

Scientists make stunning discovery in remote forest: 'There are no others that have had the opportunity to live so long'

31 December 2023

Though trees across the globe are under threat from the logging and agriculture industries and changing climate, [one tree](#) in Alerce Costero National Park in Chile is believed to have survived for more than 5,000 years — and experts say it is the oldest living tree in the world.

The tree, known as “Gran Abuelo” (Great-Grandfather), is believed to be even older than the currently recognized oldest tree in the world, California’s 4,850-year-old [Methuselah Pine](#). Scientists are in the process of measuring the tree’s age in an effort to get it officially recognized as the world’s oldest.

“It’s a survivor, there are no others that have had the opportunity to live so long,” [said](#) Antonio Lara, one of the scientists working on determining the tree’s age.

Gran Abuelo, a *Fitzroya cupressoides*, or Patagonian cypress, was discovered by a park ranger in 1972. Though its exact location was initially kept secret to protect the tree (as is [still the case](#) with the Methuselah Pine) tourists are now allowed to trek about an hour through the forest to take pictures alongside it. Chile’s national parks service has increased the number of park rangers on patrol to make sure the tree is kept from harm.

Not only is Gran Abuelo interesting in its own right, but scientists also believe it could hold the key to learning how species have adapted over time to climatic changes.

“The ancient trees have genes and a very special history because they are symbols of resistance and adaptation. They are nature’s best athletes,” Jonathan Barichivich, one of the scientists studying the tree, [said](#). “If these trees disappear, so too will disappear an important key about how life adapts to changes on the planet.”

“There are many other reasons that give value and sense to this tree and the need to protect it,” Lara [said](#).

In other recent tree discovery news, a nature photographer in British Columbia discovered one of the largest old-growth cedars ever documented. The location of that tree, which is believed to be over 1,000 years old, is also being kept secret.

Source: <https://news.yahoo.com/scientists-stunning-discovery-remote-forest-010000780.html>