

# In the Shade

NEWSLETTER OF THE ISA TEXAS CHAPTER  
SPRING 2023



Texas Chapter  
International Society  
of Arboriculture



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## From the President

Well, we blew past Spring and right into Summer in Central Texas. It feels like the year is flying past and as a board, we're jumping from one event to the next.

As a working board, we're all members of the arborist community, which means that we have a vested interest in being sure that we have relevant events and workshops. In addition to our live events, we have an online learning portal for members to get CEUs and review our webinars and conference sessions. Check it out at <https://isatexas.com/publications/online-learning-series/>. If you don't see a webinar or workshop on topic you're interested in, get in touch with our Education Committee and let them know.

We're looking forward to the Texas Tree Climbing Championship in May at Richard Moya Park (Travis County). This event relies on

volunteers. If you would like to be a volunteer, sign up through the link at <https://isatexas.com/events/tree-climbing-championship/>, and of course we always need sponsors and exhibitors.

This year has been a season of change. Several of our board members have had life changes and have had to step off the board for now.

And our long-time Executive Director has decided to step back and start his retirement process. During our first strategic planning session, the board made it a priority to start developing a succession plan, which is when Gene Gehring came on as John's assistant. Gene will be Interim Executive Director as the board goes through the process to prepare a new contract.

See you in the trees,

Rebecca



Spring drew on... and a greenness grew over those brown beds, which, freshening daily, suggested the thought that Hope traversed them at night, and left each morning brighter traces of her steps."

—Charlotte Bronte

## In the Shade

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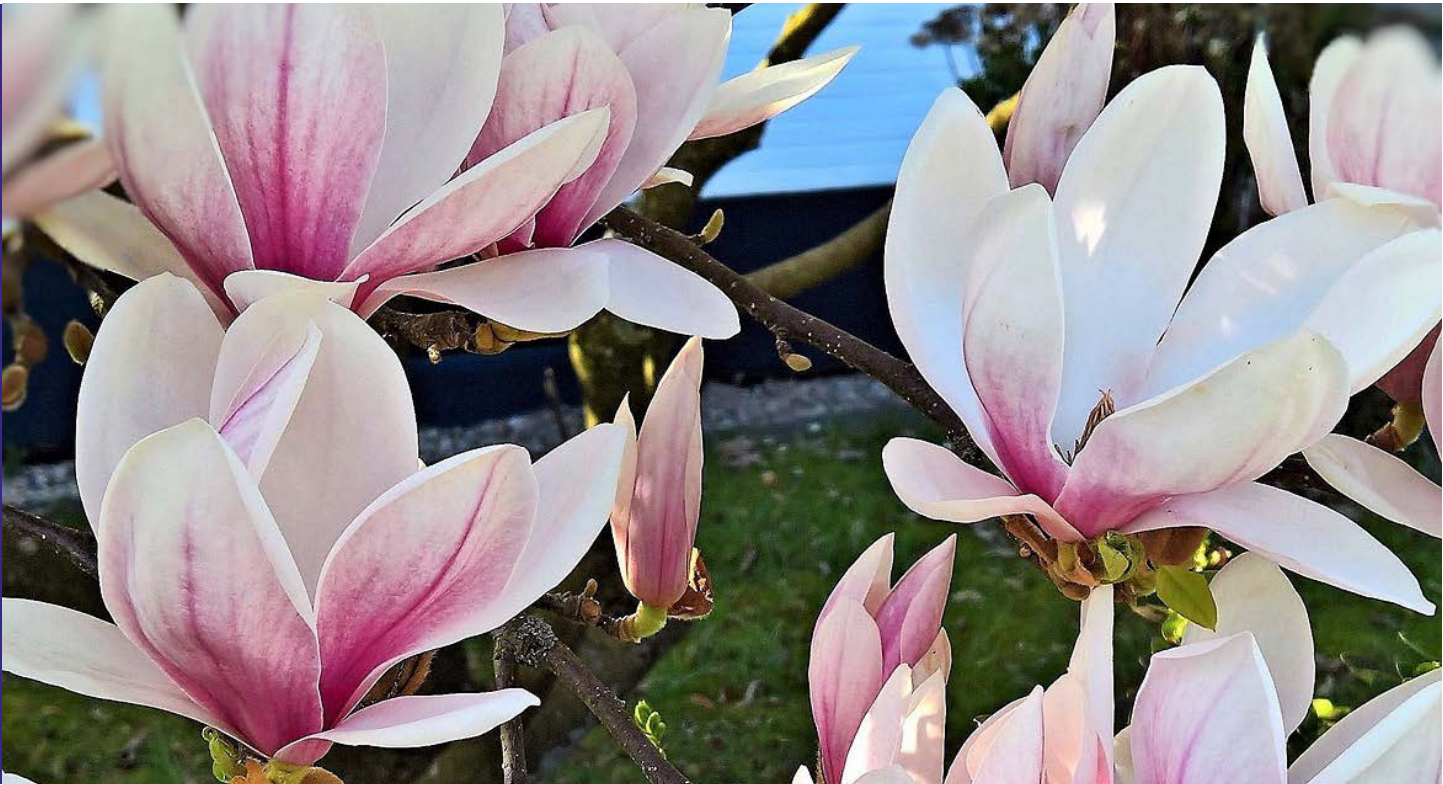


