

WEIRD AND WONDERFUL

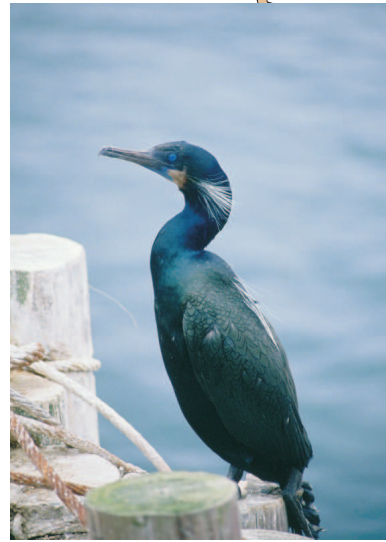
The Cormorant

CORMORANTS are sea-birds which feed on fish, and they are wonderfully designed for the life they live. To catch their food, they dive into the water head first, often from quite a height — and they dive to quite a depth. Men working in a mini-submarine in the North Sea saw cormorants swimming 45 metres (150 feet) below the water! To help them dive, these birds swallow pebbles for extra weight. They are also helped by the fact that their feathers get completely wet, which also makes them heavier. When they finish their dive, they spread out their wings to dry them.



A cormorant diving

Seeing under water would be a problem for most birds, as their eyes are designed for seeing in the air. But cormorants have special eyes which are designed for seeing both above and below the water. The lenses of their eyes are soft, and can be squeezed and stretched by the eye muscles so that they can see clearly when diving. Like many other sea-birds, cormorants have their own “desalination plant” so that they can drink salt water safely. The extra salt is taken from their blood and comes out through special glands at the tip of their beaks.



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The cormorant must have been created by God for the life it lives. Evolution couldn't have taught it to dive, or how to swallow stones to make it heavier. Nor could it have given it those special eyes and “desalination plant”.

GOD'S LOVE IS LIKE THE SUNSHINE!

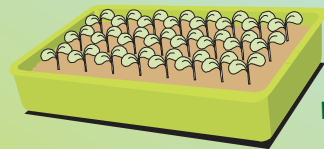
If your Mum hangs her washing on the line on a sunny day, it will soon dry. If everyone else hung out their washing at the same time, it wouldn't take any longer to dry. The heat and light that comes to the earth from the sun is so great that we could never use it all if we tried. And even if we don't use it, the sun still goes on pouring its energy on us.



God's love is like the sunshine. It pours out of God's heart all the time, and is directed at everyone in the world. There are more than 6 billion people on earth, but God's love is great enough for them all — and for billions more. But, just as we have to go outside to enjoy the sun's warmth, so we have to open ourselves to God's love. We can see and feel the sun, but how do we know that God loves us? God has told us in His book, the Bible — but He has gone further, by coming to earth in the Person of Jesus Christ,

His Son, who died so that we could be forgiven for all the wrong things we have done. “Christ died for us while we were still sinners. In this way God shows his great love for us.” (Romans 5: 8).

Plants need light to grow. If you grow seeds in a tray, and put them in a dark place the plants will be yellow, and eventually die. Put them on a window-sill and they will grow towards the light. God wants our spirits to grow as well as our bodies, and this can only happen when we turn to Him through Jesus and let His love come into our hearts. “Whoever has the Son has life. But the person who does not have the Son of God does not have life.” (1 John 5: 12). Have you opened your heart to God's wonderful love?



Plants need light to grow

PUZZLE CORNER ANSWERS

- JUMBLED WORDS:**
- Sunlight
 - Mushrooms
 - Toadstools
 - Yeast
 - Grain
 - Grass
 - Autumn
 - Glucose
- SPOT THE DIFFERENCE:**
- Missing hand
 - Extra leg
 - Extra arm patch
 - Missing patch on coat
 - The colour changed
 - Missing straw from mouth
 - Patch colour changed
 - Birds facing different way
 - Missing mouth
 - Hat band colour changed
 - Added feather in hat
 - Nose changed
 - Missing hair
 - Shirt colour changed

