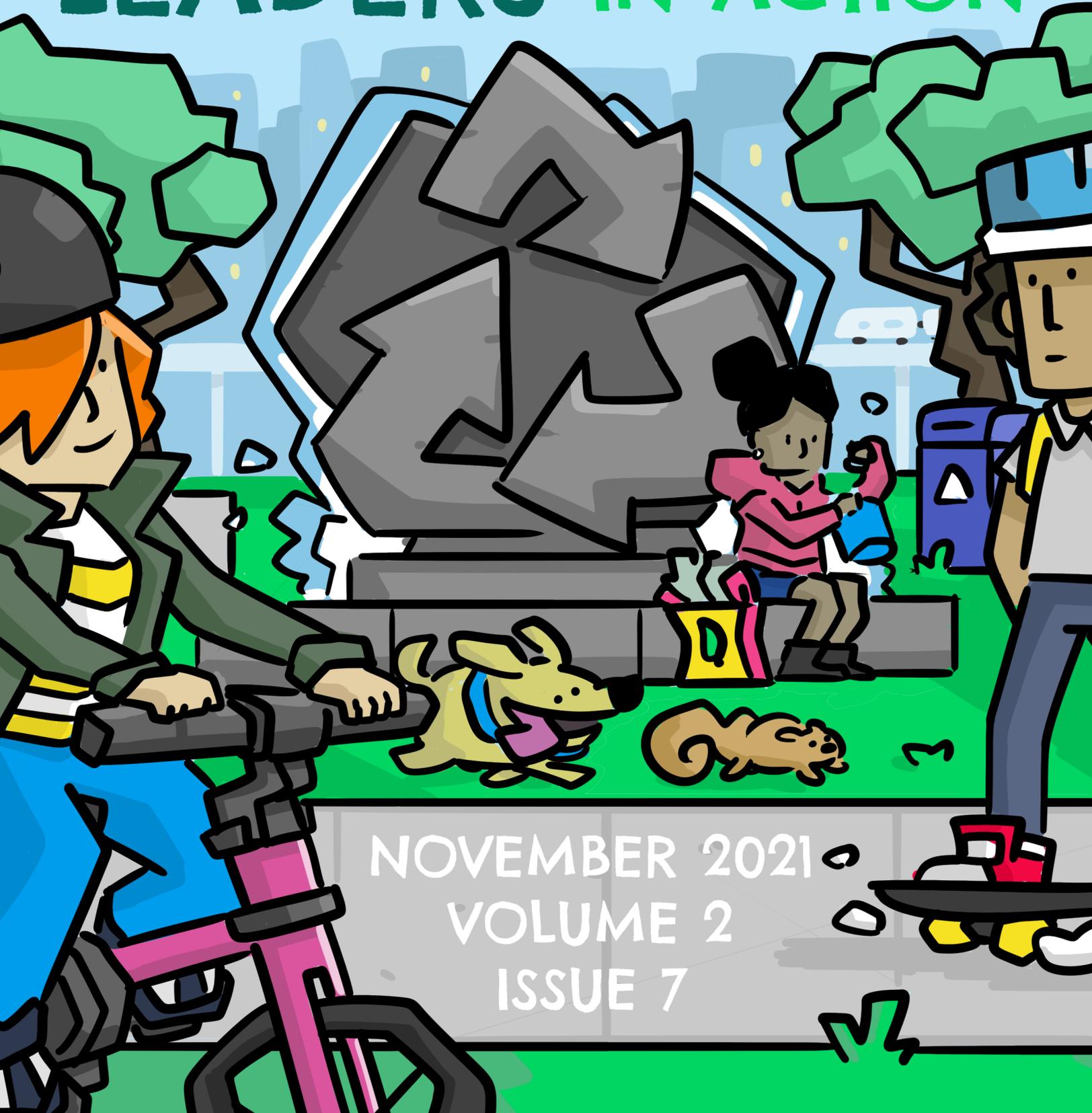


SUSTAINABLE



LEADERS IN ACTION



NOVEMBER 2021
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ISSUE 7



ACTION OF THE MONTH

Be heat wise!

