

# The trees of Shinjuku Gyoen that have grown alongside history

Japanese zelkova in the landscape garden

Why did the tree grow so big?

An operations guide of the experimental station, published in 1910



In 1879, a British man named Blough who lived in Yokohama brought Himalayan cedar seeds to Japan from Calcutta, India, and started growing young saplings. Shinjuku Gyoen purchased 100 of those saplings and raised them in the garden. Later, records show that 270 more trees successfully took root and grew, either from seeds or by a method called "cuttings," where branches are planted directly into the soil.

You see, that's because Shinjuku Gyoen has long been a place where folks have lovingly cared for plants and trees. Way back—over a hundred years ago, during the Meiji era—it was used as a kind of experimental garden to figure out how best to grow vegetables and flowers. Some of the trees planted back then are still standing tall and strong today. As for me... well, I've had my roots in this land for more than 400 years—long before those trees ever showed up! I may not be very tall, mind you, but I've been around a good long while...

Here you are



thanks



The largest London Planes tree is about 130 years old . Avenue of London Planes in the southeast part of the park is about the same age.

Avenue of London Planes planted over 100 years ago



The current avenue of plane trees



▲ From the Digital Archives of the Imperial Household Agency



Avenue of London Planes is pruned every year to keep them from growing too large and to maintain a beautiful landscape.

The tulip tree, which is also the symbolic tree of Shinjuku Gyoen, was planted about 130 years ago. It's said that the tulip trees lining the streets of Tokyo originated from the ones in Shinjuku Gyoen.

A tulip tree from over 100 years ago



The current tulip tree



▲ From the Digital Archives of the Imperial Household Agency



The tree on the left side of the photo on the left is believed to be the same tulip tree that still stands in the center of the garden today. When Emperor Taisho passed away, a funeral was held near this tulip tree in the photo.