

Keep Pearland Beautiful
2018 Arbor Day Tree Giveaway Book



Little Gem Magnolia

***Magnolia grandiflora* 'Little Gem'**

Secondary Names:

Dwarf Evergreen Magnolia

Leaf Type: Evergreen

Texas Native: Cultivar of a Native Texas Tree

Tree Description:

'Little Gem' is a much smaller and slower growing cultivar of the Southern Magnolia that typically grows as a compact upright multi-stemmed shrub or small tree to 20' tall over the first 20 years. It features glossy green leaves (to 5" long) that are bronze-brown underneath. Leaves typically drop to the ground in spring as new foliage emerges. Fragrant white flowers (to 4" diameter) bloom in summer.

Range/Site Description:

Occurs on rich, moist, well-drained soils on streambanks or the borders of river swamps in southeast Texas. It has been widely cultivated as an ornamental tree outside its native range.

Leaf:

Simple, alternate, 6" to 8" long and 2" to 3" wide, elliptical or oval in shape, thick, leathery, dark green and glossy above, rusty and pubescent beneath, with prominent midribs. They remain on the tree for about two years.

Flower:

Large, showy and fragrant, 6" to 8" across, cup shaped, with pure white petals surrounding a splash of bright purple in the center, borne in spring and summer.

Fruit:

A rounded or oval aggregation of seeds, shaped like a cone, 3" to 4" long, containing many seeds. The fruits open in the fall and display the bright red seeds dangling on slender threads.

Bark:

Gray-brown, smooth at first and developing scales on larger branches and trunks.

Wood:

Moderately heavy, hard, and cream-colored; was used chiefly for furniture, Venetian blinds, and fuelwood, but is now highly valued as a landscape specimen.

Similar Species:

Sweetbay magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*) has smaller, semi-evergreen leaves and flowers.

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Mexican Plum

Prunus mexicana

Leaf Type: Deciduous

Texas Native:

Tree Description:

A small tree to 25 feet tall and a short trunk 8" to 10" in diameter, with a short, irregular crown of dull green foliage.

Range/Site Description:

In East and Central Texas, on moist slopes, creek bottoms, fencerows, and canyons, usually as a solitary tree. Also planted widely in Texas as a landscape tree.

Leaf:

Simple, alternate, 2" to 4" long and 1.5" to 3" wide, oval, often cupped at the edges, abruptly pointed at the tip and rounded at the base, and finely toothed (sometimes double-toothed) along the margin. The upper surface is smooth, thickened, and textured, yellow-green; lower surface lighter, hairy along the veins; leaves turn yellow or sometimes red in the fall.

Flower:

Numerous clusters of white, five-petaled flowers, 0.75" in diameter, appear in March before the leaves.

Fruit:

A plum (actually a drupe) that ripens in late summer, 1.25" in diameter, dark purple-red with a bluish "bloom", with a smooth stone 0.75" long under the juicy flesh.

Bark:

Dark gray to nearly black, smooth when young with horizontal lenticels, developing broad plates with curled edges when older.

Wood:

Fruits are used to make jams and jellies. Widely available as a drought-hardy landscape tree in commercial nurseries.

Similar Species:

Flatwoods plum (*Prunus umbellata*) has smaller fruits and is found along sandy riverbottoms in East Texas.

Interesting Facts:

Mexican plum is usually the first tree to flower in March, marking the end of winter in Texas.



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Cherrybark Oak
Quercus pagoda

Secondary Names:

Swamp Red Oak

Leaf Type: Deciduous

Texas Native:

Tree Description:

A tall, straight oak of the bottomlands to 100 feet tall, with a trunk to 3 feet in diameter and even, regular branching that forms a broad round crown of glossy, dark green foliage.



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Range/Site Description:

Fertile bottomlands and streamside terraces in East Texas.

Leaf:

Simple, alternate, 5" to 9" long, typically with 7 to 9 single-pointed lobes arranged more or less at right angles to the midrib, forming a "pagoda" shape.

