

# Tree Loving Care

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## Dear Friends and Fellow Tree Lovers

This is the beginning of a new era for this letter. I sincerely hope that it will be helpful to you and welcome your observations, comments, concerns and suggestions.

We will now include color photos throughout the letter. As they say, 'a picture is worth a thousand words' and I don't think anyone wanted several thousand more words from me. This should help you identify problems, or in some cases, help you understand that something that you are seeing isn't really a problem.

We will post many of these photos on the website, [www.treelovingcare.com](http://www.treelovingcare.com), monthly. This should help

identify problems in a timely manner. Timing is critical in controlling many disease and insect problems.

Another new feature will be a website that I have found or that I think might be helpful. This quarter's website is [www.soilfoodweb.com](http://www.soilfoodweb.com). It has some excellent info on humic acid and compost tea.

*James Tuttle, Certified Arborist TX 0117*

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## Tree Loving Care Update . . .

James Majors, along with being an ISA Certified Arborist, is a youth pastor for Cathedral of Praise, a church at 1301 Redbud. They are a participating church in 'The Bridge', a ministry that provides food, clothing and housing assistance to the needy. They have, in the last several days provided for 26 families evacuated from Hurricane Katrina. They are in

need of small appliances, clothing and money. Call 763-6900 if you would like to help.

David Rios celebrated 5 years with TLC this last quarter. Congratulations! David does most of the stump grinding and root crown excavations and much of the spraying. David has three lovely daughters and is learning the joys of dealing with teenagers. Wish him luck and wisdom.

Shortly after this letter going to press, we will be going to the Texas Tree Conference in Waco. James will be ending his 4 years as an officer of the Texas Chapter of ISA. It has been a great 4 years, but it has taken quite a commitment of time.

Now there will be more leisure time for things like serving on the Water Conservation Council, a sub-committee of the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce Ag Committee.

## Critters and Cruds

Late summer and early fall, as leaves begin to senesce, they become proportionately higher in nitrogen. This makes them more attractive to sap sucking insects such as aphids. This is the reason so many Red Oaks, Bur Oaks and Pecans have a fine mist of honeydew under them in late summer-fall making everything sticky. A soil application of Merit insecticide generally clears this problem up in a few days without damage to the beneficial insect population. For a completely organic approach, Safer Soap generally gives pretty good control also.

Bleeding cankers at the base of Red Oaks have always been a problem, one that has been generally considered untreatable. At the ISA Conference last year, one of the speakers demonstrated a method he had been using with some success.

These damaged areas may be excised (cut out) with a wood chisel and mallet and treated with a fungicide. We have been using the method this summer with some promising results.

Kermes Scale on Oaks (see photo) hatch early to mid-September. These insects are armored scale with a very good protection mechanism and a small window of opportunity to control. If we miss them now, they may be suppressed with a dormant oil treatment in the winter.



David Rios



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[www.treelovingcare.com](http://www.treelovingcare.com)



# TREE LOVING CARE

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## Give Your Trees TLC

Just as the first season of the year is named spring because plants spring from the ground, fall is named for a similar reason. That's when the leaves 'fall'. And, by the way, the reason they are called leaves is because you are supposed to leave them right there. They are the insulating blanket for the roots. They insulate from the extreme cold in the winter and extreme heat of summer. They perform numerous other tasks as well, the two most important of which are to conserve moisture so you don't have to put that nasty ground water on as often and to return nutrients to the soil so you don't have to buy as much of that hot high nitrogen fertilizer.

Now, if you just must rake your leaves, please bring them to TLC so we can compost them and sell them back to you next year (see the Sell it Back to 'Em page @ [www.treelovingcare.com](http://www.treelovingcare.com)) Fall is the best time to mulch trees and shrubs. It keeps the soil warmer for the winter and you get more root growth.

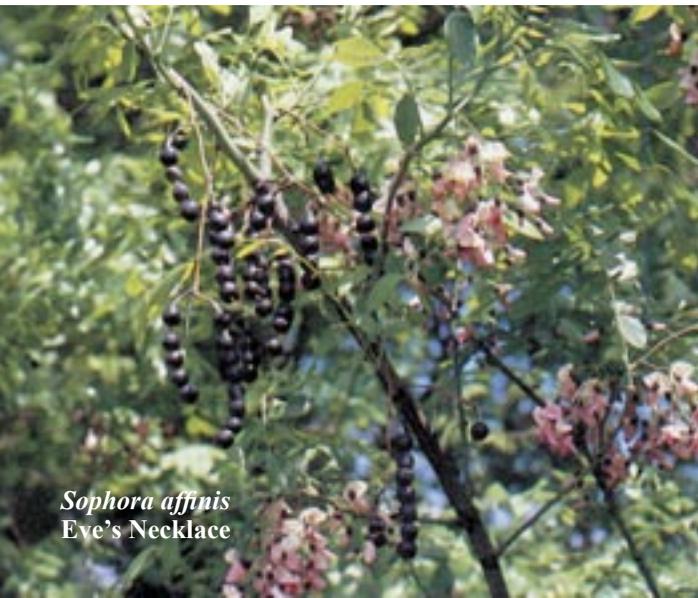
It is very important to realize that it's the root system

that needs mulching, not the trunk. Volcano mulching (see photo) isn't what you want. It is important to remember that its 2-3" of leaf litter that falls, not 2-3" of wood chips that falls. If you are mulching with that sort of product, 2" is enough. Next year, add, perhaps, an inch, not 2-3" more.

If you don't have any new trees to mulch, fall is the best time to plant many trees and shrubs.



**Volcano Mulching  
DON'T DO IT!**



*Sophora affinis*  
Eve's Necklace

## Tree of the Quarter

Texas Sophora or Eve's Necklace (*Sophora affinis*) is a small deciduous tree, growing to about 20 feet. It has dark glossy green foliage; fall color is not spectacular. Flowers are white and held in clusters on the outside of the canopy. It is in the same genus as Japanese Pagoda and Texas Mountain-Laurel and is very similar in appearance to both. It is somewhat larger than Mountain-Laurel and considerably smaller than Japanese Pagoda and not nearly as messy. The seed pods dry on the tree and turn black.

The native range of this small tree is from SE Oklahoma through central Texas, almost to Del Rio. It grows along creeks near Waco in both sandy and clay soils and the thin soils of limestone hill sides in the Cross Timbers region