

GIANT SEQUOIA

Like an ant among giants, you are dwarfed by massive tree trunks all around you, some as wide as a house! These gentle giants can live for over 3,000 years and belong to **the largest tree species on Earth by volume, the endangered giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*)**.

After decades of logging, fewer than 80,000 trees remain in California's Sierra Nevada Mountains. Here, they are adapted to snowy winters, dry summers and seasonal forest fires, which giant sequoias need to release seeds from their cones and reproduce. Fire suppression, the greatest threat against this species, allows wood fuel to build up in the understory resulting in intense fires that even these thick-barked giants cannot survive.

In California's Sequoia National Park, you can visit ancient trees like **General Sherman, the largest living tree at 84 meters (275 feet) tall with a trunk 31 meters (102 feet) in circumference**. This tree weighs an incredible 1.2 million kg (2.7 million pounds) – the weight of 10 blue whales! **An even larger giant sequoia, felled by a storm in 1905, measured almost twice the size of General Sherman – the weight of 20 blue whales!**

Cypress Family – Cupressaceae | Conservation status: Endangered



Ancient giants in Sequoia National Park, in California's Sierra Nevada mountain range.



Seed cones and evergreen, awl-shaped leaves of giant sequoia.



Sequoia National Park, Sierra Nevada Mountains, California.