



The Brazos County Arboretum

Dedicated on Arbor Day, April 30, 2010

Brazos County Master Gardener Association
Demonstration Idea Garden



Brazos County Master Gardener
Demonstration Idea Garden & Arboretum
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The dedication of the Brazos County Arboretum acknowledges a gift to the Brazos County Master Gardener Association from Ms. Janis Atkins, founder of Brazos Natural Foods. The gift, given in memory of her parents Ira Lee and Mary Dewees, recognizes their life-long dedication to gardening and preservation of nature.

Ira Lee and Mary Dewees moved to Bryan, Texas upon Ira Lee's retirement in 1980. One of the first things they did was plant trees on their new property. In Baytown where they previously resided they grew bay, camphor, oak and pecan trees. They brought seedlings of these trees with them and slowly added tree varieties adapted to this region, primarily oaks, that were readily available at the time. They then built their rose, perennial and vegetable gardens amongst them.

The Dewees were very generous in sharing the bounty of their gardens. Mary especially enjoyed passing along seeds, cuttings and divisions from their garden with her family, friends and neighbors as often as she could. The Dewees' generous and curious nature passed onto their children and grandchildren who were fortunate to spend many moments in the gardens. Together they appreciated the seasonal experiences that nature provides.

The 24 trees that were planted are adapted to the growing conditions of the Brazos Valley and will provide a living, horticultural resource for its citizens to learn from and enjoy. The Arboretum and Demonstration Idea Garden encourages not only community beautification, but also conservation of natural resources. Trees reduce erosion, stabilize soils, provide habitat for wildlife, reduce noise pollution, provide shade and help home owners minimize water and energy use.

This project was made possible through the financial and in-kind donations of Ms. Atkins, the Brazos County Commissioner's Court, ISA-certified arborists, the Brazos County Road and Bridge Department, Texas AgriLife Extension Agents, Extension Specialists and Brazos County Master Gardeners. Thank you for your contributions.

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Brazos County Master Gardener Association
Demonstration Idea Garden

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BALD CYPRESS
<i>Taxodium distichum</i> (Taks-OH-de-um DIS-tik-um)
Bald Cypress, River Cypress, White Cypress, Yellow Cypress, Red Cypress, Black Cypress, Southern Cypress, Tidewater Cypress, Gulf Cypress, Sabino Tree

Family	<i>Taxodiaceae</i>
Description	This ancient tree is native to our region. It can live for centuries and might grow 150 feet tall and spread as wide.
Plant habit	Large, deciduous conifer Develops an elongated, pyramidal shape
Landscape use	Plant as a specimen for a tall focal point or in a group for a robust yet delicately-textured screen Locate carefully; provide ample space away from structures and utilities
Average mature size	70' tall x 40' wide
Growth rate	Slow to fast, depending on water availability and soil fertility Extremely long lived
Sun exposure	Sun
Soil requirements	Acidic to neutral; can become chlorotic in highly alkaline soils
Water requirements	Thrives in waterlogged sites; develops root "knees" when planted near water or in poorly-drained sites (beware if planted in a mown lawn) Tolerates dry conditions; drought tolerant once established
Heat tolerance	High; adapts to urban conditions (reflected street heat and polluted air)
Foliage	Deciduous, dark green needles; delicate, feathery texture Yellow-bronze-brown fall color
Flowers	Inconspicuous, brownish
Blooming period	Spring
Fruit characteristics	Wrinkled, rounded cones
Pests and disease	None serious; stressed plants may attract bagworms, spider mites, or develop crown gall. Resistant to cotton root rot.
Other	Consider provenance (origin) of the tree; purchase a tree grown from a regional seed source to ensure adaptability, as nursery stock of unknown origin may not survive (ask your nursery professional) Bald cypresses with a central Texas provenance generally out perform those from Louisiana swamps or the gulf coast which are less tolerant of alkaline soil.

"The most useful of all coniferous trees for limey garden soils breaks with the traditions of its relatives by dropping its leaves in autumn... but never was shedding for a more worthy cause. The bald or river cypress turns by stages from its summer grey green, to a glowing fawn, and thence to a rich cinnamon and in its process provides one of the true spectacles of autumn."

- Scott Ogden, Gardening Success with Difficult Soils.

