

## **Post Oak**

***Quercus stellata* Wangenh**



Family – Fagaceae (Beech)  
Genus – Quercus (Oak)  
Species – stellata (Post Oak)

### **History and Value:**

Native Americans consumed the acorns and used the post oak for a variety of medicinal purposes including fevers, dysentery, and skin infections.

It has often been called “iron oak” because of its hard durable wood. Wood is heavy, close grained, and resistant to decay and makes good fence posts, rough timbers, railroad ties, and planking, but not for finished lumber.

Their tolerance to wide variety of soils types and PH values makes them a good choice for soil stabilization on dry, sloping, or stony soils where other types of trees will not grow well.

### **Tree Description and Habitat:**

The post oak is a medium sized tree with slower growth than most other oak species. Average height is 30 to 50 feet tall, and 12 to 24 inches in diameter, but it can reach heights of 75 feet. It is drought tolerant and typically grows in well drained, dry, sandy or loamy soil.

The post oak, a native Texas tree, is the widest-ranging oak tree in the state. Although it is prominent in the namesake Post Oak Savannah region, it can also be found growing in the Pineywoods of East Texas, the Gulf Prairies and Marshes, the Blackland Prairies, and into the Edwards Plateau.



The post oak does not tolerate shade well or competition from other trees. The root system is sensitive and does not withstand soil compaction or soil removal on construction sites.

**Leaves:** The leaves are alternate and oblong with 7 rounded lobes, 6-10 inches in length. The middle lobes are more pronounced and perpendicular, giving



it the appearance of a cross. Leaves appear hard and leathery with a hairy underside, and drop each fall. The leaves provide

nesting material for birds, squirrels, and raccoons.

**Flowers and pollination:** Male flowers are borne in yellow-green hanging catkins, 2 to 4 inches long. Female flowers appear on the same tree but separately as short reddish spikes near the leaf base

**Fruit:** Acorns are from ½ to 1 inch in length.



Cups are reddish with slightly hairy scales and cover about 1/3 of the nut. Like many other oaks, post oaks usually begin to bear fruit at 25 years of age. They tend to produce a good crop of acorns every 2 or 3 years. Acorns mature in a single year and drop to the ground during September through November. If acorns come in contact with moist soil and become covered with leaves, they may germinate and sprout that same fall. Acorns provide high nutrient food source for deer, turkeys, squirrels, and other animals.

**Bark:** The thick bark is light gray and scaly.



**Twig:** Twigs are gray with multiple short, blunt, range-brown terminal buds.