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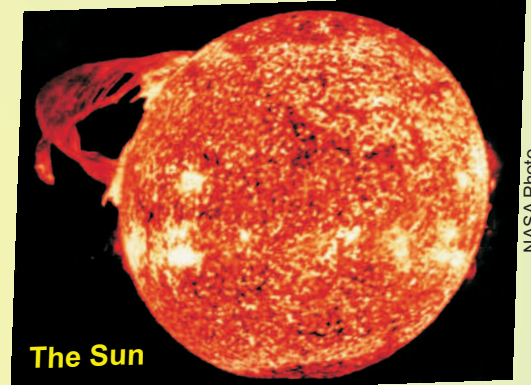
God's amazing

POWER PLANTS

Billions of tiny factories all over the earth are working to keep us all alive!

THE SUN - OUR POWER STATION

All life on the earth depends upon the star that we call the sun. It is a huge power station, and although it is 150 million km. (93 million miles) away from us, it provides us with both light and heat, and

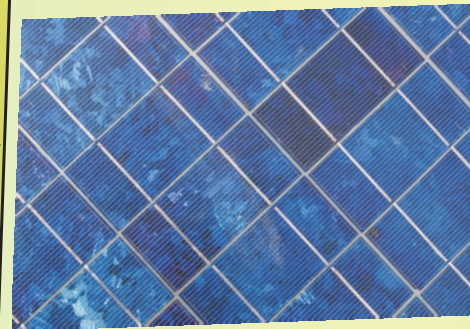


The Sun

NASA Photo

we couldn't live without it. The amount of power that reaches the earth from the sun every minute is enough to provide all the world's energy needs for a whole year! But the sun also provides us and other living things with food, as we shall see.

Humans are learning how to use the sun's power, and many houses have solar panels to heat water or make electricity. But God created “factories” to turn sunlight into energy when the world began!



Part of a solar panel

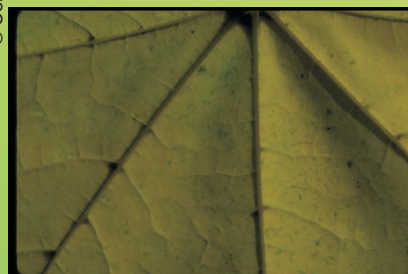
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Solar panels that keep us all alive



Every leaf is a power plant

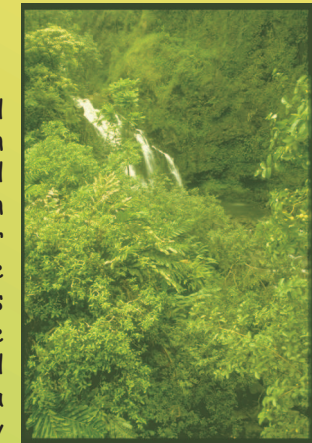
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Leaves are factories that provide us with oxygen and food

The Bible tells us that when God created the world, He made plants on the third day, before animals and humans. There was a very good reason for this. Without plants neither animals or humans would be able to live or breathe. Plants take poisonous carbon dioxide gas from the atmosphere and produce oxygen, and they turn sunlight into energy — a process called **photosynthesis**. Every leaf on all the plants and trees on earth contains tiny 'solar panels', and a chemical factory.

When God created the sun on the fourth day, the plants were all ready to start producing oxygen and food for the living creatures God created on the fifth and sixth days, and for the first people.



