



Quercus glauca Blue Japanese Oak¹

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INTRODUCTION

At first glance, this plant would hardly be thought to be an Oak (Fig. 1). Creating a very formal, dense, round or oval shade, evergreen Blue Japanese Oak grows slowly to 25 to 40 feet in height with a spread of 25 to 35 feet. The new growth is often bronze- or purple-tinted, and develops into shiny, dark green, 2.5 to 5.5-inch-long by 1 to 2.5-inch-wide, leathery leaves. It is a very attractive tree suited for many uses.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Quercus glauca*

Pronunciation: KWERK-us GLAW-kuh

Common name(s): Blue Japanese Oak, Ring-Cupped Oak

Family: Fagaceae

USDA hardiness zones: 8 through 9 (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size); wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; shade tree; narrow tree lawns (3-4 feet wide); residential street tree; no proven urban tolerance

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

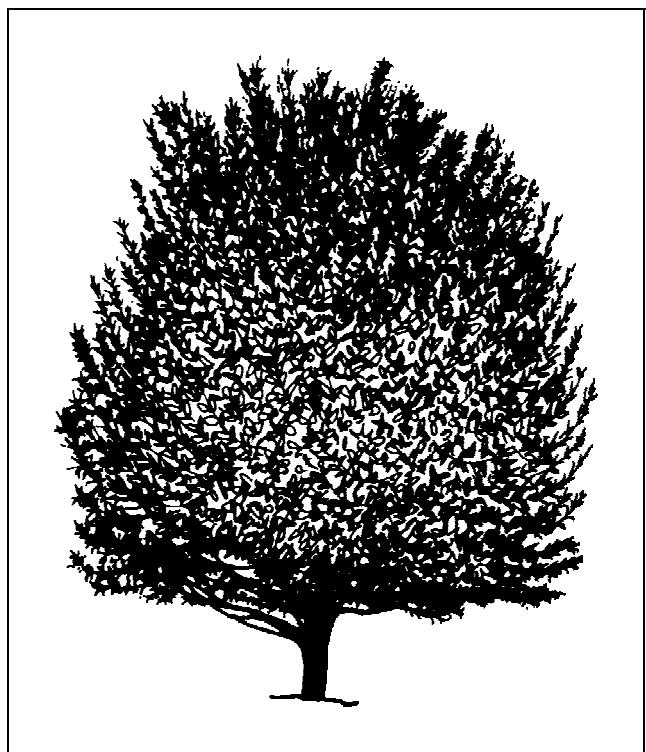


Figure 1. Middle-aged Blue Japanese Oak.

DESCRIPTION

Height: 25 to 40 feet

Spread: 25 to 35 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms

Crown shape: oval; round

Crown density: dense

Growth rate: slow

Texture: medium

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Fig. 3)
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: dentate; serrate
Leaf shape: elliptic (oval); oblong; obovate
Leaf venation: pinnate
Leaf type and persistence: broadleaf evergreen; evergreen
Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches; 2 to 4 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: no fall color change
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: does not attract wildlife; 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; not particularly showy; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns

Pruning requirement: requires pruning to develop strong structure

Breakage: susceptible to breakage either at the crotch due to poor collar formation, or the wood itself is weak and tends to break

Current year twig color: brown; green

Current year twig thickness: thick

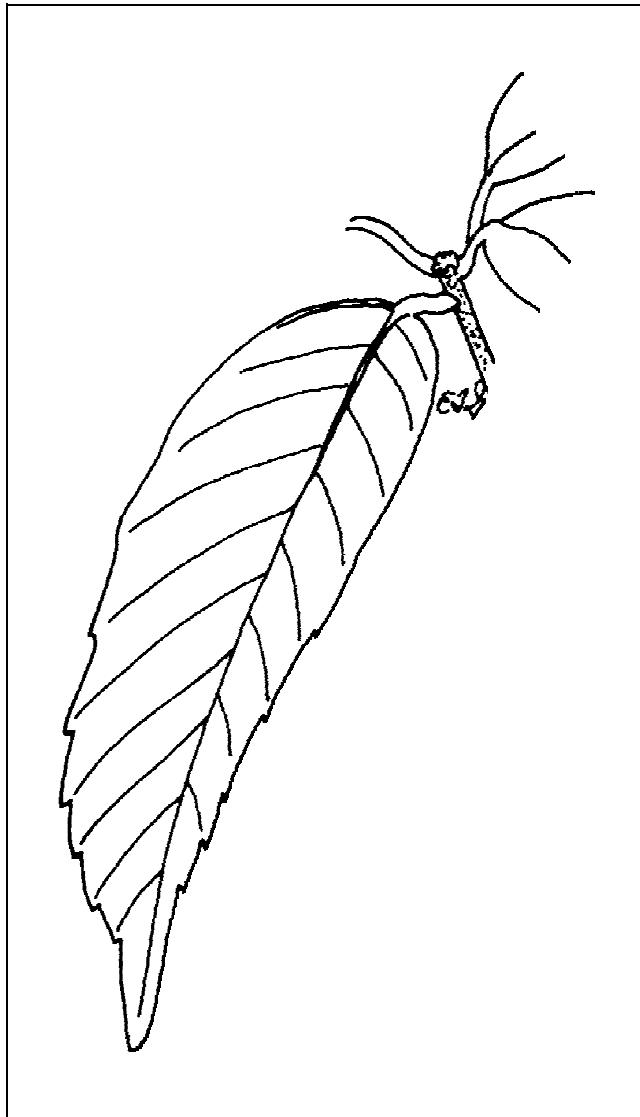


Figure 3. Foliage of Blue Japanese Oak.

Culture

Light requirement: tree grows in full sun

Soil tolerances: clay; loam; sand; acidic; occasionally wet; well-drained

Drought tolerance: high

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding tree: not particularly outstanding

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

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: not known to be susceptible

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

USE AND MANAGEMENT

Blue Japanese Oak has been used as a street and parking lot tree in parts of the southeast for a number of years. Was used in USDA hardiness zone 7b until the 1983 freeze which reduced large trees to a collection of sprouts. It appears to be tolerant of drought and poor, clay soil including those which are poorly-drained and grows well in tight soil spaces. Its tight crown lends a formal feel to the landscape.

Many upright trunks and branches originate from one point on the trunk without initial training, and this structure could lead to a weak tree. Following initial training and pruning to develop a central leader and well-spaced branches, little care should be needed to maintain this tree. It should be grown and planted more in urban areas in the south.

Blue Japanese Oak should be grown in full sun. It is tolerant of a wide range of soils, including heavy clay soils.

Propagation is by seed.

Pests and Diseases

There is a large number of potential problems on Oaks, but none of major concern.