

Erin D – Sino-Himalayan Guide Walk (Oct.13, 2021)

Metasequoia glyptostroboides ‘Gold Rush’

- *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* ‘Gold Rush’ (Gold Rush Dawn Redwood) (Family Cupressaceae) (Accession number 2010-0158)
 - Deciduous conifer, chartreuse-yellow leaves in spring (when the light hits it in the morning, it reflects a golden light on that section of path), mature to golden, rich shades of orange brown in fall
 - Attractive reddish bark when young and flared trunk
 - Full sun, wet and clay soil tolerant
 - Valid cultivar name: *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* ‘Ogon’
 - Cultivar originated in 1974 in Japan. Seedling selected from a batch of X-ray irradiated seed by the New Oji Paper Company
 - 1977, original tree planted at Kameyama breeding station, Institute for Forest Tree Improvement, New Oji Paper Company, Ltd., Mie, Japan
 - Original Japanese name ‘Ogon’ => “gold bullion” or “gold coin”
 - 1993, Pieter Zwijnenburg Jr, Boskoop, Netherlands, got first propagation material directly from Japan and renamed it ‘Goldrush’ and began distributing it under that name in 1997
 - Around the same time, Larry Stanley & Sons nursery, Boring, Oregon, received it and began distributing it under the name ‘Gold Rush’, which is the most commonly seen misspelling
 - 1995, New Oji Paper Co. applied for a US patent for this tree under ‘Golden Oji’, but with the other names circulating the request was withdrawn
- *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* is a fast-growing deciduous conifer, the sole species of the genus *Metasequoia*, endangered in the wild but planted extensively in arboreta worldwide
- Wild distribution in south-central China (Hubei, Hunnan, Chongqing, Sichuan) in wet lower slopes and montane river and stream valleys. Lichuan, Hubei is known for its large expanse of *Metasequoia* trees as well as the world’s longest karst limestone cave system. Locally *M. glyptostroboides* has been called Shuishan, or “water fir”.
 - The genus *Metasequoia* was once much more widespread. Many Mesozoic era fossils have been found across the northern hemisphere, with at least 3 species identified. *M. glyptostroboides* is considered a living fossil since it resembles these ancestral species in the fossil record. *M. glyptostroboides* was actually known to scientists first through the fossil record, before the extant species was found.
 - In 1941 paleobotanist Shigeru Miki from Kyoto University named the genus *Metasequoia*, “like a sequoia” and identified it as a once widely-distributed extinct genus, based on fossil evidence. In the following few years, samples of several living trees were taken by forest surveyors who recognized the tree’s unique traits. In 1946 the connection was made between Miki’s fossil genus and the living samples by professors Zheng Wanjun and Hu Xiansu who gave it its specific epithet “*glyptostroboides*”, after its resemblance to the Chinese swamp cypress (*Glyptostrobus*).
 - At the time of its ‘discovery’, it was commonly planted as an ornamental by local people. It was not planted outside its native range until 1948. Nearly all trees growing outside China are from seedstock derived from 1-3 Chinese trees during 1947 collections.

<https://conifersociety.org/conifers/metasequoia-glyptostroboides-ogon/>

<https://www.gardenia.net/plant/metasequoia-glyptostroboides-gold-rush>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metasequoia_glyptostroboides

<https://www.conifers.org/cu/Metasequoia.php>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metasequoia>

<https://www.tourism-review.com/travel-tourism-magazine-lichuan-and-hubei-province-offer-extraordinary-caves-and-forests-article2340>