BUR OAK
<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i> (KWER-kus ma-kro-KAR-pa)
Burr Oak, Mossycup Oak, Mossy Overcup Oak, Prairie Oak

Family	<i>Fagaceae</i> (white oak group)
Description	This native giant is considered the longest lived of the oaks. A stately tree, it can grow 150 feet tall and spread nearly as wide.
Plant habit	Large, deciduous shade tree
Landscape use	Locate carefully; provide ample space away from structures and utilities Plant on southern and western exposures of structures to provide shade As canopy matures, understory light conditions may change from sun to full shade Provides food and shelter to a variety of beneficial insects and wildlife
Average mature size	60' tall x 60' wide
Growth rate	Moderate
Sun exposure	Sun
Soil requirements	Any well-drained soil, including alkaline soils
Water requirements	Low to medium Tolerates drought once established
Heat tolerance	High; tolerates urban conditions
Foliage	Deciduous Deep green leaves
Flowers	Catkins, 4"-6" long, white
Blooming period	Spring
Fruit characteristics	Acorns with fringed cup, can grow to golf ball size Acorns are a food source to a diverse variety of wildlife
Bark	Rough corky bark provides winter interest
Pests and disease	None serious; resistant to oak wilt
Other	Can develop a deep tap root system Straight trunk and large branches (common to white oaks) are ideal hardwood lumber for furniture building

“An outstanding tree, it should be more widely planted.”
- Neil Sperry, Neil Sperry’s Complete Guide to Texas Gardening.

CHINESE FRINGE TREE
<i>Chionanthus retusus</i> (kye-oh-NAN-thus re-TOO-sus)
Chinese Fringetree, Fringe Tree

Family	<i>Oleaceae</i>
Description	An ornamental species from China Unlike the native fringetree, <i>C. virginicus</i> , which prefers acid soils, the Chinese fringetree is more adaptable to the alkaline soils of the Brazos Valley
Plant habit	Large, multi-stemmed shrub or small to medium sized tree Drooping growth habit; may require pruning and/or limbing up as it matures
Landscape use	Outstanding ornamental tree Plant in a location where fragrance and blooms can be appreciated
Average mature size	15-20' tall x 10-15' wide
Growth rate	Slow, but accelerates with regular water and fertilizer
Sun exposure	Part sun/shade
Soil requirements	Prefers acid to neutral pH soils, but adapts to alkaline soils
Water requirements	Prefers well-drained soils, but tolerates seasonally soggy soil Tolerates moderate drought, but will require additional water if drought persists
Heat tolerance	Low
Foliage	Deciduous, glossy, dark green leaves Unremarkable fall color
Flowers	Monoecious, both male and female trees flower Male trees typically have larger, showier blossoms 5"-10" panicles of long petaled, white flowers Fragrant
Blooming period	Spring, typically for two to three weeks
Fruit characteristics	Female trees produce fruit attractive to birds
Pests and disease	None serious
Other	Messy leaf and twig drop may become a maintenance issue

"It is hard to think of a more beautiful, small 20 foot-tall tree than the Chinese fringetree when it is in full bloom."

- Edward Gilman, U.S. Forest Service Fact Sheet ST160

CHINESE PISTACHE
<i>Pistacia chinensis</i> (piss-TAY-shee-uh chi-NEN-sis)
Chinese Pistachio

Family	<i>Anacardiaceae</i>
Description	Introduced from China, this is the ugly duckling of trees: gawky, awkward and lopsided when young, maturing into a symmetrical form with an umbrella-like crown
Plant habit	Medium sized shade tree
Landscape use	Plant as a specimen tree or group several informally to provide an attractive fall foliage display An ideal specimen for a xeric garden
Average mature size	60' tall x 50' wide
Growth rate	Moderate to fast Relatively long lived
Sun exposure	Sun, part sun/shade
Soil requirements	Tolerates most soils, including those in urban conditions Develops a deep root system; does not usually interfere with foundations
Water requirements	Low; prefers dry conditions
Heat tolerance	High
Foliage	Deciduous Deep green, pinnately compound leaves with a mild radish-like fragrance when crushed Autumn hues can range from yellow, gold, salmon, orange, red, scarlet, crimson and maroon, often a brilliant mix on one tree
Flowers	Dioecious; flowers only on female trees Inconspicuous, green/white flowers
Blooming period	Spring
Bark	Zigzag branching and exfoliating bark provide winter interest
Fruit characteristics	Female trees produce red-orange fruit that ripen to purple in the fall, not usually a maintenance issue Attracts birds and other wildlife
Pests and disease	None serious
Other	Pruning may be necessary early on to develop a symmetrical structure

“Add one or more of these trees to your landscape, especially if your space is limited and you want a tough, trouble-free tree for fall color.”

