

The Stalwarts of the Landscape



Trees, a long-term investment, are the most essential parts of our home landscape. Trees are the basic element for any landscape. They set the stage for the entire design of a landscape. Type and location determine to a great extent what other plantings are appropriate.

Trees are the most permanent specimens that we grow. Many will enhance our landscape for 10 or more years if given the chance. Care must be taken to select the best species because of the permanency and dominance in the landscape. If a tree is planted in the wrong spot it will detract from the overall effect and precious growing time may be lost before the mistake is realized.

Trees serve many purposes:

- Preserve the environment by conserving water, and reducing the possibility of flooding by reducing storm run-off. Shade from trees provide relief for the plantings underneath by cooling the temperature and reducing evaporation from the soil.
- Provide beauty, and a valuable climate-controlled environment for our homes.
- Improve air quality by filtering the air we breathe and absorbing carbon dioxide from the air.
- Increase the value of our homes.
- Provide height and texture in a landscape.

What is a tree? There is an old proverb “if you can walk under it, it is a tree, if you have to walk around it, it is a shrub.”

The following are some of BexarMet’s favorites for the landscape, based on their hardiness to adapt to our growing conditions.

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| Small Trees (about 15 to 35 feet tall) | |
| Anaqua (<i>Ehretia anacua</i>) | Native evergreen that is covered with clusters of white star-shaped flowers in the spring and followed by small orange fruit. Moderate growth rate. |
| Desert Willow (<i>Chilopsis linearis</i>) | Reveals an airy appearance with willow like foliage. Very adaptable and will grow under a variety of soil and moisture conditions. |
| Yaupon Holly (<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>) | Evergreen native with light colored bark and dense branch structure. An added attraction is bright red fruits lasting over the winter. |
| Texas Mountain Laurel (<i>Sophora secundiflora</i>) | Evergreen native noted for lush foliage and outstanding springtime flowers reminiscent of grape kool-aid. |
| Redbud (<i>Cercis texensis</i>) | Deciduous, small native with clusters of white to purple blooms in early spring. |
| Texas Persimmon (<i>Diospyros texana</i>) | Attractive bark with small leathery leaves. Birds enjoy the fruit when ripe. |
| Mexican Plum (<i>Prunus mexicana</i>) | Native with profuse white blossoms in the |

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| | spring. |
| Chinese Pistache (<i>Pistacia chinensis</i>) | Rounded growth habit with compound leaves and outstanding fall color. Grows rapidly, drought, insect and disease-tolerant. |
| Retama (<i>Parkinsonia aculeata</i>) | Native fast grower with drooping foliage and wide fragrant flowers that appear during late spring or early summer. |
| Wild or Mexican Olive (<i>Cordia boissieri</i>) | Evergreen that bears showy flowers that turn into white fleshy fruits. |
| Shantung Maple (<i>Acer truncatum</i>) | Spreading canopy with foliage that turns red, red-orange in the fall. |
| Eve's Necklace (<i>Sophora affinis</i>) | Deciduous native with fernlike foliage and attractive fruit that resembles a necklace throughout winter. |
| Mexican Buckeye (<i>Ungnadia speciosa</i>) | Multi-trunked native noted for showy pink orchidlike flowers in the spring. |

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| Large Trees (over 35 feet) | |
| Bald Cypress (<i>Taxodium distichum</i>) | Native, tall, fast-growing deciduous conifer with fine textured leaves. Leaves turn a deep rust in the fall. |
| Bigtooth Maple (<i>Acer grandidentatum</i>) | Native that has outstanding red and yellow fall foliage. |
| Texas Sycamore (<i>Platanus occidentalis</i> v. <i>glabrata</i>) | Very large native with white peeling bark. Fast-grower that tolerates most soil conditions. |
| Montezuma Cypress (<i>Taxodium mucronatum</i>) | Evergreen with soft, fernlike foliage and strong weeping branches. Tolerant of poor soil conditions. |
| Cedar Elm (<i>Ulmus crassifolia</i>) | Irregular shaped native with glossy, rough leaves. Tolerant of variety of soils. |
| Texas Red Oak (<i>Quercus texana</i>) | Deciduous and multi-trunked. Moderate to fast growth, good form, scarlet and orange foliage in the fall. |
| Bur Oak (<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>) | Stately native with yellow fall color. Wildlife loves the large golf-ball sized acorns. |
| Chinquapin Oak (<i>Quercus muhlenbergii</i>) | Native, deciduous with large rounded top. Moderate to fast-grower. |
| Live Oak (<i>Quercus virginiana</i>) | Native with broad, spreading limbs. One of our best shade trees, being long-lived and evergreen. |
| Lacey Oak (<i>Quercus laceyi</i>) | Native, extremely drought-tolerant. Bluish-gray leaves that turn gold in the fall. |