



Metasequoia (Dinosaur Tree)

Metasequoia glyptostroboides, also known as Dawn Redwood or Dinosaur Tree, is native to China. Paleobotanists (scientists who study ancient and extinct plantlife) believed this plant was extinct; the only evidence ever found of the plant were fossils from the time of the dinosaurs.

In 1941 a botanist exploring the interior of China noticed a large tree in a remote village with a small shrine at its base. The villagers worshiped a god they believed lived inside the tree, and the botanist realized the tree was something special indeed. Scientists around the world examined samples from the tree and confirmed that it was the *Metasequoia* that had previously only been known by impressions left in solidifying stone millions of years before.

Seeds were collected on later expeditions and a large grove of Dawn Redwoods was discovered deep in an isolated valley. The seeds were sent to botanical gardens and universities around the world.

Over the past 66 years the Dawn Redwood has become a popular landscape tree because of its attractive form and tolerance for adverse growing conditions.

To achieve optimum growth choose a sunny location with moist soil. It can survive in drier soil, but will need to be watered deeply in the first few years of its life. This will encourage the tree to establish a strong deep root system which will help it access moisture deep within the soil.

The Dinosaur Tree will become very large and needs a minimum of 80' vertical clearance and at least 40' horizontally. It is a relatively fast grower and can grow as much as a foot a year when growing conditions are good.

Choose a spot where you will be able to admire its beautiful fall foliage. The Dawn Redwood is deciduous and will drop its leaves when the weather turns cool.

Amend the planting hole with well rotted compost to provide nutrients the tree will need as it grows. While the tree is small you can encourage faster growth by using a balanced liquid or granular fertilizer lightly around the base of the tree. Plant your young sapling with the crown of the plant level with the surface of the soil. The crown is the point where the trunk joins with the roots.

Mulch around the base of the plant with no more than 3 inches of mulch to reduce competition from grass and weeds. Mulch will also retain soil moisture, mediate soil temperatures, and eliminate the danger posed to the tree's trunk by lawnmowers and string trimmers. Rake away old mulch and replace it with new mulch every other year. **DO NOT ALLOW MULCH TO EXCEED 3 INCHES IN DEPTH** around the Dawn Redwood or any other landscape tree.