**What is Dendrochronology?**

**Dendrochronology** is the dating and study of annual growth rings in trees.

The word comes from these roots:
- **dendros** = trees; more specifically, the growth rings of trees
- **chronos** = time; more specifically, events and processes in the past
- **ology** = the study of

In other words, the “study of tree rings to understand past events and processes”.

**What Do Tree Rings Tell Us?**

The practical uses of the study of tree rings are numerous. Dendrochronology is an **interdisciplinary** science, and its theory and techniques can be applied to many uses. These research interests have in common the following goals:

1. to put the present in proper historical context
2. to better understand current environmental processes and conditions
3. to improve understanding of possible future environmental issues
Dendrochronology Vocabulary

**Cookie** A tree cookie is a sliced portion of a tree bole that can show each and every annual ring on a viewable plane. A tree cookie can be one of the best teaching aids to kids and adults on things happening in a tree and environmental effects on trees.

**Dendrochronology** is the dating and study of annual growth rings in trees.

**Dendrochronologist** is a scientist who uses tree rings to answer questions about the natural world and the place of humans in its functioning.

**Increment Borer** an instrument used to remove a narrow core sample from the tree.

**Living-tree chronology** is a chronology series beginning in the present or recent past and getting older in time using only cross-dating of non-archaeological tree samples.

"**Floating**" chronology is a chronology series based on archaeological tree ring samples which is not connected to the present with living-tree chronologies.

"**Bridging of the gap**" is when the floating chronologies were connected to the living-tree chronologies.

**Cross-dating** is comparing tree-ring information between two different trees to match-up sections of there three-ring chronologies.

**Cross-section** a cross section is a cut through something (such as a tree) at an angle perpendicular to its axis in order to view its interior structure.

**Annual ring** is the amount a tree grows in one year as seen in its tree rings.

**Earlywood** is growth of the tree ring in spring (or rainy season); looks light colored.

**Latewood** is growth of the tree ring during fall/winter (or dry season); looks dark colored.
**Pith** is the wood at the center of the tree.

**Repository** is a location where things are stored for future examination and review. For example, a library is also called a book repository.

**Interdisciplinary** is when specialists/scientists from different areas of study (i.e., disciplines) work together toward understanding or studying a common problem.