

SUFA E-News Spring 2025



Welcome to the Spring 2025 issue of the Sunnyvale Urban Forest Advocates (SUFA) newsletter. This quarterly newsletter will keep you informed about how you can participate in SUFA's efforts to increase the tree canopy in Sunnyvale through education, tree plantings, and advocacy.

SUFA and the Sunnyvale Library are excited to announce an exclusive screening of the film **Giants Rising: The Secrets and Superpowers of Redwoods**.

Join us and explore the wonder of the redwoods. This highly acclaimed film is only available through private screenings – it is not in theaters or online. And join us after the movie for a Q&A session with David Cowman, Director of Land Stewardship - Sempervirens Fund. Visit the [SUFA Giants Rising Webpage](#) to learn more and stay updated. Registration is required.

Date: Saturday, June 7, 2025

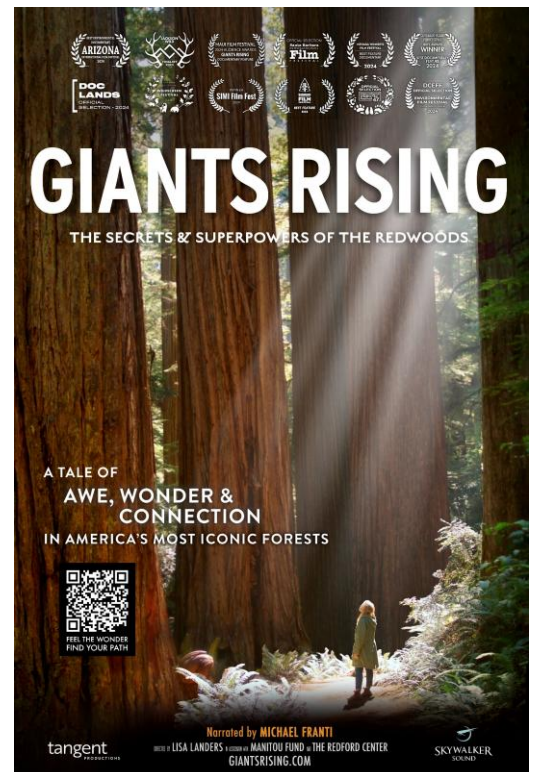
Time: 3-5pm

(Movie: 3-4:30pm; Q&A: 4:30-5pm)

Location: Sunnyvale Library, Program Room

This event is FREE but registration is required at:

[Giants Rising Registration](#).



Movie Trailer: Watch the trailer at giantsrising.com.

Synopsis: A journey into the heart of America's most iconic forests, GIANTS RISING reveals the secrets, superpowers and the saga of the redwoods—the tallest and among the oldest living beings on Earth. Living links to the past, redwood trees hold powers that may play a role in our future, including their ability to withstand fire and capture carbon, to offer clues about longevity, and even to enhance our own well-being. Through the voices of scientists, artists, Native communities and others, we discover the many connections that sustain these forests and the promise of solutions that will help us ALL rise up to face the challenges that lie ahead.

Looking for a fun and engaging way to explore the natural beauty of Sunnyvale? How about a no-cost, private tree walk with your friends or organization?

The Sunnyvale Urban Forest Advocates (SUFA) are thrilled to offer exclusive tree walks for groups at many of our beautiful parks. Whether you are a nature enthusiast, a curious soul, or simply looking for a unique adventure, our tree walks are perfect for you!



Discover the Wonder of Sunnyvale's Trees with a Private Group Tree Walk!

•Why Join a Tree Walk?

- Connect with Nature: Experience the serene beauty of our parks and learn fascinating facts about the diverse tree species in Sunnyvale.
- Interactive Learning: Our knowledgeable guides will lead you on an educational journey that's both fun and informative.
- Bond with Your Group: Spend quality time with friends, family, or fellow organization members in a refreshing outdoor setting.

How to Get Started: Gather your group of up to twenty people (minimum of five participants) and reach out to us at info@sunnyvaletrees.org to schedule your tree walk. Tree walks are available from May through September.



Tree Walk Parks



Ponderosa, Ortega, Serra, De Anza, Murphy, Lakewood, Washington, and the Sunnyvale Civic Center are all available for tree walks. Don't miss out on this opportunity to explore and appreciate the natural treasures of Sunnyvale. Contact us today to set up your walk.

Fall Special Offer: Child-Friendly Tree Walk at Serra Park!

Got little adventurers aged 5-10? We have a special child-friendly tree walk designed just for them at Serra Park. It's a fantastic way for kids to connect with nature and learn in an exciting, hands-on environment.





We continue our series featuring common (and in this case, not so common) Sunnyvale street trees with information about the trees presented in an interview format. These are trees you'll see as you walk or bike through Sunnyvale neighborhoods or parks.

SUFA: Thank you for being willing to be interviewed by Sunnyvale Urban Forest Advocates. First, can I get your full name?

