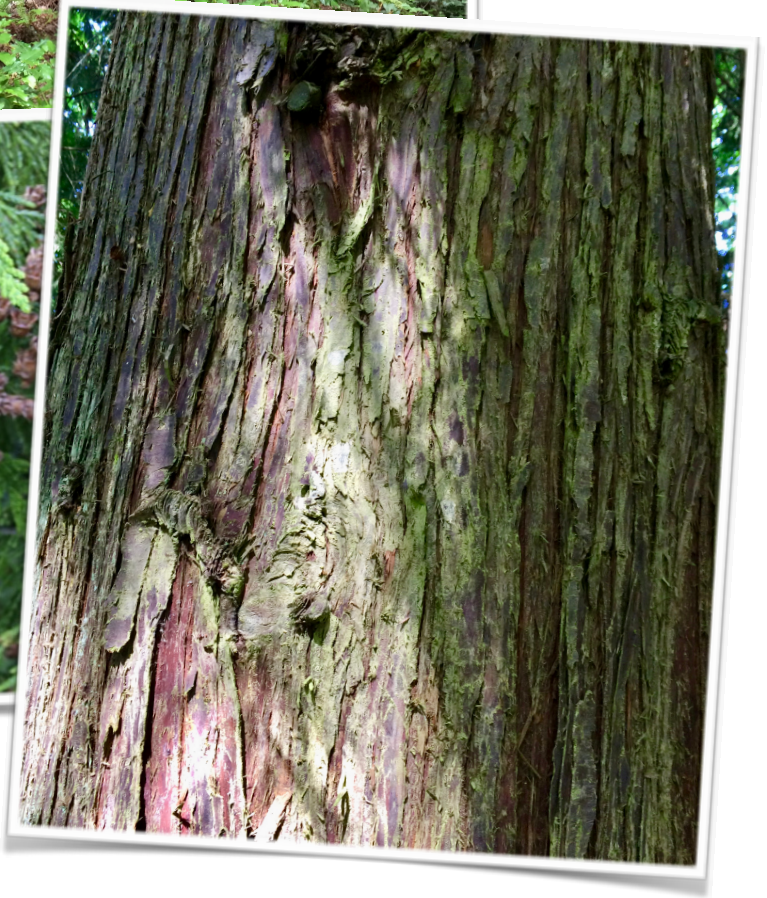


Western Red Cedar

Thuja plicata (Aka Redcedar or Red-cedar)



"The power of the Red Cedar tree was said to be so strong a person could receive strength by standing with his or her back to the tree...It is called the 'tree of life'...and is still held with highest respect by all northwest coast peoples for its healing and spiritual powers."

Pojar, Jim and MacKinnon, Andy. [Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast](#)

One of the native giants of the Pacific mature forest, this majestic evergreen can reach 1,000 years of age and a height of 200 feet at maturity. In old growth forests, the enormous buttressed base of the mature trees may spread out as much as 20 feet in diameter. Western red cedar grows quickly when young, up to three feet per year, however it will need hundreds of years to achieve maximum size.

Depending on exposure and the age of the tree, the bark varies in appearance from its youthful red color to a more weathered gray. It is thin and shreds off easily into soft reddish fibers that Native Americans have made clothes, rain gear, mats, ropes, tinder and wicks, toilet sticks (prior to the introduction of paper) and baby diapers. Other uses include: wood for arrow and spear shafts, ceremonial carving and totem poles, rattles, basketry, fishing nets and traps. The low smoke from an aromatic fire of red cedar is still favored for smoking salmon.

Canoes made by Native Americans from red cedar were such amazing vessels that in about 1900, J.C. Voss bought a 38 foot dugout canoe from Vancouver Island Indians, and with the addition of 3 masts and a cabin, used it to sail around the world!

Interestingly, few cedars were cut down before explorers from other lands arrived. Instead of felling the trees, fallen logs or boards split from living trees were used by Native Peoples.

The "Quinault Lake Redcedar"...was one of the largest of all trees. It died back extensively over many years and finally collapsed, leaving only a large stump, in early 2016. The girth of the tree was 62 feet and its height was 174 feet.

Hansen's Northwest Native Plant Database [http://
www.nwplants.com/](http://www.nwplants.com/)

Monumental Trees [www.monumentaltrees.com/en/usa/
washington/](http://www.monumentaltrees.com/en/usa/washington/)

Pojar, Jim and MacKinnon, Andy. [Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast](#)