

# Hikers are Banned from Visiting World's Tallest Tree

## VOCABULARY WORDS

1. Exact /ɪg'zækt/ (Adjective) precise or accurate  
Example: In baking, you need to have exact measurements.
2. Hike /haɪk/ (Verb) to walk a long distance for pleasure, especially in the countryside  
Example: The entire family will go hiking tomorrow.
3. Jail /dʒeɪl/ (Noun) a place where prisoners are kept  
Example: There were a lot of inmates in the jail.
4. Trail /treɪl/ (Noun) a path through a natural area  
Example: They didn't get lost because they followed the trail back home.
5. Drastic /'dræstɪk/ (Adjective) extreme in effect or degree  
Example: They took drastic measures to save the company.



Hikers have been banned from visiting the world's tallest tree as the US National Park Service (NPS) tries to protect it. Hyperion, as the tree is called, is a 116-meter-tall redwood found in California's Redwood National Park. It was first discovered by researchers in 2006. The exact location of Hyperion wasn't shared because of how visitors could damage the tree — but people have still found their way to it. And now, anyone found hiking to the tree, or even the area around it, could have to pay \$5,000 or spend up to six months in jail.

The NPS website says that ferns no longer grow around Hyperion because of people walking through the area, while trash and worse things have been found near the tree. Leonel Arguello from Redwood National Park told SFGate that people were leaving "used toilet paper and human waste" in the area. The NPS says damage to the forest also hurts the tree, which took 600 to 800 years to grow. Also, since there are no official trails to Hyperion — and no cellphone reception — trying to get to it could be dangerous for hikers.

Arguello said Hyperion might also not be the tallest tree for long — its top could break off, or another tree could grow faster. The park service website has a message for anyone who thinks it's okay to visit the tree: "Forests grow by the inch and die by the foot. A single visitor can make a drastic negative change to an environment." The website also explains that many people making even small changes to the forest can have a serious negative effect.

## **DISCUSSION**

1. What are the most-visited natural attractions in your country?
2. How often do you get a chance to spend time in nature?
3. Are there any trees that attract a lot of tourists in your country?
4. Are there many forests in your region? Are they popular with hikers?
5. What natural attractions in the US do you want to see someday?