



Tech Talk

Plant Identification Apps

presented by Ralph Thompson, UCCE Master Gardener
UCCE Master Gardener Program of Riverside County

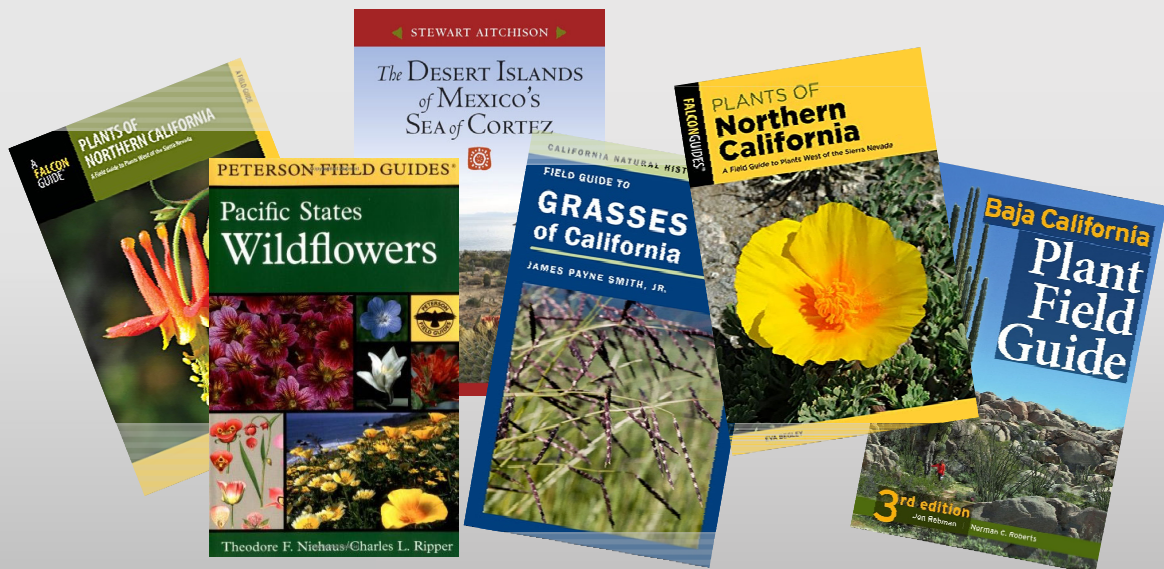


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Growing Master Gardeners Initiative – 2022-23 Program Year

Slide 1

The Old Days . . .



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Slide 2

From This ...



To This ...



From This ...



To This ...



How Do They Work?

- ❖ Open the plant identification app and choose 'Identify' (or similar wording)
 - Some offer a 'Diagnose' feature
- ❖ The app will open the phone's camera app where you take a photo of the target plant
- ❖ Most apps give you a chance to review and accept the photo
 - The app sends your accepted photo to its home server where image recognition software attempts to find a match
- ❖ Matches are sent back and displayed in the app window
 - Most apps provide a list ranking from highest confidence and down
 - Some apps only provide a name and a few details
 - Others provide more information such as a description, care notes, popular cultivars, toxicity, informative videos



Now, my Disclaimers . . .

- ❖ My goal was for my personal use – not a public recommendation
- ❖ I use an Android cell phone – not an iPhone
- ❖ I did some 'standardized' testing – not extensive nor by others
- ❖ I did not want to purchase a Pro version nor subscription
 - I rejected apps whose design was confusing or 'tricky'



Lots of Options

- ❖ Agrobase
- ❖ Blossom
- ❖ FlowerChecker
- ❖ Garden Answers
- ❖ Garden Compass
- ❖ Google Lens
- ❖ iNaturalist
- ❖ iPlant
- ❖ Leafsnap
- ❖ NatureID
- ❖ PictureThis
- ❖ Planta
- ❖ PlantIn
- ❖ Plantix
- ❖ PlantNet
- ❖ PlantSnap
- ❖ What's That Flower

31 in latest Google Play Store search



My List . . .



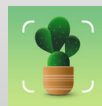
– PlantNet Plant Identification –



– iNaturalist –



– PictureThis –



– NatureID –



My List . . .



– PlantNet Plant Identification –
for everyday use

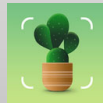
Simple to use with quick, consistently accurate plant identifications. Few ads and no sneaky pop-ups. Does not offer as much plant information as some other apps nor as seamless a sharing experience.



– iNaturalist –



– PictureThis –



– NatureID –



My List . . .



– PlantNet Plant Identification –



– iNaturalist –

for sharing and 'science' projects
Sometimes a little tricky to use. But still, fairly consistent and accurate plant identifications. No ads and no sneaky pop-ups. Easy to create and participate in sharing observations with other amateur naturalists or researchers.



– NatureID –



– PictureThis –



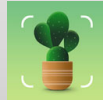
My List . . .



– PlantNet Plant Identification –



– iNaturalist –



– NatureID –



– PictureThis –
for research

Much more depth on subjects like toxicity and natural history. Less user-friendly. Frequent ad popups. Easy to accidentally subscribe to paid features.



My List . . .



– PlantNet Plant Identification –



– iNaturalist –



– NatureID –

for diagnoses

Quick accurate diagnoses. Time-outs on non-paying accounts. Most ‘advanced’ features are paid, with constant reminders to subscribe.



– PictureThis –



Thoughts . . .

- ❖ Functionality depends on cellular service
- ❖ Some apps allow guest access while some apps require that you register
 - If you register, consider using only initials instead of your full name (or even make up a name)
- ❖ According to terms of use on most apps, your photos will be shared under a CC by-SA license, which means that others (including people selling something) can use and modify your photos
- ❖ Be careful... many apps seem to be designed to “trick” the user into buying something they may not mean to



Hints . . .

- ❖ Try to isolate the target plant in the camera frame
- ❖ Ensure the target plant is well lighted
 - Avoid heavy shadows
- ❖ If possible, include the entire leaf or flower or even a group
- ❖ Take advantage of apps that allow multiple photos





Any topic suggestions for Tech Talk?

Ralph Thompson
ralph.catcity@gmail.com



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