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Sciadopitys verticillata (Japanese Umbrella Pine) ID #318

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Japanese Umbrella Pine

Sciadopitys verticillata

318



Julian John

Bio 140 Humans and the Environment Lab

12/11/18

Salve Regina University

Japanese Umbrella Pine *Sciadopitys verticillata*, #318

Nicknamed “Redwood”

At the beginning of the semester, we were tasked with the mission to find a tree on campus and keep tabs on it. In doing this my fellow lab students and I closely studied a variety of different trees on campus and we did this by keeping a close eye on our tree and making observations throughout the change in seasons through the pictures we took. My tree, who I named *Redwood*, was marked with the number 318, and is located in between the chapel and the gated entrance when walking to the O’Hare Academic Center. After finding the tree I wanted to observe, I would make sure to go by on a weekly basis and take pictures of it. For about the first month I didn’t know what type of tree *Redwood* was so I just assumed it was some sort of redwood tree due to the color of its bark.

Figure 1: Photo taken on
September 17th, 2018



During the semester I was supposed to watch my tree change throughout the seasons like trees usually do but mine was odd, it didn't change at all. As my tree stayed unchanged as the temperature lowered I decided to do some research on the tree and find out what it really was. To do so I used the arboretum guide that you gave us and looked up the number the tree was tagged under, 318. In doing this I found that the real name of the tree is *Sciadopitys verticillata* but the common name is the Japanese Umbrella-Pine. The Japanese Umbrella-Pine is a native and unique conifer that is endemic to Japan. Also known as Koyamaki, the Japanese Umbrella-Pine is the sole member of the family Sciadopityaceae and genus *Sciadopitys*, and a living fossil with no close relatives. It is present in the fossil record for about 230 million years.

Worth about \$7,484 my tree has some fairly unique characteristics. Like aforementioned my tree is one of the most ancient trees found here on campus as its been found in fossil records that span to 230 million years ago. It also reproduces



sexually. There are two types of Koyamaki as they come as males and females. The flowers produce sexually as the two sexes are often kept together to increase the chances of successful mating. They are also very slow growing as they only grow up to 4-5 feet in the first ten years. After doing this research I found that conifers are the types of trees that grow pines and actually keep these pines throughout the winter.

Figure 2: Photo of *Redwood*, October 1, 2018.

Figure 3: Photo of *Redwood* on October 10, 2018.



Figure 4: Last photo of Redwood on November 20, 2018. After the snow and heavy weather the pines are still intact.



The Japanese Umbrella-Pine is a very tough species and is highly regarded for its aesthetic value. The red bark is what generally makes it so appealing but its rarity is what makes it so expensive. After doing this project I learned a lot about the Japanese Umbrella-Pine even though I knew nothing about this tree beforehand. I learned about its fascinating characteristics and its long evolutionary history that has kept it so unchanged. Learning about this tree and its unique mating style I am hoping that Salve

implements the opposite sex of the existing Japanese Umbrella-Pine that we currently have as we were unable to identify the current tree's gender.

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