THE INEQUALITIES OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Learn why climate change affects some communities more than others



SUSTAINABILITY IN THE MAKEUP INDUSTRY

3 sustainable brands to check out and support!



HURRICANES' INCREASING DEVASTATING IMPACT

How climate change increases the impact of hurricanes



IMPORTANCE OF NATIVE LANDSCAPING

The benefits and importance of native plants

RECIPE



Vegan and gluten free pumpkin bread

November Action of the Month: Be Heat Wise

by Abigail Stofer

It's that time of the year again! The weather is getting colder, and to help you conserve heat and energy, SLIA has chosen "Be Heat Wise" as their November Action of the Month. Especially during COVID, when people are spending more time at home than ever before, energy bills may be higher than ever, so be sure to follow these tips to stay warm and save money!



Here's an interesting statistic: 20% of all home energy can be lost through windows. To help prevent this, use your window coverings (drapes, shades, blinds, etc.) as insulation. Keep them open to let the sun and heat in during the day, and close them when the sun goes down, to trap the heat inside. For best results, make sure to have energy-efficient rated drapes and curtains that are mid to heavyweight and completely and snugly cover your windows. By doing this, you can reduce heat loss up to 10%.

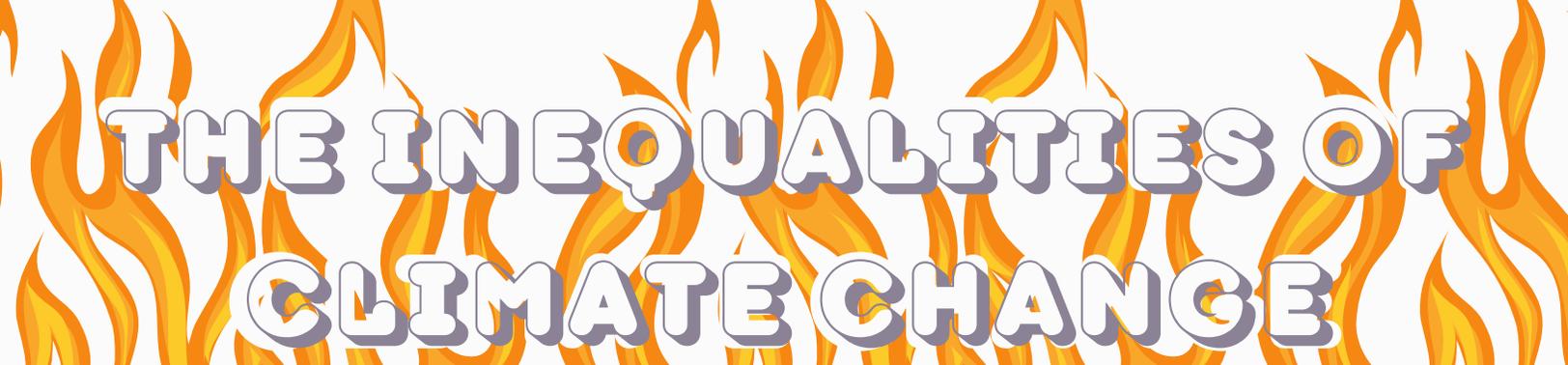


In terms of shades, honeycomb shades, specifically with double or triple cell shades, are the most efficient, but you could also use woven/roman shades that come with liners. Compared to drapes and shades, blinds are not as effective, but they are still very useful for reducing heat in the summer. If you live in a warmer climate, these might be the most beneficial to you. If your home has awnings, make sure to adjust them in the winter, especially the south facing ones, in order to let the sunshine in.



Besides using window coverings, there are many other ways you can conserve heat and stay warm. Make sure that heat is able to circulate throughout your home without anything blocking the heating vents, and have your fans turning in a clockwise direction. Avoid heating unoccupied rooms by closing the door and vent of that room. However, remember to never block off more than 25% or more of your vents at the same time or it can be damaging. Additionally, try adding rugs to maximize heat retention, ensure your furnace filters are clean, and check for drafty doors and windows. Caulking drafting drafty doors can save you up to 20% on your annual heating/cooling bill, and weatherstripping windows can save you 5-10%. Finally, close your chimney's flue to keep cold air out and hot air in.

