

## Redwood Tree Trail in Horsham Park



1. Most people have met the Giant Redwood *Sequoiadendron giganteum* at the North Street entrance to the park. It's a tree that makes a statement and is the tallest in the park. It's still quite small compared to the Redwoods in California, some of which are over 3000 years old. Does anyone know when it was planted? Redwoods didn't grow in England until they were introduced in 1853. This timing is why they are sometimes called the Wellingtonia in honour of the Duke of Wellington (1769-1852). It features in the 1982 Guide to the Trees in Horsham Park – the only Redwood which does. By the time of the 1997 edition another six are shown on the map.



Some distinguishing features of the Giant Redwood to look for:



The trunk is rusty-red, fibrous and quite soft. The branches are at right angles which gives the tree its compact and conical shape.



The needles are hard but in slightly drooping sprays where they grow in spirals around the stems.



The cones are egg sized.



2. Did you know we also have a deciduous Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) at the pond which bursts into life in spring? Being deciduous this makes it an unusual conifer.

Have a look at the young leaves – notice that the needles are attached opposite each other which is a distinguishing feature. These leaves turn orange in the autumn.



Its trunk is not as large as the other Redwoods in the park but it has the same conical shape. It is in a good position because Dawn Redwoods like plenty of water and can do well in swampy ground.

There are ten other Redwoods to find in the park. They all have the rusty-red, furrowed, soft bark which protects them from forest fires – as you find them in the park, it's worth touching the bark to feel how spongy it is. This can help you differentiate it from other conifers, even if they have red trunks.



**3.** While at the pond walk round to the right to find 'Cyril's tree'. This is a memorial tree and you can see where the volunteers had to remove the lower dead branches because they had been suffocated by brambles.

**4.** Moving to the North Parade side of the pond (outside the pond fence) you'll find two more of Redwoods. These, like Cyril's tree, must have been planted relatively recently as they don't feature in the 1997 Tree Guide.

**5.** Walk to the back towards the Human Nature Garden and you can find four more Redwoods – two standing guard by the gate and two either side of the mushroom sculpture, near the shepherd and sheep.

If you want to find more Redwoods in the Park, look for the conical egg-shape shape along the perimeter path between the Pavilions and North Parade – there are another three you can find:

- 6.** one at the end of the skate park,
- 7.** one near the outdoor gym with monkey bars and the last one
- 8.** in the Pavilions car park.



The conical egg-shape is easy to spot from a distance.



Have you noticed the Giant Redwood when parking your car at the Pavilions?

As far as we know, we don't have the third type of Redwood in the park: the Coast Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*). This has yew-like flatter, alternately spaced needles. Coast Redwoods can grow even taller than the Giant Redwood but are not as broad.

We love these Redwoods but wonder who was inspired to plant so many in Horsham Park?

For more information on Redwoods see <http://www.redwoodworld.co.uk/> which includes lots of fascinating facts and watch an intriguing TED talk on Redwood rainforests in California at [https://www.ted.com/talks/richard\\_preston\\_the\\_mysterious\\_lives\\_of\\_giant\\_trees](https://www.ted.com/talks/richard_preston_the_mysterious_lives_of_giant_trees).