

D.M. Rabin, J.T. Jefferies, C. Lindsey (Eds), *Infrared Solar Physics*, Proceedings of the 154th Symposium of the International Astronomical Union, held in Tucson, Arizona, U.S.A., March 2–6, 1992, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, 608 + xx pp., 1994, hardbound Dfl. 290,-/\$ 176.-/£ 116.-, ISBN 0-7923-2522-2; paperback Dfl. ,-/\$ .-/£ .-, ISBN 0-7923-2523-0.

Astrophysicists tend to explore new spectral regimes by first observing the Sun. The infrared is not a new window, being first opened to the Sun by William Herschel, but space platforms and new groundbased technology currently bring the transition from glimpse to detailed diagnostical observation. The US National Solar Observatory plays a major role in the window opening and hosted a IAU Symposium at a timely moment to assess the state of this budding field. These proceedings (less timely in that their production took too long) furnish an excellent overview with a good balance between instrumentation, observation and interpretation. There is a special section on the 1991 eclipse which so fortunately passed directly over Mauna Kea; another section, on magnetic fields and infrared magnetometry, displays the major promises of infrared solar research. The spirit of the book illustrates ‘the joy of discovery’ in an otherwise mature science, as noted by R.W. Noyes in his preface. The book belongs in every astrophysical library and is also of interest to atomic spectroscopists.

*Sterrekundig Instituut Utrecht*

R.J. RUTTEN