

NURTURING NATURE

Nature serves as a haven for numerous plants and animals, opening doors for humans to explore the beauty of our planet. The serenity found in this greenery is unparalleled, allowing students to escape their busy lives.

Embrace your GREEN THUMB

Advice from Penny Lane Farm's Diane Matarangas

TOMATOES MAKE TERRIFIC STARTERS

"Cherry tomatoes are very forgiving, and you will feel like a million bucks because you have produced all these lovely things that you can eat."

WATER WELL, BUT NOT TOO WELL

"If you are overwatering, you're going to have a big green plant with no blossoms or fruit."

SUPPLEMENT YOUR SOIL

"If the plant is in the soil, water once a week. If it's in a pot, you're going to water three times a week and fertilize every week."

PLANT IN PAIRS

"You should start with two plants because that way you won't forget about them."



Alice Yu (11)

"Being in nature and raising plants helps me calm myself in the midst of all the stress from school. Raising plants helps me take my mind off of things and is rewarding."



Photo by Mae Richardson

Jamie Nguyen (10)

"I've always been a big fan of nature, so I decided to incorporate it into my personal spaces. Succulents are a great decoration and they brighten up every space."



Photo courtesy of Jamie Nguyen

Spring is marked by the sweet scent of cherry blossoms in the air. Cherry blossom festivals flourish across California, showcasing Japanese culture and celebrating the beauty of nature.

Protecting our planet

Junior Asha LaManque describes sustainability journey
By Amber Birrell and Ritaja Subrahmanya

Droughts and wildfires linger in the shadows of the pleasant weather and perfectly blue skies. In California, it is difficult to ignore the effects of global warming. To combat this environmental crisis, junior Asha LaManque is taking matters into her own hands.

As a child, LaManque said she watched numerous nature documentaries that transformed her outlook on the world. Topics such as climate change were mentioned frequently, which inspired LaManque to further her research and understand these issues. Through her explorations, she said she began

"When it comes to food, I make sure to buy organic or locally grown produce," LaManque said. "I try to be aware of the entire supply chain of where products come from."

Surrounded by the swirling sands of the Mojave Desert lies the largest freestanding boulder in North America: Giant Rock. Over seven stories tall, Giant Rock has a unique history ranging from Native Americans to hoisting conspiracy theorists, according to SF Gate.

It is important to make an effort to be more sustainable, LaManque said, because the effects of global warming are constantly seen. She said even small actions, such as choosing to walk or bike to school, can make a lasting difference.

"We're about to reach a tipping point," LaManque said. "There is a time limit to resolving the issue of climate change. One action, no matter what, will impact our future."

Ultimately, LaManque said being environmentally conscious has helped her gain a better understanding of nature, since she now knows her place in the world and her impact on the environments around her.

"Everything on our planet is interconnected," LaManque said. "Nature is essentially the world around us, and it represents who we are."

Explore the natural wonders of CALIFORNIA

By Mae Richardson and Ritaja Subrahmanya

Hakone Gardens

Located in Saratoga, Hakone Gardens is a tranquil Japanese garden. The area contains towering bamboo, a dry Zen garden with patterns of gravel and a tea garden featuring colorful flowers.



Photo by Sara Ahmed



Photo courtesy of Stacy Thompson

Municipal Rose Garden

The Municipal Rose Garden in San Jose is the perfect spot to take beautiful prom photos next to the dazzling, blue fountain and dark, red roses. Stop by the rose garden to enjoy the scenery or have a peaceful picnic.

Salt Point State Park

North of San Francisco, visitors can feel the salty ocean spray. Salt Point State Park is home to the tafoni phenomenon, which produces intricate, honeycomb like rock patterns.



Photo by Hanyu Wang

Tomales Point

At the northern tip of Point Reyes National Seashore, Tomales Point is one of the only places in California where native Tule Elk can be spotted.



Photo by Sara Ahmed

Fitzgerald Marine Reserve

This delicate ecosystem is cherished as one of the best marine life habitats in Northern California. Explore tidepools, which serve as a home to sea urchins, anemone, hermit crabs, sea stars and even the occasional octopus.



Photo courtesy of San Mateo Parks Department