



## Pre-Climbing Competition Workshop

Advanced Climbing and Rigging by Mark Chisholm

Thursday, May 17, 8:30 am - 3:30 pm, Zilker Park, Austin

Come and learn from the best.

Arborist, business owner and three-time world champion Mark Chisholm will present the latest in climbing and rigging in this fast-paced one-day workshop. Registration is \$60.

Topics include: current “cutting-edge” climbing gear • access systems • belay anchoring systems • friction hitch configurations • work positioning solutions • single-block rigging forces • multiple-block rigging • block loading factors • angle of deflection • speedline forces.

## Texas Tree Climbing Competition

May 18-19, Zilker Park, Austin

The winner of this year’s competition will represent the Texas Chapter at the internationals in Portland. This is the best event of the year for a working climber to attend if you want to improve your skills.

The competition is made up of five preliminary events:

- Throwline – tests a climber’s ability to install a climbing line high in the tree.
- Belayed speed climb – hand-over-hand climbing to the top of a 50-foot tree. This is a pure power house event.
- Footlock – like climbing the rope in gym class, only the rope is 1/2” thick and there are no knots to grab. This is a balance of skill, calmness, agility and pure strength. [See a video here](#).
- Aerial rescue – a 150-pound sand-filled dummy is set in a tree in a simulated injury-rescue scenario. The climber must assess the situation and safely bring the injured climber to the ground. [See a video here](#).
- Work climb – four stations are set in the tree, the climber’s time starts when they are already in the top of the tree and finish when they are on the ground and unclip from their gear. [See a video here](#).

The top five finishers from the preliminary events qualify to compete in the Master’s Challenge, where the winner earns the right to compete in the international event in Portland later this summer. The Master’s Challenge combines all the skills from the preliminary rounds into one big climb.

[Click here for more information](#).



INSIDE:  
Storms Over the Urban Forest . . . p. 10





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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER by Keith Brown



April 20, 2012

In my first letter this year, I made a call out to remind people to spend some time revisiting their organizational processes for improvements. The ISAT board has taken that to heart and there have been a few significant improvements recently. One improvement was developing a single vendor registration form to cover both the tree climbing championship and the annual conference. This may seem simple, but it is an important step in centralizing our outreach to vendors that we rely on for our goods and services. How have your improvements been coming along?

One of the problems I'm trying to work out right now is dealing with the onslaught of calls that come in with the spring rush, to filter out the good leads and reduce wasted site visits where people don't have real problems or needs. My staff has been listening for keywords like "sick tree" or "stressed tree" and we're requiring these people to email photos before we're willing to provide an onsite consultation or bid. In today's age, this is as simple as clicking a picture with your phone on the way to the car before going to work. I figure if someone can't muster the motivation to do this, they probably aren't serious about their tree concern. This simple step has really helped save me a lot of time and gas money. Granted, you can't do a full-blown diagnosis from a single photo, but you can get a really good vibe on what is going on, especially when coupling the photo with some info you can get from Google maps (aerial imagery, street view and terrain/topo).

If you've made any improvements that are really helping, we'd love to hear it! Send us your letters.

## Bilingual Tree Worker Workshop May 24 in San Antonio

The San Antonio Arborist Association and the ISA Texas Chapter are sponsoring a Bilingual Tree Worker Workshop May 24 in San Antonio. This is the third year this popular event has been offered.

It is targeted to regional tree workers in the tree care industry with English as a second language. While general local tree care topics will be discussed, a major emphasis of the training will be improving safety and client/worker communication skills. 5.75 CEUs.

The workshop will be held at the City of San Antonio Northeast Service Center at 10303 Tool Yard.

Register online at [www.shop.isatexas.com](http://www.shop.isatexas.com).

## Oak Wilt Training

ISAT, in conjunction with the Texas Forest Service and Texas AgriLife Extension, will provide a workshop for Certified Arborists to receive in-depth training in the identification, biology, and management of oak wilt.

The workshop will be held in Austin at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center June 6 and 7. Dr. David Appel and TFS staff foresters will conduct the training.

Registration available at [isatexas.com](http://isatexas.com).

– Jim Houser, Regional Forest Health Coordinator, TFS

## Arborist Prep Course

Whether you want to become an ISA Certified Arborist, or you're already certified and want CEUs, the Certified Arborist Preparation Course is for you.

The course will be held Friday afternoons from June 1 through July 20 at the San Antonio Botanical Garden. An *Arborists' Certification Study Guide* is free with your registration fee, and a discount is available for members of the San Antonio Arborist Association.

Register at [sabot.org/?nd=adults](http://sabot.org/?nd=adults).

## Houston Area Workshop

The Houston Area Urban Forestry Council and Texas Forest Service are hosting a regional workshop May 16 in Houston and May 17 in Pearland. This is a Texas Emerging Communities workshop focusing on watershed protection, community forestry, sustainable planning, emergency management and wildfire protection.

