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EDITORIAL NOTES

This Newsletter is prepared by the Theosophy-Science Group in Australia for interested members of the Theosophical Society in Australia. The email version is also made available on request to members of the Theosophical Society in New Zealand and USA by the respective National bodies. Members in USA should contact **tsa@theosophical.org** Members in New Zealand should contact: **john@serion.co.nz** . Recipients are welcome to share the Newsletter with friends but it must not be reproduced in any medium including on a website. However, permission is given for quoting of extracts or individual articles with due acknowledgement. Selected items appear from time to time on the website of the TS in Australia – **austheos.org.au** .

As editor of this Newsletter and Convener of the Australian Theosophy-Science Group I hope to continue providing readers with news of our activities, past and future, as well as articles of general scientific and theosophical interest. I would welcome contributions from our readers.

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THEOSOPHY and our ENVIRONMENT

Our respected long-serving member of the Theosophical Society in Australia, Dr Hugh Murdoch, astrophysicist and instigator of this Theosophy-Science Group in Australia, spoke at the World Congress of Theosophists held in Sydney, January 2001. In his introduction, Hugh Murdoch stated:

“I believe we should aim to apply the timeless fundamental concepts of Theosophy to the scientific issues of the day rather than revisiting century old battles. We should emphasise current ethical and environmental issues. Science has progressed enormously in the last century. First quantum physics and relativity; then an understanding of our solar system and of the vast universe of galaxies. In my lifetime; radio, television, transistors, lasers, computers, satellites, DNA and the genetic code to name a few. We need to recognise the role of modern science and its self-imposed limitations, not expecting all scientists to go beyond the strict limits of their science and embrace the mystical and eternal verities; but certainly we should celebrate those who do and there are many.”

All life has consciousness

Consciousness, Physics, and Hermetic Idealism

by Ben Cunningham – Sunday, 16 August 2015,
University of Philosophical Research, Los Angeles.

Today's *New York Times* has the obituary of Bernard d' Espagnat, an early theoretical physicist and one of the early writers making the connection of quantum entanglement and non-locality with what, at bottom, is at the core of Hermetica (and our other studies of traditions embracing transcendental consciousness). He once said this: "The doctrine that the world is made up of objects whose existence is independent of human consciousness turns out to be in conflict with Quantum Mechanics and with facts established by experiment."

Recipient of the Templeton Prize in 2009, awarded to those who make "an exceptional contribution to affirming life's spiritual dimension, whether through insight, discovery or practical works", Dr.d'Espagnat falls into all those categories. His consciousness, as all consciousness, will survive the material vessel that powered him for 93 years.
A book worth reading is his *Physics and Philosophy*, appropos our general studies in consciousness in this UPR program of consciousness, psychology, and Wisdom Traditions. It's all connected...
Fair winds at your back, Dr. d' Espagnat as you sail on across this universal ocean of consciousness.

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IMPORTANCE OF TREES to humans

Extract from ***The Conversation*** July 24, 2015.
Jennifer Morrow/Flickr, CC BY

Around the world, many cities have been undertaking massive urban tree expansion and renewal programs. Million Tree initiatives have begun in many cities including Los Angeles, New York and Shanghai. These aim primarily to plant more trees, but also manage the resilience of the forest by increasing species diversity, and encourage community participation in choosing locations and kinds of tree, and stewardship by adopting and caring for trees.
The City of Melbourne's urban forest program is also using cutting-edge research to increase tree canopy cover, manage diversity in the forest, and reduce heat in summer. Yet it is perhaps through new ways of valuing trees, and through community engagement programs such as emailing a tree, that the City of Melbourne is being most innovative.

Why do we value trees?

By valuing, we mean determining the importance of trees. Trees have always been valued by urban people, but the way they have justified their value has constantly changed.

In recent decades, the emergence of the Ecosystem Services framework has allowed the benefits provided by trees such as temperature reduction, carbon sequestration and pollution interception to be quantified and valued in dollar terms. This thinking has led to recent initiatives such as the price-tagging of trees.

