal principle of diapause	320
	Pupal diapause	322
	Larval diapause	324
	Late embryonic diapause	325
	Adult diapause	326
	Early embryonic diapause	329
	The synchronization of diapause in parasites with that of their hosts	334
	Artificial diapause	335
	The evolution of diapause	335
7	The neurohormones	338
	Characteristics of neurohormones	338
	Distribution of neurosecretory cells	344
	The cerebral ganglion	344
	The suboesophageal ganglion	346
	The ventral nerve cord	347
	The visceral (sympathetic) nervous system	348
	The metameric (perisymphetic) neurohaemal organs	350
	The ganglionic neurohaemal organs	357
	Survey of neurohormones	357
	Myotropic effects	357
	Rhythms of activity	362
	Neurohormones and hardening of the cuticle	365
	Neurohormones and the colour change	367
	Physiological colour change	368
	Morphological colour change	374
	Influences on water balance	376
	Effects on gut proteinase activity	378
	Activation of the endocrine glands	379
	Effect on the gonads	380
	Control of metabolism	381
	Effect on saccharide metabolism	381
	Effect of neurohormones on electrical activity	382

The phylogenetic origin of neurohormones and neuro-secretion	382
8 The protohormones	385
Neurohumoral factors	386
Acetylcholine	387
Acetylcholinesterase	387
Serotonin (5-hydroxytryptamine)	387
Catecholamines	388
GABA (γ -aminobutyric acid)	388
Other pharmacologically active substances	388
Gene hormones	389
Gene hormones and the eye-colour of <i>Ephestia</i>	389
Gene hormones in the eye-colour of <i>Drosophila</i>	390
Other gene hormones	392
9 Incompletely known substances with allegedly hormonal characteristics	393
The dorsal (thoracic) glands of Lepidopteran larvae	393
The R organ (branched organ, organ ramifié)	395
The oenocytes	396
The problem of sex hormones in insects	402
The 'androgenic hormone' of glow-worms	403
Effects of parasites	404
Substances affecting the ovarian cycle in insects	407
The oostatic hormone	409
The bursa copulatrix factor	409
Other alleged sources of hormones in insects	410
10 The exohormones	412
The exohormones of termites	415
Exohormones in the Hymenoptera	422
The inhibitory substance of the honey bee	423
Exohormones in other Hymenoptera	427
Concerning the phylogenetic origin of exohormones	429
11 Effects of insect hormones on other animal groups and vice versa	431
The effects of insect hormones on crustaceans	432
Effects on colour changes	432
	xix

CONTENTS

The effect of the queen bee exohormone on ovarian development	432
Action of the moulting hormone and other ecdysoids	433
Action of the juvenile hormone and juvenoids	433
The effects of insect hormones on vertebrates	433
The metamorphosis hormones	433
The effects of crustacean hormones on insects	437
The effects of vertebrate hormones in insects	438
 12 The theoretical and practical significance of insect hormones	442
The importance of insect hormones in the study of endocrinology in general	442
The evolution of hormones and endocrine systems	443
The contribution of hormone research to the natural classification and phylogeny of insects	452
The hormonal system and Martynov's scheme of insect phylogeny	452
The significance of hormones in problems of morphogenesis and heredity	453
Further aspects of research in insect hormones	454
Prospects for the utilization of insect hormones in insect control and in applied entomology	454
Insect hormones as a new type of insecticide	455
Metamorphosis hormones and viability	455
Metamorphosis hormones and susceptibility to insecticides	455
 References	456
Index of Topics	571
Index of Species	585
Index of Authors	590