



Authorities closed Sequoia National Park in California, US, because there were two wildfires close to the park.

There are around 2,400 sequoias in the park, and among them is the tallest tree in the world named General Sherman. General Sherman is 83.82 meters high, and a scientist said that the tree could be between 2,300 to 2,700 years old. Firefighters wrapped the **bases** of many sequoias in **aluminum blankets** to keep them safe from the fire.

Sequoias are the tallest trees in the world, and they are thousands of years old. Fires are also good for them. It is interesting that fire helps them grow because they start making **seeds**. Fires also burn other trees which is good for sequoias because they have more space to grow.

**Difficult words:** **base** (the bottom of an object or a plant), **aluminum blanket** (a light silver-grey metal turned into a large piece of material which people usually put on a bed to keep warm), **seed** (a small oval part of a plant from which a new plant grows).

**Discussion Questions****Topic Talk**

1. Define the following words: *base, aluminum blanket and seed*
2. What is the name of the tallest tree in the world? And how old is the tree?
3. Where can we find the tallest trees in the world?
4. Why did the authorities close the Sequoia National Park?
5. Why are fires good for sequoias?
6. What did the firefighters use the aluminum blankets for?

**Express Your Thoughts**

1. Do wildfires happen in your country?
2. What do you think are the most common causes of wildfires?
3. In your country, where can you find the tallest and the oldest trees?
4. Why do we need to protect trees from wildfires or any other form of destruction?