

Giant Sequoias in Germany

*A photographic survey from
Langenhagen, Hannover,
Magdeburg, Bad Salzdetfurth,
Bremen and Bochum*

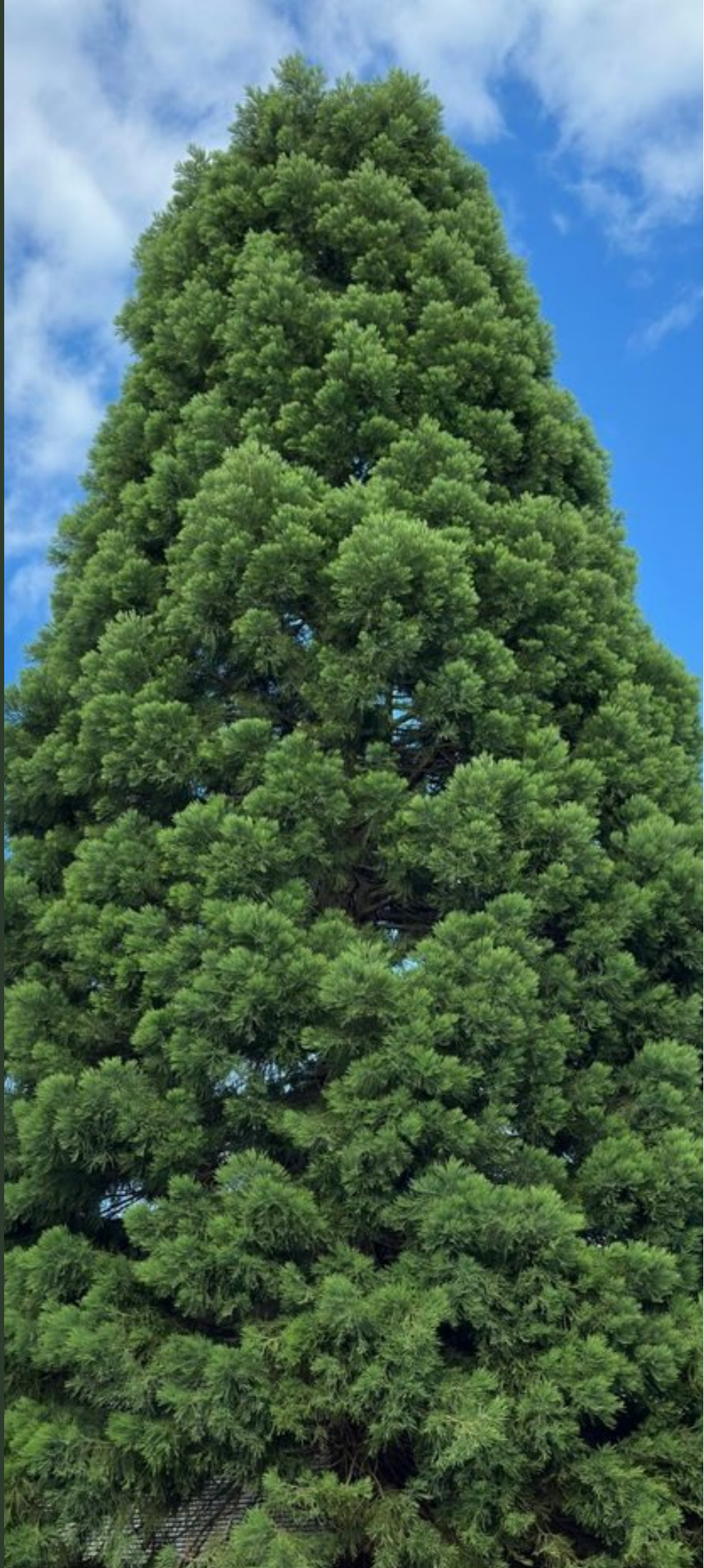
Sequoiadendron giganteum
(Giant Sequoia)

Metasequoia
glyptostroboides (Dawn
Redwood)

Sequoia sempervirens
(Coast Redwood)

Thomas Wenzlaff
kleinhirn.eu — June 4, 2026

© 2026 Thomas Wenzlaff. All rights
reserved.



