

Monterey Oak, Mexican Live Oak (*Quercus polymorpha*)

Native Range: Mexico

Sun/Shade: Full sun or part shade

Landscape Use: Very popular large shade tree. It is becoming as popular as Arizona Ash and Chinese Pistache were, in their day, and rivals even the popularity of Texas Red Oak for new plantings. This tree is sometimes called Mexican Live Oak since it loses its leaves in spring like our Live Oaks and immediately puts new ones on. Both Monterey Oaks and Live Oaks are in the White Oak family. The new leaves begin with a peachy color and then mature into a healthy green. They do not display fall color. Monterey Oak leaves are larger than Live Oak tree leaves and the trees grow somewhat faster, perhaps three feet around per year, after the second year. There are many examples of Monterey Oaks growing successfully throughout the area but few examples of them over 30 years old around here. Preliminary indications are that they will prove to be a long-lived Oak tree. They are not susceptible to Oak wilt disease.

Size 45' feet tall and 30 feet wide.

Deer Resistance: Few trees are Deer-resistant so when young protect the foliage, but more importantly, protect the bark. Deer love to scratch their horns on a long straight, young, tree trunk. Letting the lower limbs grow is an effective method of discouraging serious damage. When the green leaves are out of reach and the trunk is thicker, the tree will be safer and cages, if used, can be removed.

Drought Tolerance: Very drought tolerant but looks best with regular watering.

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: Remember when Monterey Oaks lose their leaves so that you will not think your tree is dieing in spring.

Rating: Rates high as a landscape plant.

Pictures: See the plant picture book in the appropriate section.