

Bell County Master Gardener  
Tip of the Week  
By Mary Lew Quesinberry  
“Native Trees for Central Texas”

Q. Can you provide us with a list of native trees that we might consider planting when we start landscaping in the spring?

A. My number one recommendation would be Mexican White Oak/Monterrey Oak (*Quercus polymorpha*). This is a clean, fast growing tree that is alkaline/drought tolerant. It is deciduous. It grows 40-60 feet. It is resistant to Oak Wilt Disease.

Another choice is Lacey Oak (*Quercus glaucoides*). This is a slow growing deciduous tree that is alkaline/drought tolerant. It grows to 20-30 feet. It is resistant to Oak Wilt Disease and produces acorns.

Or Chinquapin Oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*) is another selection. This tree is a moderate grower that is alkaline/drought tolerant. It is resistant to Oak Wilt Disease. It grows to 20-30 feet and produces acorns.

Or you could try the Arizona Cypress (*Cupressus arizonica*) Beautiful evergreen, fast growing tree that is alkaline/drought tolerant. It grows 40-50 feet. Makes a good screen. It has interesting bark.

Also consider our native Pecan tree. It does very well in areas of deep soil, but it is messy-- they self-prune every time the wind blows, so you are constantly picking up twigs and limbs. They get aphids almost every spring and this results in a moldy mess under the trees. They grow to 75 feet.

Or perhaps you don't have a great deal of space so the small trees are what you need. These are small flowering trees: Redbud, Desert Willow (Bubba), Flowering Senna, Goldenball Leadtree, Anacacho Orchid Tree, Retama, Texas Mountain Laurel. Or try small trees with winter berries: Yaupon Holly, Possumhaw Holly.

You can plant trees year round in Central Texas. They do best when planted in the fall/winter, but spring will do too. Water the tree well before planting. Dig the hole twice as wide, but no deeper than the pot. Tease the roots before planting to get them out of the habit of growing in a circle. This will make them branch out. Place the tree in the hole and use the native soil to fill the hole. Water well, then water three times a week until established. (Usually one year) After one year, give it at least one inch of water per month, more if very dry.

Plan to attend the master gardener spring plant sale March 26th 7:30 AM to 1 pm.

Have any questions about gardening in Central Texas? Contact [ask.bcmqa@gmail.com](mailto:ask.bcmqa@gmail.com)

In the photo: The early spring blooms of the Texas redbud tree creates a "Wow factor" in the landscape. When selecting trees for your landscape, include a small flowering tree such as Anacacho Orchid, Texas Mountain Laurel, Texas

Pistachio or Texas Redbud. Flowering trees can be messy so locate them away from patios and sidewalks.