OVERVIEW

Table of Contents

01	INTRODUCTION Three species, one genus history	03
02	LANGENHAGEN Dawn redwood in Brinker Park and Eichenpark	04
03	LANGENHAGEN Giant sequoia at Lehmdamm	05
04	LANGENHAGEN Cones and seeds of the dawn redwood	06
05	HANNOVER Giant sequoia in the Maschgarten	07
06	HANNOVER Coast redwood in the Berggarten	08
07	MAGDEBURG Giant sequoia in Magdeburg	09
08	BAD SALZDETfurTH Dawn redwood in Bad Salzdetfurth	10
09	BREMEN Giant sequoia in the Wallanlagen	11
10	BOCHUM A small forest of giant sequoias	12
11	BOCHUM Needle detail and botanical labeling	13
12	BACKGROUND The names of the giant sequoias	14
13	DATA & FACTS Distribution in Germany	15
14	CONCLUSION Summary & knowledge check	16
15	APPENDIX Imprint & photo credits	17

INTRODUCTION

Three species, one genus history

Giant sequoias are among the most impressive conifers on Earth. Although their natural home lies in North America and China, numerous specimens have grown in German parks, gardens, and avenues since the 19th and 20th centuries.

The reason for this is their remarkable adaptability to the temperate Central European climate. In Germany, one mainly encounters three species: the giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*), the dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*), and the rarer coast redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*).

The giant sequoia originates from the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada in California. It is evergreen, forms a thick, fire-resistant bark, and reaches heights of up to 95 meters in its native range. The coast redwood grows along the Pacific coast of Northern California and, at over 115 meters, is even the tallest tree species in the world. The dawn redwood, by contrast, was long considered extinct and was known only from fossil finds – until it was rediscovered as a living species in 1941 in China's Hubei province. Unlike most conifers, it sheds its needles completely in autumn.

The following pages document several sites in northern Germany where these giant sequoia species can be seen: Langenhagen, Hannover, Magdeburg, Bad Salzdetfurth, and Bremen – including the Berggarten in Hannover, where all three species grow side by side. The documentation is supplemented by background on the naming as well as current population figures from the nationwide giant sequoia register.

AT A GLANCE

Giant Sequoia

Sequoiadendron giganteum · evergreen
· scale-like needles · native to: Sierra Nevada (USA)

Dawn Redwood

Metasequoia glyptostroboides · deciduous · soft needles · native to: Central China

Coast Redwood

Sequoia sempervirens · evergreen · tallest tree species in the world · native to: Pacific coast of California/Oregon

Rediscovery

1941 in China's Hubei province, after the species had previously been known only as a fossil

Data Basis

mbreg.de — more than 23,000 mapped giant sequoias in Germany

SITE 01 · LANGENHAGEN

Dawn Redwood in Brinker Park and Eichenpark

Metasequoia glyptostroboides

Several specimens of the dawn redwood stand in Brinker Park and Eichenpark in Langenhagen.

The slender, cone-shaped trees can be recognized by their reddish-brown, fibrous bark and their soft, oppositely arranged needles. In spring and summer, the trees appear in a vibrant light green.

In autumn, the needles turn golden-yellow to orange before the tree – unusually for a conifer – sheds them completely. This shedding of foliage, along with its rapid growth, makes the dawn redwood a popular choice for urban green spaces.



Dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*), Brinker Park and Eichenpark, Langenhagen.

SITE 01 · LANGENHAGEN

Giant Sequoia at Lehmdamm

Sequoiadendron giganteum

A mature giant sequoia grows at Lehmdamm in Langenhagen.

Characteristic of this species is its thick, spongy-soft, fire-resistant bark, which protects the tree from wildfires in its North American homeland. The scale-like, tightly overlapping needles differ clearly from the soft needles of the dawn redwood.

Giant sequoias are among the most massive living organisms on Earth and can reach an age of several thousand years. Even as young trees, they develop the straight, towering growth habit that makes the species so unmistakable.



Giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) and its characteristic bark, Lehmdamm, Langenhagen.

