

Garden Themes Currently on Campus

as of 2026

1. **California Natives:** While California native plants are scattered around campus in nearly every garden, these specific gardens display a diverse range of California native plants in various combinations. The largest concentration of curated native plants can be seen on the northwest side of the Natural Science (NS) building, the southwest side of MD, and the west side of the F building.
2. **Melaleuca:** Some *Melaleuca* species can grow into large trees, while others grow as shrubs or sub-shrubs. Most *Melaleuca* are quite drought-tolerant. They have beautiful flowers that resemble *Eucalyptus* flowers, of which they are related. Nearly all *Melaleuca* are from the Australian mainland and its surrounding islands, with a few from Tasmania and seven (most likely) from New Caledonia.
3. **Monocot Garden:** Planted in 2006, this garden displays an interesting collection of plants that produce seeds with a single cotyledon. *Grasses* are just one of many *Monocotyledonous* plant families on Earth. *Lilies*, *Palms*, *Sedges*, *Bananas*, *Gingers*, *Orchids*, *Bromeliads*, *Pandanus*, and *Agave* are a few other *Monocots* found in this garden.
4. **Cycad Garden:** *Cycads* are among the world's oldest plants, with estimates placing them on Earth as far back as the Cisuralian/Early Permian period 298.9 million years ago. These gymnosperms of the order known as *Cycadales* produce their seeds in cones instead of producing flowers and then fruits. This taxonomical order of plants contains two separate families of *Cycads*. Nearly all of them resemble ferns or palms, with many being well-armed with spines. There is an estimated 350-394 species distributed throughout tropical, subtropical, and some temperate regions across the globe. While there are no known

living specimens in the polar regions today, cycads were once at home in Canada, Siberia, and Antarctica (likely when Earth was much warmer than it is today).

5. **Medicinal Garden:** Planted in 2006 near NS, this garden once hosted a vast display of some of the world's medicinal plants, from small herbs and shrubs to vines and trees. While some of the herbs have since gone, many of the original trees, shrubs, and vines are still present in the garden. *Camptotheca acuminata*, *Kigelia pinnata*, *Handroanthus impetiginosus*, *Cinnamomum camphora*, *Leptospermum scoparium*, and *Ginko biloba* are still thriving there.
6. **Galaxy Garden:** This simple succulent garden is intended to enhance the experience for Planetarium visitors. The succulents are planted in patterns that resemble galaxies and constellations.
7. **Meso-American Garden:** Planted near the pool in the spring of 2012, this garden was intended to offer a glimpse at seasonally-dry Central American and South American forest species. There are also ethnobotanically-valuable plants that the peoples of Central America use and eat on a daily basis. Many of the perennial species are still present today, like *Attalea*, *Parajubaea*, *Chusquea*, *Bromelia*, and *Bixia*. Hidden in plain site is a solar winter solstice marker—see if you can find it near the sidewalk amongst the plants!
8. **Southern Africa:** Intended to display some of Southern Africa's unique drought-tolerant botanical treasures, these gardens contain succulents and other specimens from the region.
9. **Protea Garden:** A display of drought-tolerant plants in the *Protea* family from across Southern Africa and Australia.

- 10. North Africa and Arabian Peninsula:** When planted in the mid-2000's, this garden was seemingly sparse with only a few small plants and two large *Quercus suber* (*Cork Oak*) amidst a sea of sand. Today, the plants have grown in. The garden now hosts some wonderful succulents like *Aloes*, *Euphorbias*, fruit trees, palms, and other plants from this region.
- 11. Hawaiian Garden:** This was the test garden for the larger Polynesian garden. The garden was planted with many rare or endangered Hawaiian natives. Today, many of those plants have grown to be quite large and beautiful. Some notable specimens are the *Acacia koaia* (a relative of the famous *Koa*), *Pandanus*, *Beach naupaka*, *Pritchardia* (*Loulu Palms*), and *Soap Berry Trees*.
- 12. Rose Gardens:** These two gardens display roses in their many forms, including trees that are related to roses.
- 13. Undersea Succulent Garden:** A succulent garden planted to resemble a coral reef.
- 14. Mexico and Desert Southwest:** Though there are some lush tropical rain forests in Mexico, like much of the southwestern US, many areas in Mexico receive low annual rain fall. The gardens display some of the rich diversity of plant life from these drier regions of Mexico and the southwestern US.
- 15. Mascarene Island Garden:** Many plants from this collection of islands in the Indian Ocean are endangered in their habitat. This garden displays some of the more spectacular *Pandanus*, *Palms*, *Dracaena*, and *Hibiscus* from this region.
- 16. Australian Gardens:** These gardens are a few of the largest in square footage on campus. They are home to some of Australia's most unique and beautiful plants. *Australian Grass Trees*, *Ficus*, *Palms*, *Melaleuca*, *Brachychiton*, *Callistemon*, *Grevillea*, *Acacia*, *Eucalyptus*, and many others can be found here.

