

Wollemi Pine

The Wollemi Pine (*Wollemia nobilis*) was first discovered in 1994 in Wollemi National Park wilderness area, located in New South Wales, northwest of Sydney, Australia. Though the tree is called a pine, it is not in the pine family, but belongs to the family Araucariaceae, a 200 million year old family of conifers. The Wollemi Pine can grow to heights of 80 to 112 feet, and can grow in temperatures ranging from 23 to 113 degrees Fahrenheit.

The Wollemi Pine is a living fossil because it is the sole living member of its genus. The last known fossil of the genus dates back to approximately two million years ago.

Fewer than 100 trees are known to be growing in the wild. Genetic testing done on the Wollemi Pine has revealed that all specimens are genetically indistinguishable. This suggests that the plant went through a genetic bottleneck; an evolutionary event in which a large percentage of the population was killed or unable to reproduce. This caused all genetic variability to be lost.

