

# Water Oak

## *Quercus nigra*



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### **Tree Description:**

A large tree to 90 feet or more and a trunk to 3 feet in diameter, with a dense, round crown of dark green foliage.

### **Range/Site Description:**

Occurs along the borders of swamps and streams and on rich bottomlands in East Texas, west and south to the Colorado River.

### **Leaf:**

Simple, alternate, 2" to 4" long and 1" to 2" wide, obovate or slightly three-lobed at the outer end, bristle-tipped, thin, dull bluish-green above and lighter green beneath, persisting on the twigs late into winter. Juvenile leaves are highly variable and have a mix of sharp teeth and rounded lobes.

### **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.

### **Fruit:**

An acorn, requiring two years to mature, 0.5" to 0.75" long and wide, light brown or yellowish-brown and enclosed only at the base in the thin, saucer-shaped cup.

### **Bark:**

Smooth, light brown to dark gray, with many thin scales over the surface; developing broad, smooth plates on older trunks.

### **Wood:**

Heavy, hard, and strong, light brown in color, with lighter-colored sapwood; utilized chiefly for crossties, fuelwood, and pulp.

### **Similar Species:**

Willow oak (*Quercus phellos*) has narrow, linear leaves and rougher bark; laurel oak (*Q. laurifolia*) occurs only on very wet sites and has semi-evergreen, elliptical leaves.

### **Interesting Facts:**

Along with several other oaks, water oak is commonly referred to as "pin oak" because of its similarities to the true pin oak (*Quercus palustris*), except for leaf shape. This name is almost generic for any unknown oak species.

# CITY OF TYLER

# ARBOR DAY

**Sat. January 21, 2023**

**Fun Forest Park  
900 N. Glenwood  
10:00 a.m.**

<https://bit.ly/TylerArborDay23>

