

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910452570203321
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Titolo	California Indians and their environment [[electronic resource]] : an introduction // Kent G. Lightfoot and Otis Parrish ; contributions by Lee M. Panich ... [et al.]
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Berkeley, : University of California Press, 2009
ISBN	1-280-99554-8 9786613767158 0-520-94228-0
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (513 p.)
Collana	California natural history guide series ; ; no. 96
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Disciplina	979.4/01
Soggetti	Indians of North America - California - Social life and customs Indians of North America - Hunting - California Hunting and gathering societies - California Human ecology - California - History Indigenous peoples - Ecology - California Electronic books. California Environmental conditions History
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Preface -- Acknowledgments -- VISUAL GUIDE TO NATURAL RESOURCES -- CALIFORNIA INDIAN USES OF NATURAL RESOURCES -- Notes -- General References -- Resource References by Region and Type -- Art Credits -- Index -- More Advance Praise
Sommario/riassunto	Capturing the vitality of California's unique indigenous cultures, this major new introduction incorporates the extensive research of the past thirty years into an illuminating, comprehensive synthesis for a wide audience. Based in part on new archaeological findings, it tells how the California Indians lived in vibrant polities, each boasting a rich village life including chiefs, religious specialists, master craftspeople, dances, feasts, and ceremonies. Throughout, the book emphasizes how these

diverse communities interacted with the state's varied landscape, enhancing its already bountiful natural resources through various practices centered around prescribed burning. A handy reference section, illustrated with more than one hundred color photographs, describes the plants, animals, and minerals the California Indians used for food, basketry and cordage, medicine, and more. At a time when we are grappling with the problems of maintaining habitat diversity and sustainable economies, we find that these native peoples and their traditions have much to teach us about the future, as well as the past, of California.
