

# Text Twigs

By Thomas Bilda

*Translated from German by Max Landwehrjohann*

THEOPHRASTUS OF ERESOS  
*THE NATURAL HISTORY OF PLANTS*  
*VOL. 10: NOTES ON PLANTS DANGEROUS TO MAN*  
THE YEAR HIPPODAMAS WAS ARCHON

However, it now seems that there are plants on Earth with no other purpose than quiet, unstoppable self-reproduction. I was given an account of a peculiar shrub capable, with the deceptive allure of its Herculean size, of causing fire-like injuries to other living beings upon mere touch. Comparable to a silent army, this plant defends its territory with power and elegance. I would be thrilled to describe its leaves, blossoms, and fruits in more detail. Alas, there appears to be a limitation of unknown reason and constitution, set by nature itself.

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HILDEGARD VON BINGEN  
AMENDMENT TO THE BOOK *ON THE NATURE OF CREATURES*  
BINGEN AM RHEIN, 1161

Therefore, these plants do not constitute matter, but rather creatures in possession of a will inherently hostile to man. And yet I was shaken to the core tonight, as I, my spirit wide awake, was befallen by the vision of a plant, which, not unlike useless weeds, bore no relationship to man. In diabolical fashion, it harms this creation of God after His own likeness and may, with its monstrous incarnations, symbolize like no other, the eternal conflict between light and dark.

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CARL VON LINNÉ  
*PLANT SPECIES* – SECTION II  
SUPPLEMENTARY VOLUME  
STOCKHOLM, 1759

My explorations in the Caucasian highlands led me to a weed-like plant, which the locals say is the curse of the ominous forest woman. Surely this is but humbug and can be discarded as a fairytale of the local, less educated folk. Yet, I cannot deny a certain awe as I gaze upon these almost two-men-tall specimens. Their big flower heads are of an enormous circumference and in no other known land have I found anything alike. We still know too little about nature.

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S. SOMMIER ET E. LEVIER  
LIST OF PLANTS OF THE CAUCASUS  
EXPEDITION REPORTS  
FLORENCE, 1900

Heracleum giganteum, belonging to the family of Umbelliferae (Apiaceae), the subfamily of Apioideae, genus: Hogweed (Heracleum). Finally, we can take home specimens of the giant hogweed, as if they're native to our country, and put them on display. First examinations suggest that the giant hogweed may be of great economic use as a nectar source. The shade it can provide thanks to its enormous size and the rapidness with which it grows will hopefully turn out useful for forestry and livestock farming.

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RESEARCH REPORT "PROJECT HG" BY  
EXO-PLANT CORP.  
FOR INTERNAL, CONFIDENTIAL USE AT  
THE SUPERVISORY BOARD MEETING  
PARIS, 3rd QUARTER, 2019

Test series 24c to 31a with Heracleum giganteum (hg) show promising results regarding its potential for profitable use. Via CRISPR/Cas procedure, its gigantic growth was successfully increased by an additional 147%. Contacting biogas companies is recommended. Will require the acquisition of cultivation areas for monocultural production from Q1/2020 onwards. Revenue projection of Exo-Plant Corp. for "Project hg": 375%.

Addition: Manipulating phototoxic characteristics of hg with gene editing is still not possible. Genome implementation of various mycelia. Single dominant test series show unwanted, as of now unexplainable, increase in phototoxicity.

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PROTOCOL NOTE FROM THE 4th EU  
COUNCIL MEETING  
COUNCIL: AGRICULTURE AND FISHERY  
BRUSSELS, 2024

For the purpose of more effective containment, Heracleum will be added to the list of non-indigenous invasive plants of Union-wide significance. We currently assume that a high potential for continued spread is to be expected. The damage done to sectors, such as biodiversity, health and economy, has been proven and is high. As non-native species, its furocoumarins are particularly dangerous and can be life-threatening. The use of broad-spectrum herbicides is being checked.

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ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE WORLD  
HEALTH ORGANIZATION  
DEPARTMENT: HEALTH PROTECTION  
SUBJECT: HERACLEUM FUNGUS DISEASE  
(HFD-35)  
LINZ, 2038

Avoid any contact with Heracleum Fungus (HF, image overleaf). Should you leave your shelter, wear long clothes, face and hand protection. Heightened risk, esp. for small children, lasts from April to August. After contact, skin may get red, itchy and dry. Other typical signs: burning-like state, symptoms of poisoning. In case of contact with HF, use ampule 2a of the WHO MedKit and visit the nearest Disease-Control-Unit.

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INTERNET RELAY CHAT RECORDING  
USER-ID0V689DE  
DE-CIX FRANKFURT a.M., 2072

+++ hey, Olli. honestly, we're bouncing tomorrow. really makes sense to get out of here. fuckin dangerous, all of it. last night the mobs were roaming the streets again. I'm done putting up with the [data lost] +++ lea's crying a lot and dad's at the outskirts burning a path through. our trek arrives at the assembly point 17/FFM at 8 am. hope 2 c u there. kinda hard to leave all our stuff behind but mom says we have to travel fast. will still hide Dr. Watson in my backpack, couldn't take the heartbreak of abandoning him. +++ [data lost] +++ for the disk. I'm gonna watch it in the bunker like a thousand times per day 4 sure. really have no idea how things are gonna be down there. I'm dreading the dark already. +++ [data lost] +++ reach out to me thru ID0v689. we'll find each other.

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*FIELD MANUAL OF THE PREACHERS OF THE  
PERENNIAL*  
CHAPTER XI: ON THE PLANT HOMO  
SAPIENS  
ELEVENTH GENERATION OF THE  
LIGHTLESS ENLIGHTENED

How small and unknowing we had always been. Simple-minded, we deemed ourselves superior to nature and yet were always just a lesser part of it. The world's knowledge forebode the great cycles that would surpass a single lifetime. Underground, we are now gathering strength again and, when the right time comes, will rise from the earth's surface to hopefully humbler greatness. Here's to hoping the

children of the Perennial will once again feel the sunlight, grow, and prosper.

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SOKURATESU THE SECOND  
*THE RENEWED NATURAL HISTORY OF  
HUMAN BEINGS – SKETCHES*  
THE FIRST YEAR OF LIGHT

After generations of darkness, cold, and deprivation, the digging has finally begun. I can't believe that the Global Council assigned me to the group of first explorers. Already during this cycle, a small number of subterraneans and I will set out to the surface. Our mental scholars have begun negotiations with the Mycelia Network and have been allocated a surface spot where we're allowed to spread out. In the transmitted phantasms, we can make out a green plain with a body of water. I am confident that the learned will teach us what needs to be done under the light of the sun. We will certainly spread out fast and cleverly adjust to some of the adversities. With my insatiable curiosity, I want to understand the world with open eyes. We still know too little about our nature.

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