

Welwitschia Mirabilis

Welwitschia mirabilis, also known as tree tumbo, is named after a Latin word meaning marvellous, miraculous, or extraordinary. And the tree that grows in the Namibia desert is just as extraordinary as its name suggests.

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A special feature of this plant is that it has only two leaves. From a tiny tree, just two leaves spring up. They may be torn to pieces, tattered, and old, looking like a mess, but they persevere. For how long? The average is 600 years, and there are larger trees that are believed to be 2,000 years old. Some even say that Welwitschia has been around since a giant meteorite struck the earth 65 million years ago, surviving the arrival and the departure of the ice age. They survive wildfires, harmful insects, viruses, parasites, people, roads, and even wars. They are miraculous, and thousands of trees still live today in the Namibia desert.

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How many leaves does Welwitschia mirabilis have?

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How long does tree tumbo live for, on average?

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What does "mirabilis" mean?