

## Texas' Lacey Oak - *Quercus laceyi* or *Quercus glaucooides*

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The small native tree known as Lacey Oak, *Quercus laceyi* or *Quercus glaucooides*, can be found growing in limestone and rocky soils of the Edwards Plateau and South Texas Plains. Other common names include: blue oak, canyon oak, rock oak, mountain oak, and smoky oak.

No matter what common name this tree goes by, it has many attributes that should not be ignored. The lacey oak is virtually pest free, high tolerance of heat, drought, and high Ph soils, once established. Additionally, they will survive on well-drained clay soils, can be grown in east Texas, and the cold tolerance is fair through zone 9. As you might have



guessed, the lacey oak is a Texas Superstar™, but it has some limitations, including an intolerance to poorly drained soils, slow growing, and it may need to be pruned to establish a strong central leader. In higher rainfall areas, they will do fine growing in a raised bed or berm beds.

The lacey oak can reach a height of 30-40 feet (depending on local growing conditions) and the trunk can have a diameter of 1 1/2 feet, or it can be a short shrub. The leaves are 2 to 5 inches long, 3/4 to 2 inches wide, and have wavy to slightly lobed margins that look blue-green. Lacey Oak blooms in the spring and has acorns in the fall. The acorns are usually found in clusters of 1 to 3, and measuring 1/4 to 1/2 inch in width. An interesting characteristic of the lacey oak is its irregularly shaped crown. Its trunk is rather thick with scaly gray bark that contrasts nicely with its blue-green foliage.

This smallish tree can add nice shade to small or medium sized landscapes, because it keeps its shape and small feature. This tree is at home in native Texas plantings and low water usage sites. For poor drainage areas, containerized specimen lacey oaks can be a nice addition to courtyards and entryways. Give the lacey a try for those areas in need of a smallish Texas-tough tree.