You can download a brochure from [texasemergingcommunities.org/page.php?page=workshop](http://texasemergingcommunities.org/page.php?page=workshop). Or contact Mickey Merritt at [mmerritt@tfs.tamu](mailto:mmerritt@tfs.tamu).

# Pruning and Evaluating the Rio Frio Landmark Live Oak

by Mark Duff



On February 25, John Worrell, local manager with Bartlett Tree Experts and crew out of San Antonio, donated a health evaluation and pruning of the famous and historic Rio Frio Landmark Oak in Real County near Garner State Park. Two earlier pruning cycles were performed by Bartlett in 1993 and 2004. The tree owners, along with the Friends of the Big Tree, provided a feast to feed and thank the crew members.

From 1880 until 1890, N.M.C. Patterson laid out the town of Rio

Frio using the tree and Schoolhouse Mountain to the east as bearing points. For many years this Texas escarpment live oak (*Quercus virginiana* var. *fusiformis*) held champion status until dethroned in 2007 by a larger specimen in Young County. The circumference, measured at the narrowest point between the ground and the underside of the lowest branch, is 297 inches. Its crown spread is 100 feet and has a height of just over 40 feet.

The owners of the tree were concerned about the sulphur fungus conks

(*Laetiporus sulphureus*) that have periodically been forming on the main branches; they called the Texas Forest Service for advice. This bracket fungus is a saprophyte which feeds on the non-conductive tissue, which causes a brown cubical heartrot in affected trees. The fruiting body, also known as chicken mushroom, is edible when young. Our recommendations called for deadwood removal to relieve several hundred pounds from the scaffold limbs and to do a test to evaluate how structurally sound the tree was.

From left to right:  
Jacob West, John  
Worrell, Daniel  
Valadez, Gustavo  
Rodriguez, Roberto  
Mata, Mark Duff and  
Clint Robison.





## ◀ Rio Frio Oak Cont'd

Seven of us worked the tree for about six hours, with four climbers working overhead and three from below pruning limbs and painting all of the wounds. Once the pruning was complete, the downed limbs and ballmoss were chipped and dumped just beyond the drip line in two spots for spreading under the crown.

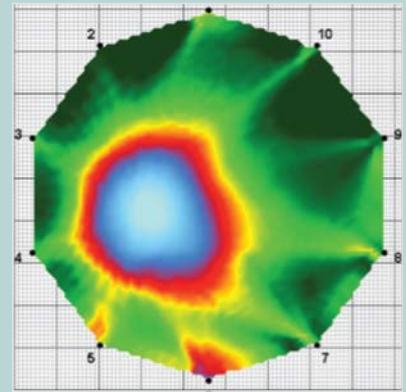
Once everything was cleaned up, Jacob West, Roberto Mata and John Worrell brought out the ArborSonic equipment and attached it to one of the main limbs (the tree was just a little too big to examine the trunk). The ArborSonic is a minimally invasive evaluation tool for trees. It works based on sound velocity measurement between several sensors around the trunk. Because sound velocity drops in decayed areas, internal holes or decay can be detected and the stability of specific branches and main trunk can be estimated. The result is an image that shows how much sound and decayed wood is present along a given cross section.

The image shows that about 27 percent of this particular cross section of stem was decayed, which is good news. Hopefully the rest of the branches and main stem are just as sound. Eventually gravity and wind will take their toll, but let that be many, many years down the road. The tree is estimated to be around 300 years old.

Once all the work was done, we went to visit the largest tree in Texas—a baldcypress about one mile away at the confluence of Buffalo Creek and the Frio River at Cryder's Campground.



ArborSonic image showing location and extent of sound, hollow and decayed section of stem.



Sulphur fungus conks on a limb.

John Worell,  
Jacob West  
and Roberto  
Mata using the  
ArborSonic.



Largest tree in  
Texas by points—  
baldcypress  
at Cryder's  
Campground.

## News from the International:

# The ISA Strategic Planning Session and Board Meeting

by John Giedraitis, ISA Texas  
Chapter member of the ISA Council of  
Representatives

Ever wonder what's going on with the international side of this 20,000+ member organization known as ISA? This past March 14-16, I had the honor of attending the ISA Board of Directors meeting at the ISA headquarters in Champaign, Illinois.

If you recall, about two years ago the governance structure of ISA was changed. We now have an elected 15 member ISA Board of Directors who is responsible for the strategic direction, fiscal oversight and policy development of ISA.

Also established two years ago was the ISA Council of Representatives (COR) made up one voting member from each ISA Chapter, Professional Affiliate (SMA, UAA, AREA, SCA) and the ISA Certification Board. I am currently your ISA Texas Chapter representative to the COR and also its Secretary.

