

REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY

PRESENTATION ON THE TOPIC:
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CALIFORNIA

- ▶ California is a state located on the West Coast of the United States. It is the most populous U.S.A. state, with 39 million people, and the third largest state by area (after Alaska and Texas). California is bordered by Oregon to the north, Nevada to the east, Arizona to the southeast, and the Mexican state of Baja California to the south. It contains the nation's second most populous census statistica area (Greater Los Angeles Area) and the fifth most populous (San Francisco Bay Area), and eight of the nation's 50 most populated cities (Los Angeles, San Diego, San Jose, San Francisco, Fresno, Sacramento, Long Beach, and Oakland). Sacramento has been the state capital since 1854.

State of California

California symbols

The state's name goes by the Spanish conquistadors. Adapted from a French novel in 1510, which describes the paradise island with the same name.



Flag



Seal

The word California originally referred to the entire region composed of the Baja California Peninsula of Mexico, the current U.S. states of California, Nevada, and Utah, and parts of Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and Wyoming.

The name California is most commonly believed to have derived from a fictional paradise peopled by Black Amazons and ruled by Queen Calafia. The story of Calafia is recorded in a 1510 work *The Adventures of Esplandián*, written as a sequel to *Amadis de Gaula* by Spanish adventure writer Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo. The kingdom of Queen Calafia, according to Montalvo, was said to be a remote land inhabited by griffins and other strange beasts, and rich in gold.

According to another version, the name comes from the Latin phrase *calida fornax* (hot oven), which was used by the Spanish colonists to describe hot climate of this region.

CLIMATE

Even though most of the state has a Mediterranean climate, due to the large size of the state, the climate ranges from subarctic to subtropical. The cool California Current offshore often creates summer fog near the coast. Farther inland, there are colder winters and hotter summers. The maritime moderation results in the shoreline summertime temperatures of Los Angeles and San Francisco being the coolest of all major metropolitan areas of the United States and uniquely cool compared to areas on the same latitude in the interior and on the east coast of the North American continent.

Northern parts of the state have more rain than the south. California's mountain ranges also influence the climate: some of the rainiest parts of the state are west-facing mountain slopes. Northwestern California has a temperate climate, and the Central Valley has a Mediterranean climate but with greater temperature extremes than the coast. The high mountains, including the Sierra Nevada, have an alpine climate with snow in winter and mild to moderate heat in summer.



FLORA AND FAUNA

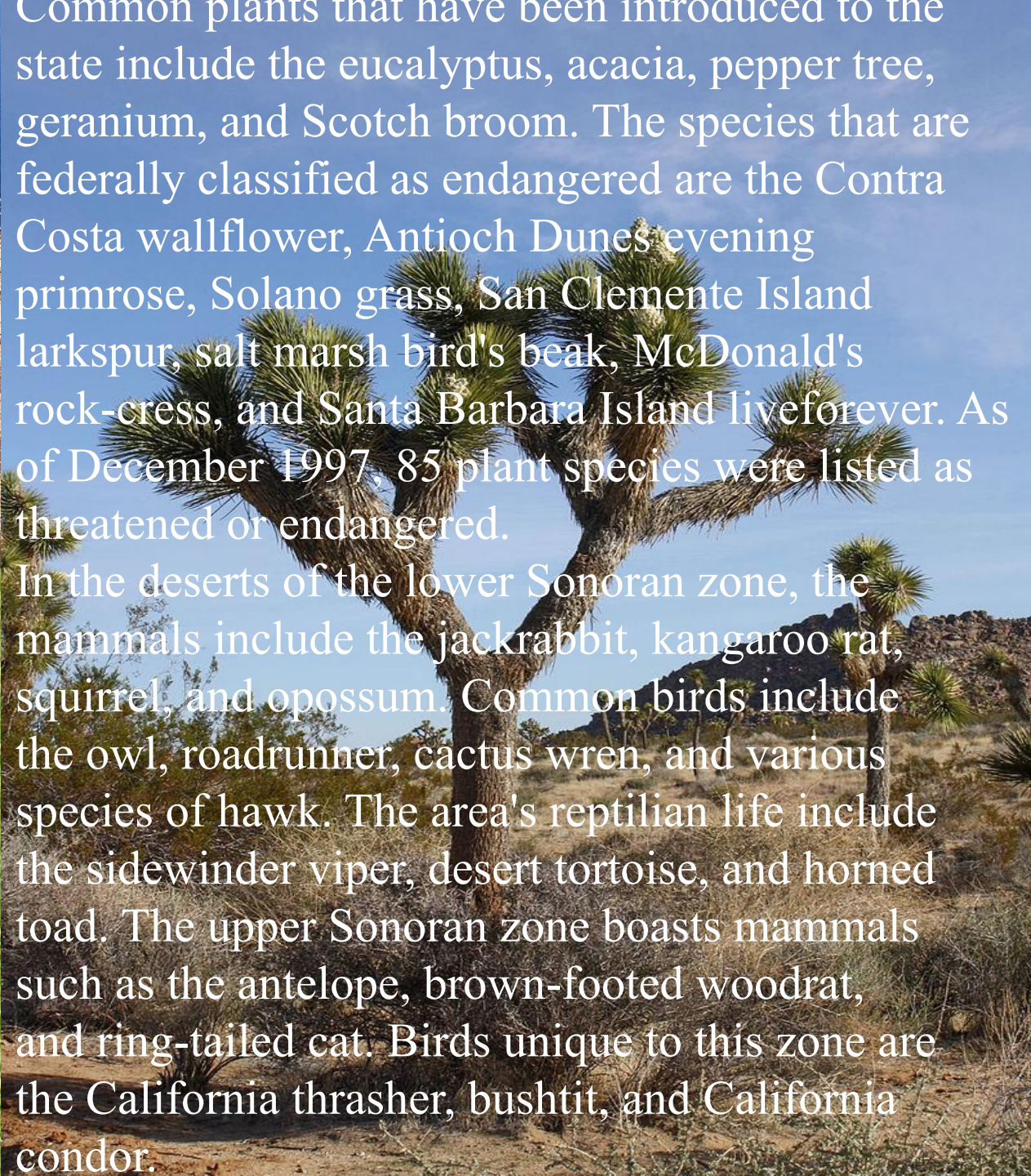
▶ California boasts several superlatives in its collection of flora: the largest trees, the tallest trees, and the oldest trees.

