

Amazing tree facts

It has been estimated that in 50 years one tree recycles more than £60,000 worth of water, provides £50,000 worth of erosion control, £100,000 worth of air pollution control, and produces £60,000 worth of oxygen.

Two mature trees provide enough oxygen for a family of four.

Trees help reduce the "greenhouse effect" by absorbing CO_2 . One acre of trees removes 2.6 tons of CO_2 per year.

By cooling the air and ground around them, the shade from trees helps cool the Earth's temperature.

Trees help prevent city flooding by catching raindrops and offsetting runoff caused by buildings and parking lots.

Hospital patients heal faster, require shorter stays and less painkillers if room windows face trees.

Well placed trees help cut energy costs and consumption by decreasing air conditioning costs 10-50% & reducing heating costs as much as 4-22%.

One person causes about 10 tons of carbon dioxide to be emitted a year. One tree removes about 1 ton of CO_2 per year.

Trees increase property values by 5-20% due to their landscaping value.

The largest individual tree in the world is a Giant Redwood called "General Sherman". It is about 275 ft tall and a girth of 85 ft. It is estimated to have a volume of 52,500 cubic feet.

The world's tallest tree is a Coast Redwood in California at 360ft. Westonbirt's tallest tree is a Giant Redwood measuring 153ft.

The world's oldest trees are Bristlecone pines in the USA, with confirmed ages up to 4600 years. Britain's oldest tree is probably the Fortingall Yew in Tayside, which is believed to be over 3000 years old. Westonbirt's oldest tree is a 2000year old coppiced lime in Silk Wood. Britain is thought to have the largest population of 'ancient' trees in Europe.

A fully-grown Oak in the UK grows - and sheds - 250,000 leaves every year and produces around 50,000 acorns in a good year.

Many of the world's rarest trees are endemic to remote islands (i.e. they are found nowhere else). Some are known from a single wild specimen, such as the St Helena Olive. Britain has its own endemic trees including *Sorbus bristoliensis* which only grows naturally in the Avon Gorge.

The height above sea level at which trees cannot grow is called the tree line. This changes with latitude - in the Alps it is approximately 7000ft, whilst in North Wales it is a mere 1820ft.

Written by Westonbirt Education Team 2003