

Love Letter from . . .

Tree Loving Care

Lubbock, Texas (806) 785-8733 • Midland, Texas (432) 620-8733
Spring 2015 • Serving All The West Texas Tree Needs Since 1978

Dear Friends and Fellow Tree Lovers

It seems to me that the Farmer's Almanac had it right when they predicted that the winter of 2014/15 would be colder and wetter than normal. That combination of cold and wet had a devastating effect on many trees in a lot of west Texas the first week of January. The ice that extended from about a Post to Seminole line went as far south as Alpine and included Midland/Odessa. The ice devastated mostly Live Oaks and Aghan Pines in most of that area. Some areas tended to have more damage in certain species.

Some trees, such as Pecans and Elms, are more brittle and evergreens such as Live Oak and Pines have more leaf surface are to accumulate ice and ice weighs a lot. Some estimates are that a tree in leaf can gain 20-30 times its weight in a matter of hours.

The good news is that almost all of the trees will recover. In many cases, it will take a decade or more, but trees grow. Unless the tree was a multi-trunk tree which had multiple trunks completely failed, there was no loss to the bottom (root system) of the plant. The branches lost in the canopy will re-sprout and, in many cases, grow vigorously. The next step will be to begin a re-training process. This will generally begin in 2-3 years, depending on the vigor of the sprouts.

This retraining of branches from loss of canopy is the same, regardless of reason you have limbs broken: ice, windstorms or mechanical injury.

The upside of the ice storm is that throughout the region, we have pretty good soil moisture.

A few weeks after the January ice storm, **Midland Tree Keepers** held a workshop for the area public at the Centennial Library in Midland titled 'Tree Care 911, After the Storm'. It was a panel discussion format with Oscar Mestes, Urban Forester with **Texas Forest Service**, myself, Mark Walter, a local arborist, Laurie Williams, Parks Director for City of Midland and Debbie Frost, retired Ector County Horticulture Agent. The workshop was well attended and well received.

James Tuttle, Certified Arborist TX0117A



Tree Of The Quarter

There are several species of Hawthorn, *Crataegus*, in Texas. The Cockspur Hawthorn, *Crataegus crus-galli*, from the Cross Timbers region of Texas or the Mountain Hawthorn, *Crataegus tracyi*, from the Davis Mountains should both do well in our area.

None of the Hawthorns are large growing trees. The Texas Champion Mountain Hawthorn is on a ranch between Fort Davis and Alpine and is 21' tall with a crown spread of 34'. Hawthorns would be a great tree for back yards near power lines. They should be available in many nurseries as collected plants.



**Texas Champion
Mountain Hawthorn**
(*Crataegus*)



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GIVE YOUR TREES TLC

In West Texas, winters are normally pretty dry. This winter has been a little wetter than normal and the moisture was appreciated, even if the snow and ice wasn't.

It is time to begin spring Deep Root Fertilization. Spring is the main period of growth in trees and it takes good moisture and nutrients to produce this growth. If the tree or shrub is growing in a healthy soil, the tree can get the needed nutrition from the soil. This primarily means an adequate amount of organic matter. A good healthy forest soil is usually about 4% organic matter, whereas our prairie soils are usually about 1% organic matter.

Tree Loving Care organic fertilization provides an increase in organic matter as well as many of the beneficial micro-organisms that are found in a healthy soil.

Spring also brings the onset of the thunderstorm season. High winds can tear a tree apart. Trees break first at defects. Pruning out the defects or installing cabling and bracing systems can often prevent catastrophic failures and save the tree. Give us a call at **806-785-TREE** or **432-620-TREE** to have one of our Certified Arborists assess your trees needs. Lightning also comes with the thunderstorms. Lightning can completely devastate a tree. Tree Loving Care can install a **lightning protection system** (http://www.ipclp.com/html/aud_trees.html) to protect your high value trees.

CRITTERS AND CRUDS

Ericoccus scale continues to be a huge problem in the Lubbock area. After hatching, this insects sets up house on a twig, inserts their mouth parts and suck sap the rest of their life. We had one generation hatching in late January. This insect has multiple generations, which gives it a tremendous reproductive potential. Tree Loving Care uses several different methods to combat this problem, depending on the situation. Ima-Jet, applied through the Arbor Jet System, is one of those methods.

Mealy Gall and other galls on oaks time are normally best controlled in the spring. Call Tree Loving Care at **806-785-8733** or **432-620-8733**

Injection technology has improved greatly in the last several years and is an excellent delivery method for many controls of insects and diseases. There are several reasons. One is that, since the product is only within the vascular flow, there is much less negative effect on non-target species. This means that the beneficial insects aren't killed. Any time you throw a chemical up in the air in West Texas, you increase the chance of spraying thing you never intended. Pine Tip Moth was a tremendous problem last year on Afghan Pine and Pinyon Pine. The first of 3 generations hatch about the end of March. Call one of our Certified Arborists to check your trees.



Mealy Gall

TLC UPDATE

James Tuttle attended the 29th annual Think Tree Conference in Albuquerque, NM, in early February. Dr. John Ball was one of the main speakers and presented some great information on safety and on species selection. There was also a great presentation on ways to create healthy soils.

Glen Seaman, Butch Lathy and James Evans have been attending a 6 week webinar series on Arbor-Jet micro injections. Arbor-Jet has several devises and products to provide essential nutrients, insecticides and fungicides to manage a variety of problems in trees.

Visit our website at
www.tree-lovingcare.com