

Redwood Trees



Image courtesy of National Park Service www.nps.gov

“General Sherman” Tree in Sequoia National Park, California, USA. This Giant Sequoia is the largest tree in the world.

Redwood is a common name given to a group of coniferous trees that contains both the largest and tallest trees in the world. These trees belong to a subfamily of the cypress tree. There are three redwood species:

Coastal Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*), also known as California Redwood or Sequoia, grow along a narrow coastal area in California and Oregon, in the USA, where coastal fog, high rainfall and mild temperatures provide sufficient moisture for the trees. Coastal Redwoods can grow for a very long time. Samples of trees have been dated at over 2,200 years old.

Giant Redwood (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*), also known as the Giant Sequoia, grow in the Sierra Nevada mountains of California, where the melting winter snow provide the moisture the trees need. Giant Redwood can also grow for thousands of years. Some specimens have been dated at over 3,200 years old.

Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) grow in central China, in shaded valley forests, and get their moisture from ravines on the valley floor. While both the Coastal Redwoods and Giant Redwoods are evergreen, the Dawn Redwoods are deciduous.



The Tallest & Largest Trees

The tallest tree in the world is a Coastal Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*). It is nicknamed “Hyperion” and is located in Redwood National Park, in California. It measures 115.72 m in height.

The largest tree in the world, in other words, the total volume of the tree, is “General Sherman” a Giant Sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*), which grows in Sequoia National Park, also in California. It is about 1,487 cubic metres in volume.



Giant’s Grove in Birr, Co. Offaly

Giant Redwoods were once native in Ireland and Europe, 30,000 years ago, before the arrival of the ice age. In the last few hundred years, specimens and small groves of redwoods have been planted around the world. There are some scattered around Ireland in various gardens. In Ireland, the redwood with the largest girth is a Giant Redwood in Charleville Estate in Co. Wicklow. There are now plans to form the largest grove of Giant Redwoods outside of California, at Birr Castle in Co. Offaly. Some of the grove will also be planted with Coastal Redwoods. They hope to fund the project by finding a sponsor for each of the trees. By sponsoring one of the redwoods, the sponsor would be creating a living, growing gift that would last for many generations. Details of the grove are at: www.giantsgrove.ie