- Dale Groom, Dale Groom’s Texas Gardening Guide

CHINKAPIN OAK
<i>Quercus muehlenbergii</i> (KWER-kus mew-len-BERG-ee-eye)
Chinquapin Oak, Bray Oak, Chestnut Oak, Rock Chestnut, Rock Oak or Yellow Oak

Family	<i>Fagaceae</i> (white oak group)
Description	A Texas Superstar, this native tree is suitable for planting across much of Texas. Chinkapin oaks have a graceful look at all stages of growth.
Plant habit	Medium to large shade tree Upright canopy develops into an open, rounded form as it matures
Landscape use	An ideal size and shape for most residential structures Provides food and shelter to a variety of beneficial insects and wildlife
Average mature size	60' tall x 35' wide
Growth rate	Fast when young, slower as matures
Sun exposure	Sun
Soil requirements	Adaptable to a wide range of conditions, including alkaline soils
Water requirements	Adaptable, but prefers well-drained soils Drought tolerant once established
Heat tolerance	High
Foliage	Deciduous, dark green, glossy, saw-toothed leaves, 4-6" long Bronze to yellow fall color
Flowers	Inconspicuous
Blooming period	Spring
Fruit characteristics	Acorns, deep purple when ripe, are known for their sweetness and are particularly attractive to wildlife
Pests and disease	None serious; less susceptible to oak wilt than most red and live oaks
Other	Consider provenance (origin) of the tree; purchase a tree grown from a regional seed source to ensure adaptability, as nursery stock of unknown origin may not survive (ask your nursery professional) Transplant shock may occur in the first year or two; use nursery grown container plants

“An outstanding, but less common oak for landscape use.”
- Neil Sperry, Neil Sperry’s Complete Guide to Texas Gardening.

CREPE MYRTLE
<i>Lagerstroemia indica</i> (la-ger-STROO-mee-a IN-dih-kuh)
Crape Myrtle, Crapemyrtle, Crepemyrtle

Family	<i>Lythraceae</i>
Description	This is by far our region's most popular ornamental tree
Plant habit	Medium shrub to large tree Typically multi-trunked, this deciduous shrub or tree grows into an upright vase form with irregular, ascending branches.
Landscape use	Plant as a specimen or in a group A four seasonal, ornamental plant
Average mature size	25' tall x 15' wide (check variety for specific mature size)
Growth rate	Slow to moderate; however, faster growing hybrids are available Easy to transplant and grow
Sun exposure	Sun
Soil requirements	Tolerates heavy, alkaline soils
Water requirements	Tolerates any well-drained soil Tolerates high humidity and drought, once established
Heat tolerance	High
Foliage	Deciduous Dark green, leathery leaves Yellow, russet, and red fall coloration
Flowers	Large panicles; color is specific to variety (white, red, magenta, coral, purple, pink)
Blooming period	Throughout the summer
Fruit characteristics	Small brown seed pods; provide fall and winter interest
Bark	Cinnamon colored, exfoliating; provides winter interest
Pests and disease	Many varieties are susceptible to powdery mildew, sooty mold and aphids; select a resistant variety Resistant to cotton root rot Providing good air circulation helps to prevent disease
Other	Resist the urge to prune, as those left unpruned bloom sooner and heavier than those that are heavily pruned, an effect known as "crepe murder" or "crepicide."

"[The crepe myrtle is] unrivaled among small flowering trees in ease of culture, length of bloom period, interesting trunks and many other features."

- Neil Odenwald, Identification, Selection, and Use of Southern Plants for Landscape Design.