Since our COR Chair Craig Hallam (Australia Chapter) couldn't make it, I stood in and would like to share what our ISA Board of Directors and ISA staff are doing.

I was very impressed with our Board and their focus on strategy, policy and the big picture. I can also report that ISA has an excellent staff (over 40 now) that is focused and working to implement the Board's direction. Briefly, here is a recap of staff reports and Board planning that may be of interest to Texas:

1. **Member and Certificant Needs Assessment:** Soon you will be getting a member survey from ISA. Please fill it out so that ISA and the Texas Chapter can serve you better.

2. **ISA Committees:** here are 20 or so international committees including Tree Climbing, Plant Appraisal, Hispanic, BMPs, Certification and others. Please consider giving back to the ISA and/or your Chapter by joining an **ISA** or **ISAT** committee.
3. **Z133:** Should be published this summer.

“I was very  
impressed with  
our Board and  
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strategy, policy  
and the big  
picture.”

4. **Revisions to A300:** Three of the ANSI A300 Standards for Tree Care Operations are to be revised in 2012. Tree Care Industry Association is the secretariat for, and publisher of, the A300 Standards. Although ISA has no control over publication dates, the three titles for which we expect revisions are: Part 5 – Construction Management, Part 6 – Transplanting, Part 7 – Integrated Vegetation Management. As each A300 is revised, ISA takes the opportunity to revise the corresponding Best Management Practices (BMP) as

well. Revisions to BMPs usually follow 3 to 12 months after A300 revisions, depending on the extent of the revisions.

5. **Tree Appraisal:** the Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers has been working on the 10<sup>th</sup> edition for 12 years and a draft should be out shortly for review. The **2012 Texas update** is now available online.
6. **Arborist News:** Has a new managing editor and you will see a change in content soon.
7. **Conference and Events Committee:** Texas is hosting the International Conference in 2016. This year's annual conference and trade show will be in Portland at the Oregon Convention Center. Red Lion has the lowest room rates and the Double Tree is close. The International Tree Climbing Championship will be in Laurelhurst Park (10-minute bus ride). Early registration ends May 31. **Register soon!!!**
8. **Publications:** Gary Watson has rewritten his tree planting book and Chris Luley has a new book on pruning. The Tree Risk Assessment book is now out. The arboriculture dictionary is now in nine languages and more ISA publications are being translated every year.
9. **ArborPod:** These free podcasts where you can earn CEUs have been accessed tens of thousands of times by ISA members since they were launched six months ago. Have you seen these informative and entertaining podcasts?
10. **Online Learning – Introduction to Arboriculture:** The same



## ◀ ISA Board Meeting Cont'd

award-winning, interactive training series that was previously only available through CD-ROMs is now also available in ISA's Online Learning Center. This package deal enables users to take all 25 online courses available in the Introduction to Arboriculture Training Series for a discounted price.

Publications, podcasts and the Online Learning Center are all under "Education and Research" on ISA's main page.

11. **Tree Risk Assessment:** This is a qualification and not a certification and it will be launched early next year. This is the first qualification from ISA and policies and procedures and BMPs are being written now.

12. **Certification:** ISA is working on promoting credentials to other groups. Certified Arborist recertification rates are declining slightly worldwide (81%), probably due to the depressed economies. A committee was formed last fall to look at how to revamp the Certified Tree Worker certification to serve industry needs better. Computer Based Certification Testing: 2,600 sites available worldwide.

13. **Membership:** 2011 saw the first decline in worldwide membership (-2.5%) and so far in 2012 membership is about the same as last year. There was considerable discussion at the meeting on strategic growth in new and mature markets worldwide. Student Membership: There is support

on the Board for making student membership more affordable to college students.

You can be proud of ISAT and ISA. They are both working hard to support you and our industry. If you have any questions, issues or comments, please let me know. As your representative to the ISA, I will make sure that your voice is heard.





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# Why iTree? Why You Tree?

by Micah Pace, TFS Urban Regional Forester, Dallas

Since the first public release of the **iTree Tools** suite in 2006, communities around the country have begun to look more closely at what the urban forest does and why it matters. In fact, in 2005 the Texas Forest Service participated in one of the first pilot projects for the program UFORE (Urban Forest Effects, though now called “Eco”) in an eight-county study in and around the Houston area. The results of the **Houston Regional Study** provided a close look at the regional forest population and the multitude of environmental services it provided.

Though the iTree suite of tools has grown since the early days, adding several new tools for users, the two main flagship programs remain “Eco” (previously called UFORE) and “Streets” (previously called STRATUM). While both programs are designed to estimate and describe the environmental services and related monetary values derived from the urban forest, they focus on different components of the resource and require very different data collection protocols.

