

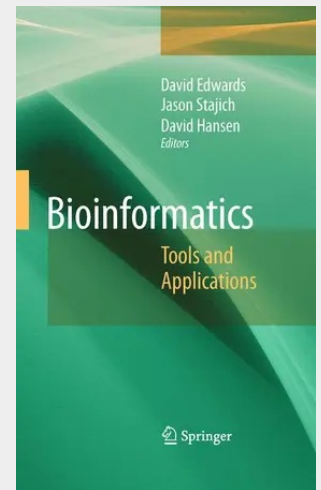
Bioinformatics

Tools and Applications

Bioinformatics is a relatively new field of research. It evolved from the requirement to process, characterize, and apply the information being produced by DNA sequencing technology. The production of DNA sequence data continues to grow exponentially. At the same time, improved bioinformatics such as faster DNA sequence search methods have been combined with increasingly powerful computer systems to process this information. Methods are being developed for the ever more detailed quantification of gene expression, providing an insight into the function of the newly discovered genes, while molecular genetic tools provide a link between these genes and heritable traits. Genetic tests are now available to determine the likelihood of suffering specific ailments and can predict how plant cultivars may respond to the environment. The steps in the translation of the genetic blueprint to the observed phenotype is being increasingly understood through proteome, metabolome and phenome analysis, all underpinned by advances in bioinformatics. Bioinformatics is becoming increasingly central to the study of biology, and a day at a computer can often save a year or more in the laboratory.

The volume is intended for graduate-level biology students as well as researchers who wish to gain a better understanding of applied bioinformatics and who wish to use bioinformatics technologies to assist in their research. The volume would also be of value to bioinformatics developers, particularly those from a computing background, who would like to understand the application of computational tools for biological research. Each chapter would include a comprehensive introduction giving an overview of the fundamentals, aimed at introducing graduate students and researchers from diverse backgrounds to the field and bring them up-to-date on the current state of knowledge. To accommodate the broad range of topics in applied bioinformatics, chapters have been grouped into themes: gene and genome analysis, molecular genetic analysis, gene expression analysis, protein and proteome analysis, metabolome analysis, phenome data analysis, literature mining and bioinformatics tool development. Each chapter and theme provides an introduction to the biology behind the data describes the requirements for data processing and details some of the methods applied to the data to enhance biological understanding.

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