- 17. Fibrous Root Plants:** This garden was installed in the early 2000's. The plants chosen for this garden have fibrous roots instead of woody hardened roots. They were chosen because these would not damage the underground utilities as they grew. Nearly all of the plants are *Monocots* that, unlike most *Dicotyledonous* trees and shrubs, have woody roots.
- 18. Hardwoods:** This garden primarily serves to display trees and timber bamboo that are frequently used in cabinet and woodworking projects across the globe—providing a valuable teaching tool for the Cabinet and Woodworking Technology program in the adjacent building. The garden is home to *Acacia*, *Oaks*, *Pecan*, *Walnut*, *Mahogany*, *Maple*, *Tongue Oil Trees*, and *Balsa Wood*. Due to its close proximity to one of the Southern African gardens, this garden also displays a mix of plants from Southern Africa.
- 19. Polynesian Garden:** This garden showcases plants found throughout Polynesia, as well as plants the Polynesians took on their voyages across the Pacific to new lands. The garden is home to a meandering water feature within a faux dried lava flow. It is nestled amongst white sand, black lava rock, and occasional granite boulders. While nearly all of Polynesian geology is composed of extrusive igneous lava rock, the north island of New Zealand is primarily granitic in composition, with the south island being like the rest of Polynesia (composed of lava from millions of years of volcanic activity). A diverse grouping of plants is found in the garden: *Hawaiian hibiscus*, *Pandanus*, *Banana*, *Pritchardia Palms*, *Kukui Nut*, and *Sugar Cane*. The garden is also home to many other rare and ethnobotanically-valuable plants from the region.
- 20. Myrtaceae:** Mostly from Austral Asia and the Pacific, the plants in this garden showcase the diversity of plants in the *Myrtaceae* family, with most being very drought-tolerant. Some of the most notable are the towering *Rainbow Gums* (*Eucalyptus deglupta*), *Angophora*, *Metrosideros*, and *Callistemon*.
- 21. Riparian Area:** Part of the Edwin and Frances Hunter Arboretum, this garden represents plants found in warm temperate and Mediterranean seasonal creeks or stream beds. Many of these plants are California natives.

- 22. Palms, Legumes, and Bamboo:** This garden has a long and storied history for the campus. It is amongst the oldest of the gardens on campus located within the Edwin and Frances Hunter Arboretum, housing some of the college's largest and rarest palms and bamboo. The garden has hosted many college and community events over the years; at one time, meetings from the *Southern California Palm Society* were also held here. Some of the palms in this garden were donated by famed palm enthusiast, John Tallman. A few of the most notable specimens are *Sabal causiarum*, *Serenoa repens*, *Phoenix rupicola*, *Livistona saribus*, *Phoenix thophrastii*, and *Bismarckia nobilis* (from Mayotte Island).
- 23. Malvaceae Garden:** This garden is also part of the Edwin and Frances Hunter Arboretum. At the center of the garden is the Hubbell Structure, one of the earliest artworks of James Hubbell (the world-famous architect and artist). The garden displays a diversity of tree and shrub species in the *Hibiscus* family, accompanied by palms and other unique plants.
- 24. Primitive Garden (Sections A, B, and C):** Palomar's own version of *Jurassic Park* is located at the front of the Edwin and Frances Hunter Arboretum, running the length of the Arboretum from North to South. In it are many living fossils: plants whose *Genera* range in age from approximately 300-10 million years ago. This is a great place to see examples of what the dinosaurs likely fed on when they ruled the Earth. Some key specimens include the *Araucaria Trees*, *Agathis*, relatives of *Protea*, *Cycads*, *Oaks*, *Pandanus*, and *Palms*.
- 25. South American:** This garden is adjacent to the Library/Learning Resource Center (LRC), Parking Structure, and Campus Police. It is home to fruit trees and shrubs, cacti and succulents, *Bromeliads*, palms, and a host of other wonderful trees, shrubs, and plants from South America. Some of the most beautiful trees in the garden are the *Erythrina (Coral Trees)*, *Hadroanthus*, *Cedrella*, and the large *Brazilian Fern Tree (Schizolobium)*.
- 26. Pollinator Garden:** This garden contains a diverse collection of plants from all over the world that attract hummingbirds and butterflies when they are in bloom.

