

Willow Oak: *Quercus phellos*

Secondary Names:

Leaf Type: Deciduous

Texas Native:

Tree Description: A large tree to 90 feet tall and a trunk to 3 feet in diameter, with an open, rounded crown of slender, green foliage, making a beautiful tree that is desirable for roadsides, lawns and parks.

Range/Site Description: Found in East Texas, west to the Brazos River, on frequently-flooded bottomlands and along the borders of rivers and swamps.

Leaf: Simple, alternate, 2" to 5" long and 0.5" to 0.75" wide, linear to lanceolate in shape, with a bristle at the tip; leaves are smooth, medium green and shiny above, dull, light green and smooth below, turning golden brown in fall.

Flower: Separate male and female flowers appear on the same tree in spring when the leaves begin to unfold; male flowers are borne on a yellowish catkin 2" to 3" long; the female flowers are less conspicuous and clustered on a short stalk in the leaf axil.

Fruit: An acorn, requiring two years to mature, hemispheric, about 0.5" in diameter, light yellow-brown, its base scarcely enclosed in the shallow, greenish-brown cup.

Bark: Smooth and reddish-brown, with age becoming roughened by narrow ridges.

Wood: Similar to other species in the red oak group. Heavy, strong, rather coarse-grained, light brown tinged with red, and not durable when exposed to the weather; used for crossties, bridge planks, and general construction.

Similar Species: Water oak (*Quercus nigra*) has obovate leaves with more than one bristle-tip; laurel oak (*Q. laurifolia*) has wider, more variable leaf shapes; black willow (*Salix nigra*) has very narrow, serrated leaves.