As you might expect by its name, the Streets program was designed to look at publically managed street trees. On the other hand, the Eco program was designed to look at the urban forest as a whole. Projects using this program collect data on both public and private trees in both developed and

of the differences between these two iTree programs, they both help to effectively communicate, in a scientific and logical way, our passion for and innate knowledge of why urban trees are important. Ultimately, iTree created a new form of communication between resource managers and local leaders, helping to justify and support funding public tree care programs.

iTree can also aid tree protection during development projects and can be used to develop species-specific recommendations for removal and planting based on desired benefits.

So the answer to the question “Why iTree?” was answered six years ago. However, it still seems that the question, “Why You Tree?” still must be answered. I pose this question directly to municipal tree managers, since they are in charge of managing public trees in a relatively large and well defined geographic location, but also to commercial arborists and urban forestry consultants that work with our local cities who can offer these services to communities that are less inclined to do so alone. Why not be next to conduct an iTree study?

In 2009 the City of Arlington, Texas stepped to the plate (Get it? Texas Rangers . . . Arlington baseball . . . “stepped to the plate” . . . alright I’ll stick to iTree and leave the bad jokes and loose references to our prized editor) and conducted their own city Eco study. The **Arlington Eco Study** was a success and allowed the city’s urban forester to garner more support for his city-wide tree inventory system, which incorporates iTree benefits values and an important risk component.

There have been several other communities utilizing iTree tools. For example, the City of McAllen is utilizing the Streets program for its city

inventory data. The City of Irving is also incorporating iTree in its current inventory project. So what about you?

I asked this question to Travis Sales, the City



of  
Mesquite Parks

Services Manager, a couple years ago and every time I saw him or talked to him since. (I can be a real pain!) This year was the year! The City of Mesquite has begun its very own Eco study and plans to complete all field data collection by October 2012.

I invite those of you who have contemplated an iTree study but just have not had the opportunity to do so, or perhaps have been a little hesitant to undertake such a task, to consider coming to Mesquite and participating for a couple days to see firsthand that you too can iTree!

If your community is interested in learning more about its urban forest and the environmental services it provides, contact your local TFS regional forester for more information about the iTree suite of tools and how to conduct a project in your area. Stay tuned for results from the Mesquite study later this year!

For more information regarding the various iTree studies mentioned here contact Micah Pace, Dallas Regional Urban Forester with the Texas Forest Service at [mpace@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:mpace@tfs.tamu.edu).



undeveloped locations. Regardless





## EDITOR'S NOTE by Oscar Mestas

What do all of these folks have in common: Salvador E. Alemany, Greg Carver, Kathleen Craig, Ginny Crow, Maisy Crow, Shirley Crow, Stuart Crow, Chris Jordan, Claire Jordan, Jefferey May, Jenna May, Grady McGahan, Jimmy Olsen, Dan Patterson, Pete Smith, and Tim Sullivan. Give up?

Well if you visit the following link, <http://stihltourdestrees.org/2012-rider-gallery/>, this will take you to the Tour des Trees Rider Gallery. All the folks mentioned above are Tour des Trees cyclists who have listed Texas as their home state. I invite you all to visit the rider gallery and support your favorite Texan. On this webpage you can find out more information on your favorite rider and donate to the cause.

I'm a little biased on my choices; I have decided to support my two TFS colleagues, Pete Smith and Salvador Alemany. This is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary for Tour des Trees and these folks are going to be averaging about 85 miles a day. The riders have a fun-filled, seven-day tour totaling 585 miles traveling to the Oregon coast and inland to the Dalles and finally settling in Portland. If I were a betting man, and had to pick a favorite between Pete and Salvador as to who will come in before the other, I would say that Salvador has the edge on Pete. Sorry, Pete. So take a few minutes and donate a few bucks, it's only a click away. The proceeds go to benefit the TREE Fund.



## Treaty Oak Seedlings for Sam Houston IV

Gretchen Riley, Famous Trees of Texas program coordinator, had a recent brush with living history. Sam Houston IV – a direct descendent of General Sam Houston, the first President of the Republic of Texas – wrote to inquire about the fate of the Treaty Oak in Austin.

By sheer coincidence, TFS had just received the last Treaty Oak seedlings grown by American Forests' Historic Tree nursery, and Gretchen and Pete Smith (both of College Station) were able to deliver two trees to Mr. Houston when they met in Huntsville at the Sam Houston Museum.

Houston's plan is to plant them at the site where Stephen F. Austin died in December 1836, near West Columbia, TX, on land owned by his childhood friend, Billy Price. Price was instrumental in growing Stephen F. Austin oak saplings and distributing them to schools and courthouses across Texas about twelve years ago. *—Pete Smith*



Pete Smith and Gretchen Riley flank Sam Houston IV and Billy Price at the Sam Houston homeplace and museum site in Huntsville.



Billy Price and Sam Houston IV pose next to a Stephen F. Austin live oak growing at the Sam Houston homeplace site in Huntsville.



