

BOB McDONALD'S RED OAK

Quercus shumardii



Characteristics

- Type: Tree
- Zone: 5 to 9
- Height: 40.00 to 60.00 feet
- Spread: 30.00 to 40.00 feet
- Bloom Time: April
- Bloom Description: Greenish
- Sun: Full sun
- Water: Dry to medium
- Maintenance: Low
- Suggested Use: Shade Tree, Street Tree, Rain Garden
- Flower: Insignificant
- Leaf: Good Fall
- Tolerate: Drought, Dry Soil, Air Pollution
- Texas Native

Culture

Texas Red Oak is a medium to small tree, rarely growing over 75 feet, but usually 30 to 50 feet, with spreading branches. It is found on alkaline limestone and neutral to slightly acid gravels and sands of north central and central Texas west to the Pecos River. Texas Red Oak is smaller, more often multi-trunked, and more drought tolerant than Shumard Red Oak. The foliage turns bright shades of vivid red and orange in autumn. The bark is dark gray to black with plate like scales, although sometimes it is light gray and smooth. Generally, a durable and long-lived tree. Easily grown in average, dry to medium moisture, acidic soil in full sun. Prefers fertile, sandy, finely-textured soils with good drainage.

This tree was grown from a cutting taken from a red oak belonging to Bob McDonald, one of the original members of the East Texas Arboretum and Botanical Society that was established in 1993. That cutting was planted in his honor in the Henderson County Master Gardener DREAM Garden by one of the long-time Master Gardeners who helped start the DREAM Garden.

Noteworthy Characteristics

Red Oak are large stately and majestic trees native to Texas and grow east of Ft. Worth to Texas' border with Louisiana and Arkansas. They have wide spreading canopies that become more rounded as they mature. When younger, Red Oaks have a narrow and open habit. Red Oak are fast growing and high quality trees that are easy to maintain and require moderate amounts of fertilizer and moisture when established. The leaves are 4 to 8 inches long, display 5 to 7 deep lobes and have bristles on the tips of each lobe. The leaves are glossy dark green with a lighter green underside and in the fall the leaves turn a brilliant red to red-orange color.

Problems

Generally, a durable and long-lived tree, but is susceptible to a large number of potential diseases and insect pests, including anthracnose, canker, leaf spot, rust, blight, galls, caterpillars, borers, leaf miners, oak lace bug and oak mite. Chlorosis (yellowing of the leaves while the veins remain green) often occurs when soils are not properly acidic. Can be difficult to transplant and establish.

Garden Uses

Shade tree, street tree, lawn tree. Does well in wide range of soils from dry locations to wet ground and low spots.