

NWF volunteer Larry Crumb recently emailed to NWF friends:

“I’m reading a history of grafting, and I came across a poem by the Roman historian Virgil (1695 translation by John Dryden) that describes grafting, quite accurately. I share it with you here:”

But various are the ways to change the state
Of plants, to bud, to graff, to inoculate
For, where the tender rinds of trees disclose
Their shooting germs, a swelling knot there grows
Just in that space a narrow slit we make,
Then other buds from bearing tress we take;
Inserted thus, the wounded rind we close,
In whose moist womb the admitted infant grows.
But when the smoother bole from knots is free;
We make a deep incision in the tree.
And in the solid wood the slip inclose;
The battening bastard shoots again and grows;
And in short space the laden boughs arise;
With happy fruit advancing to the skies.
The mother plant admires the leaves unknown
Of alien trees and apples not her own

On October 15, 70 BC, Publius Vergilius Maro, known in English as Virgil or Vergil, was born in the farming village of Andes, near Mantua, in northern Italy. Virgil was born of peasant stock in northern Italy, and his love of the Italian countryside and of the people who cultivated it colours all his poetry.



Early 3rd century AD mosaic of Virgil (centre) holding a scroll with a quotation from the Aeneid and flanked by the muses Clio and Melpomene, from the Bardo National Museum, Tunis, Tunisia.