

Book Review

Circadian Physiology (3rd ed).

Roberto Refinetti. Boca Raton,

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This must be the most comprehensive account of circadian physiology that has yet been published. It covers the history of circadian physiology, the research methods used in investigating it, and types of circadian rhythms and their mechanisms in human and a wide variety of other organisms. It then goes on to consider the application of these principles in human activities and medicine. Of particular interest to the travel medicine community will be the chapter on jet lag and shift work, and of interest to the wider medical community will be the chapter on human medicine, covering such topics as chronotherapeutics in physical conditions such as asthma and cardiovascular disease, and depression and seasonal affective disorder. Each chapter concludes with a summary, extremely useful for the casual or less knowledgeable reader, and exercises that make use of the accompanying CD. Finally there is a list of suggested further reading for each chapter followed by extremely comprehensive references. Good use is made throughout the book of figures and diagrams. This is by no means a book to be read from cover to cover, but it contains an enormous amount of information that will prove either interesting or useful to a wide variety of readers. Few readers of this review are likely to purchase it at its published price of £89 but it will prove to be a valuable reference book in medical libraries.

Dr Mike Townend