Although framing trees as “ecosystems services” or “green infrastructure” are undoubtedly useful tools for directing the wheels of urban development, there is real power in understanding people’s emotional relationship with trees. Healthy, liveable and lovable cities need to allow people’s subtle and nuanced spiritual and emotional bond with trees to thrive.

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THE QUESTION OF INTELLIGENCE AND SENTIENCE IN PLANTS

Is intelligence “what is needed to solve problems” or does it require a brain?

Tony Fearnside, M.Sc., OAM, 2015.

In 1973, the publication of *The Secret Life of Plants* by Peter Tompkins and Timothy Bird occasioned much controversy. Appearing at a time when New Ageism was strong, the book was a “best seller” in USA and inspired a popular documentary film of the same name (Paramount 1979). One of the book's controversial claims was that plants may be sentient despite their lack of a nervous system and a brain.

The book opened with a report on "Cleve" Backster, a former interrogation specialist for the CIA, and his experiments with plants using a polygraph or lie detector in the 1960s (Grover Cleveland "Cleve" Backster, Jr (1924 – 2013). These were widely reported in the media but were rejected by the scientific community. His book *Primary Perception: Biocommunication with Plants, Foods, and Human Cells* (2003) described his work with plants, including attaching a polygraph to an indoor plant (*Dracaena massangeana)* in his office. Backster reported that the plant registered a reaction on the polygraph when he had thoughts of injuring it and when a live shrimp was put into boiling water in the next room. Controlled experiments that attempted to replicate Backster's findings failed, and the "Primary Perception" theory was not accepted since it did not follow a scientific method (eg. at the 141st annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 2011, the panel of biologists found the claim unsupportable).

Backster's theory was a subject of an episode of the television show Mythbusters. After all human and environmental stimuli that could alter the results were removed, they tried to reproduce Backster's experiments with the *Dracaena massangeana* plant. After obtaining negative results, they performed a final experiment using an EEG instrument (more sensitive than a polygraph) connecting it to a plant to check whether it would react to eggs being catapulted randomly into boiling water. The instrument registered no change in the plant and the myth was considered busted! (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cleve_Backster).

However critics had overlooked a characteristic of plants which was reported in chapter two of *The Secret Life of Plants*. Marcel Vogel, a researcher at IBM who could be described as empathetic to plants, was asked to give a course on creativity to IBM staff members. He set out to demonstrate a machine with similar capabilities to Backster's polygraph and divided the class into three groups; none of the students got results but Vogel did. He concluded that plants could respond to a person's intentions if there was some sort of a bond between the person and the plant.

A deliberate attempt to see if Backster's results could be replicated using the equivalent of a galvanic skin response[1] was made by Theosophist Steven Guth and David Beale in 2007 and 2011. David, an electronics inventor developed a 'materials analyzer' that sends out and receives modulating patterned waves. It was adapted to present results similar to the GSR machines. Antenna and receiver plates were placed near plants and results recorded as Steven meditated and sent feelings of love and appreciation to the plants. Garden trees responded slowly. Potted geraniums cuttings tended to give good results. A further experiment was conducted by moving a geranium over a dowsing water line - the plant responded to the line. Steven observed that plants appear to react much like cats, "One needs to get and hold their attention. Responses are not always what one expects." Steven and David have placed their work, with photographs on the following web site: http://westernau.com/PlantResponse/index.html .

Controversy re-awakened in 2007 as a result of an article by six plant scientists in *Trends in Plant Science* (2006) that proposed a new field of inquiry "plant neurobiology". They argued that this name was justified by the sophisticated nature of plant responses to environmental variables which could not be explained using accepted genetic and biochemical definitions. Systems of signalling in plants had been found that are analogous to systems in animals – plants exhibited intelligence. The Society for Plant Neurobiology had held its first meeting in 2005. After criticism from other plant scientists, the society was re-named the Society for Plant Signalling and Behaviour and its journal became *Plant Signalling and Behaviour*.

