

Love Letter from . . .

Tree Loving Care

Lubbock, Texas (806) 785-8733 • Midland, Texas (432) 620-8733
Summer 2014 • Serving All The West Texas Tree Needs Since 1978

Tree Of The Quarter

Since the dawn of civilization, oaks have been one of the most revered and sought after trees. Most of the oak species in the world are in Mexico and the southwestern US. All oaks are susceptible to a vascular wilt disease called Oak Wilt. However, oaks in the White Oak group rarely die from the disease.

Arizona White Oak, *Quercus arizonica*, is an oak that should be tried in areas that have an Oak Wilt problem. The tree is found naturally in Arizona and New Mexico, generally at elevations of 4,000-5,000', in rocky soils to clay to sandy loams. The tree is very heat and drought tolerant. The tree can attain heights of 60', but is generally much shorter and is very slow growing.

As with many trees that are underutilized, it is not widely available in the nursery trade, but is well worth the effort to find one.



Arizona White Oak
(*Quercus arizonica*)

Dear Friends and Fellow Tree Lovers

IT RAINED!!!! I knew it could!!!! The rain a few weeks ago was wonderful. It was the first widespread rain that lasted more than 3-4 hours in 46 months. WE ARE STILL IN A DROUGHT. The rainfall totals ranged from over 6" in the northern parts of the South Plains to 1-2" in the Permian Basin and none around Fort Davis. However, West Texas is still in the grips of the most severe drought in recorded history. It will take at least another 10" of rain this summer to break this drought.

Congratulations also to Tommy Schooler. He is Tree Loving Care's latest Certified Arborist. His father, Tom Schooler was the second Certified Arborist in all of West Texas. Tommy has been back with Tree Loving Care for only 3 years, when he was about 7, I remember telling him that some day he would be my best climber.

Congratulations to the United States Department of Agriculture on the acquisition of their new weaponry (I assume they have found what they need)...

"The US Department of Agriculture, Office of Inspector General, located in Washington, DC, pursuant to the authority of FAR Part 13, has a requirement for the commercial (sic) acquisition of submachine guns, .40 Cal. S&W, ambidextrous safety, semi-automatic or 2 shot burts (sic) trigger group, Tritium night sights for front and rear, rails for attachment of flashlight (front under fore grip) and scope (top rear), stock-collapsible (sic) or folding, magazine - 30 rd. capacity, sling, light weight, and oversized trigger guard for gloved operation."

I think it is because of all the hormones and steroids we feed to cattle and sheep. They have gotten so much bigger and meaner. These guys at USDA obviously need a little more protection than you can get from a cattle prod.

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GIVE YOUR TREES TLC

Much of West Texas was blessed with a great soaking rain on Memorial Day weekend. It was great relief from the drought. There have been scattered areas of thunderstorms since. Tree Loving Care's home office in Wolfforth has received over 8" since May 24th. That was more rain than fell in all of 2011 or 2012. The drought is not broken, but the area of West Texas that has been under exceptional drought conditions has shrunken dramatically.

One of the great benefits of this rain has been the flushing of salts from the soil. When all of the watering is done with water that is pumped from the ground with dissolved minerals in it, water quality can become almost as much an issue as water quantity. High salt content water can be very harmful to plants. After 4 years of drought, all areas have been building salt in the soil. The recent rains may not have flushed it completely down beyond the root zone, but it was a great start.

Especially in areas that have not been so blessed with rain, Tree Loving Care still recommends application of our organic fertilizer. This is our way adding to soil the life that is normally found in a good healthy forest soil. Our organic fertilizer is injected into the soil and contains fungi and bacteria that commonly grow in the soil and greatly increase the micro flora and fauna in the soil. This enables roots to grow better and get the other nutrients that plants need.

CRITTERS AND CRUDS

Recently, we found a scale insect in Lubbock on Italian Stone Pine that we have never seen before. These trees are in an un-natural environment, having been watered daily for a very long time and that is almost certainly led to this situation, but it is always interesting to find a new pest. It is much like the Eriococcus found in the same part of South West Lubbock about 8 years ago. Interesting, but potentially deadly to trees.

We are still awaiting lab verification from the Texas Plant Disease Lab at A&M about a potentially new Oak Wilt center in Midland. We currently

have 12-15 Oak Wilt centers in Lubbock and 5-6 in Midland, depending on how some centers have coalesced.

If you want to know where the Oak Wilt centers are and if one is close to you, Tree Loving Care does track where the infections are. Proximity is a factor in disease management decisions. Check out the new Oak Wilt page on our website, www.treelovingcare.com. Another good resource for Oak Wilt information is www.texasoakwilt.org.

TLC UPDATE

We had a great time at the Texas Tree Climbing Championship last month in New Braunfels. What a great venue. Jose Rodriguez and Chris Graham represented Tree Loving Care at the competition this year. It was the first competition for both and they finished 21st and 22nd, respectively. Not bad for their first competition and in some pretty heady company. James Tuttle was a technician on the Aerial Rescue event. The competition is an event focused on safety.



Dominic Rendon was scheduled to compete, his third, but his father has become ill. Our prayers go out to his family. Please join us in prayer for him.

Visit our website at
www.treelovingcare.com