Dawn Redwood: Of course, but as Latin names go, it's pretty boring. My Latin name is *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* – *Metasequoia* meaning “akin to *Sequoia*” and *glyptostroboides* meaning resembling the genus *Glyptostrobus* because we were originally misidentified as *Glyptostrobus pensillis* (Chinese swamp cypress). Sorry, TMI that only a botanist could love.

Tree on the Street Interview: The Dawn Redwood

SUFA: But you have a common name also, am I correct?

Dawn Redwood: Oh, yes! We are commonly known as the dawn redwood and that's a much more interesting story.

SUFA: Please share.

Dawn Redwood: Well, the name dawn redwood was actually coined by the San Francisco Chronicle to evoke the idea that we are as ancient as the dawn of time. Fossil records show that 50-65 million years ago *Metasequoia* species were abundant and found throughout the Northern Hemisphere. But as the earth cooled my genus began to disappear and was thought to be completely extinct 2-5 million years ago.

SUFA: And yet, here you are!

Dawn Redwood: Indeed. A number of us were discovered in central China in 1941 and the University of California, Berkeley funded a seed collection expedition to disperse seeds to botanic gardens, universities, and colleges throughout the world in an effort to preserve the species. And the rest is history.

SUFA: How are you related to the two native redwood species we have here in California?

Dawn Redwood: Ah! Interesting question. We are all classified as redwoods but are all very different. We dawn redwoods only get to be about 100 feet high but our cousins the coast redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*) can reach up to 400 feet – the tallest living things on earth. The giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) are really big around – the most massive things on earth. Sigh. I live in their shadows so to speak.

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SUFA: But I understand you have a feature that your redwood cousins don't have.

Dawn Redwood: True! We are unique in that we are among the very few conifers (cone-bearing trees) that are deciduous. Our leaves turn coppery-brown in the fall and then drop. And, like all deciduous trees, we get new growth again in the spring.

SUFA: That's fascinating! But wait! I thought redwood trees have needles not leaves.

Dawn Redwood: Ah, a common misconception. Our leaves are considered "needle-like" because they are thin and pointy but they are indeed leaves and perform all the same duties that leaves are supposed to – photosynthesis, water transpiration, and gas exchange.

SUFA: Well, thank you! You've been very informative. Lastly, we always ask our tree interviewees what makes them a good tree for the urban forest. What would you say?

Dawn Redwood: Well, we tolerate dry soil but usually get too big to be a useful street tree. However, we are great for larger home gardens as we can shade homes in the hot summers and, because we are deciduous, allow the sun to warm the house in the winter. We're also a great park tree although I'm a bit sad. In all of Sunnyvale there are only two of us, all by our lonesome in De Anza Park.

SUFA: That is a bit sad.

Dawn Redwood: Well, let's look on the bright side. We're the only "living fossils" in Sunnyvale so maybe some folks will stop by De Anza Park to see us and say "Hi!"



The cones (*left*) and the beautiful fall foliage (*right*) of the dawn redwood.

Sunnyvale's Earth Day Festival 2025



On Saturday, April 5th, 2025, Sunnyvale marked Earth Month with its annual Earth Day Festival, a vibrant and sustainability-driven event centered around the theme: Empowering Our Community. From 11am - 2pm, attendees enjoyed an eclectic lineup of activities designed to inspire and engage the community in protecting our planet.

The Sunnyvale Urban Forest Advocates (SUFA) hosted an informational table with activities and led two Tree Canopy Tours around the City Hall grounds. These tours provided participants

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Visitors to SUFA's table explored touch boxes containing pine cones, tree leaves, barks from redwood and cork trees, and even a growing coast live oak planted by a squirrel! For giveaways, kids and adults alike enjoyed small heart-shaped seed packets, Earth Day stickers, and tree tattoos. SUFA also highlighted its annual Edible Tree Walk (see next article).

The Earth Day Festival was a meaningful celebration of sustainability and community, leaving attendees inspired to take action for a greener future. Thanks to everyone who participated, Sunnyvale truly embodied this year's theme of Empowering Our Community.

The Sunnyvale Urban Forest Advocates (SUFA) invite you to join an Edible Tree Walk on Saturday, July 12 at 10am. Learn about more than 40 trees and bushes that produce something edible on this permaculture-inspired walk. The walk will be approximately one mile in length.

Edible tree walks are a great way to learn about different types of trees and plants that have edible fruits or other plant parts that may be eaten. This knowledge can be both fascinating and practical, especially if you are interested in gardening.

Following the walk, enjoy tea and cookies in an urban food forest.

Reservations are required for this walk. The meeting location will be provided to the registrants. The number of participants is limited so register today at [Edible Tree Walk Registration](#).

Date: Saturday, July 12
Time: 10:00am - 11:30am



**Join Us for Our
Fourth Annual
Edible Tree Walk**

Visit us at: www.sunnyvaletrees.org

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