# Storms Over

## F2 and F3 Tornadoes Hit DFW Area

*by Courtney Blevins, TFS, Ft. Worth*

On Tuesday April 3, 17 tornadoes ripped across the Dallas-Ft. Worth area, leaving areas of damage from Arlington to Sulphur Springs east of Dallas. The tornadoes were of varying strengths, with the strongest being classified as F3. The most serious damage appears to be in the town of Lancaster, a Dallas suburb.

In the Crosstimbers region (Ft. Worth), both Arlington and Kennedale were hit by F2 and F3 tornadoes. Although damage overall in the cities was minor, in the areas hit it was severe. Unlike hurricanes or ice storms which cause damage, region-wide tornadoes are spotty, with no damage at all in some areas right next to neighborhoods completely destroyed.

Tree damage was heavy, with most damage being large limbs twisted and ripped from the trees. Where the F3 tornadoes hit, large trees were lifted completely out of the ground including many huge post oaks. As expected, most limb damage and split trunks occurred on species such as Bradford pear and Arizona (Berlandier) ash.

As of two weeks after the storms, both communities are still trying to clean up large amounts of debris and some are planning on drafting storm debris plans for future tornado outbreaks.

Photos below show damage in Lancaster. More tornado photos on page 12.



## Lancaster Was the Worst!

*by Micah Pace, TFS, Dallas*

Lancaster definitely got hit harder. The damage is approximately five miles long and 200 yards wide, and more than 300 homes were destroyed.

The response effort in Lancaster is being led by the City of Mesquite, the City of Dallas, and Dallas County. Other entities involved include: Rockwall County, City of Rowlett, Duncanville, and DeSoto. At this point all roads are open and crews are looking at one more day of debris removal. In speaking with the City of Lancaster staff, we said that once the major response effort has quieted, a residual tree risk assessment should be conducted to ensure the safety of the trees left behind. They plan to contact me when they are ready.

The big difference between Forney and Lancaster was the size of the area damaged and the fact that the trees in Forney are generally younger/smaller than the ones in Lancaster.



# the Urban Forest

## Epic Hail Storm in McAllen

by Mark Kroeze, Urban Forester,  
City of McAllen Public Works

McAllen, Texas, was in the path of an epic hail storm on the night of Thursday, March 30. The damage left in its wake was incredible. Leaves and brush posed a serious public safety issue, obstructing streets and creating the potential for storm water system blockages. Video of the 'McAllen Hail Storm' can be found on YouTube.

My neighborhood was at ground zero for this once-in-a-lifetime storm. The north-facing windows of our home were knocked out and horizontal hail deluged the interior. My wife and I ducked behind a wall as the hail was sailing through the air. It was a frightening experience to say the least. My initial observations included:

- Hail as large as baseballs piled two feet high in the back yard.
  - Four inches of rain and two feet of hail make for very cold feet.
  - Trees stripped bare with leaves and twigs everywhere.
  - Catastrophic damage to cactus and succulents.
  - Who invited the wood processor?
- It looked like a giant mulcher went across McAllen and shredded



everything in its path.

Dealing with the aftermath of the storm was a logistical challenge

for the City of McAllen. We had to figure out how to efficiently remove several thousand yards of leaves and brush from the street. We received help from a majority of the cities in the Rio Grande Valley with street sweepers, grapple truck, loaders, and open-top brush hauling trucks. As I write this on April 12, we are finally starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

My area of responsibility for this storm was to clear roads and alleys of trees and tree limbs that were causing an obstruction. We combined our most experienced trimming crew with a grapple unit working systematically in four separate quadrants in the city. We used four teams of two trimmers in pickup trucks to categorize the locations and equipment needed to clear any obstructions that they could not complete. Using this approach, we did not experience any service interruptions for City services for Monday residential trash service.

City management authorized overtime for this storm so we went on 12-hour days for eight straight days and 10-hour days thereafter. At the height of

the work, we had approximately 230 staff working on the cleanup, greatly increased from 30 staff working on brush pickup and tree trimming on a normal day.



Above are before and after pictures of the hail damage to trees standing on the same spot at Tulip Circle in McAllen.

The first picture was taken February 24, 2009. The second picture was taken after the hail storm that hit McAllen March 30, 2012. The clean street was after several passes with a street sweeper.



## ◀ Storms Over the Urban Forest cont'd

DFW  
tornado  
damage ▶



▶ DFW  
tornado  
damage



Thanks to Courtney Blevins for Dallas-Fort Worth tornado photos, Micah Pace for Lancaster tornado photos, and Mike Kroeze for McAllen hail storm photos.

## McAllen Hailstorm cont'd

All television channels in the area were interested in speaking to the McAllen Forestry Department about coping with hail damage to trees. The advice given was to remove only broken and cracked branches, monitor the releaf process for the next 8 weeks and then remove dead branches, and ensure trees are properly watered through summer.