We hope these tips were helpful in giving you some ideas on how you can save some energy this winter! You can also track your household's carbon footprint, learn more about the Be Heat Wise action, and take more actions with us on the Cleaner Contra Costa Challenge website.



THE INEQUALITIES OF CLIMATE CHANGE

WRITTEN BY ALIYAH RAMIREZ ART BY TATIANA TORRES

"Because the Earth is a system, where everything is connected, changes in one area can influence changes in all others... The consequences of climate change now include, among others, intense drought, water scarcity, severe fires, rising sea levels, flooding, melting polar ice, catastrophic storms and declining biodiversity," as reported by the [United Nations](#).

The Earth's climate evolves naturally, such as through variations in the solar cycle, but since the 1800s, humanity has accelerated drastic changes in our Earth's temperature and weather patterns, primarily by burning fossil fuels like coal and gas. Greenhouse gas emissions from CO₂ and methane trap the sun's heat and raise temperatures around the world. Global energy, transportation, and agriculture consumption are the main contributors of this issue and have driven greenhouse emissions to their highest levels over the last decade

This pressing global issue is impacting us all and can affect our health, safety, ability to grow food, and work, yet it leaves some areas more vulnerable than others. From an economic standpoint, global warming is enriching cooler countries such as Sweden and Norway but decreasing growth in warmer countries like India and Nigeria. A study from Stanford University shows a decline in wealth in the poorest countries, worsening from 17% to 30%, based on GDP (gross domestic product).

"The historical data clearly shows that crops are more productive, people are healthier and we are more productive at work when temperatures are neither too hot nor too cold... This means that in cold countries, a little bit of warming can help... The opposite is true in places that are already hot," explained Marshall Burke, co-author of [Stanford study](#).

Inequalities among developing, low-income nations are intensified by climate changes and drastic weather. Globally, certain populations are more at risk of poverty due to rising sea levels and increased temperatures. Basic necessities like food and energy are becoming less available as lower income families fight natural disasters, decreasing economic growth, and poverty.

"People with fewer resources can't afford to pay for heating or air conditioning and often live in much older buildings without proper insulation," stated [Cristina Linares](#), researcher at Spain's National School of Public Health.