Flower:

Male and female flowers borne in spring on the same tree, the male flowers on catkins up to 5" long, the female flowers inconspicuous, on a peduncle.

Fruit:

An acorn, taking two years to mature, about 0.5" long and as wide, hemispheric, enclosed one-third by the saucer-shaped acorn cup.

Bark:

Gray to black, breaking from the smooth young bark into scaly patches and then dark, rough ridges on older trees.

Wood:

A high-value timber tree, used for red oak lumber, furniture, tanning, and pulpwood.

Similar Species:

Southern red oak (*Quercus falcata*) has fewer lobes and gray-green leaf undersides.

Interesting Facts:

Several natural varieties or races of southern red oak are common in East Texas, but cherrybark oak has been elevated to species status.

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Pin Oak

Quercus palustris

Leaf Type: Deciduous

Tree Description:

Pin oak is a moderately large tree with normal heights ranging from 70 to 90 feet with diameters between 2 and 3 feet. Trees reaching 120 feet tall with 5-foot diameters are occasionally encountered on good sites.

The bark of this tree is smooth, reddish to grayish-brown during the juvenile period, becoming darker and shallowly fissured as the tree growth slows with age. The lower branches of pin oak are prostrate to descending, with smooth, slender, reddish-brown twigs. Clusters of pointed buds are located at the tips of twigs. Three to five inch alternate leaves have 5 to 7 points or lobes with bristled tips and deep C-shaped sinuses. The leaves change in color from a dark green to a deep scarlet red in fall. The leaves are deciduous but will usually persist on the tree into winter.



The flowers of pin oak emerge soon after new leaves unfold in spring (April to mid-May). The acorns that develop are roundish, short stalked, 3/8 to 1/2 inches long, and capped with a thin and shallow saucer-like cup. The acorns will take 16 to 18 months to develop from pollination to maturity. When mature the acorn turns light brown to reddish-brown, and will drop from September to November. In 30 to 35 year old stands of pin oak, 4,000 to 20,000 sound acorns per acre yields have been documented. There are 410 acorns per pound.

Pin oak is often confused with scarlet oak (*Q. coccinea*) due to similar appearance. Scarlet oak is an upland species that prefers soils with good drainage on dry sites.

Range/Site Description:

This tree grows under a wide range of site conditions, but is a true bottomland tree. It is seldom found growing above elevations of 800 feet, or on sloped ground. Pin oak grows in practically pure stands with good growth rates on wet, shallow sites with heavy soils that drain poorly. On better quality sites it will often grow larger, but is normally out competed by other species.

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Water Oak

Quercus nigra

Leaf Type: Deciduous

Texas Native:

Tree Description:

A large tree to 90 feet or more and a trunk to 3 feet in diameter, with a dense, round crown of dark green foliage.

Range/Site Description:

Occurs along the borders of swamps and streams and on rich bottomlands in East Texas, west and south to the Colorado River.

Leaf:

Simple, alternate, 2" to 4" long and 1" to 2" wide, obovate or slightly three-lobed at the outer end, bristle-tipped, thin, dull bluish-green above and lighter green beneath, persisting on the twigs late into winter. Juvenile leaves are highly variable and have a mix of sharp teeth and rounded lobes.

Flower:

Separate male and female flowers appear on the same tree in spring when the leaves begin to unfold; male flowers are borne on a yellowish catkin 2" to 3" long; the female flowers are less conspicuous and clustered on a short stalk.

Fruit:

An acorn, requiring two years to mature, 0.5" to 0.75" long and wide, light brown or yellowish-brown and enclosed only at the base in the thin, saucer-shaped cup.

Bark:

Smooth, light brown to dark gray, with many thin scales over the surface; developing broad, smooth plates on older trunks.

Wood:

Heavy, hard, and strong, light brown in color, with lighter-colored sapwood; utilized chiefly for crossties, fuelwood, and pulp.

Similar Species:

Willow oak (*Quercus phellos*) has narrow, linear leaves and rougher bark; laurel oak (*Q. laurifolia*) occurs only on very wet sites and has semi-evergreen, elliptical leaves.