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Are you a Chapter member? If not, go to [www.isatexas.com](http://www.isatexas.com) and join today!

Chapter member benefits include:

- **Publications:** In The Shade, a bi-monthly printed newsletter
- **Email Update:** TreEmail, a monthly calendar of tree events and important tree news
- **Networking and Promotional Opportunities:** Texas Tree Conference, Texas Tree Climbing Championship, Arbor Day and other events
- **Discounts:** Discounts on Texas Chapter seminars, workshops, and conferences
- **Online Learning:** Monthly/bi-monthly educational webinars created by the Chapter



On the Cover

Blooms of the Saucer magnolia (*Magnolia x soulangiana*) announce the arrival of Spring.

### Certification Exams

June 15th—Austin  
September 1st—Austin  
September 20th—Waco  
(Tree Conference)  
November 17th—Ft. Worth

More info at [ISATexas.com](http://ISATexas.com)



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Editor’s Note



Greetings, fellow Tree People!

Spring is here! Here on the Gulf Coast, we’re enjoying crawfish boils and strawberry picking while watching the bulbs emerge from their winter slumber (between rain showers). The garden centers and nurseries are packed with people ready to plant veggies, herbs, flowers... and play in the soil.

Learn about an important variety of Celits on page 8, get the recap from the Women’s Climbing Workshop on page 11, and read about the aftermath of the ice storm in Austin. Be sure to “leaf” through the rest of this issue for Upcoming Events and other goodies.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this issue and to those out there reading it.

Happy Spring!

Sincerely,

Heather McKnight





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## New Members

- Katy Allbritton ..... San Antonio TX
- Daniel Barron.....Nacogdoches TX
- Christian Boser .....Nacogdoches TX
- Kelly Brown.....Amarillo TX
- Jason Brown .....Richland Hills TX
- Dale Bufkin, Jr.....Nevada TX
- George Martinez Cardenas .....San Antonio TX
- Ryan Davidson.....Princeton TX
- Tracy Dillon .....Montgomery TX
- Jeremy Dirksen .....Oklahoma City OK
- Kyle Dittfurth.....Livingston TX
- Tyler Dunne .....Denton TX
- Lawson Eddy.....Fair Oaks Ranch TX
- Kaniz Farzana.....Stoneham MA
- Thomas Frampton .....Nacogdoches TX
- Jesus Garcia .....Pasadena TX
- Hunter Garrison .....Arlington TX
- Michael Gonzales .....San Antonio TX
- Margaret Elise Gullion.....Houston TX
- Adam Hall .....Flower Mound TX
- Vanessa Halsey.....Arlington TX
- Brian Robert Hart.....Houston TX
- Kaylie Heimann.....Argyle TX
- Anthony Hernandez.....Irving TX
- Marcus Herrera.....San Antonio TX
- Gerald C. Hoffstrom .....Universal City TX
- Sera Holland.....Houston TX
- Lee Hoover .....Plano TX
- Jacob Matthew Hurtado .....Alice TX
- Robert Jacob Ingram .....Dripping Springs TX
- Scott Knussmann.....Georgetown TX
- Martin Lemond .....Houston TX
- Maria Elena Lopez Lopez.....Houston TX
- Justin Michael Martin .....Spicewood TX
- Cleto Martinez .....Waco TX
- Nazario Memije .....Dallas TX
- Morgan Metcalf .....Nacogdoches TX
- Brett Michalk .....Wells TX
- Gerardo Moncada .....Dallas TX
- Duncan Moore.....Sunset Valley TX
- Jesse Morton.....Houston TX
- Aaron Neville .....Jupiter FL
- Stephen Michael Olinski .....Mansfield TX
- Carmelo Orellana .....Friendswood TX
- Justin Ory .....Buda TX
- Jason Andrew Plunk .....Spring TX
- Ever M Reyes.....Garland TX
- Terry Kristin Rodgers .....Burnet TX
- Robert Ruiz .....Austin TX

