

# Study: Old trees keep growing – in girth

By Richard Harris, NPR

Like other animals and many living things, we humans grow when we're young and then stop growing once we mature. But trees, it turns out, are an exception to this general rule. In fact, scientists have discovered that trees grow faster the older they get.

Once trees reach a certain height, they do stop getting taller. So many foresters figured that tree growth – and girth – also slowed with age.

“What we found was the exact opposite,” says Nate Stephenson, a forest ecologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, based in California's Sequoia and Kings Canyon national parks. “Tree growth rate increases continuously as trees get bigger and bigger,” Stephenson says.

The General Sherman, a giant sequoia in California's Sequoia National Park, is more than 2,000 years old, and is thought to be the largest tree (by volume) in the world.

**Read the whole story**