LACEBARK ELM
<i>Ulmus parvifolia</i> (ULM-us par-vee-FOH-lee-uh)
Chinese Elm, Chinese Lacebark Elm

Family	<i>Ulmaceae</i>
Description	A graceful shade tree of fine texture, its ornamental value is its lacy-patterned exfoliating bark and arching branch structure
Plant habit	Medium shade tree
Landscape use	Plant as a specimen or in a group Scaled to fit most residential structures
Average mature size	30' tall x 40' wide
Growth rate	Fast; young trees may require staking Relatively long lived
Sun exposure	Sun, part sun/shade
Soil requirements	Easy to grow in most soil conditions, even in wet, compacted soil Develops a shallow, fibrous root system; surface rooting is likely in heavy, alkaline soils (plant at least 30' away from foundations and planting beds to avoid root intrusion)
Water requirements	Moderate
Heat tolerance	High, especially in urban conditions (reflected street heat)
Foliage	Deciduous to evergreen (depending on climate) Dark green, shiny, leathery leaves
Flowers	Inconspicuous, green
Blooming period	Fall
Fruit characteristics	Inconspicuous, brown
Bark	Cinnamon colored, exfoliating bark provides year-round interest Thin bark is vulnerable to string-line trimmers; mulch to drip line of canopy if possible
Pests and disease	Resistant to elm leaf beetle, Dutch elm disease and phloem necrosis Susceptible to cotton root rot, particularly in wet conditions and areas where cotton was previously grown
Other	Not to be confused with Siberian elm (<i>U. pumila</i>), which should not be planted due to its invasive nature, susceptibility to pests and diseases, overall weak structure and constant leaf/branch litter nuisance. Low maintenance

“As a fast growing shade tree in Texas, Lacebark elm is tops.”
- Dale Groom, Dale Groom’s Texas Gardening Guide.

LITTLE GEM SOUTHERN MAGNOLIA
<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i> 'Little Gem' (mag-NO-lee-a gran-dih-FLOR-uh)
Little Gem Magnolia

Family	<i>Magnoliaceae</i>
Description	The southern magnolia is the symbol of the south, considered by many as the world's most beautiful flowering tree. Fossil remains show Magnolia grew 60 million years ago, making it one of the most ancient plants still growing today. Of the many available varieties of <i>M. grandiflora</i> , the cultivar 'Little Gem' is adaptable to Brazos Valley growing conditions.
Plant habit	Medium sized tree Pyramid shape with straight central trunk
Landscape use	Four seasonal ornamental tree Plant as a specimen for a beautiful, evergreen focal point Ideal for smaller locations
Average mature size	25' tall x 15' wide
Growth rate	Slow Relatively long lived
Sun exposure	Sun, but tolerates part sun/shade
Soil requirements	Adaptable to heavy, alkaline soils Shallow, dense, and fibrous root system; locate away from foundations
Water requirements	Prefers moist, well-drained soils
Heat tolerance	High
Foliage	Deciduous Dark, glossy green leaves with rusty velvet undersides
Flowers	Large white flowers (half the size of other <i>M. grandiflora</i> cultivars) Slightly fragrant Some repeat bloom
Blooming period	Spring
Fruit characteristics	Fuzzy brown seed pods hold bright red seeds
Pests and disease	None serious
Other	Constant leaf drop can be a maintenance issue Provides dense shade at maturity; almost nothing grows underneath

"The Little Gem Magnolia is a stunning small tree for urban landscapes."
- Neil Sperry, Neil Sperry's Complete Guide to Texas Gardening.

LIVE OAK	TEXAS LIVE OAK
<i>Quercus virginiana</i> (KWER-kus vir-jin-ee-AN-uh)	<i>Quercus fusiformis</i> (KWER-kus fus-EE-for-miss)
Coast Live Oak, Southern Live Oak	Escarpment Live Oak, West Texas Live Oak

Family	<i>Fagaceae</i> (white oak group)
Description	An impressive oak tree with a large, sprawling canopy once mature
Plant habit	Large shade tree, with a spreading, downward growth habit
Landscape use	Given proper growing conditions, oaks can grow to a massive size over a long period of time, producing generous shade Provides food and shelter to a variety of beneficial insects and wildlife Locate carefully; provide ample space away from structures and utilities
Average mature size	60' tall x 70' wide (can exceed both)
Growth rate	Slow to moderate Long lived
Sun exposure	Sun
Soil requirements	Adaptable
Water requirements	Low
Heat tolerance	High
Foliage	Evergreen except during short period of leaf change (spring)
Flowers	Green catkins
Blooming period	Spring
Fruit characteristics	Acorns
Pests and disease	Susceptible to oak wilt
Other	Consider provenance (origin) of the tree; purchase a tree grown from a regional seed source to ensure adaptability, as nursery stock of unknown origin may not survive (ask your nursery professional) Maintenance may be an issue, as oaks seasonally drop flowers, acorns and leaves Produces high-quality hardwood

