

DOCUMENTS

NOTHING STOPS NATURE



(a) What's a window? Plants will grow anywhere.

“Thus did nature triumph over man’s attempt to conquer it. Nature always wins.” Douglas Brinkley.

1. Have you ever thought about the fact that, in spite of man’s efforts to conquer and subdue the world, nature has often proven that it is more resilient than iron or steel or even nuclear bombs? Furthermore, it seems that nature has its own agenda and acts accordingly. It follows its own laws and does not need an alarm clock to wake up when the time comes. Can we therefore say, that nature is stronger than mankind and that it always wins?

♪ « Colchiques dans les près - Fleurissent, fleurissent - Colchiques dans les près : C'est la fin de l'été. »



(b) Colchicums - the autumn crocus are always on time.

2. The world was seriously shaken by two major nuclear power plant disasters: Chernobyl in Ukraine (April 1986), and Fukushima in Japan (March 2011). Physical and material damages prevailed in the wake of those incidents. The aim is not to discuss the causes of these deadly incidents, but rather to examine how nature has fared in those exceptional circumstances.

3. In the case of Chernobyl we now have over 35 years of data to go on. There were short-term and long-term effects on humans, animals and the environment. Many people and animals died in the days, months and weeks that followed. The atmosphere, plants and soils were contaminated. We have all heard of the mutations that occurred in some animals and we have seen pictures of two-headed and/or one-eyed cows and sheep that were born in the months that followed. Yet, if today not all has been erased, plants have reclaimed the area and in many cases have totally covered houses and buildings. It is not a wasteland, as could have been expected; on the contrary it is luxuriant. It has even become a haven for wildlife species, freed from human predators.

4. Volcanic eruptions are other fascinating natural events. These occur regularly in many parts of the world and are often feared to be most detrimental. We have all studied how the earth has been shaped through volcanic eruptions and how islands have been created. We generally view volcanic activity as a highly destructive event. This is true, of course, yet the lava also benefits the surrounding soils by bringing it many rich nutrients. It is not by accident that agricultural lands flourish in those areas.

5. We don't have to focus on just catastrophic events to see the power of nature. If we just look in our backyards we can 'see' it in action. If no human action is taken, weeds and wildflowers take it over in relatively short time. Weeding a garden is a weekly task, which can be compared to house cleaning. No matter how well you clean and dust, it has to be repeated regularly. Of course, toxic agents can be used to kill bad weeds, but it also has an adverse effect on soils. Mind you, if you let down your guard, nature will not be polite about it and you will quickly be overpowered.



(c) You can put all the gravel you want, weeds will keep on growing if you don't clean regularly.

6. *What do these few examples tell us? Man can travel faster than the speed of sound, can go to the moon and back, can invent myriads of electronic devices to make communications and daily chores easier, can improve its fight against diseases and thus increase the average life expectancy and so on. Yet, man should think twice before believing that he rules the land, the seas and the skies. He should remember that nature always wins.*