



Hardy Californians: A Woman's Life with Native Plants

Lester Rowntree

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Lester G. E. Rowntree (1879-1979), free-spirited adventurer and pioneering botanist, was fifty-two when she traded a comfortable home for the life of a peripatetic traveler in the California mountains, deserts, and forests. Through hundreds of magazine and journal articles, two acclaimed books, and uncounted public lectures, Rowntree shared her vast knowledge of California native plants and at the same time argued passionately for the protection of the state's bountiful flora. A mountain mystic who worshipped on Sierra peaks, bathed in alpine streams, and lived for months on beans and bread, Rowntree has remained an inspiration in native plant horticulture and plant conservation to this day.

A beloved classic first published in 1936, *Hardy Californians* is Rowntree's poetic sketch of California and its plant life. In charming prose, she takes us along on her annual seed-collecting journey through the state and gives a concise introduction to the complexities of California flora, climate, and geography. The book also gives information on the suitability of many native California plants for the garden. This new edition includes a comprehensive biographical essay, a chapter on Rowntree's horticultural legacy, an updated species list, and a complete bibliography of her writings.

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