

Live Oak Tree

(*Quercus virginiana* and *fusiformis*)

Native Range: Technically speaking, *Quercus fusiformis* is the Hill Country Live Oak and *Quercus virginiana* is the Live Oak of coastal areas of Texas to Florida. Nursery trees grown from acorns of these two look and grow the same and it is hard to tell the true origin of your tree. The rate of growth is more determined by soil and water than acorn source. *Quercus wislizenii* is the Live Oak of California.

Sun/Shade: Full sun to part shade.

Landscape Use: Live Oak trees are still one of the best trees for landscaping and probably the best if no supplemental water is ever given. They are not as slow as reported but with regular watering can grow much faster, twice as fast as one left to itself out in the rocky hills. But with so many majestic Live Oak trees around, there is not as much incentive to plant one. In the end, the Live Oak Tree will out live and provide more years of beauty than any other popular Oak tree like the Monterey or Red Oak; but in the short term the later two choices may provide more interest and beauty. If you are more interested in the next 50 years you may want to plant another tree. If you are more concerned about leaving behind an awesome legacy, plant a Live Oak.

Size: Live Oak trees even in the Hill Country, can reach 60 feet tall and almost as wide. There are documented Live Oak trees of over 600 years old in the San Antonio area.

Type: **Deciduous** shade tree that is almost evergreen but loses its leaves in spring immediately putting new ones on.

Drought Tolerance: Very drought tolerant.

Soil: Not particular about soil as long as it drains well and does not remain constantly wet. Does well in rocky soil or even better with soil enhancement.

Water: Smart Watering Principle=Water well when first planted then allow to dry slightly, without wilting, then water deeply again, etc. Do not keep constantly wet.

Fertilizer: Looks even better with regular fertilization.

Maintenance Tips: **Looks best when the trees are cleaned out of dead wood and ball -moss revealing the attractive limb structure.** Oak wilt is present in Helotes on the east side of Bandera road but does not show signs of wiping out all Live Oak trees in Helotes or the Hill Country. However, trees next to infected trees are in danger through root system contamination.

Rating: Rates high as a landscape plant.