“Botanists see no difference between the coast live oak and the escarpment live oak of the Hill Country, and in terms of how they look, they’re right. They’re both big, powerful looking live oaks. But there’s all the difference in the world in how they grow. The coastal live oak isn’t nearly as drought tolerant; around Houston, it lives in heavy clays, often in seasonally-standing water, and is usually draped with Spanish moss. One other difference; the coastal oaks aren’t as cold tolerant as its escarpment relative. All the live oaks growing between the Hill Country and the Gulf are hybrids of these two.

- Sally Waskowski, Native Texas Plants.

“Scarcely any other tree develops the distinctive, spreading habit of the live oaks...”

- Scott Ogden, Successful Gardening with Difficult Soils.

MEXICAN PLUM
<i>Prunus mexicana</i> (PROO-nus meks-sih-KAY-nuh)
Big Tree Plum, Inch Plum

Family	<i>Rosaceae</i>
Description	This small, native tree is an excellent four-seasonal ornamental
Plant habit	Small to medium sized tree
Landscape use	Plant as a specimen or in a naturalized border or grove
Average mature size	20-25' tall x 15-20' wide
Growth rate	Moderate to fast Difficult to transplant from the wild; purchase a nursery-grown specimen
Sun exposure	Sun to part sun/shade Prefers dappled, understory light conditions
Soil requirements	Tolerates most soil conditions
Water requirements	Tolerates any well-drained soil; relatively drought tolerant
Heat tolerance	Moderate
Foliage	Deciduous, dark green leaves Yellow-orange fall color
Flowers	Small, 1" wide, white flowers last seven to 10 days Fragrant and attractive to butterflies
Blooming period	Spring
Fruit characteristics	Red or purple drupes develop in summer, tart tasting Attractive to birds and wildlife (raccoons, ringtails, opossums and foxes)
Bark	Exfoliating; provides winter interest
Pests and disease	Relatively free of pests and blight
Other	Does not typically produce suckers Thorns on newer branches can be a nuisance Hog Plum (<i>P. regularis</i>) is more adapted to alkaline soils Native Americans and early settlers harvested the fruit for winter made plum jelly and preserves.

“This is the star of our native plums. Our smaller plums form thickets, but Mexican plum is well-behaved - a tree to enjoy and treasure for years.”

- Sally and Andy Wasowski, Native Texas Plants, Landscaping Region by Region.

MONTERREY OAK
<i>Quercus polymorpha</i> (KWER-kus pol-ee-MOR-fuh)
Mexican White Oak, Mexican Oak, Coahuila Oak, Net Leaf White Oak

Family	<i>Fagaceae</i> (white oak group)
Description	This white oak specimen is found in the deep canyons of the Sierra Madre in northern Mexico, southward to Guatemala and north to the borderlands of West Texas Relatively new to our region, growing tests appear promising for our alkaline soil and winter hardiness zone
Plant habit	Medium sized shade tree Matures somewhat smaller than live oaks, needing less sprawling space
Landscape use	An excellent shade tree with dense foliage useful in wind and sound abatement, this tree shows promise as a substitute for our live oaks which are prone to oak wilt. Provides food and shelter to a variety of beneficial insects and wildlife
Average mature size	30-40' tall x 30-40' wide; can grow to 80' given ideal conditions
Growth rate	Fast; grows tall, then spreads in the manner of live oaks
Sun exposure	Sun
Soil requirements	Adaptable to a wide range of soil conditions
Water requirements	Prefers moist soils, but adaptable to a wide range of soil conditions Tolerates drought once established; possible xeriscape plant
Heat tolerance	High
Foliage	Deciduous to evergreen (depending on climatic conditions) New leaves emerge in spring, light pink to rose or red maturing to blue green
Flowers	Inconspicuous
Blooming period	Spring
Fruit characteristics	Acorns provide a food source to diverse array of wildlife
Bark	Attractive, scaly
Pests and disease	Resistant to oak wilt
Other	Consider provenance (origin) of the tree; purchase a tree grown from a regional seed source to ensure adaptability, as nursery stock of unknown origin may not survive (ask your nursery professional) Monterrey oaks are often found as a hybrid with bur oak, chinkipin oak, and red oak parentage, which are more susceptible to disease

Specimens more than ten years old are doing well at the Wildflower Center in Austin and at the San Antonio Botanical Gardens. With cold hardiness shown to be at least 5 degrees Fahrenheit, this oak may prove to be a very beneficial plant for Brazos Valley landscapes.