Associate professor Monica Gagliano, from the Centre for Evolutionary Biology, University of Western Australia, working at the International Laboratory of Plant Neurobiology near Florence experimented with seedlings of the sensitive plant *Mimosa pudica*. She used protocols for testing habituation in animals by repeatedly dropping containers with the seedlings from a height of 15 centimetres every five seconds. At first, the seedlings responded as they do to touch, by "folding up" but after a while they had "learned" that this was unnecessary. 28 days later the plants "remembered" what they had learned. She said "Brains and neurons are a sophisticated solution, but are not a necessary requirement for learning." Her paper was rejected by 10 scientific journals, not because they doubted the results or the methodology, but could not agree to use her terminology, to which she replied that it was necessary to use similar terminology so that plant behaviour could be compared with animal behavior. The paper was eventually published in *Oecologia*).

[1] A measure of changes in emotional arousal recorded by attaching electrodes to any part of the skin and recording changes in moment-to-moment perspiration and related autonomic nervous system activity .www.medilexicon.com/medicaldictionary.php?t=77695

It is not surprising therefore that “plant neurobiologists” have turned to information science for definitions and terminology which are broader and concepts that are easier to apply.

So, are we getting closer to finally refuting or accepting the existence of sentience in plants as propounded by eastern sages, and by CW Leadbeater and others who possessed a degree of clairvoyance? Probably not, but much more is now known of what was previously the “secret” life of plants and therefore of the claims to their having some sort of intelligence or “sentience”.

Some things that plants do (plant behaviour)

The following describes some aspects of above-ground plant movements or “behaviour” in vascular or higher plants – land plants that have lignified tissues (xylem) for conducting water and minerals through the plant and a specialised non-lignified tissue (phloem) to conduct products of photosynthesis. Vascular plants include gymnosperms (conifers and cycads) and angiosperms (flowering plants). Mosses, yeasts (and other single-celled organisms) are not considered here. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vascular_plant.

Firstly, let’s consider the oft repeated anonymous observation, “We live in a definition-based reality, held in place by peer review.” In the case of plant studies much of the discussion and controversy centres on terminology and definitions. Thus “behaviour” can be taken to be reactions to stimuli. In animals, reactions are usually characterised by movement that is readily observed while most reactions to stimuli in plants are much much slower. If we remember that plants are unable to move we begin to see that this greatly influences and helps to explain their slower responses, and their different ways of signalling, etc. Arising from this we can also argue that plants have advantages over animals in many respects (eg, a plant can lose 90% of its structure and still survive, while having a brain as in higher animals would be a disadvantage as foragers could easily destroy the plant’s ability to defend itself). Perhaps we humans should be more humble and abandon our feeling of superiority brought about by our (apparent) ability to out-think species in the animal and plant kingdoms. Consider also the following: living entities take steps to pass on their genetic material and consume materials to provide the necessary energy. In so doing, animals generally consume materials to provide energy whereas plants generally generate their own energy sources.

In plants, vegetative growth is the period of growth between germination and flowering and the following table indicates the different forms of growth that are recognised in vascular plants. source: http://plantsinmotion.bio.indiana.edu/ accessed 6 July 2015.

Seeds absorb moisture sufficient to generate energy for growth to begin (germination).
Plants move in response to environmental stimuli where movement is related to the direction of the stimulus (tropisms eg, geotropism in roots, movements caused by wind).
Plant movements in response to light which are not tropic: photomorphogenesis eg the diurnal movement of sunflowers.
Movements by plants in response to environmental stimuli where movement is not related to the direction of the stimulus (nastic movements eg, the Venus Flytrap, and *Mimosa pudica* [sensitive plant]).
Time dependent movements eg, closing of flowers, or leaves at night (Circadian responses).
Processes that occur during vegetative growth, ie, between germination and flowering are referred to as general growth.
Growth associated with reproduction, including pollination and pollination aids, flowering, fertilisation, fruiting and seed disposal. Eg, *Rafflesia* is a genus of parasitic plants[2] that attracts insects at night by emitting (to us) an unattractive stink.