SITE 01 · LANGENHAGEN

Cones and Seeds of the Dawn Redwood

Metasequoia glyptostroboides

The small, oval cones of the dawn redwood open in individual segments when ripe, releasing their seeds.

Compared with the cones of the giant sequoia, those of the dawn redwood are notably smaller: when mature, they reach a length of about 1.5 to 2.5 centimeters and hang from long, thin stalks on the branches. The individual fruit scales are shield-shaped and open in a star pattern at maturity, as can clearly be seen in the close-up photographs.

Numerous small, winged seeds ripen inside the cones. Their narrow wing margins allow for wind dispersal, although their range is limited compared to the lighter seeds of other conifers. The specimens shown were collected in Langenhagen and photographed next to a scale; a single cone measures roughly the width of a thumbnail.



Opened cones and exposed seeds of the dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*), Langenhagen.

SITE 02 · HANNOVER

Giant Sequoia in the Maschgarten

Sequoiadendron giganteum

Another giant sequoia stands in the Maschgarten on Willy-Brandt-Allee in Hannover.

This inner-city green space shows that the species can thrive well even under urban conditions – with compacted soils and limited root space.

The characteristic, slightly drooping growth of the outer branches and the gray-green, scale-like needles are clearly visible in the photographs. The tree forms a distinct vertical accent within the park.



Giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*), Maschgarten, Willy-Brandt-Allee, Hannover.

SITE 02 · HANNOVER

Coast Redwood in the Berggarten

Sequoia sempervirens

In the Berggarten of the Herrenhausen Gardens in Hannover, a coast redwood grows alongside giant sequoias and dawn redwoods – here, all three giant sequoia species can be compared at a single site.

With at least eight mapped giant sequoias, the Berggarten ranks among the most species-rich sites in northern Germany: alongside several giant sequoias (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) and dawn redwoods (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*), there is also a coast redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) here – the third species, and the tallest of the three in its native range.

The coast redwood originates from the Pacific coast of Northern California to southern Oregon, where in the moist, cool coastal climate it reaches heights of over 115 meters, making it the tallest tree species in the world. Its needles are flat and soft, resembling those of the yew, while its fibrous, reddish-brown bark is notably thinner than the spongy bark of the giant sequoia. In the Berggarten, the tree already shows the species' characteristic slender, cone-shaped growth habit.



Coast redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*), Berggarten, Herrenhausen Gardens, Hannover.

SITE 03 · MAGDEBURG

Giant Sequoia in Magdeburg

Sequoiadendron giganteum

A well-developed giant sequoia can also be found in Magdeburg.

The photographs show the species' characteristic cone-shaped habit: a straight, towering trunk with a comparatively narrow, densely foliated crown.

This growth form remains strikingly symmetrical throughout the tree's life, making giant sequoias a popular eye-catcher in parks and public green spaces.



Giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*), various views, Magdeburg.

SITE 04 · BAD SALZDETFURTH

Dawn Redwood in Bad Salzdetfurth

Metasequoia glyptostroboides

A dawn redwood with especially delicate foliage stands in Bad Salzdetfurth.

The soft, light-green needles appear noticeably more filigree compared directly with the giant sequoia. They are flat, resemble those of the yew in their arrangement, and stand in opposite pairs on thin, horizontally spreading shoots.

This tree exemplifies how the dawn redwood has also become established away from larger cities in smaller municipalities – often as a solitary specimen in parks or cemetery grounds.



Dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) and needle detail, Bad Salzdetfurth.

SITE 05 • BREMEN

Giant Sequoia in the Wallanlagen

Sequoiadendron giganteum

A giant sequoia with strikingly beautiful, reddish-brown bark grows in the Wallanlagen of Bremen.

The deeply furrowed bark structure gives the trunk its characteristic appearance and makes it – alongside its impressive height – a striking feature of this historic park.

The Wallanlagen rank among the largest contiguous green spaces in Bremen's city center, giving the tree ample room for its crown to develop freely.



Giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*), bark and needles, Wallanlagen, Bremen.

