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Clarke: *Edible and Useful Plants of California*

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deserving of review here. The listing of Indian uses is far from exhaustive, since this is a practical guide for foragers rather than a study of all human uses of plants. Most of the relevant data are from California and all appear to derive from standard sources. The Indian uses are accurately given, but usually not specified by tribe, language or whatever—it's just "The Indians used this plant as . . . ."

More generally, this is a marvelous guide and should be indispensable to anyone interested in California plants. It is far better than the various previous works dealing with the west-coast area's useful plants from a popular standpoint. Some 127 plants are treated—actually many more species, since the usual Californian folk classifications are the basic "sorting" here, and thus we have only one entry for "nettles," another for currants, etc. A key species is given, with scientific name, but many other species are described within the following text.

The guide is arranged by habitat: Foothills and Mountains, Deserts, Wetlands, Urban and Cultivated Areas, Ornamentals. The latter section may be particularly useful to suburban Californians, since it tells how to use many common garden plants that are not normally considered food sources.

The descriptions of the better food sources include recipes, and these alone are worth the price of the book. They are superb. I have not counted them up, but there are plenty. Anyone interested in good food and in cookbooks should take notice—even persons who would never normally forage in the wilderness.

All in all, we have a very worthy successor to Euell Gibbons here. For a second edition, much to be hoped for, I have the following comments: First, the poisonous plants should be more sharply stressed and separated from useful plants; e.g., the color plate of Poison Hemlock should have its caption printed in red as a warning (at least one guide does this). Second, of course, I would like to see the data on Indians made more specific by ethnic group, and at least sometimes referenced (the sources are given in a bibliography in the back, though, so this may not be necessary in a popular work of this kind). Third, I can think of a few worthy plants that are missed here: wild lettuces, for one. Fourth, one use not much covered here is scent—wild rose petals for potpourri, for example. Fifth, I would hope for more cross-cultural data on uses. I miss references to Chinese uses of plants—there are a few (e.g., under Chrysanthemum) but not enough. Likewise, European uses are sometimes noticed but get rather short shrift. Last, medicinal uses of some plants are given, without sufficient disclaimer; nothing is claimed for them but nothing is denied either. I know from my students that many people will try anything herbal, and occasionally damage themselves thereby: I think all books on useful plants should counsel moderation (*great* moderation) in self-medication. This book is not a serious offender in this regard, however—unlike many others.

All in all, I recommend this book highly. Students of California Indians will find it convenient even though it is no substitute for the primary sources. Anyone interested in Californian plants and foods will find it invaluable.

***Occasional Papers in Method and Theory in California Archaeology,*** No. 1. *Gary S. Breschini*, ed. Society for California Archaeology, 1977. 82 pp., no publication place and no price given.

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This publication inaugurates a new series published by the Society for California Archaeology under the editorship of Gary S. Breschini. The preface tells us that it will

"concentrate specifically on new and different interpretations or explanations of existing data, and new methods of gathering, analyzing and interpreting data." There are two articles in this number, one for each of the above categories.

Grover Krantz's "Populating of Western North America" is basically an interpretation of language distribution in Western North America based upon two rules: "(1) The first group into an area tends to occupy that area indefinitely; (2) technological advantages may cause regular shifts of language boundaries." Krantz apportions the western native languages to five language phyla: Athapaskan, Hokan, Penutian, Salish, and Utan (Uto-Aztecan) with Algonkin to the east. He argues that they came to this continent prior to differentiation about 12,000 years ago and after they got here they split up into separate migratory groups which, becoming isolated from one another, formed separate linguistic communities and thus the bases of separate phyla.

Krantz's use of the linguistic material is often perplexing. For example he calmly assigns the Ritwan languages (Yurok and Wiyot) to the Penutian rather than to Algonkin as the linguists do. If the linguists' material can be treated with such cavalier insouciance, one wonders why he uses it at all.

Some of the notions Krantz advances seem to me to be very useful. I would not at all agree with his statement (p. 55) that "If the Ritwan languages of California really are Algonkin, instead of Penutian, as I have claimed, there is little hope for the rest of the theory." After all, his first rule says the first group *tends* to occupy the area *indefinitely*. Surely, based upon that statement, it is impossible to construct a logical system so tight that it will collapse if one of its elements is moved. Given a certain amount of flexibility (not a notable characteristic of Grover Krantz) the ideas presented here may prove to be very useful indeed. Thus, for example, if has long been thought that the Penutians are intrusive into a California once held almost exclusively by Hokans. Krantz's notion that there may have been a partial depopulation at the time the intrusion occurred seems a notion well worth entertaining. Other notions, such as those concerning Athapascans, seem too bizarre to contemplate.

The second paper included here is called "Investigations into Computer Graphics: Archaeological Applications" and is by Stephan R. Samuels. This is a careful exposition of a method of putting data into the computer from, for example, a contour map which the computer then regurgitates in some other form, in this case a perspective drawing. It is a bit difficult to follow the procedure on the printed page, but it is quite apparent that if one had the actual machines it would be quite clear.

An example of this work is presented from an archaeological site in Washington for which a contour map is given and then various views of the site after the data have been transformed into perspective drawings; it gives one more of a 3-dimensional feeling.

If the process is as simple and cheap as the author describes, then it seems eminently worth doing, at least in some cases. I have personally never had any difficulty visualizing topography from contour maps; but I believe this is not true of everyone, so an additional tool may prove quite useful.

This series in method and theory is intended to parallel another one by the SCA on cultural resource management. The latter "will seek to publish examples of CRM reports currently being produced, as well as papers dealing with data . . ." It is to be hoped that these two series will prove to be valuable and long-lived contributions to California archaeology.