All in all, mother nature really threw a surprise at McAllen and I would encourage you to think about the emergency response protocols you have in place for your city or business.

## Helping Owners of Damaged Trees

After the March 29 hailstorm in McAllen, many concerned homeowners wanted to know what to do about their storm-damaged trees. To get the word out, Texas AgriLife communications specialist Rod Santa Ana interviewed urban forester Salvador E. Alemany, and the resulting article is full of information on how to care for damaged trees and how to decide if professional help is needed.

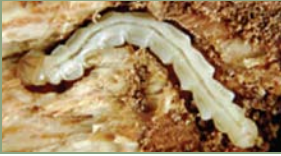
In general, storm-damaged trees need water to reduce stress. They could also require specialized care, depending on the type of damage and the type of tree.

The article included Alemany's recommendations on oaks, cedar elms, and several varieties of palms that are popular in McAllen. The entire article is at [themonitor.com/opinion/water-60063-mcallen-need.html](http://themonitor.com/opinion/water-60063-mcallen-need.html).



McAllen  
hail storm





## Follow Up: Emerald Ash Borer Trapping Study

by Micah Pace and Oscar Mestas,  
TFS Regional Urban Foresters

If you remember the Pest Post article in the March issue, it mentioned the emerald ash borer (EAB) study that was under way and that TFS was looking for partners and locations to set traps. Well a lot of TFS urban foresters and partners have been very busy setting traps. As you drive around, you may spot these huge purple boxes in trees and you will know that there have been a lot of busy people out there.

TFS Regional Urban Forester Micah Pace states, “This will be the fifth year to conduct this survey, but this year the number of traps has greatly increased from 200 to over 1700.” The traps used in this survey—EAB Purple Traps—are hung in trees and may be conspicuous along some roadsides. In the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex traps are being placed in 10 different counties.

In Kaufman County, the Texas Forest Service is being assisted by the Kaufman County Urban Forester, Pam Corder. She has been invaluable in assisting with urban forestry-related inquiries from residents throughout the county and in the location of trap sites and placement of traps.

According to Micah, trap installation began last month and is ongoing. They will be monitored once in late May or June, and then removed from the field in August. Lures should be replaced during the first revisit (late May or June). When traps are examined in late May or June and then again in August, any beetle samples resembling EAB (about ½-inch long, elongated body)

will be placed into a glass vial with 70% isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol. If the insect is too wide to fit in the 4-dram vial, it is not an EAB and doesn’t need to be collected. Vials will be labeled with the date, county, trap number, and collector name and then sent to TFS Entomologist, Joe Pase, in Lufkin for the final assessment.



▲ Regional Urban Forester Mickey Merritt finishing up after hanging a trap in White Park in Chambers County.

◀ Extension Associate, Dr. Charlie Helpert, hanging an EAB Purple Trap from an ash tree.

## CERTIFICATION TESTS

These are the remaining certification tests scheduled for 2012:

May 14	Fort Worth
August 10	Amarillo
August 15	Round Rock
Sept. 28	Waco

Certification information and an application form can be obtained at [www.isa-arbor.com/certification/becomeCertified/index.aspx](http://www.isa-arbor.com/certification/becomeCertified/index.aspx)

As with all Certification Examinations the application must be in the ISA office 12 working days prior to the Exam.

The ISA Certified Arborist computer-based exam is now available in Texas.

To view computer-based testing locations please go to [www.isa-arbor.com/certification/benefits/credentialsExplained.aspx](http://www.isa-arbor.com/certification/benefits/credentialsExplained.aspx)

In order to schedule a computer-based exam, you **must** submit your application and/or retake form to ISA.



## What is the benefit of this tree?

The 16-inch bur oak in this photo provides overall benefits to the owner of \$48 every year, according to the Tree Benefit Calculator on the iTrees website.

Using this calculator you can identify a specific tree in a client's yard and get an estimated benefit value for that tree. Just type in an address and follow the instructions. It's at:

[itreetools.org/design.php](http://itreetools.org/design.php)



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## Texas Arboretum Opens May 19

The Mollie Steves Zachry Texas Arboretum at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin will officially open May 19 with a ribbon cutting at 1:30 at the trailhead garden.

The Texas Arboretum will serve as a resource for tree identification, field trips, and outdoor classes. Visit [wildflower.org/arboretum/](http://wildflower.org/arboretum/).

## Land Management Expo June 9

Natural resource professionals from the Central Texas Conservation Partnership will help Travis County landowners learn more about land management at the Travis County Conservation Expo June 9 at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, Austin.

Topics include brush and native grass management, landscaping with natives, oak wilt prevention and mature tree care, wildlife management, prescribed fire and protecting structures from wildfires, and rainwater harvesting.

Free admission and lunch will go to the first 200 who RSVP to Eric Beckers, [ebeckers@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:ebeckers@tfs.tamu.edu) or 512-339-3772. CEUs are available for pesticide applicators.