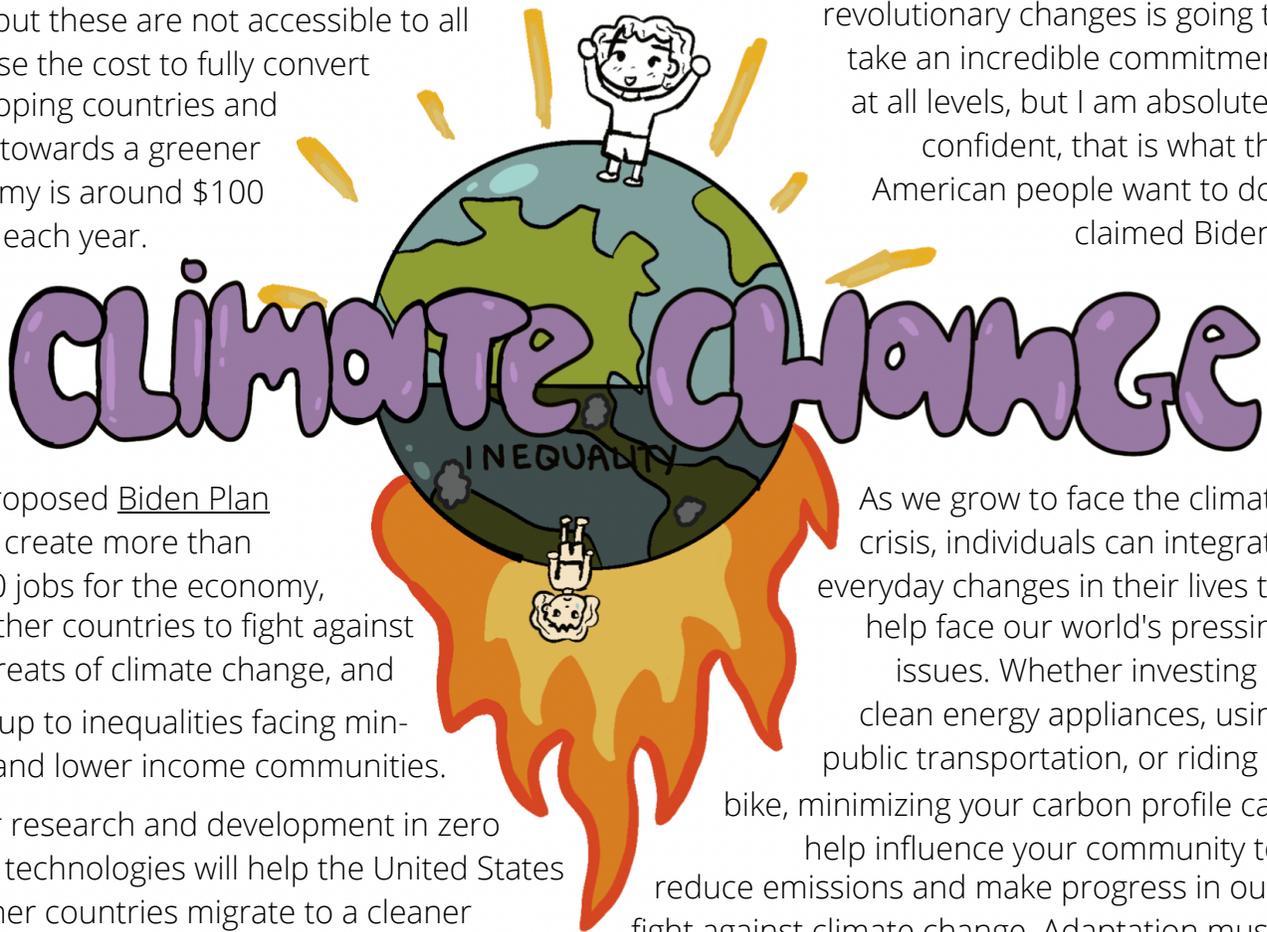
Each day, 100 million tons of CO₂ are emitted, leading to intense heat waves, droughts, and ocean acidification, which can drastically affect the growth of primary livestock, fisheries, and crops such as wheat, rice, corn, and soybeans. Yes, some extra CO₂ in the environment can be beneficial to crops grown in greenhouses, but it is a different story when it comes to the real world. Impacts of drastic heat and rising sea levels can negatively harm farms and make plants and animals more vulnerable to disease and decreased fertility.



Within the past decades, the goal of finding solutions to end climate change has remained prevalent as global agreements such as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement address three broad topics: cutting down emissions, adapting to climate impacts, and financing required adjustments.

The primary focus is on switching energy production from power plants to solar or wind, but these are not accessible to all because the cost to fully convert developing countries and adapt towards a greener economy is around \$100 billion each year.

“As president, I will lead America and the world, not only to confront the crisis in front of us but to seize the opportunity it presents...I will use every authority available to me to drive progress and I will not accept half-measures... because making these revolutionary changes is going to take an incredible commitment at all levels, but I am absolutely confident, that is what the American people want to do,” claimed Biden.



The proposed Biden Plan would create more than 10,000 jobs for the economy, rally other countries to fight against the threats of climate change, and stand up to inequalities facing minority and lower income communities.

Further research and development in zero carbon technologies will help the United States and other countries migrate to a cleaner economy. By the end of President Joe Biden’s first term, he may have an enforcement mechanism to keep the government focused on creating a greener future for America by investing \$1.7 trillion to become a 100% clean energy economy with net zero emissions by 2050.

