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Sommario/riassunto	The largest seaweed, giant kelp (<i>Macrocystis</i>) is the fastest growing and most prolific of all plants found on earth. Growing from the seafloor and extending along the ocean surface in lush canopies, giant kelp provides an extensive vertical habitat in a largely two-dimensional seascape. It is the foundation for one of the most species-rich, productive, and widely distributed ecological communities in the world. Schiel and Foster's scholarly review and synthesis take the reader from Darwin's early observations to contemporary research, providing a historical perspective for the modern understanding of giant kelp evolution, biogeography, biology, and physiology. The authors furnish a comprehensive discussion of kelp species and forest ecology worldwide, with considerations of human uses and abuses, management and conservation, and the current and likely future impacts of global change. This volume promises to be the definitive treatise and reference on giant kelp and its forests for many years, and it will appeal to marine scientists and others who want a better appreciation and understanding of these wondrous forests of the sea.

