

ASKS AID FOR TREES

Martin L. Davey, Head of Tree Surgeons, Tells Importance of Water for Trees

A plea to save the lives of trees by sufficient watering during the warm weather season has been made by Martin L. Davey of Ohio, who is head of a famous company of tree surgeons. "It is just as important and as humane a deed to give sufficient water to our good friends, the trees, in summer as it is to feed the birds in winter time" said Davey. "Trees are living things and are even more helpless than birds. Lacking the power of locomotion, they cannot go where water is. They must depend entirely upon human beings for their supply. "The average householder keeps his lawn well sprinkled because the results of his failure to do so are soon

evident. He pays less attention to his trees because the results of neglect are slow in appearing. A parched lawn may be renewed within a growing season, but a stately tree not within a generation." Sprinkling the lawn for a brief period in the evening does not help the trees, Mr. Davey explained. In fact it may harm them by attracting the roots too close to the surface of the ground. An effective way, he said, is to perforate the soil beneath the spread of the tree with a spading fork to a depth of eight inches. Water should be run into these holes for several hours at least once every two weeks, depending upon the amount of rainfall. **Trees Affect Rainfall** The importance of water to a tree is evidenced, he said, by the fact that an average sized tree with a spread of fifty feet of foliage, under normal conditions, throws off five barrels of

water a day in the form of vapor. This vapor is attracted to the clouds and returns to the earth as rain. With the possible exception of the Great Lakes, trees are the most important factor affecting the rainfall in inland territory, according to Mr. Davey. Before the summer season is over, Mr. Davey said, many cities will be suffering because of drought. In practically every case, he said, it will be found that this is due to the cutting of forests at the headlands of the streams that flow through these communities. The process whereby the tree gets water from the ground to its leaves to be thrown off as vapor to make rain clouds is rather complex, according to Mr. Davey's description. The water is absorbed from the ground by the tips of the roots. Then the tree has a tremendous job ahead of it, to lift the water to the leaves at the top.

It is difficult to explain this in non-technical terms. If you drop a cube of sugar in a cup of coffee, the entire cup soon will be sweetened although you have not stirred the coffee. In some way, the elements of the sugar have been lifted from the bottom to the top of the cup. In much the same way, the tree lifts the water from the roots through tiny tubes, aided by capillary attraction and a pull from the leaves. These tubes vary in size according to trees, but in average size oaks they are roughly one one-hundred of an inch in diameter. The water is carried to minute openings in the leaves, so small that a dime will cover 10,000 of them. The water leaves these tiny perforations as moisture which is not visible to the naked eye. Yet this process operates on such a large scale that in one day an average sized tree will throw off five barrels of water.

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