Sequoia sempervirens
Coast Redwood

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INTRODUCTION

Sequoia sempervirens, the Coast Redwoods of California, are the tallest trees in the world (Fig. 1). They can vary greatly when grown from seed, but varieties are available now which have been vegetatively propagated and they retain true characteristics. Redwoods grow three to five feet per year and are remarkably pest-free. They live to be many hundreds of years old; some live to several thousand years. Bark is particularly beautiful, turning a bright orange on older trees. It may grow poorly in zones 9 and 10 in Florida.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: Sequoia sempervirens
Pronunciation: see-KWOY-uh sem-per-VYE-renz
Common name(s): Coast Redwood
Family: Taxodiaceae
USDA hardiness zones: 7 through 10A (Fig. 2)
Origin: native to North America
Uses: screen; specimen; no proven urban tolerance
Availability: grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

DESCRIPTION

Height: 60 to 120 feet
Spread: 25 to 35 feet
Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms
Crown shape: pyramidal
Crown density: moderate

Figure 1. Mature Coast Redwood.

Growth rate: medium
Texture: fine

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Foliage**

Leaf arrangement: alternate; spiral  
Leaf type: simple  
Leaf margin: entire  
Leaf shape: needle-like (filiform)  
Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see; parallel  
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen; needle leaf evergreen  
Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches  
Leaf color: green  
Fall color: no fall color change  
Fall characteristic: not showy

**Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; inconspicuous and not showy; no significant litter problem

**Trunk and Branches**

Trunk/bark/branches: droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; should be grown with a single leader; very showy trunk; no thorns  
Pruning requirement: needs little pruning to develop a strong structure  
Breakage: resistant  
Current year twig color: brown; green  
Current year twig thickness: medium; thin  
Wood specific gravity: 0.35

**Culture**

Light requirement: tree grows in part shade/part sun; tree grows in full sun  
Soil tolerances: clay; loam; sand; slightly alkaline; acidic; occasionally wet; well-drained  
Drought tolerance: moderate
Other

**Roots:** surface roots are usually not a problem
**Winter interest:** tree has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers
**Outstanding tree:** not particularly outstanding
**Invasive potential:** little, if any, potential at this time
**Ozone sensitivity:** tolerant
**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** not known to be susceptible
**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

**USE AND MANAGEMENT**

Redwood maintains a pyramidal form and dark green foliage throughout the year. Planted in a row 15 to 20 feet apart they make a nice screen. In areas outside California and the Northwest, it is probably best used occasionally as a novelty specimen.

Redwood is tolerant of flooding, making best growth along stream banks and flood plains. Irrigation helps maintain a vigorous tree in other sites. Allow plenty of soil space for proper development.

Propagation is possible from seed and through vegetative propagation.

**Pests**

Few insects were noted for *Sequoia* species.

**Diseases**

No diseases are of major concern.

*Sequoia sempervirens* is resistant to oak root fungus.