As we grow to face the climate crisis, individuals can integrate everyday changes in their lives to help face our world's pressing issues. Whether investing in clean energy appliances, using public transportation, or riding a bike, minimizing your carbon profile can help influence your community to reduce emissions and make progress in our fight against climate change. Adaptation must be made to beat the climate consequences. It will cost billions of dollars to fully convert all countries to a greener nation, but the price must be paid to create clean energy and food for everyone, no matter where they are in the world. Speaking up about the inequalities can be your first step in helping better our world's planet for a cleaner tomorrow!



Sustainability in the Make Up Industry

by Lorin Iglesias, art by Riley McIntosh



As an avid make-up user, I can testify that choosing the right shades and tones in your products is extremely important. But have you ever thought of selecting the right ingredients and materials not only for your skin but the environment as well? The majority of cosmetic products use harmful chemicals that can damage our skin as well as non-biodegradable packaging that can cause damage to our environment. Considering that these chemicals are harmful to humans, imagine what they do when tested on animals! I know researching sustainable makeup products that are actually effective is a nuisance, so here are a few brands that you might wanna check out when you are looking for a new tube of (ethical) mascara.

1. Elate Beauty

This brand swears on “[Striving] to use ingredients that are both nourishing and sustainable without sacrificing the quality of the products we create or the wellbeing of animals, people, or the environment” The company uses ingredients that are organic, PETA certified vegan, and gluten-free. The cherry-on-top is that they are cruelty-free! Recently, they upgraded their packaging to a more sustainable option. They now use reusable bamboo to promote their “goal of becoming the first waste-free cosmetic company.” To add to their outstanding sustainability, Elate products are refillable and are sent to you in a seed paper envelope. After you refill your favorite Elate product, you can start your own garden using these seed papers!

2. Axiology

“I was determined to create a lipstick that didn’t harm animals. Period,” was what Ericka, the founder of Axiology, said as she looked back on her journey of creating her own palm oil-free and cruelty-free products. This woman-owned company uses nothing but safe and non-toxic ingredients. Most of their ingredients are organic, such as coconut oil, grapeseed oil, elderberry extract, etc. In addition to their incredible sustainable reputation, they are “the first multi-use product to contain no plastic and no packaging (meaning nothing that pollutes our planet).” Lastly, to complement their anti-palm oil advocacy, Axiology also financially supports the Orangutan Foundation International to provide sanctuary and rehabilitation to animals affected by the catastrophic consequences of palm oil extraction.

3. Dab Herb

“Welcome to the healthiest decision you’ve ever made yet” is the opening statement on Dab Herb’s website. They produce beauty and skincare products that are affordable and healthy for the skin as well as the environment and utilize “the best of food-grade, cruelty-free, certified organic, and vegan ingredients available” for the production of their products. Like every other sustainable brand, Dab Herb promotes refillable packaging such as glass or tin jars, but with their products, the refill costs less than buying a whole new one, which urges customers to be sustainable.

Indeed, making sure that you are environmentally conscious about the products you buy may sometimes be a lot of work and cost a bit more than the usual, careless products, however, we must remember that while these eco-friendly products are expensive, we cannot afford to be selfish considering the current state of our environment. Sustainability is everywhere, in various aspects and in many ways. At this point, it is simply up to us if we are willing to utilize these options and take action.



