

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
SEQUOIA AND KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARKS  
THREE RIVERS, CALIFORNIA

**GENERAL SHERMAN AND GENERAL GRANT – GIANT SEQUOIAS**  
(*Sequoiadendron giganteum*)

The **General Sherman**, at Giant Forest, in Sequoia National Park, was discovered by James Wolverton on August 7, 1879. He named the tree in honor of the General under whom he served as a First Lieutenant in the Ninth Indiana Cavalry.

The **General Grant**, at Grant Grove, in Kings Canyon National Park, was discovered in 1862 by Joseph Hardin Thomas, and was named in August 1867, by Mrs. Lucretia P. Baker, in honor of Ulysses S. Grant.

	<b>General Sherman Tree</b> Largest Living Thing	<b>General Grant Tree</b> A National Shrine
Estimated age	2300 - 2700 years	1800 - 2000 years
Estimated weight of trunk	1385 t. (1256 m.t.)	1251 t. (1135 m.t.)
Height above base	274.9 ft. (83.8 m.)	267.4 ft. (81.5 m.)
Circumference at ground	102.6 ft. (31.3 m.)	107.6 ft. (32.8 m.)
Maximum diameter at base	36.5 ft. (11.1 m.)	40.3 ft. (12.3 m.)
Diameter 60 ft. above ground	17.5 ft. (5.3 m.)	16.3 ft. (5.0 m.)
Diameter 180 ft. above ground	14.0 ft. (4.3 m.)	12.9 ft. (3.9 m.)
Diameter of largest branch	6.8 ft. (2.1 m.)	4.5 ft. (1.4 m.)
Height of first large branch	130.0 ft. (39.6 m.)	129.0 ft. (39.3 m.)
Volume of trunk	52,500 cu. ft. (1,486.6 cu. m.)	47,450 cu. ft. (1,343.6 cu. m.)

It is difficult to appreciate the size of these two sequoias because neighboring trees are so large. Both Big Trees are as tall as the average 26-story building, and their diameters at the base exceed the width of many city streets. The large branch growing from the south side of General Sherman's trunk, 130 feet from the base, is 6.8 feet in diameter and 140 feet tall. This branch is larger and taller than most eastern forest trees. It would require at least 30 railroad cars to move the trunk alone.

On the basis of total volume, the General Sherman is called the "largest living thing in the world." Although a mature tree, its annual growth rate has been measured at almost a millimeter (1/25th inch). This translates into new wood production of about 40 cubic feet each year or approximately the volume contained in a tree one foot in diameter and 50 feet tall.

The bark of the sequoias, which sometimes reaches a thickness of two feet, affords excellent protection against fire. The heartwood is very resistant to fungus and insect attacks. It is this high resistance to destruction that has enabled the sequoias to survive through the ages and live through scores of fires.

While the bristlecone pines lay claim to the title of being the "oldest living tree in the world," the exact age of the Giant Sequoias cannot be determined while they are still standing, as the coring instruments which are used to tell the age of lesser trees will not penetrate to the heart of a Big Tree. The age of the General Sherman, General Grant, and other large sequoias is unknown, but it is estimated by those who have studied these trees, and have counted the annual rings on fallen sequoias, that these two giants are between 2,000 and 2,700 years old. During this time they have withstood countless fires, and though damaged, have continued to bear cones and flourish.