

BOOK REVIEW

DAVID CARLE. 2010. **Introduction to Earth, Soil, and Land in California.** (ISBN 978-0-520-26681-0, pbk.). California Natural History Guides 101. University of California Press, 2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, California 94704-1012, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.ucpress.edu, 510-642-9737). \$19.95, 230 pp., 101 color illustrations, 11 line illustrations, 18 maps, 2 tables, 4½" × 7¼".

This book follows David Carle's previous natural history guides to air, fire, and water, and is an exploration into yet another primary element of the natural world, the land beneath our feet. His goal is to educate and encourage all Californians to appreciate the living soil as the fundamental basis for life and to become better stewards of this valuable resource.

Introduction to Earth, Soil, and Land in California begins with the story of ecosystems beneath the surface of the earth. It introduces the processes and communities of organisms that build and replenish soil. The book then leads to broader topics with a comprehensive overview of humans on the land, turning land into real estate, population growth, wildlife management, and farmland. Discussion of untamed land is filled with interesting geological information on earthquakes, volcanoes, and landslides. Carle's guide is filled with relevant facts and is told in a narrative style that makes a subject, which to some might seem boring, quite interesting. While not being technically difficult to read, the material is covered in great detail and Carle carefully breaks down the various issues. We feel the passion that Carle feels for preserving our environment. It would be difficult not to have a greater sense of appreciation for the soil beneath our feet after having read his book.

The book is written from a perspective more political and historical rather than technical, and includes numerous wonderful color photographs, maps, and other illustrations. Also included in the back of the book is an Index, extensive list of Online Soil and Land Resources, References, and Art Credits.—*Doty Bucy, Master Gardener and volunteer, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 1700 University Drive, Fort Worth, Texas 76107-3400, U.S.A.*