Hurricanes' Increasing Devastating Impact

By Alison Chiu, Art by Stella Lin

The Importance of Climate Changes and Hurricanes

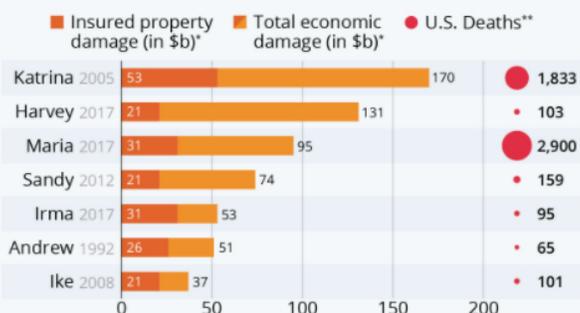
The increasing damage caused by climate change is becoming more and more apparent in our world today. While it is true that these kinds of devastating natural disasters have already existed for a long time, the costliest hurricanes have all occurred in the last 21 years for the U.S. The costlier a hurricane is, the more damage and lasting impact it will leave on the inflicted place. For example, Hurricane Katrina (2005) cost the U.S. about \$106 billion USD and resulted in more than 1,800 fatalities. There are a couple of influences caused by climate change that can affect hurricanes, and it is important to get to know and analyze them in order to gain a better understanding of how our actions as humans affect the environment.

Recent Hurricanes and their Disastrous Impact

Recently, more and more dangerous hurricanes are occurring. The infamous Hurricane Katrina (a Category 5 hurricane) from 2005 is a perfect (albeit sad) example of this. It made the charts as one of the worst hurricanes in America, killing more than 1,800 people across the Gulf Coast, Louisiana, and Florida. Another Category 5 hurricane, Hurricane Maria, eventually killed about 3,000 people. As seen on the chart, all of the costliest and some of the deadliest hurricanes in the U.S. have occurred very recently -- in the last 20-30 years!

The Costliest and Deadliest Hurricanes to Hit the U.S.

U.S. damages and death tolls for the costliest hurricanes on record to impact the U.S.



* Adjusted for inflation ** Mainland and territories (Maria: minimum of deaths)
Sources: NOAA, International Insurance Institute



statista

How Climate Change Impacts Hurricanes

In reality, hurricanes have three major, influential factors, all related to climate change, that can majorly affect the range of damage they cause. Warmer sea temperatures, rising sea levels, and expanding tropics all directly affect hurricanes' impact. Hurricanes require high humidity, and the warmer ocean temperatures are, the more they facilitate hurricane development. Cold waters act as brakes to hurricanes, so with warmer waters caused by climate change, there is almost nothing holding back the quick development of hurricanes. Since the 1970s, air temperatures have been rising and aiding the development of recent tropical storms, as well as increasing their intensity and speed. Additionally, rising sea levels lead to more flooding and danger to the communities who are affected by hurricanes. Finally, because Earth's tropics (regions of the Earth surrounding the equator) are expanding poleward (mainly from climate change), hurricane impact areas are also shifting. The Earth's tropic zones are warmer than other parts, and their expansion can not only warm up ocean waters but also leave communities weak and damaged. All three causes of hurricanes have become more aggravating in recent years and are connected to the main culprit, climate change, which is mainly caused by humans.

How do you protect yourself? What can we do?

Hurricane season typically runs from June 1st to November 30th if you are in the Western Hemisphere. The CDC provides multiple methods of preparation for a tropical storm/hurricane, including making a plan, preparing emergency supplies beforehand, etc. Hurricanes are clearly becoming more and more impactful on our communities and the world as they gradually worsen over time. Their lasting damage is facilitated, if not caused, by climate change (greenhouse gases), and it is important to understand the great influence the warming of our planet can have on natural disasters. As many people continue to ignore this growing issue, it is up to you to encourage others to take action and take action yourself.



U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen



The Importance of Native Landscaping

art & article by Tatiana Torres

Educating oneself about the importance of native landscaping is vital for maintaining a flourishing ecosystem in a particular area. Native plants, such as the California poppy, belong to a certain region because that land has produced the same plant for thousands of years. As written by Environmental Education for Kids, "Native plants also promote biodiversity; therefore, a landscape full of native plants provides many different shapes, sizes, textures and colors." Keeping our native plants safe not only is aesthetically pleasing but benefits our ecosystems. But, what happens when a non-native plant invades that land? Invasive plants are extremely detrimental, as they can cause habitat loss and reduce biodiversity. Not being educated about the importance of native plants and land has been apparent throughout history.

