

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF TEXAS

Lindheimer Chapter

PLANT OF THE MONTH JANUARY, 2012

CEDAR ELM, *ULMUS CRASSIFOLIA*



Cedar Elm – Fall Color



USDA Range Map: Texas



Cedar Elm

Cedar Elm is the most widespread Elm in Texas. It is tolerant of various conditions and soils, and can be found in East Texas, the Rio Grande Valley and west to the Pecos River. It is drought tolerant but also can take short periods of standing water. In deep soils, with adequate moisture, it can become a tall tree to 60' with a full crown, but in other conditions its shape is more variable. Although Cedar Elms are evergreen in the Valley, they are deciduous in the rest of the state, turning vivid shades of yellow and gold in the fall.

Cedar Elms have the smallest leaves of any Elm in the state. They have a rough texture, and the Latin name, *crassifolia*, means thick leaf. It is the only native elm that blooms and sets fruit in the fall. Since the young branches can form corky, wing like projections similar to the Winged Elm of East Texas, the bloom time is a definitive distinguishing feature. Some people are allergic to the pollen.

Cedar Elms are attractive and relatively fast growing landscape trees. They transplant easily and are readily available in nurseries. They will need to be protected from deer. In fact, in the wild, deer predation is a cause of concern as most of the young seedlings are being eaten, resulting in few new replacement trees. Cedar Elm is also subject to Dutch Elm disease, which has decimated populations of American Elm in East Texas and across the US, but so far has not been a problem in our area.