



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

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1898-12-28

**Letter from John Muir to [Charles Sprague] Sargent, 1898 Dec 28.**

John Muir

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**Recommended Citation**

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Martinez Dec 28. 1898

My dear Prof Sargent

I'm glad you're miserable about  
not going to Mexico, for it shows that  
your heartwood is still honest & losing  
towards the grand trees down there.  
Through foot ball games & Connecticut  
turkey moments, got the letter of you.  
The grand taxodians were object enough  
for the trip, & I came pretty near  
making it alone, - would certainly have  
done it had I not felt childishly lonesome  
& woe-begone after you left me. No  
wonder I looked like an inland coast  
to friend Mellichamp. But what would  
that sharp observer have said to the  
canby tuckleberry party gyrating  
lost in the Delaware woods, & splashing  
along the edge of the marshy bay  
"froggin' & crabbin'" with devout scientific  
solemnity!!! Mellichamp I liked ever  
so much, & bless old Mother more than ever



For these good men & many many  
trees I have to thank You, & I do  
over & over again as the main  
blessings of the passing year.  
And I have to thank You also for  
Grays writings - Essays etc, which I  
have read with great interest. More  
than ever I want to see Japan &  
Eastern Asia. I wonder if Carby  
could be converted to sufficient  
sanity to go with us on that glorious  
 dendrological trip. Confound his  
Yankee savings bank! He has done  
more than enough in that line. It  
will soon be dark. Soon our good  
botanical pegs will be brought home  
in a box & planted, & it behooves us  
as reasonable naturalists to keep  
them tramping & twinkling in the  
woods as long as we can.

As to the big tree fruit - I have  
not seen enough to be quite sure.



that it is annual. We have one tree on the ranch. I have watched it pretty closely the last two years & have never seen fruit of two seasons on it at once. At present it has about 40 or 50 cones on a dozen branches or so, all about the same size, & apparently mature, with plenty of seed. If these cones are two years old, where are the yearlings? I can't <sup>find</sup> see a single cone younger than those with ripe seed. Moreover the branches on which the cones are show only one year's growth.

Hereafter I mean to watch this tree still more closely - try to find some fertile flowers & mark them.

I see by the newspapers that the Kammer Reserve is to be leased to Chapman at the rate of \$5 per 1000 shup!!  
 Wish you & family & Silva happy New Year. I am  
 Ever yours, John Muir