INSPIRE ME

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Project Information (EN)

INSPIRE ME is a project about the history of Douglas Firs trees (Pseudotsuga menziesii) and their relation with our surroundings. Douglas Firs make part of the big group of gymnosperms trees, each has existed long before the earth knew its current continents. Like in many other conifer trees, the Douglas Firs have a strong scent resembling grapefruit and mandarins blended with pine, and sweet passionfruit notes (or as others may do as well think, the smell of Christmas trees). But actually what we perceive as smell, are, in fact, the VOCs (volatile organic compounds), a group of chemical compounds realized by plants that work as a self-defensive mechanism against other species, either by repelling or attracting them. Humans may perceive VOCs as simple smells, but other species, like insects and fungi, have chemical receptors that detect these compounds to help them navigate and find shelter or food sources. Douglas firs are not native from the Netherlands, they were brought from the east coast of North America, in the 19th century, because of their economic value, and now they can be found everywhere in the Netherlands. Along with this tree, insects and fungi were attracted by their VOCs and learned to live in the Netherlands, creating new relationships. By bringing an exotic species to the Netherlands, we (multiple species) change their biodiversity, even if on a small scale, and new relations are built, such as parasitic or symbiotic relationships. This phenomena, partly caused by humans, and partly caused by trees and other species became hard to be categorized as natural or artificial since they are the result of an interspecies interaction. This shows how impossible it is to disconnect us from nature because it is part of our existence. Instead of trying to label the world we should care and preserve it.

Image List

Filename	Caption	Credit
fotocaetano_1696320102.jpg		

The images above are included in the ZIP under `/images`.