SITE 06 · BOCHUM

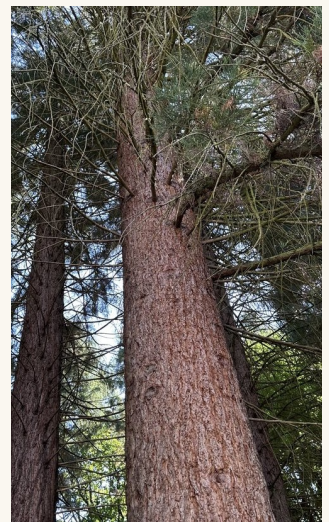
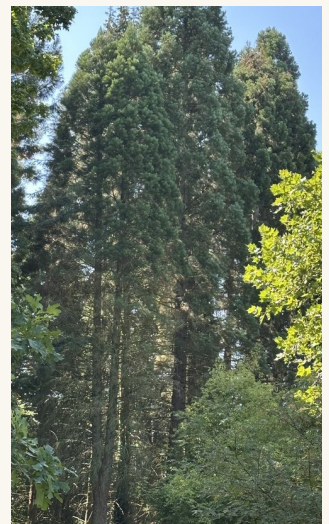
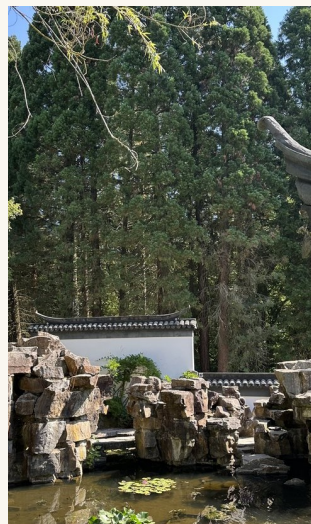
A Small Forest of Giant Sequoias

Sequoiadendron giganteum et al.

A whole group of giant sequoias grows in the Botanical Garden of Ruhr University Bochum – almost a small forest of giant specimens, arranged in a row opposite the Chinese Garden.

Founded in 1968, the Botanical Garden lies at the edge of the university campus in Bochum's Querenburg district and is divided into numerous themed gardens – from the alpine garden to the steppe garden to the Chinese Garden. Admission to the roughly four-hectare site is free.

Directly opposite the Chinese Garden stand several towering giant sequoias in a row, as can be seen in the background of one photograph behind the pagoda wall. With their slender, cone-shaped crowns and gray-green foliage, they form an impressive eye-catcher and rank among the largest groups of this species in North Rhine-Westphalia.



Giant sequoias in the Botanical Garden Bochum, opposite the Chinese Garden.

SITE 06 · BOCHUM

Needle Detail and Botanical Labeling

Sequoiadendron giganteum · *Sequoia sempervirens*

A botanical label in the garden confirms: a coast redwood (Sequoia sempervirens) is also represented in Bochum.

The dense, blue-green shimmering needle clusters are typical of the giant sequoia, while the name tag on a neighboring tree reading “Sequoia sempervirens” points to the tallest tree species in the world in its native range. This allows several giant sequoia species to be directly compared in the Botanical Garden Bochum.

Viewed from below, the dense crown of one of the older specimens reveals the typical sparse branch structure with whorled side branches – a growth pattern found in similar form across all giant sequoia species, even though needle color and shape vary by species.



Needle detail, crown view, and botanical name tag, Botanical Garden Bochum.

