

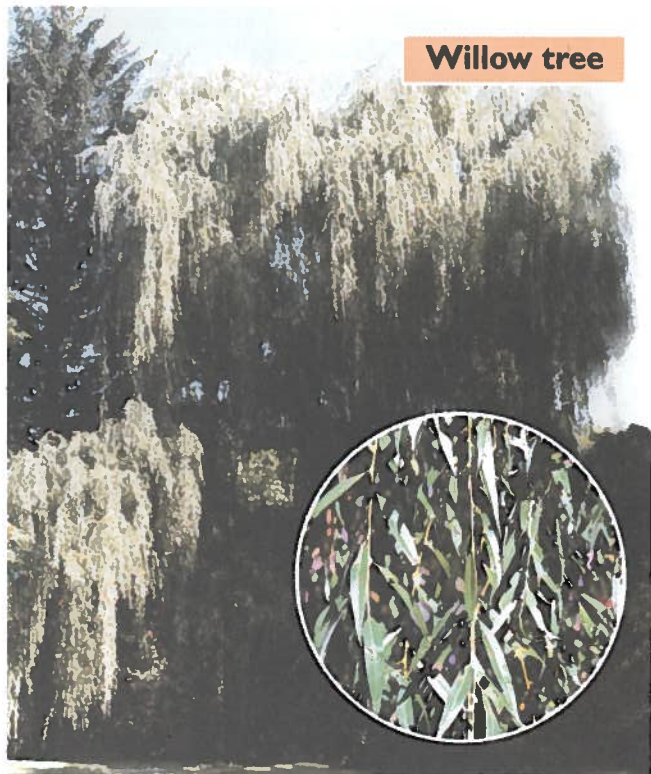
Humans have always depended on plants and animals to stay alive. Long, long ago, we roamed about collecting plants and hunting animals for food. Animals also gave us materials such as skins and bones, to make things, such as clothes, hunting weapons and jewellery.

About 9 000 years ago we began to grow our own food. The first crops were grass plants (wheat). We learned how to tame and breed wild animals. Some animals gave us food like eggs and milk, while other animals became our dinner.

Today, we use plants for food, medicines, clothing, shelter, furniture, paper, and fuel. We benefit from plants because their roots hold soil in place. They give us protection and help cool us. They give us oxygen. We love to have plants in our homes and gardens.

People around the world use animals for food, clothing, work, transportation, sports, hunting, cosmetics, drugs, and fertilizers. We enjoy having animals as pets too.

Plants and animals make human life possible. However, we must be careful about how much we take from the Earth's forests and waters.



Willow tree

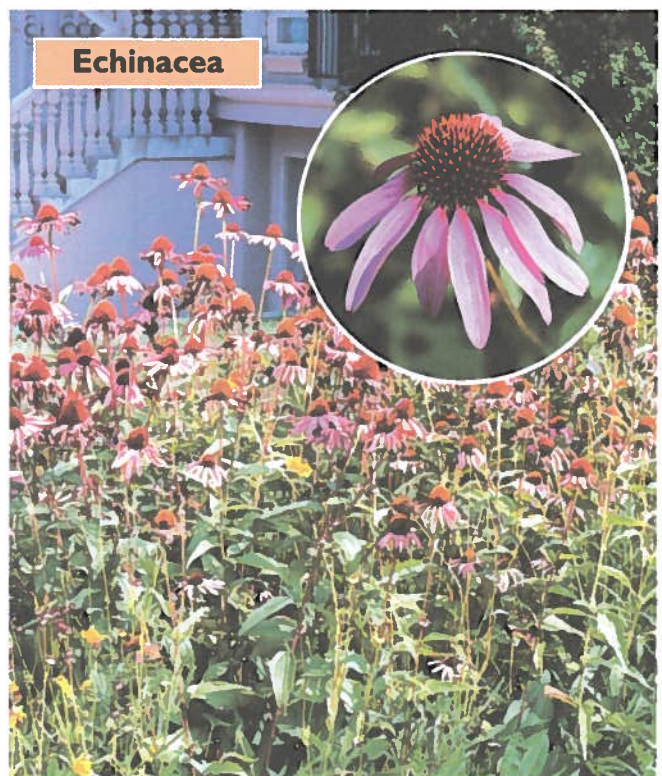
Was used to relieve pain

You've probably heard that huge parts of the South American rainforest are being cut down very quickly. Did you know that Canada's own Newfoundland fishers are not allowed to catch any codfish in the ocean? There just aren't enough cod any more.

If you learn more about animals and plants in their habitats, you can make wise choices about how to protect plants and animals.

Fur traders and pioneers who moved over the vast American continent used native practices to survive. They need to learn from the experience of the Native Peoples, who had lived on the land for untold generations. They learned that bark, roots, leaves, and berries could supplement their diets. When boiled, rose hips made a vitamin-rich tea.

Before the end of the eighteenth century, two books were published that listed over three hundred medicinal plants of North America. They noted that many plants were collected in certain ways, perhaps during a full moon or after rain. Plants gathered at different times had different purposes. We now understand that this ensured that plants were collected at their peak.



Echinacea

Is used to treat colds