▶ The Joshua tree is found in the Mojave Desert. Flowering plants include the dwarf desert poppy and a variety of asters. Fremont cottonwood and valley oak thrive in the Central Valley.



Common plants that have been introduced to the state include the eucalyptus, acacia, pepper tree, geranium, and Scotch broom. The species that are federally classified as endangered are the Contra Costa wallflower, Antioch Dunes evening primrose, Solano grass, San Clemente Island larkspur, salt marsh bird's beak, McDonald's rock-cress, and Santa Barbara Island liveforever. As of December 1997, 85 plant species were listed as threatened or endangered.

In the deserts of the lower Sonoran zone, the mammals include the jackrabbit, kangaroo rat, squirrel, and opossum. Common birds include the owl, roadrunner, cactus wren, and various species of hawk. The area's reptilian life include the sidewinder viper, desert tortoise, and horned toad. The upper Sonoran zone boasts mammals such as the antelope, brown-footed woodrat, and ring-tailed cat. Birds unique to this zone are the California thrasher, bushtit, and California condor.









REGIONS

- Central Valley
- Coastal California
- Northern California
 - Central California
 - North Coast (California)
 - San Francisco Bay Area
 - Sierra Nevada

- Eastern California
 - Inland Empire (Also included in Southern California)
- Southern California
 - South Coast
 - Los Angeles Metropolitan Area
 - San Diego metropolitan area
 - Inland Empire
 - Imperial Valley



Mount Whitney (l), the highest point in the Contiguous U.S., is less than 90 miles (140 km) away from Badwater Basin in Death Valley (r), the lowest point in North America

POPULATION

- ▶ The United States Census Bureau estimates that the population of California was 38,802,500 on July 1, 2014, a 4.16% increase since the 2010 United States Census. Between 2000 and 2009, there was a natural increase of 3,090,016 (5,058,440 births minus 2,179,958 deaths). During this time period, international migration produced a net increase of 1,816,633 people while domestic migration produced a net decrease of 1,509,708, resulting in a net in-migration of 306,925 people. The state of California's own statistics show a population of 38,292,687 for January 1, 2009. However, according to the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, since 1990 almost 3.4 million Californians have moved to other states, with most leaving to Texas, Nevada, and Arizona.

CULTURE

- ▶ The culture of California is a Western culture and most clearly has its modern roots in the culture of the United States, but also, historically, many Hispanic influences. As a border and coastal state, Californian culture has been greatly influenced by several large immigrant populations, especially those from Latin America and Asia.
- ▶ California has long been a subject of interest in the public mind and has often been promoted by its boosters as a kind of paradise. In the early 20th century, fueled by the efforts of state and local boosters, many Americans saw the Golden State as an ideal resort destination, sunny and dry all year round with easy access to the ocean and mountains. In the 1960s, popular music groups such as The Beach Boys promoted the image of Californians as laid-back, tanned beach-goers.
- ▶ The California Gold Rush of the 1850s is still seen as a symbol of California's economic style, which tends to generate technology, social, entertainment, and economic fads and booms and related busts.

POINT OF INTEREST



- ▶ From Eureka to San Diego, California's large and small coastal cities are not to be missed (especially Monterey, San Francisco and Santa Barbara); Colorado River;
- ▶ Big Sur region; Lake Tahoe; Redwood National Park; the Wine Country (Napa area); Santa Catalina Island and Yosemite National Park.
- ▶ CITY ATTRACTIONS: Hollywood, Lake Tahoe, Sacramento, San Diego San Francisco San Jose
- ▶ Times to Travel: There is never a bad time to visit California. For sure, some weather extremes exist on occasion, but it's much like being in London on a rainy day - there's so much to see and do that you never really notice the rainfall.



- ▶ **There also are:**
- ▶ **Golden Gate Bridge and Golden Gate Park**
- ▶ **SeaWorld's San Diego**
- ▶ **Yosemite National Park**
- ▶ **Legoland**
- ▶ **Alcatraz**



- ▶ **Knott's Berry Farm**
- ▶ **San Diego Zoo**
- ▶ **Balboa Park**
- ▶ **USS Midway Museum**
- ▶ **California's Great America (park)**
- ▶ **Griffith Park and Griffith Observatory**
- ▶ **TCL Chinese Theatre and Chinatown**