Interesting Facts:

Along with several other oaks, water oak is commonly referred to as "pin oak" because of its similarities to the true pin oak (*Quercus palustris*), except for leaf shape. This name is almost generic for any unknown oak species.



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Eastern Redbud

Cercis canadensis var. *canadensis*

Secondary Names:

Judas-Tree

Leaf Type: Deciduous

Texas Native:

[Firewise:](#)

Tree Description:

A small or medium-sized tree, usually less than 40 feet tall and a trunk to 12" in diameter, with arching branches that form a wide, flat-topped crown.

Range/Site Description:

Occurs in East Texas, west to Austin and Dallas, usually on well-drained soils along in forests or at the edge of the woods or planted as a landscape specimen.

Leaf:

Alternate, simple, heart-shaped, 3" to 5" long and wide, leaf edge smooth; upper surface dull, dark green, and lighter beneath, turning yellow in the fall.

Flower:

One of the first trees to bloom in early spring, the flowers appear before the leaves as conspicuous, pink to purplish, pea-shaped flowers in clusters along the twigs and small branches.

Fruit:

A flattened, many-seeded pod, 2" to 4" long and 0.5" wide, tapering at the ends, reddish during the summer and brown when ripe, often hanging on the tree through the following winter.

Bark:

Reddish-brown, smooth when young, but developing a scaly texture and then long, narrow plates and shallow fissures on older trunks.

Wood:

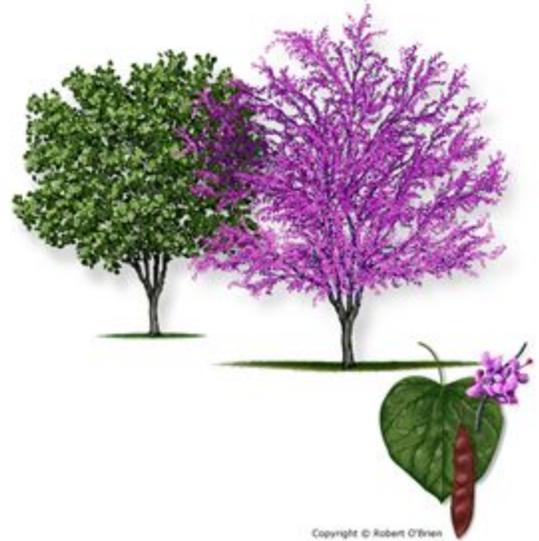
Heavy, hard, not strong, rich dark-brown in color, and of little commercial importance; cultivated in the nursery trade as a landscape tree.

Similar Species:

Texas redbud (*Cercis canadensis* var. *texensis*) occurs in Central Texas and Oklahoma and has glossy, leathery leaves.

Interesting Facts:

Sometimes called "Judas-tree" for its resemblance to a Mediterranean relative, *Cercis siliquastrum*, from which the disciple Judas Iscariot supposedly hanged himself after betraying Christ.



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VITEX: Lilac Chastetree

Vitex agnus-castus

Secondary Names:

Vitex

Leaf Type: Deciduous

Texas Native:

Firewise:

Tree Description:

A large shrub or small landscape tree to 15 feet tall, often multi-trunked, twisted, with a spreading crown.

Range/Site Description:

Native to Europe and Asia, it prefers well-drained soils of any texture, but performs poorly on wet sites. Tolerates heat and alkaline soils well.

Leaf:

Blue-green, compound, opposite, with 5 to 7 leaflets arranged palmately, each leaflet 1" to 3" long on a short stalk.

Flower:

Dense, slender, 6" long spikes of white or lavender flowers appear in late spring and summer above the foliage. This year we have two different varieties, a blue flowered vitex and a pink flowering vitex.

Fruit:

Brown to black, fleshy fruits dry into short clusters and persist through winter.

Bark:

Gray, smooth, developing into irregular blocks.

Wood:

Flowers produce excellent honey; seeds once used as a sedative, the leaves for medicinal use. Sold as a landscape tree in nurseries.

Similar Species:

Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*) has simple leaves and serrated leaf edges.

