



## *Quercus stellata* Post Oak<sup>1</sup>

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson<sup>2</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

This 40 to 50-foot-tall deciduous tree creates a dense, rounded canopy of spreading, twisted branches, but is not cultivated in nurseries (Fig. 1). The four to six-inch-long by three to four-inch-wide, shiny, dark green leaves are deeply lobed and appear somewhat in the shape of a Maltese cross. Only rarely do the leaves change to a golden brown in the fall before dropping. The one-half to one-inch-long acorns are quite popular with squirrels and other wildlife. Old trees growing on good soil form a wonderful silhouette in the winter, with large-diameter, curving branches growing from a sinuous trunk.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Scientific name:** *Quercus stellata*

**Pronunciation:** KWERK-us stell-AY-tuh

**Common name(s):** Post Oak

**Family:** *Fagaceae*

**USDA hardiness zones:** 6 through 9A (Fig. 2)

**Origin:** native to North America

**Uses:** recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; reclamation plant; shade tree; specimen; no proven urban tolerance

**Availability:** grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

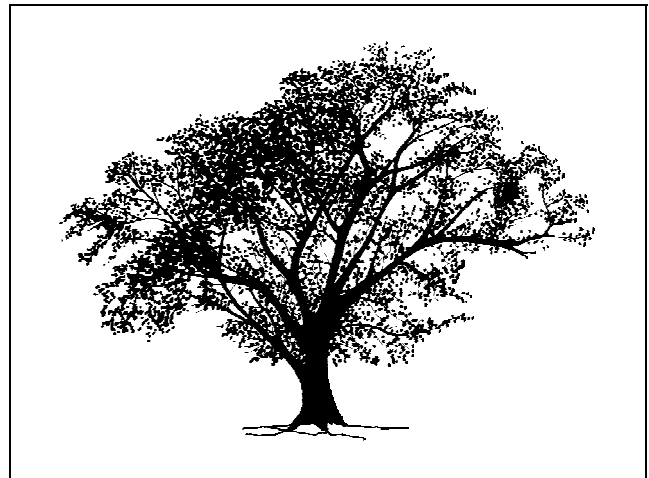


Figure 1. Mature Post Oak.

### DESCRIPTION

**Height:** 40 to 50 feet

**Spread:** 35 to 50 feet

**Crown uniformity:** irregular outline or silhouette

**Crown shape:** round

**Crown density:** open

**Growth rate:** medium

**Texture:** coarse

### Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate (Fig. 3)

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** lobed; parted

**Leaf shape:** elliptic (oval); obovate

**Leaf venation:** pinnate; reticulate

**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous

**Leaf blade length:** 4 to 8 inches

1. This document is adapted from Fact Sheet ST-562, a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October 1994.
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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** copper

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

### Flower

**Flower color:** brown

**Flower characteristics:** inconspicuous and not showy; spring flowering

### Fruit

**Fruit shape:** oval; round

**Fruit length:** .5 to 1 inch

**Fruit covering:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** brown

**Fruit characteristics:** attracts squirrels and other mammals; inconspicuous and not showy; fruit, twigs, or foliage cause significant litter

### Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; showy trunk; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns

**Pruning requirement:** needs little pruning to develop a strong structure

**Breakage:** resistant

**Current year twig color:** brown; gray

**Current year twig thickness:** thick

**Wood specific gravity:** 0.67

### Culture

**Light requirement:** tree grows in full sun

**Soil tolerances:** clay; loam; sand; slightly alkaline; acidic; well-drained

**Drought tolerance:** high

**Aerosol salt tolerance:** moderate

### Other

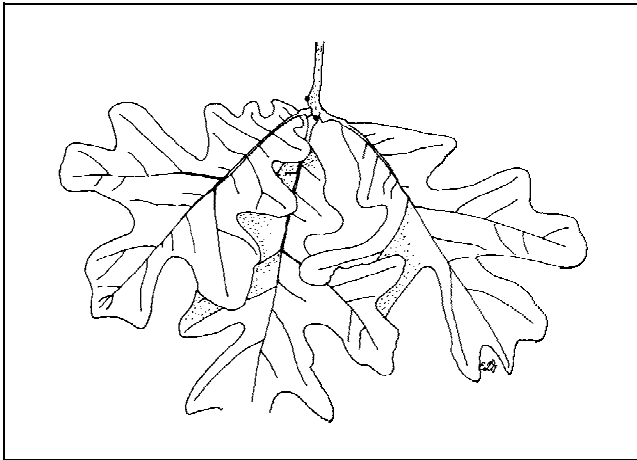
**Roots:** surface roots are usually not a problem

**Winter interest:** tree has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers

**Outstanding tree:** not particularly outstanding

**Invasive potential:** little, if any, potential at this time

**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** not known to be susceptible



**Figure 3.** Foliage of Post Oak.

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

### **USE AND MANAGEMENT**

Most often found on dry, low-fertility, sandy soils, Post Oak is extremely drought-tolerant. Trees should be located in full sun. Native trees are very sensitive to soil compaction, drainage changes and soil disturbance. Do not disturb the soil beneath the canopy on a construction site if the tree is to be saved.

Propagation is by seed.

### **Pests and Diseases**

No pests or diseases of major concern but the tree occasionally succumbs to Chestnut blight. There are many other potential problems on Oaks but none are normally serious. Post Oak is susceptible to oak wilt.