- 27. Asia:** This garden can be found on the west side of the Football Stadium and along Mission Road near the track. The collection is home to a diversity of plants from the vast continent of Asia. Beautiful *Bauhinia Trees* fill the air with a wonderful floral perfume in the spring, followed by the relaxing scent of *Jasmine*. Late winter is the best time to see the *Bombax ceiba trees* blooming. These relatives of *Cotton*, *Hibiscus*, and *Chocolate* took seventeen years from seed before they began to bloom in 2026. Most specimens have red blooms, though ours are the less common orange variety. *Lilies*, *Bamboo*, *Tongue Oil Trees*, *Roses*, *Longan*, *Lychee*, *Ficus* (including the *True Banyan/Ficus benghalensis*), and many more can be found in this garden.
- 28. Tropical Africa and Madagascar:** There are multiple Madagascar gardens across campus. Madagascar, one of the world's biological hot spots and the fourth largest island in the world, is home to some of the strangest and most beautiful plants. Each of our gardens focuses on flora from Madagascar, but may have some African plants interspersed. A variety of drought-tolerant flowering trees, succulents, palms, and *Pandanus* can all be found in these locations. Some key specimens are the *Pachypodiums*, *Bismark Palms*, *Euphorbias*, *Delonix*, *Moringa*, *Aloes*, and *African Sausage Trees*.
- 29. Anacardiaceae:** This is more of a small collection of plants related to *Mango*, *Pepper Trees*, *Cashew*, and *Pistachios*.
- 30. Cactus and Succulent:** This theme is found across the San Marcos Campus, but the largest cactus and succulent garden is along Mission Road at the Comet Circle Entrance. This garden is the oldest botanical collection of plants on campus, dating back to the 1960's. It is only accessible by appointment; to request a visit, email arangel@palomar.edu
- 31. Caribbean Plants:** This theme is also scattered around campus. The plants in these gardens are native to the US's southern states that border the Caribbean, down through the Atlantic/Gulf states of Central America to northern South America; most are from Mexico, Florida, and the Caribbean Islands.

- 32. Canary Islands:** The plants in this garden are from the Canary Islands off the northeast coast of Africa. The garden is home to our largest and oldest Canary Island Palms, many *Dracaena draco*, some *Canary Island Pines*, *Euphorbias*, and a host of *Aeoniums*.
- 33. Indo Asia:** The plants in this garden are from various parts of India, often considered a subcontinent of Asia. Some of the most beautiful specimens are the *Beaumontia grandiflora*, *Thunbergia vines*, *Gmelina arborea trees* that bloom in the spring, various *Ficus*, *Pandanus*, *Hedychium*, *Dalbergia*, and the popular *Moringa oleifera*.
- 34. California Channel Islands Garden:** This newest garden theme on campus is still being planted. It's near the Baseball Field, housing some of the California Channel Islands' wonderful and rare plants.
- 35. Pacific Coast of Mexico:** A relatively recent theme on campus with similar plants to Garden 14 (Mexico and Desert Southwest), these gardens are primarily filled with plants that originated specifically on the Pacific Coast of Mexico.
- 36. California Native People's Garden:** This garden focuses on California native plants that were used by the local tribes who made the North County of San Diego their home. *Rhus integrifolia*, *Muhlenbergia rigens*, *Salvia apiana*, a native *Clematis*, *Opuntia littoralis*, *Juncus textilis*, and a host of other native plants can be found here.



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- 1. California Natives**
 - 2. Melaleuca**
 - 3. Monocot Garden**
 - 4. Cycad Garden**
 - 5. Medicinal Garden**
 - 6. Galaxy Garden**
 - 7. Meso-American Garden**
 - 8. Southern Africa**
 - 9. Protea Garden**
 - 10. North Africa and Arabian Peninsula**
 - 11. Hawaiian Garden**
 - 12. Rose Gardens 1 and 2**
 - 13. Undersea Succulent Garden**
 - 14. Mexico and Desert Southwest**
 - 15. Mascarene Island Garden**
 - 16. Australian Gardens**
 - 17. Fibrous Roots Plants**
 - 18. Hardwoods**
 - 19. Polynesian Garden**
 - 20. Myrtaceae**



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 - 36. California Native Peoples Garden**