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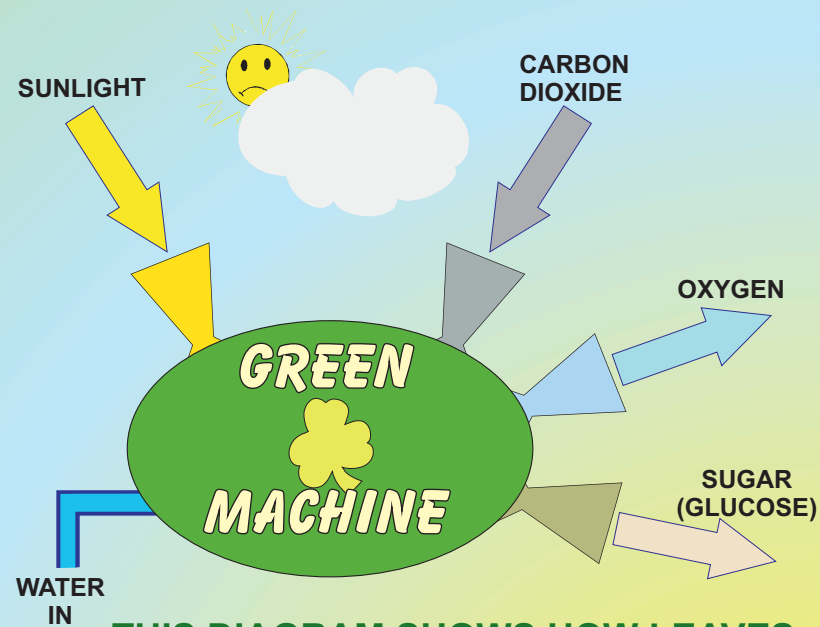
“God said: ‘Let the earth produce plants... God saw that all this was good... This was the third day.’” (Genesis 1: 11-13)

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:
GREEN MACHINES KEEP US ALIVE
NATURE NOTES: FUNGI
WHY WE NEED PLANTS
PUZZLE CORNER.
WEIRD AND WONDERFUL: THE CORMORANT
GOD'S LOVE IS LIKE THE SUNSHINE!

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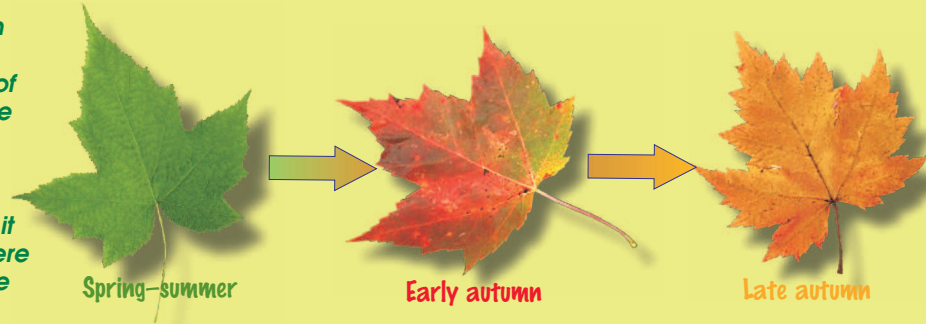
GREEN MACHINES KEEP US ALIVE!

Without plants, the earth's atmosphere would soon become deadly poisonous and everything would die. When we breathe, we take in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide. Plants turn this back into oxygen. Without plants there would be no food for us or other living things, since plants make energy in the form of glucose — a kind of sugar — providing food for us all. If human engineers invented a machine that could turn sunlight, water and a poisonous gas into oxygen and food, they would be given a special prize for their cleverness. Yet there are billions of such machines working away through the world — designed by God. These "green machines" are the leaves on millions of trees and other green plants. They take in sunlight, carbon dioxide gas and water, and turn it into food, and the oxygen we need to breathe. This process is called photosynthesis. Green plants get their colour from chlorophyll, and it is this which plants use to turn the sunlight and water into food. How wonderfully God has provided for us by creating all these tiny "green machines"!



THIS DIAGRAM SHOWS HOW LEAVES PRODUCE OXYGEN AND FOOD

Chlorophyll gives leaves their green colour. In autumn, as the days get shorter, a tiny "trapdoor" below each leaf closes. The flow of water and minerals from the soil stops, and the green colour fades. We then see the "real" colour of the leaves, which is brown, red, or yellow, making the beautiful autumn colours, before the leaves fall as winter begins. Since it is not winter everywhere at the same time, there are always green trees and plants somewhere in the world to keep everything alive.



