

ALL ABOUT COASTAL REDWOODS

Sequoia National Forest

Giant Sequoia National Monument

The cousins of the giant sequoia trees are the coastal redwoods. Many visitors here at Sequoia National Forest and Giant Sequoia National Monument are interested in the differences between these two types of large trees. They are both in the same botanical family, Taxodiaceae.

The giant sequoia trees (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) grow in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. They enjoy the bragging rights as the world's **largest** trees by volume. The coastal redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*) grow in the coastal ranges of California from San Luis Obispo County to slightly beyond the Oregon border. They can claim the rights as the world's **tallest** trees. Sorry, but neither are the **oldest**. That prize goes to the bristlecone pine, which may grow as old as 5,000 years and range from eastern California to Colorado.

It is interesting to compare the giant sequoia and the coastal redwood in a number of ways. This table details some of these comparisons.

HEIGHT

Giant sequoia	Up to 311 feet.
Coastal redwood	Up to 370 feet.

DIAMETER at breast height (4.5 feet above the ground)

Giant sequoia	Up to 29 feet.
Coastal redwood	Up to 25 feet.

AGE

Giant sequoia	Up to approximately 3,200 years.
Coastal redwood	Up to approximately 2,200 years.

BARK

Giant sequoia	Brownish red, often deeply fluted.
Coastal redwood	Reddish chocolate brown, moderate fluting.

FOLIAGE

Giant sequoia	Awl shaped scale about ¼ inch.
Coastal redwood	Short alternating needles about ½ inch long, some scale-like foliage.

ROOTS

Giant sequoia	Up to 6 feet deep. Usually up to 150 feet long.
Coastal redwood	Up to 4 feet deep. Usually up to 100 feet long.

CONE

Giant sequoia	3 inches long.
Coastal redwood	Up to 1 inch long.

The main location to see the coastal redwoods is the RNSP, which stands for Redwood National and State Parks. The National Park Service and the California Department of Parks and Recreation decided to manage the national park and the three state parks as one unit in 1994. RNSP includes Redwood National Park, Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park, and Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park.

Additional state parks with coastal redwoods include:

- Humboldt Redwoods SP
- Hendy Woods SP
- Grizzly Creek Redwoods SP
- Armstrong Redwoods SR
- Admiral William Standley SRA

Of the top ten tallest trees, all ten are within 5 feet of each other in height. The tallest is the Stratosphere Giant at 368.6 feet with a diameter of 17.0 feet. Imagine looking up at a 35-story skyscraper! It is located in the Humboldt Redwoods State Park. The largest coastal redwood is the Del Norte Titan. It has a height of 307 feet, a diameter of 23.7 feet, and a volume of 36,893 cubic feet. It is located in the Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park.

Interested in finding drive-through trees? There are three drive-through trees on U.S. 101 along the “Avenue of the Giants” highway, all coastal redwoods. All are private businesses, which charge a small fee to drive your car through the tree. From north to south they are:

- Klamath Tour Thru Tree, \$2
- Myers Flat Shrine Tree, \$3
- Leggett Chandelier Tree, \$3

As far as giant sequoia drive-through trees, the famous Wawona Tree in Yosemite National Park fell over in 1969 under a heavy snowfall. There is a drive-through downed sequoia tree called the Tunnel Log in Sequoia National Park. There is also a walk-through sequoia in Yosemite National Park within the Tuolumne Grove called The Dead Giant.



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