In California, the use of iceplants made a huge impact on the land and ecosystem. During the 1900s, railroad workers needed to remove soil, so iceplants were brought in without knowing the consequences. Now "It is so widespread that it is only realistic to try to control small infestations at once." (California Department of Fish and Wildlife) Because of lack of knowledge about native landscaping, iceplants have caused multiple infestations in California and less plants to grow because it takes up all the space.

Native landscaping aids with maintaining biodiversity, but it can also help out the animal species nearby! It is found that, "Consciously creating or maintaining a habitat full of native plants can be of great help and relief to animals looking for a home." (Environmental Education for Kids) Making sure native plants are not invaded creates a chain reaction that helps animals around the landscape have a home. Due to urbanization, habitat loss is a growing issue, and maintaining native plants is key to making sure all animals have a domain to live in.

California poppy

Maryland



Native landscaping not only has multiple environmental merits but many health benefits as well. For years, Native Americans have used herbal medicine from plants native to America. The California Evening Primrose was used to help women “stay in balance through menopause and uterine problems like fibroids and cysts,” while Mugwort had, “serotonergic agents that interfere with addiction mechanisms,” ([USC Pharmacy Magazine Fall 2017](#)). Plants that are native in our own land can help treat health issues from menopause and bladder problems to battling addiction. Learning about native plants can help manage health issues by using what is in our own backyard!

Native landscaping has multiple perks such as helping maintain biodiversity, decreasing habitat loss for native animals, and offering health benefits for humans. Educating oneself about native landscaping can help keep our ecosystems and health safe!



California
poppy

Mugwort

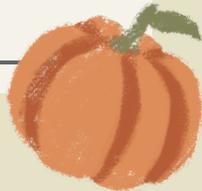


VEGAN AND GLUTEN FREE PUMPKIN BREAD

By: Brooke Abess



FALL IS
HERE WHICH
MEANS, SO
IS PUMPKIN
BREAD!



THE
PERFECT
DESSERT
FOR ANY
MOMENT

Enjoy this pumpkin bread by following the recipe provided!



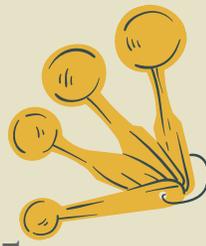
This vegan pumpkin bread is the perfect recipe for the colder months of the year and gets you into the autumn spirit! It is a perfect breakfast, snack, or way to finish off your Thanksgiving dinner. With a simple ingredient list and an even easier method to make it, this is a delicious recipe you will not want to skip!

Adapted from: From My Bowl



INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp ground flax seeds + 5 tablespoons water
- 2 ¼ cup oat flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 tablespoon pumpkin pie spice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup pumpkin puree
- 2/3 cup coconut sugar
- 1/4 cup nut or seed butter or choice
- Juice of 1/2 lemon
- ¼ cup chopped walnuts (optional)



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat your oven to 350F and grease or line a 8"x4" bread pan.
2. In a small bowl, mix together the ground flax seeds and water to create a flax "egg." Let the mixture sit for 5-10 minutes.
3. Add the oat flour, pumpkin pie spice, baking soda and salt to a large bowl. Mix together until combined and set aside.
4. Add the flax egg, pumpkin puree, sugar, nut butter and lemon juice to a small bowl and mix until combined. Then, slowly add the wet ingredients to the dry, mixing well until there are no clumps.
5. Mix in the chopped walnuts, if using.
6. Pour the batter into your prepared bread pan, then bake in the oven for about 55-60 minutes, or until the top is golden brown.
7. Allow to cool completely before slicing, then enjoy!

STEP 1:



STEP 2:



STEP 3:



Thanks for reading and we hope you enjoyed baking this delicious vegan and gluten free pumpkin bread!

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Writing & Editing Team

Abigail Stofer Lorin Iglesias
Brooke Abess Alison Chiu
Aliyah Ramirez Tatiana Torres

Art & Photo Team

Riley McIntosh Stella Lin
Kyle Suen
Tatiana Torres

Assembly Team

Alexi Lindeman Sarah Khan
Liezyl Ann Catahan Tatiana Torres
Abigail Stofer Stella Lin

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