In the case of the insectivorous plant, the Venus Flytrap (*Dionaea* spp) an insect crawling on the plant's leaf will bend a single hair but nothing happens ... until a second hair is bent by the insect, whereupon the leaf closes quickly and catches it. Is this a form of intelligence, since the plant knows the difference between a single bend and a second bend? A single bend could be caused in many ways but potential prey will cause two bends. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venus_flytrap).

In the parasitic plant, dodder (*Cuscuta* spp) seeds sprout at or near the surface of the soil. Although germination can occur without a host, it has to reach a green plant quickly and is adapted to grow towards the nearby plants by following chemosensory clues. If a host plant is not reached within 5 to 10 days, the seedling will die. Before a host plant is reached, the dodder relies on its food reserves. It has been demonstrated that dodder plants "hunt" their preferred victims (eg, tomato plants) by responding selectively to different volatile airborne compounds emitted by their potential hosts. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuscuta.)

Another fascinating case is that of the parasitic pitcher plant, N*epenthes hemsleyana*. The large pitcher that this plant possesses has been shown to attract bats by reflecting sounds that enable bats to more easily locate the pitcher plant amongst other plants through echolocation. When the bats roost above the pitcher plant in considerable numbers, their droppings provide nutrients for the plant.
(http://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2015/07/10/4271372.htm)

So far in this section, we have considered above-ground movements which are far easier to observe than those below-ground. Moreover, plant scientists have begun to move from studying single plants or even parts of a plant to groups of plants and

[2] Including *Rafflesia arnoldii,* said to be the largest flower in the world.

thence to plants in the landscape, no doubt benefiting from advances in technology. This contrasts to clairvoyants who tend to move from landscapes to groups of plants then to individual plants or trees.

The below-ground behaviour of plants can be even more intriguing than their above-ground behaviour. Recent work has shown that roots somehow avoid overcrowding with their own species, take action to avoid other species that may be competitors and seek out organisms that may be helpful, such as symbiotic fungi or bacteria.

The growing tip of a root (or radicle) is generally regarded as comprising a protective but sensitive growing tip, followed by a region of rapidly dividing cells (meristem), then a transition zone and an elongation zone. Plant neurobiologists have now proposed that the transition zone is in fact a "nerve centre" that controls or directs growth and that this is a form of intelligence (Ananthaswamy, 2014). In addition to tropic movements (in response to gravity, lack of light, moisture, and penetrability) plant roots can respond to chemicals (nitrogen, salt, phosphorus) toxins, microbes and chemical signals from neighbouring plants (Pollan, 2013).

Are plants sentient, showing intelligence?

The question of whether plants are sentient entities with intelligence (perhaps how plants decide what and how to do things) has long been controversial, and events in the past 40 years have been no exception. Before closing, let us consider a few definitions of "sentience" which in general usage is the ability to feel, perceive, or experience subjectively.

The on-line psychology dictionary defines sentience as: 1. The most primitive and simple form of cognition. 2. The state of being sentient where "Sentience consists of being aware of stimuli without interpreting them" (http://psychologydictionary.org/sentience.)

In Eastern philosophy, sentience is a metaphysical quality of all things, and calls for care and respect. The concept is central to the philosophy of animal rights because sentience is necessary for the ability to suffer (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sentience)

It seems certain that those who want to believe that science is getting closer to demonstrating sentience in plants – because scientists are becoming more able to demonstrate forms of plant intelligence – will readily accept that indeed science is closing in on proving that plants are intelligent, sentient beings. The naysayers will remain unconvinced.

References

Anil Ananthaswamy *New Scientist* 6 December 2014.

Gagliano, M., Renton, M.S., Depczynski, M.R., Mancuso, S. 2014, Experience teaches plants to learn faster and forget slower in environments where it matters, *Oecologia*, 175, 1, pp. 63-72.

Michael Pollan, *The New Yorker* ,23 December 2013.

PLANTS COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER [Reprinted from N75]

Dr. Suzanne Simard is a professor with the UBC Faculty of Forestry. She comes to us with the amazing discovery that mycorrhizae and mycorrhizal fungi form networks between the trees that allow for a type of communication between trees. It's a symbiotic relationship; the trees provide the fungus with carbohydrate energy in return for water and nutrients that the fungi collect from the soil.