MONTEZUMA CYPRESS
<i>Taxodium mucronatum</i> or <i>T. distichum</i> var. <i>mexicana</i> (Taks-OH-de-um muh-kron-AH-tum) or (T. DIS-tik-um meks-sih-KAY-nuh)
Montezuma Bald Cypress or Mexican Cypress

Family	<i>Taxodiaceae</i>
Description	While taxonomists disagree on its classification, this wonderful tree is closely related to <i>T. distichum</i> (bald cypress) and shares most of its outstanding characteristics, yet is distinct
Plant habit	Medium to tall tree with an open, spreading habit (Bald cypress is upright and dense)
Landscape use	Plant as a specimen or in a massed group
Average mature size	45-80' tall x 40-50' wide
Growth rate	Slow to fast, depending on water availability and soil fertility Extremely long lived
Sun exposure	Sun
Soil requirements	Adaptable to a wide range of soil conditions
Water requirements	Low; tolerant of dry conditions (more so than bald cypress) Less tendency to develop root "knees" (good to consider if planted in lawn)
Heat tolerance	High; adapts to urban conditions (reflected street heat and polluted air)
Foliage	Semi evergreen to evergreen Light green needles shed in spring and immediately produce new foliage (earlier than bald cypress) Sheds quickly when temperatures drop to 25 degrees Fahrenheit Yellow fall color is insignificant (unlike bald cypress)
Flowers	Male flowers on long racemes (bald cypress male, short clusters)
Blooming period	Spring
Fruit characteristics	Globose, brown cones
Pests and disease	None serious
Other	May be more salt tolerant than bald cypress Native to the canyons of Mexico's Sierra Madres and deep south Texas

POSSUMHAW
<i>Ilex decidua</i> (EYE-leks dee-SID-yoo-uh)
Deciduous Yaupon, Deciduous Holly, Meadow Holly, Prairie Holly, Welk Holly, Bearberry, Winterberry

Family	<i>Aquifoliaceae</i>
Description	This ornamental Texas Superstar is a native, deciduous shrub or small tree prized for its showy fruit
Plant habit	Medium shrub to small tree with an irregular, spreading and open crown
Landscape use	Plant as a specimen tree, or group for visual impact (fall berries) Ideal planted along edges of woodlands or naturalized borders Low maintenance
Average mature size	15' tall x 10' wide (species can vary widely)
Growth rate	Moderate
Sun exposure	Sun to part sun/shade Fruits best with at least six hours of sun
Soil requirements	Adaptable to a wide range of soil conditions
Water requirements	Low; drought tolerant once established Easy to grow in any soil, even with poor drainage
Heat tolerance	Moderate
Foliage	Deciduous At first frost the leaves yellow and drop
Flowers	Dioecious: flowers on separate male and female plants
Blooming period	Spring
Fruit characteristics	Fruits only on female plant (look for plants with berries at the nursery) Plant male species to ensure pollination (1 male: 9 female) Red-orange drupes persist through winter (color depends on variety), providing visual interest; wildlife food source
Pests and disease	None serious
Other	Earth Kind plant: tolerates infrequent watering, poor soils, and is relatively pest and disease free This plant gets its name due to its confusion with hawthorn and its attraction to possums

“If I had my way, I’d want every gardener in the south to enjoy the winter beauty of Possumhaw.”

- Sally Waskowski, Gardening With Native Plants of the South.

