

CROSSROADS

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter March, 2021



It's a Sitka spruce and some people call it "the tree of life." It's a very unusual tree located at Kalaloch Beach in Washington State USA and it is another reminder of just how miraculous nature can be.



If you ever get overwhelmed with life's problems and feel like giving up, just think of this tree. The earth directly under its trunk has almost completely eroded away, exposing its roots, but it still hangs on, still breathing even thriving, refusing to give up.



And how's this for "social tree distancing"? Actually, it's called "crown shyness" by those who study these kinds of things. In many thickly forested areas, trees have been observed to display the very best of good manners, taking care as they grow not to encroach into their neighbor's space.

You could say the above two examples are incidences where nature, through trees, displays the principles and courage we humans would well do to emulate.

Trees can offer all kinds of surprises, some verging on unbelievable. Take the Dragon's Blood tree for instance. This tree grows almost



exclusively in only one place in the world - a small island approximately 480 km

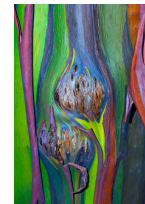


south of the Yemeni and the Arabian Coast called Socotra. The tree's unique shape, like a huge umbrella, is strange enough, but the real shock is its sap. When cut the tree bleeds!

Then there is the Jaboticaba tree from Brazil. It bears its fruit directly on old growth trunks and branches. The fruit is said to be delicious but hard to get outside of its native habitat as it will not last long after harvesting.



How about the Baobab tree? It can be found in dry, arid countries such as Africa, Madagascar and Australia. It can survive in very harsh conditions by storing vast amounts of water in its trunk. It is also very hard to kill and is among the oldest living trees in the world. Some of the oldest are estimated to be near 5,000 years old!



But, the prize for the most "artistic" tree goes to the "Rainbow Tree". This beauty is a variety of eucalyptus and grows in the Philippines, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. Its unique coloring comes from the way it sheds its bark.



And these are just a few miracles in the tree world. Don't get me started on insects!

Net News

NET LESSONS: Too busy to come to CROSSROADS?

.... Try our *lessons on the net!*

Read more about these and other unique trees here:

<https://en.paperblog.com/top-10-amazing-and-unusual-trees-1362745/>

Some Thoughts for the Month

Joshua Says: A paradox, as you probably know, is a statement that seems to contradict itself. Here is a simple example: “Nobody goes to that restaurant because it’s too crowded.” How can it be crowded if nobody goes there? Or how about, “to learn how to communicate in English, don’t study English!” The purpose of a paradox is to point out a truism that leaves you with an insight, an understanding that you may not normally have.

Junko Says: Recently I found a good website for reading short stories. The URL is <https://bookfortoday.com/all/best-british-short-stories-2019-by-nicholas-royle/> - The good thing is that you can download PDF files of these articles, and so you are not interrupted by advertisements. The editor covered a wide range of topics from anthologies, magazines, newspapers and web sites, looking for the best of the bunch in 2019 to reprint all in one volume. I hope you will be able to enjoy reading these articles.

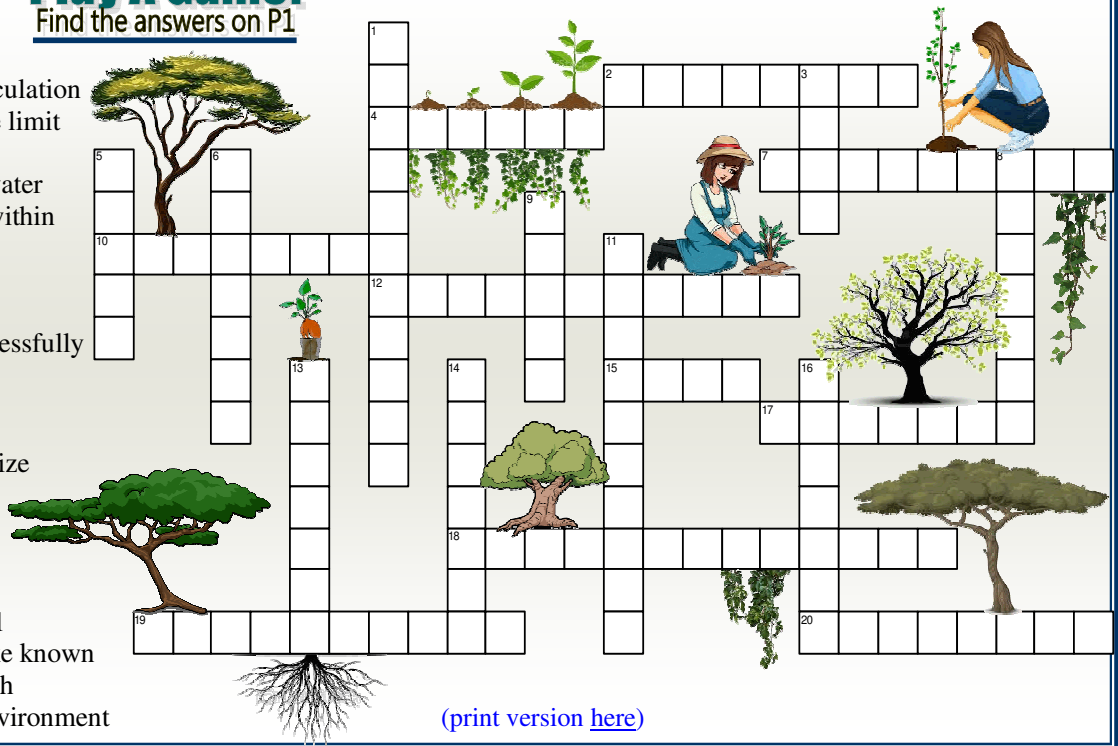
Marek Says: Recently, I took on a challenge to teach our TORAY student basics of German language. As I was preparing general facts about the language, I realized that a majority of Germans speak reasonable English. Also, English skills are quite transferable to German, as many words share close similarities in pronunciation and spelling between the two languages. The ability to speak English gives you an opportunity to enjoy holidaying in Europe without worrying about language barrier.