"The mycorrhizal networks form when mycelia connect the roots of two or more plants of the same or different species" writes Dr. Simard. "Through careful experimentation, recent graduate Francois Teste determined that survival of these establishing trees was greatly enhanced when they were linked into the network of old trees."

Read more at http://higherperspective.com/2014/10/trees-communicate-fungus.html#2JDGxHGlCYc5BSSW.99

victor gostin

Honouring the One Legs

Olga Gostin

In 1996 we had the pleasure of hosting Auntie Agnes (Agnes Baker-Pilgrim) an elder from a Native American group of the Oregon coast. Aunt Aggie had come to take part in a major basket-makers' workshop organised by our local Ngarrindjeri weavers, and we'd been asked to billet her. The workshop went well with meaningful and heartfelt

interchange between Australian Aboriginal basket weavers and their international counterparts.

Midway through the event there was a free day and we offered Aunt Aggie to take her to any place round Adelaide. What would she like to indulge herself with? Without hesitation Aunt Aggie said: "Please take me to the biggest One Leg that you know; I want to pay my respects to it."

We were bemused. Not only did we not know any amputees, but how would one calibrate the biggest of them all? We pleaded ignorance and asked Aunt Aggie to please explain. And so she related how living beings are classified as being one-, two- or four-legged. The four-legged are self-explanatory: deer, dogs, giraffes - the vast array of the animal kingdom. The two-legs consist mostly of humans and birds. And the one-legged ones? Aunt Aggie smiled and spread her hand across our garden: "Here they are in all their diversity – the one-legs: trees, corn, flowers, grass, in fact all plants". She elaborated further on how all the categories are equally important and imbued with sacred attributes according to Native American folklore and spirituality, but the One-Legs are especially important because unlike the other species, they are immobile. They offer themselves as food and fodder to the Two-and Four-Legs, and have to be remembered and honoured for their selfless sacrifice. Most importantly, said Aunt Aggie, where Two-Legs take it upon themselves to cultivate, transplant or otherwise manage One-Legs, then they have a special duty of care towards them.

It was an enlightening and chastening reminder of our common roots with all living species. And it made our visit to the biggest River Redgum by the River Torrens more than just a photo opportunity, with Aunt Aggie dressed in full regalia. She blessed the tree there, with tobacco from her sacred pouch, and embraced it in silent meditation. It was at the same time a profoundly moving and spiritual experience that has remained with us ever since, and that has redefined our relationship to plants and trees in particular.

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Reverence for trees is found amongst all cultures, and I have chosen just a couple of examples, one of which struck me for showing how an ordinary individual can effect quite extraordinary changes in the natural environment. I refer to Jean Giono's account of his meeting with "the man who planted trees". This is the title of his book describing his encounters with Elzeard Bouffier over several decades between 1913 and 1945 in the French Alps of Provence.

Giono describes the countryside of his wanderings as 'barren and colourless' where nothing grew in this area of 'unparalleled desolation' except lavender. Yet Roman ruins suggested that the area had once supported a thriving community. A few extant villages along his walks made a living as charcoal burners. The reason for the denudation of the countryside was thus explained by deforestation. It is there that he

met Elzeard Bouffier, aged 55 at the time of their first encounter. The solitary widowed shepherd had chosen to live in this isolated area where, over a couple of days of proferred hospitality, Giono witnessed the daily routine of this extraordinary man. Every night Elzeard would carefully select one hundred of the best acorns in his store, soak them and set out the next day with his flock of sheep and an iron rod. Leaving his dog to tend the sheep the shepherd would walk in a methodical way, thrusting his rod into the soil and planting acorns as he went along. Giono learnt that over three years Elzeard had planted 100 000 acorns. Allowing for rodents, poor germination and other hazards, the shepherd calculated that 10 000 oak trees would grow where none had grown before.

