The FALL AND RISE of the WETLANDS of CALIFORNIA'S GREAT CENTRAL VALLEY

PHILIP GARONE
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This book is a life work in progress. There is something about moving to California—with its stunning landscapes, fascinating geology, and untroubled wilderness areas—that turns one’s interest toward the environment. After arriving in the San Francisco Bay area from the East with degrees in history and medieval studies, I found myself teaching at the Athenian School, a high school with a strong reputation for outdoor and environmental education. Influenced by that physically and intellectually stimulating environment, I soon began working summers as a rangernaturalist in Sequoia National Park, high in the Sierra Nevada but within view of the Central Valley lying far below. In a happy coincidence, Rick Higashi and Teresa Fan, researchers at UC Davis, whom I had recently met, appeared unexpectedly in the park one day and first told me about toxicity issues that were affecting wildlife in the valley, a topic they correctly suggested might be of interest to me. In the Central Valley I sensed a different kind of nature, one that has been remarkably transformed by human actions but still presents glimpses of what it once was and offers tantalizing possibilities for exploration and investigation. With these observations in mind, as I...
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