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BOOK

Delta Primer:
A Field Guide to the California Delta

AUTHOR

Jane Wolff

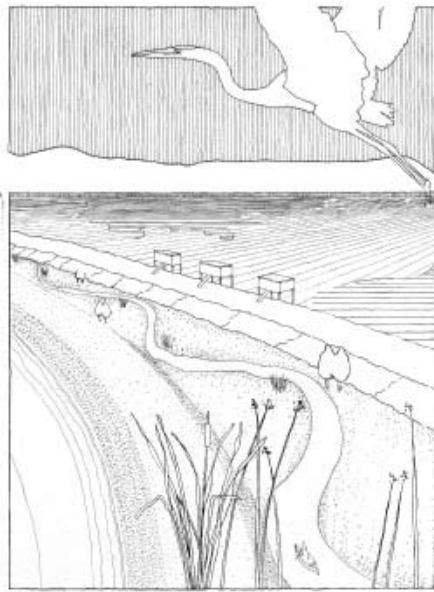
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READERSHIP Conservationists, Environmentalists , students
and general readers interested in ecology.

BOOK DESIGN Jane Wolff

Delta Primer *A Field Guide to the California Delta*

"Delta Primer is ... a toolkit and a kit of parts that represents ... a breakthrough in the methodology of environmental science ... California has need of the Delta Primer not only for the saving of the Delta itself, but also for the case study that saving the Delta ... would offer the rest of the state."

-California State Librarian Kevin Starr.

The preservation of the California Delta, the largest estuary on the west coast, is critical to the ecology and economy of California. 150 years ago it was transformed from marshland to farmland. It is this intersection of fluctuating natural processes and expanding cultural demands that has made it into a strange hybrid and one of the most contested landscapes in the United States. Although it is still an agricultural landscape, it has also become the protected habitat of endangered species, the back yard of an intense ring of urban development, and the center piece of the vast system that delivers water to Southern California.

Delta Primer, is intended to make the particular circumstances of the Delta vivid for broad audiences, includes maps, photographs, a brief history and a lexicon. It is organized around a standard deck of playing cards: four suits, 13 cards each, ranked from ace to king. The suits represent four ways of understanding the landscape: as a garden, as a machine, as a wilderness and as a toy. The cards describe artifacts, practices and processes that belong to and shed light on those categories. Rank depends on the scale of the card's subject. Four wild cards comprise a panorama of the future.

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