The Great War intervened and Giono was on the Front. Returning to Provence after the war, Giono found his alpine friend still planting in a countryside that was beginning to be transformed by the emerging saplings. Over the space of the next three decades Giono returned to witness the extraordinary transformation of the countryside – the return of springs, and the flow of brooks; return of animals and a new lease for villages which had previously been abandoned. At the age of 75 Elzeard diversified into planting beech trees at a lower point in the valley with a similar transformative impact on the environment. The Second World War intervened, but still the shepherd continued to plant his trees while the countryside resonated to the pulse of renewed social life that followed in the wake of his restored environment. Never seeking recognition, this unassuming man died peacefully in a hospice in 1947.

[Jean Giono 2011 *The Man who Planted Trees*. Translated from the French
ISBN 978-2-916965-08-6; books.google.com.au]

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The disaster of massive deforestation.

South America suffered the largest net loss of forests in the decade to 2010 – about **4 Mha/yr** (equivalent to 0.46 per cent of total forest cover) – followed by **Africa**, which lost about **3.4 Mha per year**. Although the **rate of global deforestation** has recently slowed, it continues at a high rate in several countries, especially Indonesia.
[*Ending Global Deforestation: Policy Options for Consumer Countries* by Duncan Brack and Rob Bailey; September 2013 © The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2013; Chatham House; www.chathamhouse.org]

By 2012, annual primary forest loss in Indonesia (0.84 Mha) was estimated to be higher than in Brazil (0.46 Mha).
In addition, Indonesia's forests contain **high floral and faunal biodiversity** including 10% of the world's plants, 12% of the world's mammals, 16% of the world's reptile amphibians, and 17% of the world's bird species.

The forests' **high biodiversity** places Indonesia among the world's mega-diverse countries; extensive clearing of Indonesian primary forest cover directly results in habitat loss and associated plant and animal extinctions.

Deforestation in Southeast Asia has made Indonesia the third largest carbon emitter on Earth. The orangutan, the Sumatran tiger, and countless other endangered species are being pushed to the brink of extinction.

[B. Margono, P. Potapov, S. Turubanova, F. Stolle & M. Hansen
Nature Climate Change, Vol 4, Aug. 2014.]

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Extract from ***The Conversation***, November 24, 2015, by Bill Laurance, James Cook University

Forests on fire

Since August 2015, forest and peatland fires have become so widespread across Indonesia that, in satellite images, the nation has looked like an over-lit Christmas tree. [NASA Image below shows active fires in just one week, 2015]

In the wake of the alarming fire crisis, Indonesian president Joko Widodo recently banned peatland fires and the planting of peatlands with palm oil. The president must be lauded for this crucial action. Although belated, it's central to efforts to staunch the present fire crisis and to limit future crises.

The deforestation revolution

The destructive impacts of oil palm on rainforests and peatlands is a key reason why palm oil corporations have come under heavy fire in recent years to clean up their

environmental acts. And this has fomented a true revolution. Under growing public and consumer pressure, many of the world's biggest palm oil producers, as well as many large multinationals (such as Procter & Gamble, Nestlé and Cargill) that buy and use palm oil, have adopted "nodeforestation" agreements. This has all happened in the last two years and it's been one of the most remarkable environmental advances of the last decade.

But just as the no-deforestation agreements are starting to yield real benefits, Indonesia and Malaysia are moving actively to destroy them. One of the aims of the new council is to pressure corporations working in their nations to drop their no-deforestation pacts. They argue that the pledges are an affront to sovereignty, in being driven by Western consumers, and disadvantage smaller palm-oil producers. However the coalition coordinating no-deforestation efforts among Indonesian producers — known as the Indonesia Palm Oil Pledge — is working to help smaller firms and community producers achieve no-deforestation compliance.

We can stop illegal logging and poaching

https://rfcx.org/get_involved

Rainforest Connection (RFCx) transforms recycled cell-phones into autonomous, solar-powered listening devices that can monitor and pinpoint chainsaw activity at great distance.
This changes the game by providing the world's first real-time logging detection system, pinpointing deforestation activity as it occurs, and providing the data openly, freely, and immediately to anyone around the world.
For the first time on a scalable level, responsible agents can arrive on the scene in time to interrupt the perpetrators and stop the damage, and the world can listen in as it occurs.

