

Giant Sequoia

Sequoiadendron giganteum

Sequoiadendron giganteum, known as Giant Sequoia was discovered in 1833. Sequoias have the most massive size of any tree in the world. It is an erect single trunk often buttressed at the base needled evergreen conifer. Best grown in moist, deep, loose, well drained sandy loams in full sun in cool moist climates with consistently high moisture levels. Sequoias do surprisingly well in Utah where the temperature doesn't get too cold. The largest of the Sequoias are as tall as an average 26 story building. Sequoias may live 2000 to 3000 years.

Sequoias are usually more than 20 feet in diameter and up to 35 feet across. Sequoia trunk diameters range from 15-20' and weigh 200 or more tons. Sequoias may live 2000 to 3000 years. They can have branches up to 8 feet in diameter. **Leaves** are awl – shaped, 1/8" to 1/2" long sometimes look scale-like, alternately or spirally arranged along twig; evergreen; blue-green; somewhat similar to junipers. Twigs slender covered by leaves. Buds small naked no scales. **Flowers/Fruit:** Monoecious fruit a woody cone. Oval 1-3/4" to 3 – 1/2" long red brown hangs down; wrinkled scales with diamond shaped ends. Mature in two years but cones persist on tree with live seed for up to 20 years. Sequoias bark can grow up to 3 feet thick. Young trees have a pyramid – oval shape. As the trees mature, they begin to lose branches from the lower part of the trunk. Sequoias generally feature attractive, dark, cinnamon brown bark with deep furrows and ridges. The only older tree is bristlecone pine.

Sequoias are incredibly hardy they resist fungal rot, wood boring beetles and their thick bark is flame resistant all of their unusual strength is due to the presence of tannic acids. Sequoias hardiness age and size are all connected because they are tough, as they age they keep growing. Giant Sequoias only reproduce by seeds. Forest fires help open the cones which then grow from the burnt soil. Each tree needs to produce just one maturing offspring over its life span of several thousand years for the species to persist.

As you stroll through the Salt Lake City Cemetery you will find many beautiful examples of this species.

