

Program 19 - THE TEN MOST IMPORTANT TREES IN THE WORLD - February 10, 1941SOMETHING TO DO AND TALK ABOUT FIRST

Naming the ten most important trees should arouse as much discussion as naming the ten best books or the ten greatest men in the world. Encourage this discussion, and stimulate it by asking each child to make out his own list of the ten most important trees. Mention a few logical rules for the children to follow, such as:

1. Select a tree of great importance to man.
2. Select a tree that has been in great use for a long period of time.
3. Select a tree for which no other tree or material can be substituted.

By these three rules we see that trees which furnish foods are of first importance.

DO YOU KNOW THESE WORDS?

synthetic

cinchona

substitute

LISTEN FOR THESE IDEAS

These are the trees which Ranger Mac considers most important. Listen to find out why. (They are placed in order of their importance.)

- |                  |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1. date palm     | 5. fig tree      | 8. lemon tree    |
| 2. cocoanut palm | 6. mulberry tree | 9. cinchona tree |
| 3. almond tree   | 7. olive tree    | 10. rubber tree. |
| 4. apple tree    |                  |                  |

SOMETHING TO DO AND TALK ABOUT LATER

1. Make a list of important lumber producing trees.
2. Why didn't Ranger Mac include any of them in his list?
3. Do you think modern methods of making synthetic products will lessen the importance of the rubber tree?
4. Will improved methods of manufacturing rayon lessen the importance of the mulberry tree?
5. Name ten important food trees that grow in Wisconsin.
6. What is your favorite tree?

THE TEN MOST IMPORTANT TREES IN THE WORLD

Hello Boys and Girls:

Today we are going to talk about trees. We are going to try to pick out the ten most important trees in the world. Ranger Mac realizes that this is not an easy task. At least it is going to be a difficult task for all of us to agree on what are the ten most important trees in the world. You may think that the White Pine, beautiful to look at with its bluish-green needles, with its wonderful lumber - strong, easy to work, durable against the weather, with nail-holding qualities possessed by few other lumbers - you might think these qualities would give it a place high among the ten most important trees. But it doesn't, because we have found that there are other trees that can take the place of the White Pine; the Douglas Fir of the West, as an example. You might think that the Jack Pine should be given high rank because it grows on the dry sandy plains of our state where not many kinds of trees will grow, and its wood is used for so many different kinds of paper that find uses in our daily lives. Not a normal day goes by but what Jack Pine figures somehow in our lives. But Scrub Oak grows on those sandy plains and corn stalks and sugar cane stalks and many kinds of trees could be used in the making of the same grade of paper. So we can't include Jack Pine among the ten important trees of the world. Outside my window is a clump of White Birch. I like to see their white trunks against the brown house and to watch their tight catkins as the winds wave the slender branches. "Give me of thy bark, Oh, Birch tree," said Hiawatha. And down through the early days of our country the White Birch furnished bark for the construction of the canoes of Indians and the covering for the tepees and wick-i-ups of the Chippewa Indians. Its juices were boiled down by the Indians to make a syrup, its wood will burn when green; it furnishes the wood for tooth picks and for chopping bowls and many kitchen utensils, and the slender, tough switches taken from its branches have always been used by mothers, fathers and

teachers to guide unruly, stubborn boys into and along the path of good behavior. Surely, you say, such a tree should be ranked high among the ten most important trees of the world. But no, for the hand can, if need be, take the place of the switch, and many substitutes have taken the place of birch in the making of kitchen utensils. And so we could go on with the Walnut, the Maple, the Oak and many others - beautiful to look at, furnishing wonderful wood, and some of them delicious products, but each one, if suddenly taken from the face of the earth, could be replaced by some other kind.

So now Ranger Mac is going to give you the reasons that should guide us in the selection of the ten most important trees in the world, and then we'll name the trees and their great value to mankind.

First, the tree must be of great importance to man, and must have been of great importance to man for a long period of time. There is one exception to this as you will find out.

Second, the tree must be one for which no other tree or material can be substituted. You know what I mean by this; for instance, tar paper can be and is substituted for the bark of the white birch in the making of tepees and wick-i-ups.

Now let's start on our list. You will be surprised to find that all of them, with one exception, are not found in our state. In fact, we would have to go long distances to find most of them, and back into history many centuries to find how important they have been to mankind.

The first one is the date plam which has been in cultivation for over 4000 years. Considered as a human food, this tree is probably the king crop of human agriculture. For many centuries this tree has been the chief source of wealth in many parts of the world. It supplies the date of commerce, oil for hundreds of purposes, fibres for the dwellings of millions of peoples. It grows on the oases of the deserts, where it has been yielding dates year after year for centuries. It is mentioned in the Bible and by the ancient historians. It was first grown in Egypt and Babylonia, and is now cultivated on the wind-blown

sands of northern Africa, where the British are pursuing the Italians; in southern France, Italy, China, and now in southern California.

The next most important tree in my list is another palm - the coconut palm. It was first found in the Malay Archipelago and has been in cultivation for over 3000 years, first in the East Indies and now along most of the tropical coasts of the world, in India, the West Indies, Brazil, and just recently in Florida. It has been a food plant for teeming millions of people, supplying coconut meat, coconut oil for butter; sugar and wine from the juice; fibre for cordage. 56% of the coconut meat is oil which is used for a thousand purposes, one of which is butter on the tables of Europe, where it takes the place of the more expensive dairy butter.

