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Introduction to the Plant Life of Southern California: Coast to Foothills (California Natural History Guides)

Philip W. Rundel

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Field guides often provide little ecological information, or context, for understanding the plants they identify. This book, with its engaging text and attractive illustrations, for the first time provides an ecological framework for the plants and their environments in the coast and foothill regions of Southern California, an area that boasts an extremely rich flora. It will introduce a wide audience—from general readers and students to natural history and outdoor enthusiasts—to Southern California's plant communities, their ecological dynamics, and the key plants that grow in them.

Coastal beach and dune habitats, coastal and interior sage scrub, chaparral, woodlands, grasslands, riparian woodlands, and wetlands all contribute unique plant assemblages to Southern California. In addition to discussing each of these areas in depth, this book also emphasizes ecological factors such as drought, seasonal temperatures, and fire that determine which plants can thrive in each community. It covers such important topics as non-native invasive plants and other issues involved with preserving biodiversity in the ecologically rich yet heavily populated and increasingly threatened area. * 327 color photographs provide overviews of each plant community and highlight key plant species

* Describes more than 300 plant species

* Covers the counties of Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, western Riverside, San Bernardino, and the Channel Islands

* Includes a list of public areas and parks for viewing Southern California's plant communities

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