REDBUD
<i>Cercis canadensis</i> var. <i>texensis</i> (SER-sis ka-na-DEN-sis teck-SEN-sis)
Oklahoma Redbud, Texas Redbud, Texas Whitebud

Family	<i>Leguminosae</i>
Description	A heavily flowering, multi-stemmed native tree that can grow up to 40' tall and wide
Plant habit	Small to medium tree Horizontal branching forms an irregularly rounded crown
Landscape use	Plant as a showy specimen tree, or group for a dramatic flowering screen Excellent planted along edges of woodland gardens
Average mature size	25' tall x 25' wide
Growth rate	Moderate to fast Relatively short life span (average 20-25 years)
Sun exposure	Sun to part sun/shade; prefers afternoon shade
Soil requirements	Adaptable to a wide range of soils
Water requirements	Easy to grow in any well-drained soil Drought resistant once established, but responds to regular watering
Heat tolerance	Moderate to high
Foliage	Deciduous Large, leathery, heart shaped, glossy leaves that emerge after flowering Foliage may be browsed by whitetail deer
Flowers	Clusters of small pink, lavender or white flowers bloom along the branches and trunk prior to leaf emergence Blooms last longer than other spring flowering trees
Blooming period	Early spring
Bark	Thin and easily damaged; mulch to the drip line to prevent damage Branching pattern provides an interesting winter silhouette
Fruit characteristics	Seeds are an attractive food source to several bird species
Pests and disease	Few serious, but susceptible to borers, leaf rollers and fungal leaf spot
Other	Varieties interbreed; there are more hybrids than pure forms; leaf shape, color and flower color vary 'Oklahoma,' 'Texas Whitebud' and 'Forest Pansy'

“Of all the spring flowering trees grown on calcareous soils, redbuds (*Cercis*) are the most cherished.”

- Scott Ogden, Gardening Success with Difficult Soils.

SHUMARD OAK
<i>Quercus shumardii</i> (KWER-kus shoo-MARD-ee-eye)
Shumard's Oak, Shumard Red Oak, Spanish Oak, Spotted Oak

Family	<i>Fagaceae</i> (black oak family)
Description	A native tree prized for its graceful shape and fall color
Plant habit	Large shade tree with a handsome, symmetrical shape
Landscape use	Plant as a specimen for a majestic shade tree Locate carefully; provide ample space away from structures and utilities Provides food and shelter to a variety of beneficial insects and wildlife
Average mature size	60' tall x 50' wide
Growth rate	Fast Difficult to transplant due to deep taproots; buy stock from a dependable nursery
Sun exposure	Sun
Soil requirements	Tolerates a wide range of soils including heavy, alkaline soils
Water requirements	Medium low Does not tolerate wet, poorly-drained soils Drought tolerant once established
Heat tolerance	High
Foliage	Deciduous Lustrous green, deeply cut, symmetrical leaves Crimson red, russet, bronze and deep maroon fall color
Flowers	Inconspicuous green or brown catkins
Blooming period	Spring
Fruit characteristics	Small 1" striated acorns
Pests and disease	Susceptible to oak wilt, otherwise relatively free from pests and disease
Other	Consider provenance (origin) of the tree; purchase a tree grown from a regional seed source to ensure adaptability, as nursery stock of unknown origin may not survive (ask your nursery professional) Shumard and Texas oaks readily hybridize resulting in many intermediate forms Purchase an oak in fall to see its color; several cold snaps may be necessary to trigger color change

"A properly chosen red oak tree will be a long-lived garden companion."
- Scott Ogden, Garden Success with Difficult soils.

TEXAS MOUNTAIN LAUREL
<i>Sophora secundiflora</i> (SOF-or-uh sek-und-ee-FLOR-uh)
Mescal Bean, Colorino, Frigolito, Frigillito, Big Drunk Bean

Family	<i>Fabaceae</i>
Description	This harbinger of spring is a native evergreen with luxuriant foliage and intensely fragrant, deep violet flower clusters. All parts of this plant are poisonous – children, pets and the unaware need be cautioned.
Plant habit	Narrow and upright, maturing into an open canopy Typically multi-stemmed
Landscape use	Plant as a specimen or in a group for visual impact Ideal for small locations Plant in a location where the fragrant blossoms can be enjoyed
Average mature size	20' tall x 15' wide
Growth rate	Slow Difficult to propagate and transplant due to its sensitive root system, thus larger specimens are relatively expensive in the nursery trade
Sun exposure	Sun; may benefit from afternoon shade when young
Soil requirements	Tolerates alkaline conditions
Water requirements	Prefers any well-drained soil
Heat tolerance	High; tolerates urban growing conditions
Foliage	Evergreen Glossy, green leaves are thick and leathery, providing dense coverage
Flowers	Purple flower panicles Very fragrant
Blooming period	Spring
Fruit characteristics	Long hairy seed pods; white or red seeds are poisonous
Pests and disease	None serious
Other	Earth Kind plant: tolerates infrequent watering, poor soils, and is relatively pest and disease free May need protection from a severe winter in the Brazos Valley Before 1000 A.D., Texas Indians brewed a ceremonial, hallucinogenic drink made from a mixture of powder ground from a seed and mescal (Agave) to communicate with the spirit world. In 1539, Cabeza de Vaca reported use of the red bean (seed) used in trading goods. At that time, a six foot necklace of beans could buy a small horse.

