



THE garden offers an opportunity for students to observe and engage with nature up close. Students can see the seasons change, experience life cycles of plants, insects, and birds in real time, and investigate relationships among life in our native ecosystems.

In the outdoor classroom, teachers can offer hands-on lessons that meet Next Generation Science Standards. Students can observe and collect data, test ideas and use their senses to learn how our natural world works. Additionally, the garden offers a quiet place for art, writing, and relaxation.

In our urban environment, children often miss opportunities to benefit from interacting with the natural world. Our hope is that the children at Washington Elementary will be inspired by the experiences they have in this garden, whether it be a close encounter with a foraging native bee, the scent of the sages, or the sight of bluebirds bathing in a fountain, and that they

will develop a lifelong love of natural things and a deep seated desire to protect them.



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Washington Elementary

NATIVE HABITAT GARDEN



CREATED in 2019, the WESM Native Habitat Garden is meant to serve local wildlife, student education and the Pasadena community.



The garden was planted through the efforts of the Pasadena Audubon Society, with wide community support, including from Pasadena Water & Power. National Audubon Society's Coleman and Susan Burke Center for Native Plants provided funding.



Features and Amenities

Fountains

All life we know depends on water. These terracotta fountains are powered by solar panels which convert the sun's energy to electricity. Watch how many creatures enjoy the opportunity to drink and cool down.



Brush Pile

Did you know that many species of birds, insects, and lizards require shelter that brush piles and debris offer? These piles create shade and hiding places for small creatures. Also, leaving plant trimmings in the garden allows them to cycle their nutrients back into the soil instead of going to the landfill.



Fruit Orchard

You can find many fruit trees on the WESM campus and a few of them are in the Habitat Garden. Fruit trees are a great source of food for people and the birds and insects love them too!



Rainwater Capture

In the city, rain that falls on hard surfaces like roofs and streets flows into storm drains and to the ocean. Storm water pollutes the rivers and bays. Also, rain that flows into our storm drains doesn't water our plants or restore groundwater. In the garden we capture the water in a variety of ways:

- Mulch** protects soil from the sun and absorbs more water,
- Bioswales** direct water and sink it into the landscape,
- Hugelkultur** (mounds of earth and wood) hold water and restore nutrients to the soil.



Outdoor Classrooms

Our students spend most of their day indoors. The garden offers opportunities to enjoy clean air and open space. The outdoor classroom can be used for teaching, socializing, and just relaxing.



Garden design work was donated by Jesse Chang of SGV Catalyst >



Plant Communities Present in the Garden

Riparian Habitat

Riparian habitats are the areas along streams that support many native species including plants, birds, insects, fish and much more. In Los Angeles County and much of California, many of our riparian areas have been lost due to the development of roads, housing and industry. Plants in these habitats can tolerate shade but need more water than other plants in the garden.

Typical plants: Giant Chain Fern, Seep Monkeyflower



Oak Woodland

Oak Woodlands make up the backbone of the California landscape and the name says it all. Oak trees dominate the landscape and provide food and shelter for a huge number of species. Whole plant communities have evolved in the shadow of the Oak Woodland and those communities support unique wildlife, such as the Acorn Woodpecker.

Typical plants: Engelmann Oak, California Goldenrod



Meadow

These open areas are found among the valleys and woodlands of California and have rich soils that support flourishing plant life. Meadows are the home of beautiful seasonal flower blooms where pollinating insects, foraging birds, and many others find a bounty of food.

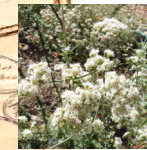
Typical plants: Lupine, California Poppy



Coastal Sage Scrub

Low-growing aromatic shrubs, which are often summer dormant, are characteristic of Coastal Sage Scrub. These plants are well adapted to the semi-arid Mediterranean climate of our area. Fragrant sages and buckwheats which support native bees, birds and insects are commonly seen in this plant community.

Typical plants: California Buckwheat, White Sage



Chaparral

Shaped by our Mediterranean climate (mild, wet winters and hot dry summers) and infrequent, high-intensity crown fires, Chaparral features big woody shrubs, often with hard evergreen leaves. Shrubs reach 10 to 15 feet on average.

Typical plants: Laurel Sumac, Quailbush