The American legend of Johnny Appleseed

John Chapman (September 26, 1774 – March 18, 1845), often called **Johnny Appleseed**, was an American pioneer nurseryman who introduced apple trees to large parts of Pennsylvania, Ontario, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, as well as the northern counties of present-day West Virginia. He became an American legend while still alive, due to his kind, generous ways, his leadership in conservation, and the symbolic importance he attributed to apples. He was also a missionary for The New Church (Swedenborgian)[1] and the inspiration for many museums and historical sites such as the Johnny Appleseed Museum in Urbana, Ohio and the Johnny Appleseed Heritage Center in between Lucas, Ohio and Mifflin, Ohio.

The *Fort Wayne Sentinel* printed his obituary on March 22, 1845, saying that he died on March 18: "On the same day in this neighborhood, at an advanced age, Mr. John Chapman (better known as Johnny Appleseed).
The deceased was well known through this region by his eccentricity, and the strange garb he usually wore. He followed the occupation of a nurseryman, and has been a regular visitor here upwards of 10 years. He was a native of Pennsylvania we

understand but his home—if home he had—for some years past was in the neighborhood of Cleveland, where he has relatives living. He is supposed to have considerable property, yet denied himself almost the common necessities of life–not so much perhaps for avarice as from his peculiar notions on religious subjects.
He was a follower of Swedenborg and devoutly believed that the more he endured in this world the less he would have to suffer and the greater would be his happiness hereafter—he submitted to every privation with cheerfulness and content, believing that in so doing he was securing snug quarters hereafter.
In the most inclement weather he might be seen barefooted and almost naked except when he chanced to pick up articles of old clothing. Notwithstanding the privations and exposure he endured, he lived to an extreme old age, not less than 80 years at the time of his death—though no person would have judged from his appearance that he was 60. "He always carried with him some work on the doctrines of Swedenborg with which he was perfectly familiar, and would readily converse and argue on his tenets, using much shrewdness and penetration."

[all text from Wikipedia, Nov., 2015]

Trees For Life

[South Australia]

Trees For Life is a not for profit community based organisation working with everyday people to help restore our natural environment through revegetation and conservation. We raise funds to help protect wildlife habitat and work to re-establish biodiverse plantings on private land. You can financially support Trees For Life by joining 8,000 other members and becoming an ambassador (through **membership** **or** **donations**) of the work that our 3,000+ volunteers do to protect our environment. If you're more hands-on, become an active volunteer to grow seedlings, collect seeds, or conserve bushland in your favourite area. We also have business programs to **offset carbon**, and have team working days that contribute to your corporate social responsibility goals.

Volunteer to Grow Native Plants

Growing native seedlings is a rewarding and practical way to help the environment.

A Volunteer Grower raises native seedlings in their backyard over summer from seed, ready for planting by rural landholders & revegetation projects in autumn. With the help of around 750 volunteer growers each year, Trees For Life provides subsidised native seedlings to farmers and other landholders with the aim to revegetate South Australia. The commitment of our volunteers means that approximately 1 million native seedlings are grown every year across South Australia.

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Logic will get you from A to Z; imagination will get you everywhere.

■ Albert Einstein

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The next Theosophy-Science Symposium is planned to follow on from the Indo-Pacific Federation Conference, see below:

Our Australian members might not be aware that we are part of the Indo-Pacific Federation of the TS, which holds a conference every 3 years. Next year this will be in Auckland, NZ, between 14 and 18 October, 2016. We look forward to receiving more infomation in the New Year. John Vorstermans [president@ipf-ts.org].
Members interested in Theosophy-Science should therefore allow for a couple of extra days after 18 October.

May this holiday season bring you, our reader, a closer realization of the brotherhood/sisterhood of all humanity without any distinctions of race, creed, caste, sex or colour as stated in the first object of our Theosophical Society. May peace and good will prevail on Earth.

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