

Second prize winner: Rena ISOMURA of Keio University

Nature Paradise Hong Kong

The city illuminated by neon lights and busy traffic may be what people think of Hong Kong. However, one of the greatest aspects of this study tour was to see with my own eyes and experience what is hidden behind the skyscrapers of Hong Kong. In the speech contest, I delivered a speech about Hong Kong's nature conservation and recreation. In order to write my speech, I could only rely on facts and pictures in books to learn about the rich nature in Hong Kong since I have never visited Hong Kong before. This study tour gave me a great opportunity to actually see with my own eyes how much Hong Kong is full of greenness. The Chinese University of Hong Kong, where we stayed for a week, was full of nature. On campus, bright colorful flowers gave out sweet scents and walking through the flowers was like walking under a shower of floral perfume. While I was heading to class, I caught the sounds of several high pitch twitters of birds making a sweet melody. It was fascinating to distinguish and explore each bird since there were signs showing descriptions and pictures of the birds living in the area.

At Lamma Island, I put on sneakers and prepared myself for hiking. The island is sharp contrast to the busy city; the area was calm, tranquil and peaceful. During the two hours of hiking, I walked through the trails surrounded by banana trees and mango trees, and this was like hiking in a tropical jungle. Climbing up the steep hills made me out of breath but the view from the very top of the mountain took my breath away. The sapphire blue sea sparkled from the beaming sun and I was able to observe the beautiful neighboring islands covered with thick deep green leaves. I was a beginner at hiking, yet was able to fully enjoy it because there were handrails and paved roads that supported me to climb up.

During my stay, I was able to explore the nature paradise of Hong Kong. I would

definitely advise people to pack sneakers and binoculars for those who are planning to visit Hong Kong. I would like to thank all the people who supported us to participate in this great opportunity and I hope Japan and Hong Kong will continue to strengthen its bond.