The partnership is a collaborative effort of the Texas Forest Service, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, and a number of other public and private natural resource organizations. More information at [texasconservation.org](http://texasconservation.org).

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## What's the Big IDea?

Can you identify this Texas native?



If you know this tree, correctly identify it on our facebook page. If you don't know it, check the page for the answer in a few days!

*Hint:*

This small tree is highly aromatic – some find it a pleasant fragrance, others don't. There is no current champion in the Big Tree Registry.



*How to enter: Log onto our facebook page and type in both the common and scientific name. We will check the page daily until the tree has been correctly identified, confirming the correct answer.*

## Last month's winner

The March winner was Amy Thiel Jones from Austin, who is a farm and garden consultant for Tierra Vibe. She correctly identified our March BigIdea tree as slippery elm, *ulmus rubra*.





Sawflies are an interesting group of insects. They are actually classified as a wasp (insect order Hymenoptera). There are over 900 species of sawflies in North America. Females use a saw-like ovipositor to lay their eggs in the foliage or branches of plants, accounting for their common name. These wasps are not a threat to people as they do not sting, but the larval stage of these insects feeds on the foliage of pine and hardwood trees (and other plants). Sawfly larvae are often mistaken for caterpillars of butterflies or moths. Sawflies are particularly a concern when they defoliate certain pine trees, mainly loblolly and shortleaf pine, sometimes causing trees to die. Fortunately, natural enemies usually bring sawfly outbreaks to an early end and outbreaks several years in succession are not common. When needed, the larvae can be sprayed with an insecticide like carbaryl (Sevin®) malathion or acephate (Orthene®). Adult sawflies are seldom seen; the larvae are most commonly encountered.



by H. A. (Joe) Pase III, Texas Forest Service

Sawfly larvae were reported defoliating pine trees in Kaufman, Hunt, and Lamar counties in northeast Texas in April 2009. At that time it was determined that the sawfly was *Neodiprion taedae linearis*. This sawfly has commonly been called Arkansas pine sawfly and loblolly pine sawfly. Now, in April 2012, this sawfly has again appeared in Kaufman County. In both occurrences, the sawfly larvae fed on the foliage of pine trees 20+ feet

tall. Mature larvae are pale green to a creamy white color, have two gray dorsal stripes, a black lateral stripe with a lighter lateral stripe below that on each side, a brown head capsule, and gray to black markings on each proleg (false legs). Larvae are gregarious and tend to feed on the second-year needles of loblolly and shortleaf pines. Mature larvae are about 1 inch long. There is one generation per year and this insect overwinters as eggs in pine needles. Larvae are present in April, and when mature, descend the tree to spin tan silken cocoons in the litter or top soil. Adults emerge in the fall, mate, and the female lays her eggs in pine needles. The defoliation by this sawfly seldom causes tree mortality.

There are two other pine sawflies that are found in East Texas from time to time—red-headed and black-headed pine sawflies. Outbreaks are usually sporadic and localized. Currently, activity from these two sawflies has not been reported.

Red-headed pine sawfly (*Neodiprion lecontei*) larvae usually feed on the needles of loblolly pine trees less than

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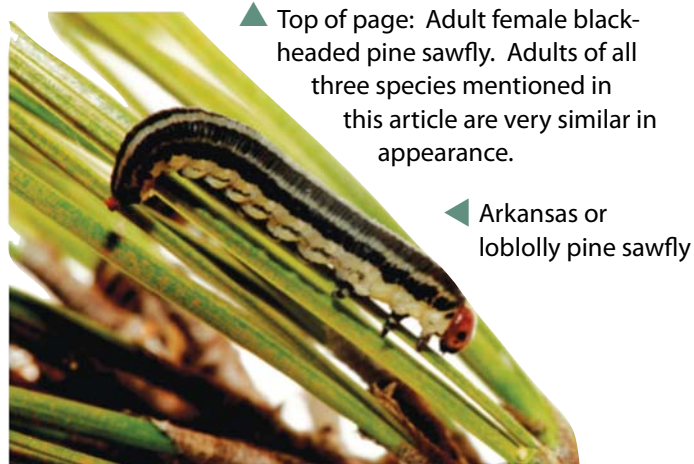


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▲ Top of page: Adult female black-headed pine sawfly. Adults of all three species mentioned in this article are very similar in appearance.

◀ Arkansas or loblolly pine sawfly

## ◀ Pest Post Cont'd

10 feet tall. They will also feed on longleaf, shortleaf and slash pine needles. When the larvae completely defoliate a young tree, the tree often dies. Mature larvae are about an inch long, have a rust-red head, and the body is light yellow-green with six rows of black spots. This sawfly spends the winter in a cocoon and emerges as an adult in early spring. The larvae feed gregariously on current and previous year's needles. Full grown larvae descend to the ground where they spin a tan cocoon in the leaf and needle litter or upper layer of soil. There may be three to five generations per year in Texas.