Nature Notes by the Editor

Do you like mushrooms? I do, though some people don't. Mushrooms are fungi, and there are many thousands of different species of fungi on earth. In our world, spoiled by sin, many fungi are harmful. Some are called toadstools, and many of these are poisonous; **you should never eat any of them unless someone who knows**



tells you they are safe. Unlike green plants, fungi don't need light to grow. Many of them feed from other living things or dead and rotten material. In fact, although many fungi don't look very nice, they are a very necessary part of creation, because they break things down and return goodness to the soil. Many fungi are too small to see without a microscope, but even most of these are useful. Yeast — a type of fungus — is used to make bread, and other fungi add flavour to cheese and some sauces.

Where did fungi come from? Evolutionists say it's 'a mystery'. Fossil fungi have been found, but there is no evidence they evolved from anything else. God created fungi, not just so that we could enjoy eating mushrooms, but to play an important part in His creation.

—Geoff Chapman



WHY WE NEED PLANTS

AFTER God had created the earth, land and sea, He said, "Let the earth produce plants." (Genesis 1: 11). The world was then ready for animals and people, who would depend on plants for food. Before sin came into the world, animals and humans were vegetarians. It was only after the Flood that God gave humans permission to eat meat, although some people still prefer to be vegetarians. And, of course, we all enjoy eating fruit and vegetables, which are very necessary for a healthy diet.

But even when we eat meat, we are still depending on plants, because the animals that provide us with meat eat the plants. We also depend on plants for milk, because the cows that produce it feed on grass and corn. Sheep give us meat and wool, but they eat plants too. Even meat-eating animals depend on other animals that eat plants. Most of us eat eggs, and the chickens that lay them are fed on grain, or food made from grain.

This is called the "food chain", because all of life depends on the plants. What an amazing variety of plants God has created to feed us, as well as the flowers that He created for us to enjoy. We just can't imagine a world without plants!



"You make the grass for cattle and vegetables for the use of man. You make food grow from the earth." (Psalm 104: 14).



Fruit and vegetables are necessary for a healthy diet

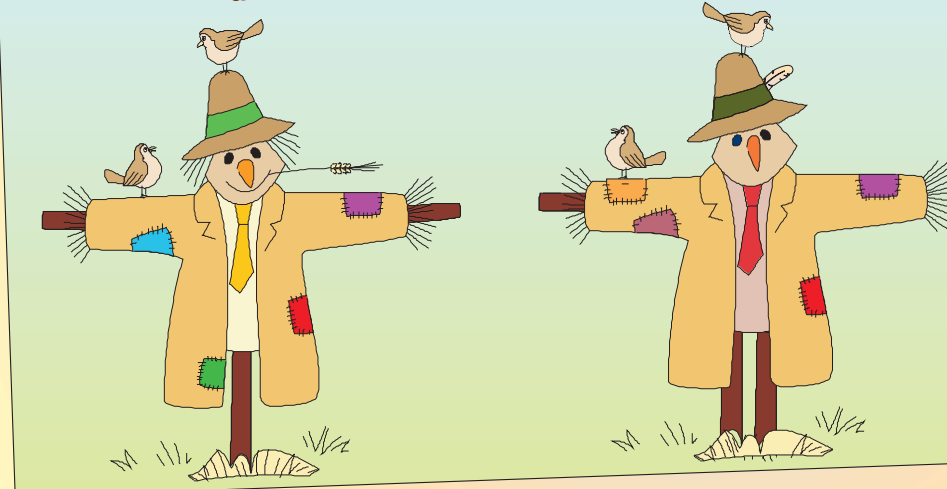


The sheep and cattle that provide us with meat, wool and milk depend on grass and other plants

Compare these two scarecrows. The one on the right has 14 differences. Can you spot them?

PUZZLE CORNER

Compare these two scarecrows. The one on the right has 14 differences. Can you spot them?



HOW WELL HAVE YOU READ THIS PAPER? UNSCRAMBLE THE JUMBLED WORDS BELOW:

- Shinglut: plants use this to make energy.
- Shroomums: fungi that we can eat.
- Stooladots. Mostly poisonous.
- Tasey: this fungus is used to make bread.
- Ragin: cattle and chicken eat this.
- Srags: green food for many animals.
- Munatu: when we see the real colour of leaves.
- Ecoslug: a food made by plants.

(ANSWERS ON NEXT PAGE)