First published in 1925, Willis Linn Jepson's Manual of the Flowering Plants of California has been a standard reference for teachers, students, and naturalists. Since that time, hundreds of new species have been identified and botanical investigation has become more sophisticated. Now Jepson's philosophy of making such information available to all is again realized in this new volume, which includes a wealth of material accumulated over the past decades. With contributions from two hundred botanists across North America, this is the most comprehensive resource and identification guide to nearly eight thousand varieties of native and naturalized California plants. The means to identify plants (using key traits and illustrations) is accompanied by special information such as horticultural requirements, endangerment, toxicity, weed status, and notes on the management of sensitive species. Identification keys have been designed for ease of use, and terms have been simplified and illustrated, making the new Manual the most authoritative field guide for the expert and amateur alike.

My Personal Review:
This is the bible of California Natives. I have used it extensively over the last 4 months with my native plant class. While the nomenclature and descriptions require upper division collegiate level command of English, the descriptions are excellent and the information is authoritative. There is an excellent section describing the various vegetation types and regions around the state. Do not expect a book with a lot of pretty pictures, this book is not that type - in fact the plants are pictured in line drawings (very well rendered by the way). It is organized by Family, so that the pines, firs, hemlocks, etc are in the same section of the book under Pinaceae. It is large and heavy - too large to take on a hike in the woods - unless you are looking for a good workout. It works best if used as a reference once you know the name of the plant. Also works well with online sources that refer to the Jepson Project - such as the USDA site. Highly recommended.