BACKGROUND

The Names of the Giant Sequoias

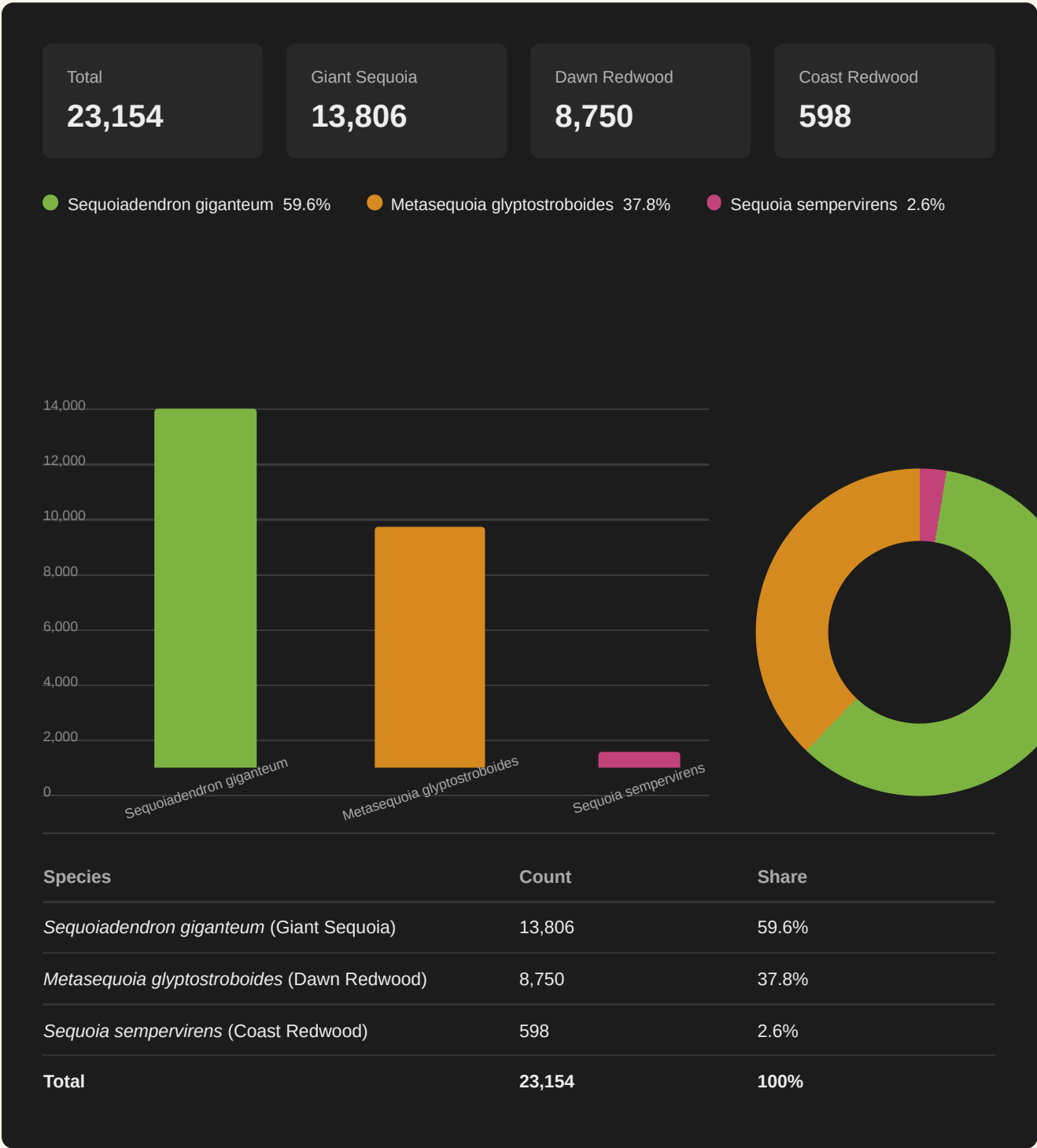
The scientific names of the giant sequoias tell the story of their discovery and study. The following overview breaks down the botanical classification from plant family to species and explains the Greek and Latin word components from which the names are composed.

