

THE REDWOOD REPORT

Humboldt and Del Norte Counties

13-14 August 2014

Before . . .

Emily hikes through the Lady Bird Johnson Grove in Redwood National Park. Somewhere in the park is the 380-foot tall Hyperion Tree, the world's tallest. Its exact location is a secret to protect it from those who'd damage it as a trophy and tree-huggers who'd love it so much that their presence in large numbers would trample its delicate root system.



And After

The range of the coast redwood – *Sequoia sempervirens*, the taller, slimmer cousin of the giant sequoia, *Sequoiadendron giganteum*, of California's Sierra Nevada – begins in Big Sur in the south and runs through foggy hills and mountains to the Oregon border.

Not coincidentally, that's the range of the colorfully painted and intricately ornamented Victorian homes that are part of every coastal settlement from Santa Cruz north through San Francisco (where they're called "painted ladies"), Fort Bragg, Eureka to Crescent City.

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The Gingerbread Mansion, built in 1895 by Ferndale's town doctor, Hogan Ring, is now an inn. Humboldt County.



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From the Gold Rush through the 1920s, almost everything wooden in California – homes and furniture, caskets and checkers sets – was made from rot- and fire-resistant redwood.

In less than a century, only five percent of the trees, which live more than 2,000 years, were left. Most are now protected in a chain of state parks, which are anchored in the north by Redwood National Park, created in 1968 in Humboldt and Del Norte counties.

That's where Emily, Gordon and I have been the last few days.

Walking down Francis Street, Ferndale's main drag.



In *Star Wars*, this forest was home to the Ewoks, who lived on one of Endor's moons.

"A tree is a tree. How many more do you have to look at?"

Gov. Ronald Reagan reacting to the proposal to establish Redwood National Park. He attended the opening.



Timber baron William Carson, whose loggers cut redwood throughout Humboldt County, finished his mansion in downtown Eureka in 1886. It's now a private club.