“For drought tolerance, no pests and ease of growing, our Texas Mountain Laurel is hard to beat.”

- Paul Groom, Texas Gardening Guide.

VITEX
<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i> (VY-teks AG-nus KAS-tus)
Lilac Chaste Tree, Chaste Tree, Wild Lavender, Sage Tree, Hemp Tree, Monk's Pepper Tree, Wild Pepper, Abraham's Balm, Tree of Chastity

Family	<i>Verbenaceae</i>
Description	This tough flowering shrub is native to southern Europe and western Asia; it is well adapted to the southern U.S. and is an excellent plant for Brazos Valley soils. Long was a favorite in early Texas gardens, it is regaining its popularity because of its beauty and durability both as a tall, spreading shrub and as a small landscape tree with a broad, round crown.
Plant habit	Large, multi-stemmed shrub or small multi-stemmed tree
Landscape use	Plant as a specimen or in a group Many ornamental features; however, winter interest is minor
Average mature size	10-15' tall x 15-20' wide
Growth rate	Moderate to fast; easy to grow Relatively short lived
Sun exposure	Sun, part sun/shade
Soil requirements	Tolerates most soil conditions
Water requirements	Prefers dry to well-drained soils; tolerant of drought conditions
Heat tolerance	Moderate-high
Foliage	Deciduous Palmate, sage green, aromatic leaves
Flowers	Lavender panicles bloom on new growth Also available in blue (<i>V. caerulea</i>), white (<i>V. alba</i>) and pink (<i>V. rosea</i>) Attract butterflies
Blooming period	During May/June and sporadically throughout the summer
Fruit characteristics	Inconspicuous black fruit
Pests and disease	None serious; occasional leaf fungus may cause leaf drop
Other	Considered a heritage plant; as early as 400 B.C. Hippocrates used vitex in medical treatments. Its legendary use to lessen libido accounts for its common name. Used as a pepper substitute. Leaves have a sedative effect and blooms can be used to make perfume.

WAX MYRTLE
<i>Myrica cerifera</i> (MY-ri-ka ker-EE-fer-uh)
Bayberry, Sweet Oak, Spiceberry, Tallow shrub, Waxberry, Candleberry

Family	<i>Myricaceae</i>
Description	A large, native shrub that can also be trimmed into a multi-stemmed tree
Plant habit	Medium shrub to small tree
Landscape use	A versatile landscape plant Plant as a specimen tree and prune to accentuate its irregular, multiple trunks or plant in a group to provide a tall dense screen Ideal size for neighborhood lots
Average mature size	15' tall x 10' wide
Growth rate	Fast, easy to grow Relatively short lived
Sun exposure	Sun, part sun/shade
Soil requirements	Prefers acidic conditions but is adaptable to alkaline soils
Water requirements	Drought tolerant once established, but responds to regular watering Tolerant of wet and poorly-drained soil conditions
Heat tolerance	Medium; tolerant of urban growing conditions
Foliage	Evergreen to semi-evergreen Waxy, dark green foliage, fragrant if crushed
Flowers	Dioecious; flowers on both male and female plants Small, inconspicuous yellow green-flowers
Blooming period	Spring
Fruit characteristics	Female plants produce attractive, waxy blue berry clusters which persist until eaten by birds (40 bird species dine on wax myrtles, including bob-white quail and turkey); foliage is not usually browsed by deer
Pests and disease	None serious
Other	May develop suckers and root sprouts; remove as needed Brittle wood may break in ice storms Leaf drop may be extreme in cold temperatures

This heritage plant has been cultivated since 1699. Early settlers in the Brazos Valley boiled the leaves and fruit to extract the wax for making candles. Specialty candle stores across the U.S. still feature “Bayberry candles” made from *M. pennsylvanica*. A dwarf variety, *M. pusilla* is also available.

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