

Big sticks from the Styx River, Tasmania



The Styx River is an area of spectacular beauty under constant threat from logging commercial interests, in the island of Tasmania, Australia.

At 87 metres the Bigger Tree swamp gum is one of the tallest trees on Earth. While taller trees continue to be discovered in the Styx State Forest, there is something about the Bigger Tree's presence, sheer size and beauty that captivates the imagination.

Have a seat and admire this spectacular swamp gum.

1. How many cm high is this swamp gum tree? How many mm is that?
2. On what day in the series reported in the Genesis story, were plants created?
3. Every 2.5cm of girth corresponds to approximately one year's growth. So a tree with a girth of 100cm will be about 40 years old, (100 divided by 2.5). At one metre from the ground the girth of this tree is 12.5 metres, so what is the approximate age of the tree?
4. As leaves or branches grow spirally spaced along a main axis, their placement forms interlocking spiral clockwise and counter clockwise arms. But the number of clockwise arms never equals the number of counter clockwise arms. Instead, the sequence is identical to the Fibonacci sequence. What is the 14th number in this famous sequence?
5. Use some of the suggestions of Vi Hart to create binary trees down your page. The shapes that emerge are quite like the grow pattern of trees.
<http://www.khanacademy.org/math/vi-hart/v/doodling-in-math-class--binary-trees>
6. An even higher 101m giant swamp gum has been recorded, and is second only to a giant coast redwood in the Redwood National Park in California. This tree stands 115m tall. Mark out 101 metres on the ground to see how tall this tree is. If this was a building, how many storeys high would it be? A tree has as much biomass in its roots as there is above the ground. The Psalmist uses the analogy of a well planted/rooted tree in Psalm 1 to teach us about our lives. What is the key teaching of this psalm?