Mandcy dit: Ça y est, le printemps est arrivé. Les premières fleur du printemps ont commencé à fleurir. Et en plus, il fait très doux. C'est un temps très agréable pour faire un barbecue dans la forêt ou un pique-nique au bord de la rivière. On peut d'ores et déjà contempler les fleurs de pruniers, de colza et de magnolia. Bon printemps à tous !!

Play A Game!

DOWN

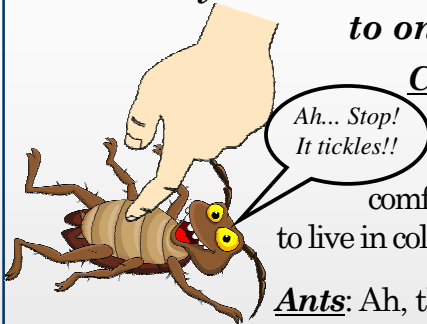
- 1 too much
3 unusually great in size
5 get rid of
6 coming close to
8 concentrated, dense
9 main part of a tree
11 amazing, wonderful
13 to uncover and make known
14 copy, equal or match
16 a life supporting environment



(print version here)

Okay, so here are some facts about the insect kingdom you're sure to be interested in...

... They make up about two-thirds of all presently known species on Earth. And they have been around for around 400,000,000 years - compare that to only about 300,000 years for humans.



Cockroaches: These friendly little critters love to be touched. Well, they like the feeling of solid matter next to their bodies. They seek out cracks and crevices that they can squeeze into for security and comfort. And in keeping with their "friendly" nature, they love to live in colonies, in close contact with their buddies. How cute!!

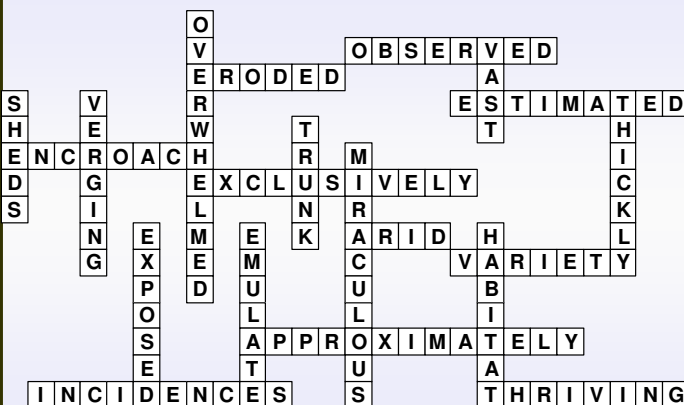


Ants: Ah, the mighty ant. It can lift and carry fifty times its own weight! There are around 10 quadrillion ants going about their business on the earth. That's about 1.4 million ants to every person! And an ant has the longest life-span of any insect species, about 30 years. Ants and humans are the only species that farm livestock. Ants tend aphids and "milk" them for their honeydew similar to human activity on dairy farms. What's the bet that ants (and cockroaches) will be around long after we humans are extinct?

Mosquitoes: Did you know that it's only the female that will bite you? Oh, the burdens of motherhood... Mom needs the extra protein from your blood to build up her strength for producing and laying her eggs. Carefree Papa, on the other hand, can relax and enjoy the carefree life of flittering among the flowers, extracting nectar for his sustenance.



House Flies: These guys can't eat solid food. So when they see a tasty looking morsel, they spit on it! That's right, they use their saliva to "tenderize" their dinner before eating it. They are especially fond of sweet dishes such as fermenting fruit. And interestingly, they taste with their feet! That's where their taste-buds are located, So they stomp on, then spit on their food before eating it.... It seems that every creature has its own idea of what good table manners are....



Last Month's puzzle Solution

ACROSS

- 2 noticed, studied
- 4 worn away
- 7 an approximate calculation
- 10 advance beyond the limit
- 12 without others
- 15 lacking sufficient water
- 17 minor differences within the same group
- 18 about
- 19 happenings
- 20 surviving very successfully

DOWN

- 1 too much
- 3 unusually great in size
- 5 get rid of
- 6 coming close to
- 8 concentrated, dense
- 9 main part of a tree
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Don't forget... Our SPECIAL 1+1 Campaign offer! Up to 50% off!!

See our notice board, or ask Junko in our office, for the details.