Mature black-headed pine sawfly (*Neodiprion excitans*) larvae are about 1 inch long, light greenish in color, usually have four distinct gray to black stripes along the top and sides (this is variable), a shiny black head, and prefer pulpwood and sawtimber-sized trees. Black-headed sawfly larvae usually only feed on second-year needles and leave the current year's needles intact. This feeding seldom causes tree mortality. Like the other sawflies mentioned above, the black-headed pine sawfly spins a tan cocoon in the litter or upper layer of soil. There may be two to three generations per year in Texas with the winter being spent in the cocoon.



▲ Red-headed pine sawfly



Black-headed pine sawfly ▲



Sawfly cocoons ▲



# Doing It Right

by Bruce Kreitler BCMA,  
*Broken Willow Tree Service*

As a Certified Arborist and owner of my own tree service, I find I spend the majority of my waking hours walking the line between doing exactly what the customers want, and what is actually best for their trees—while still pleasing the customers. I take a great deal of pride in pulling this off on a regular basis.

As you, the business owner, are aware, no matter what you spend most of your time doing, the one thing that you are going to have to furnish at all times is good customer service. It doesn't matter how much knowledge you have, or how good you are, if you aren't pleasing the customers, they aren't going to call you back. I suppose that in some of the larger, more populated areas, advertising could generate constant "new" business, and it might be possible to get by without a high percentage of return customers. But I wouldn't want to try it myself.

So I've spent years learning about trees, adapting and changing as I learned, dealing with customers on a personal yet professional level, and just generally meeting the day-to-day challenges of business. On top of that, we are dealing with some of the worst economic times since the early eighties.

So without really noticing, I've built up a business where I meet and talk with my customers, find out what they want, schedule the work, get it done to their liking, and if not we work with them to "get it right." Of course I deal with tons of paperwork, receive and return phone calls, hire, train, and deal with employees, and on and on and on. I've been doing this so long it has become second nature and

without really thinking much about it, beyond dealing with the occasional problem, or sharing a nice letter from a very satisfied customer to the work crew, I did not realize how hard we concentrated on "doing it right."

The reason that I bring all this up is because I had a pretty eye-opening experience yesterday which really put the subject of customer service and how we behave on people's property front and center.

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## An eye-opening experience that put customer service front and center...

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My wife had been wanting to paint the utility room in our house for quite some time. When she told me that she had hired someone to do it, I was relieved to find out she wasn't going to make me paint. Since I really didn't want to do it myself, I didn't offer any comment or input. The day the painters were scheduled to arrive I had to swing by the house to pick something up. Yes, they had showed up on the right day, but they had completely blocked the front drive with their trailer and truck so I could not pull in. Again, since I didn't want to do it myself, I got my stuff and left.

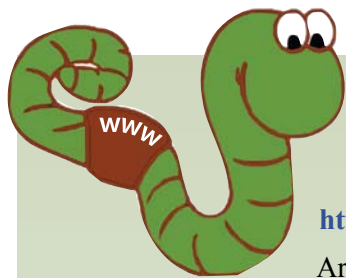
That evening when I went home, as I pulled up to my house, I noticed that the side gate to my backyard was open. My dog was with me, but I still

didn't like the gate to my yard being open. One of the most ironclad rules in home service is "Don't leave the gates open."

I got the dog (my constant companion) out of the truck, put her in the backyard, went around to the front and found they had left the trailer in my front driveway. Entering the house, I went to the utility room, and discovered they had moved the upright freezer, placed it in front of the back door and left it there, *unplugged*. Now of course they had to move it to paint, but they didn't move it back or even plug it in before they went home. They left it blocking the door, with the contents thawing. There is no way my wife could have moved that thing. On top of all that, they left debris, hardware, tools, and some of their lunch trash scattered all over the kitchen counters.

So what does all of this have to do with trees? My experience with the painters made me realize that complaints from my customers are few and mostly minor. I figured out that I've been struggling to build a business with a perfect customer service record, which can't be done, and without realizing it, have created a business with a top-notch record of customer service. Basically, I've been struggling to get "there," but had actually "arrived" some time ago and didn't even know it.

I've met a lot of members of the ISA Texas Chapter and have found them to be dedicated people just like me. I'm wondering if I'm the only one who had to be hit over the head to realize I've "made it." Are a small number of minor customer complaints keeping you from realizing that you've built a business that has really great customer service?



# WEB WORM *by Pat Wentworth*

<http://www.arbclimber.com/index.php/2011-07-25-19-17-57>

Arbor climber new magazine

<http://web.utk.edu/%7Egrissino/downloads/borer2003.pdf>

Increment borer

<http://dendrolab.indstate.edu/nadef/>

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