The third tree on our list is a cousin to the peach, whose form and leaves look like the peach, and whose fruit is called a peach without water - the almond tree. It, too, is a tree of long history, having served peoples of the dry regions of western Asia as long as recorded history. You can go to the store and buy salted almonds, candied almonds, almond meal used in the making of macarons and other cakes, and because almond is 54% oil, butter is made from it, also extracts and an oil used in some industries. Even though the growing of almonds is quite well established in California, our country imports over one million dollars worth from the Mediterranean countries each year, or did before the war. The almond tree has the ability to grow on the dry, rocky lands of Western Asia and made possible a better form of living for millions of people on these lands.

Our fourth tree is very familiar to each one because many of you have one or more of these trees at home. All of the other trees grow in the tropical or subtropical regions, but this one grows in the north temperate zone across the world, and is the most important crop bearing tree in North America and probably in the entire north temperate zone. It is the apple tree. When I looked up the history of the apple tree I found that it originated in southern Europe, and

that it was furnishing its delicious fruit to peoples as far back as the Stone Age, maybe 10,000 years ago.

Number five is the fig tree, which grew originally in southern Asia and Europe, whence it has been introduced into the sub-tropical regions of many lands. In the United States it is grown in the Gulf states and in California. It furnishes the dried figs that are used extensively throughout the world. Because this tree has been a source of food and wealth to man for centuries, we must give it a prominent place in our list of the ten most important trees in the world.

Our next tree, the sixth, is the Mulberry - the white Mulberry. This tree has been grown in China since ancient times for its leaves, the chief food of the silkworm. The silkworm is one of the few insects that man has been able to domesticate. The bee is another example. The white Mulberry furnishes its greatest service to humanity by providing thousands upon thousands of Chinese and Japanese a chance to earn a living, scanty tho it may be. The white Mulberry has another great use among the peoples of Western Asia. Dried white Mulberries form an important food for hundreds of thousands of Asiatics for many months of the year. In looking up the history of the Mulberry I found this statement "the troubles of the beggar and the dog are over for a time when the Mulberries are ripe for both move under the Mulberry tree and pick up their living". This tree is grown widely in the United States, and no doubt you might find one growing in your community. It must not be confused with the red Mulberry which is a native tree. So we put the White Mulberry on our list of the ten important trees of the world because it has furnished a livelihood for millions of people in densely populated section of the world, and has been a source of food supply that has been just as important in certain countries as bread is to the people of the United States.

Our next tree, which is the seventh - is the olive tree. The olive branch is the symbol of peace, but it does not seem to produce peace for the

tree grows best in those Mediterranean countries where war is now the hottest. This is a tree with a long history. Its value to mankind is mentioned in the oldest writings of the Greeks and Hebrews. Its chief products are its fruit and olive oil. For centuries it was grown only in the dry countries of south Europe and Asia, but now it is grown in many warm countries, including California.

Number eight is the lemon tree. This tree started in India and has been cultivated for something like 3000 years, and its products are in use all over the world. It grows throughout the world in tropical and sub-tropical lands and in the United States it is grown chiefly in Florida and California. You have heard of the lime tree. This is a variety of the lemon - quite important, but not as important as the lemon.

Tree number nine has served a different need of man - his need for medicine. The tree is called the Cinchona tree, which is the source of Quinine, one of the most important drugs of medicine. It grows in Peru and Bolivia. Those countries are its native areas, but because of the importance of the bark, it was introduced into Europe, and is now growing there.

Our last tree is the only one that has not been important for many centuries. It is the rubber tree. Our present civilization with all its machines, principally the automobile, has made it the tree which we could least afford to give up. It has been extensively grown for less than 40 years. From it, as you know, comes the juice which, when hardened, yields all the numerous products of commerce. The magic seed with which rubber orchards sprung into existence makes most interesting reading. It has all taken place within the last 40 years. Before the invention of the bicycle, the tapping of the wild trees of the forest supplied all the needs for rubber. Then came the bicycle which made the cultivation of trees necessary; then followed quite shortly the invention of the automobile with a sudden increase in the demand for rubber. Then came a great rubber-boom. Millions of dollars were spent in growing orchards of well selected trees on vast areas, and men were trained to grow the trees as scientifically as cherries and peaches are grown. It is a most interesting story.

When we read the newspapers these days we are apt to come to the conclusion that the countries are fighting because they hate each other. This is not at the bottom of these wars. They are fighting for control of the natural resources of the world upon which the very life of nations depends, and rubber is one of those natural products.

So this is our list of the ten most important trees of the world. Of course, there are others that have claims almost as great - the cherry, the orange, the cocoa, the coffee, the peach, the pear, the apricot, the quince and the clove. And you will notice that we have not mentioned a lumber producing tree. The reason is that there is not a lumber producing tree in the world for which we could not find any number of other trees which would do just about as well. When I asked some folks about this list, most of them mentioned the gigantic sequoia. As a tree of size, beauty and grandeur, there is no tree to surpass it, but it is not of great economic importance to mankind in general. It wouldn't have a place in a list of the ten most important lumber trees of our country. The test of the importance of a tree is the use mankind has made of it for centuries, how dependent mankind has been upon it for life's needs, and the need he has for it today which cannot be supplied by any other tree.

This is Ranger Mac's list. What is yours?

May the Great Spirit,  
Put Sunshine into your Heart  
Today, and forever more!  
Heap Much!