The Names of the Giant Sequoias – Etymology and Meaning				
Family	Cupressaceae (Family)	Latin <i>cupressus</i> + <i>-aceae</i> <i>cupressus</i> = cypress · <i>-aceae</i> = suffix for families	→	“The cypress family”
Sub-family	Sequoioideae (Subfamily)	<i>Sequoia</i> + <i>-oideae</i> <i>Sequoia</i> = after Cherokee chief Sequoyah · <i>-oideae</i> = “similar to”	→	“Those resembling Sequoia” Subfamily of the sequoia relatives
Genus	Sequoia (Genus)	<i>Sequoia</i> — named after Sequoyah, inventor of the Cherokee syllabary (1767–1843)	→	“Sequoia” Honoring Sequoyah
Species	<i>Sequoia sempervirens</i> (Species)	<i>semper</i> + <i>virens</i> (Latin) <i>semper</i> = always · <i>virens</i> = green, fresh	→	“evergreen sequoia” Refers to the evergreen needles
Genus	Sequoiadendron (Genus)	<i>Sequoia</i> + <i>dendron</i> (Greek) <i>Sequoia</i> = after Sequoyah · <i>dendron</i> = tree	→	“Sequoia tree” A tree of the genus Sequoia
Species	<i>Sequoiadendron giganteum</i> (Species)	<i>giganteus</i> , <i>-a</i> , <i>-um</i> (Latin) <i>giganteus</i> = giant, huge, of giants	→	“the giant sequoia tree” Refers to the enormous size of this species
Genus	Metasequoia (Genus)	<i>meta-</i> + <i>Sequoia</i> (Greek/Latin) <i>meta-</i> = after, later, beyond · <i>Sequoia</i> = after Sequoyah	→	“Beyond the Sequoia” Interpreted as the “new Sequoia” (a geologically younger relative)
Species	<i>Metasequoia glyptostroboides</i> (Species)	<i>glyptos</i> + <i>strobos</i> + <i>-oides</i> (Greek) <i>glyptos</i> = engraved · <i>strobos</i> = cone · <i>-oides</i> = similar to	→	“cone-like with engraved cones” Refers to the small, engraved (ribbed) cones
Languages		Etymological Components		Why These Names?
Latin (lat.) · Greek (gr.)		Word stems + suffixes together yield the meaning of the scientific names.		The names tell of discovery, kinship, and the distinctive characteristics of these impressive trees.

DATA & FACTS

Distribution in Germany

How many giant sequoias actually stand in Germany can be determined fairly precisely thanks to volunteer mapping efforts. The online register mbreg.de documents more than 23,000 locations nationwide, providing one of the most extensive datasets on this tree genus in Europe. The following analysis shows the current distribution by species.



Source: mbreg.de. All figures are approximate and may vary depending on mapping status.

CONCLUSION

Summary & Knowledge Check

From Langenhagen to Bremen, one thing is clear: giant sequoias have firmly established themselves in the northern German park landscape – as the evergreen giant sequoia with fire-resistant bark, or as the deciduous dawn redwood with soft foliage. Test what you remember in the short knowledge check below. Mark the correct answer for each question.

Question 1

Which of the two giant sequoia species sheds its needles completely in autumn?

- ☐ A Giant Sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*)
- ☐ B Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*)
- ☐ C Both species shed their needles
- ☐ D Neither species

Question 2

Where was the dawn redwood rediscovered as a living species in 1941, after previously being known only as a fossil?

- ☐ A California, USA
- ☐ B The Sierra Nevada
- ☐ C China's Hubei province
- ☐ D Siberia

Question 3

According to the mbreg.de register, approximately how many giant sequoias are currently mapped in Germany?

- ☐ A About 2,500
- ☐ B About 8,750
- ☐ C Around 23,000
- ☐ D Around 100,000

The answers can be found at the very end of this publication.

APPENDIX

Imprint & Photo Credits

This publication documents giant sequoia sites in Langenhagen, Hannover, Magdeburg, Bad Salzdetfurth, Bremen, and Bochum, and is based on the blog post “Giant Sequoia (in Langenhagen, Hannover, Magdeburg, Bad Salzdetfurth, Bremen),” published on June 4, 2026 on kleinhirn.eu.

All photographs and infographics in this publication were created by Thomas Wenzlaff and are protected by copyright. Any reproduction, distribution, or further use – even in part – requires the prior written consent of the author.

The population figures on the distribution of giant sequoias in Germany are taken from the volunteer-maintained register mbreg.de. All figures are approximate, without guarantee of completeness.

© 2026 Thomas Wenzlaff

All rights reserved.

Author: Thomas Wenzlaff · Blog: kleinhirn.eu · Published: June 4, 2026

Thank you for reading — and enjoy your own discovery tour of the giant sequoias in Germany.

Answer Key

Question 1: B · **Question 2:** C · **Question 3:** C