

Cycadophyta

- fossil record going back 280 million years - oldest gymnosperms
- resemble palm trees with fleshy stems and leathery, feathery leaves
- dioecious

Ginkgo Phyta

- only one extant species
- found in the mountains of southwestern China
- anatomically similar to conifers

Gnetophyta

- 3 ~~genera~~ genera, 90 species
- great diversity of form and size

Coniferophyta / Pinophyta

- most diverse gymnosperm phylum
- tallest living organisms
- modern families of conifers appeared in the Mesozoic era

Common Characteristics among all Phyla

- first seed plants to evolve ~370 million years ago