



Book Review: Computing for Biologists: Python Programming and Principles

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A book review on Computing for Biologists: Python Programming and Principles

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Fifteen years ago a student could go through the whole curriculum in any of the life sciences without ever switching a computer on but, as bioinformatics and systems biology gained weight in the field, biologists became first users and then developers of increasingly sophisticated computer programs. Even for professionals far away from these disciplines, it is nowadays unthinkable to plan an experiment without first checking some databases, designing some primers or analyzing a sequence. These changes have created a need to include basic courses in the biology curriculum where students with little or no inclination toward computer science have to learn the ropes of programming. The main challenge when teaching such a course is to find a good balance between presenting examples that are complex enough to motivate the students and simple enough to be accessible for them. This book is precisely a guide for such an introductory course. Using python as a first programming language and assuming no previous knowledge, the authors follow a practical approach to teach the basic programming skills.

The book is structured in four parts, preceded by a twenty pages tutorial on the basics of python. The examples in each of the first three parts revolve around a unifying biological theme, which turns each of them into a simple yet interesting project. Abstract computational concepts like recursion or memoization are introduced as they are needed to solve diverse problems. At the end of each part, a problem is formulated to solve a real case study using the material covered so far. Abundant examples, additional explanations on these problems and source code with the solutions are available through the companion website. The first part starts with simple tasks like computing GC content of a DNA sequence or converting DNA to its corresponding mRNA. Through these simple examples, the usage of different data types is introduced as well as the basics of flow control and functions. The rest of the first part is dedicated to the consolidate knowledge on these basic concepts understanding the general organization of a program. These concepts are then used to find ORFs in a genome and sequences that are associated with pathogenicity in *Salmonella*. The second part covers sequence alignments, building up toward finding homology between genes and then chromosomes. It is all exemplified by comparing X chromosome in humans and Z chromosome in chicken. The third part covers phylogenetic trees and ends with mitochondrial DNA comparison between humans and neanderthals. Finally, a more heterogeneous part closes the book presenting three different examples that depart from the rest: RNA folding, finding gene regulation networks and genetic algorithms.

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Computing For Biologists Python Programming And Principles

**Keith Wilson, Andreas Hofmann, John
M. Walker, Samuel Clokie**



Computing For Biologists Python Programming And Principles:

Decoding **Computing For Biologists Python Programming And Principles**: Revealing the Captivating Potential of Verbal Expression

In an era characterized by interconnectedness and an insatiable thirst for knowledge, the captivating potential of verbal expression has emerged as a formidable force. Its ability to evoke sentiments, stimulate introspection, and incite profound transformations is genuinely awe-inspiring. Within the pages of "**Computing For Biologists Python Programming And Principles**," a mesmerizing literary creation penned by a celebrated wordsmith, readers attempt an enlightening odyssey, unraveling the intricate significance of language and its enduring effect on our lives. In this appraisal, we shall explore the book is central themes, evaluate its distinctive writing style, and gauge its pervasive influence on the hearts and minds of its readership.

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