

# Read All about It!

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## Giant Sequoia Trees



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Giant sequoia trees are some of the largest and oldest living things on earth. In fact, the General Sherman giant sequoia tree in Sequoia National Park in California is the largest tree by volume in the world. When measured in 1975, the tree was a little more than 52.5 cubic feet and almost 275 feet tall. Sequoia trees grow to 361 feet. The huge trees are valuable to loggers because the wood is very strong and resistant to

decay. Coastal sequoias are good for building houses and furniture. The wood is also very beautiful. Because it is so useful, many of the trees were cut down in the early 1900s.

However, old sequoias are also valuable to the environment because many different kinds of animals and insects live in them. Even fallen sequoia trees provide homes and food for animals and plants in the forest. Because it takes a long time for the wood to decay, animals or groups of insects can live in the trees for many years. The decaying trees can also help new sequoia trees grow. The sequoia tree plays an important role in the environment from seedling until long after the aged tree falls over.

Sequoias can live for hundreds of years and grow to be very wide and tall. Their roots do not grow very far under the surface, allowing sequoias to absorb as much water as possible. Because their roots are so shallow, the trees need to grow in

clusters to help them stand up. If they grew alone, they might fall down, because they can become so big. The seedlings also need to grow tall very quickly to reach the sunlight in a dense forest.



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Scientists are still trying to understand how sequoia trees can become so big and why they live for so long. Scientists would also like to grow more sequoias in the greenhouse so that they can replant them back in the forest.