



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Sequoia and Kings Canyon
National Parks

47050 Generals Hwy.
Three Rivers, CA 93271

559 565-3341 phone
559 565-3730 fax

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Contact: Dana M. Dierkes

Phone Number: (559) 565-3131

Which Giant Sequoia is the World's Second-Largest Tree?

Recent research done by Steve Sillett of Humboldt State University and his colleagues suggests that the President Tree in the Giant Forest area of Sequoia National Park in California is the world's second-largest giant sequoia tree. Yet, the National Park Service lists it as the third-largest giant sequoia tree. Why the difference?

According to Nate Stephenson, a research ecologist with the U.S. Geological Survey who has studied giant sequoias for over 30 years at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks:

"Because branch volume is quite difficult to measure accurately, size rankings for the biggest sequoias usually have been based upon trunk volume only. By trunk volume, the General Grant Tree is second largest and the President Tree is the third largest. If you include branches, the order switches. But, no matter which measure of size you choose, both trees are awe-inspiring!"

Previously, the President Tree and many other giant sequoia trees were measured by Wendell D. Flint, as published in his book, *To Find the Biggest Tree* (2002). Because living sequoias add new growth each year but can also suffer losses due to breakage, tree dimensions change constantly.

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks continues to maintain its list of the 30 largest giant sequoias by trunk volume only. On this list, the President Tree is ranked the third-largest giant sequoia, with a note that if branches are included it is the second largest. (*Note to News Media:* See the attached National Park Service list of *"The Largest Giant Sequoias by Trunk Volume."*)

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