- Aaron Shehan.....Amarillo TX
- Elmer Benjamin Solorzano de Jesus..Austin TX
- T.C. Solorzano de Jesus.....Athol MA
- William Speed.....Montgomery TX
- Beverly Sterling.....Waco TX
- Mitchell Surovik .....Rockdale TX
- Collin Thomas.....Nacogdoches TX
- Daniel Tice .....College Station TX
- Derik Tran .....Oakland CA
- Erik Trevino .....Fort Worth TX
- Kathryn West .....Denton TX
- Michael Joseph Williams.....Austin TX
- Steven Luke Wolfard .....Grapevine TX

## Newly Certified Members

- CA Robert Adcock ..... San Antonio TX
- BCMA Maryellen Bell..... Lago Vista TX
- CA-U Osuel Castillo Paz ..... Rio Hondo TX
- CA Brad Davis..... Sapulpa OK
- CA Stephen Dodson..... Dallas TX
- CA Phillip Graves ..... Austin TX
- CA Kyle Haynes ..... Montgomery TX
- CA Scott Knussmann..... Georgetown TX
- CA Jeffrey Latour ..... Arlington TX
- CA Maria Lopez..... Houston TX
- CA Joseph Marks ..... Universal City TX
- CA Jacob Menken..... Burleson TX
- CA Brett Michalk..... Wells TX
- CA Preston Moore..... San Antonio TX
- CA Graydon Snowden ..... Bryan TX
- CA Ty Stonecipher..... New Braunfels TX
- CA-M Eric Wettengel..... Midlothian TX
- CA Michael Williams..... Austin TX



# More adaptable than you might think: Celtis ehrenbergiana provides understory and food for humans in much of Texas

By Rachel Cywinski  
ISA Texas Professional Member



Persuading landowners to protect their larger trees by adding natural understory can be challenging. But arborists have an ally in one of the most overlooked and beneficial small trees of Texas: Celtis ehrenbergiana (USDA symbol CEEH). Referred to by many common names, including “granjeno”, “desert hackberry”, “spiny hackberry”; this understory tree solves many urban landscape concerns by attracting and feeding birds while making it more difficult for cats to kill them. Celtis ehrenbergiana fruits appear throughout the summer, within easy reach of humans and birds; but the spikes on branches discourage mammals from harvesting fruit before it falls to the ground.

During May, 2022, when daily temperatures in San Antonio soared to 101 degrees Fahrenheit for four days and maxed out at 99 much of the rest of the month, I saw mockingbirds converging in my backyard in and went to investigate the reason so many were together without territorial disputes. They were too busy eating granjeno fruits to bother each other! As exotic plants wilted, the native fruit-bearing trees were setting harvesting records in the record heat. Celtis ehrenbergiana (See photo) provided thousands of fruits for bird and human consumption between the elm, anacua and pecan trees in my yard throughout the early onset of summer weather.

In preserved areas, granjeno often grows under elm, juniper, mesquite and Texas persimmon amidst agarita, coma and brazil; thus creating an essential habitat for birds and smaller wildlife. The spines do not deter birds and humans from harvesting fruits as much as they can deter mammals from climbing

the trunk. Jackrabbit and coyote are some of the animals that quickly devour any fruit that falls to the ground. Fruit of Celtis ehrenbergiana is particularly attractive to birds in semi-arid regions, including cactus wrens and green jays. Celtis ehrenbergiana is the larval host of Libytheana carinenta “American Snout” butterflies. Spiny hackberry fruits are one of the few native fruits that taste very similar to grocery store produce. San Antonio area horticulturist and native plant author Patty Leslie-Pasztor, compares the taste of Granjeno to cantaloupe during her ethnobotany walks.

More details can be found online in these profiles: Native Plant Information Network profile of Celtis ehrenbergiana: [https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id\\_plant=-CEEH](https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=-CEEH) Texas A&M AgriLife Plants of Texas Rangelands profile: <https://rangeplants.tamu.edu/plant/spiny-hackberry-granjeno/>

Butterflies and Moths of North America profile of Libytheana carinenta “American Snout” <https://www.butterfliesandmoths.org/species/Libytheana-carinenta>



## 2023 ArborMaster TCC Climbing Kit Prize Package

The Texas Chapter ISA is pleased to announce the 2023 ArborMaster TCC Climbing Kit Prize Package for the Tree Climbing Champion (TCC), held in conjunction with the chapter’s 2023 Tree Climbing Championship (TCC) event.

This kit is being offered to each chapter champion (both man and woman, if applicable)! The package is intended to help equip the chapter representative(s) for the ISA’s International Tree Climbing Championship (ITCC) Competition.

Each prize package includes:

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# Texas Women's Tree Climbing Workshop Recap

*By Rebecca Johnson*



The 4th annual Texas Women's Tree Climbing Workshop (TX WTCW) was held in Wimberley March 3-5. Women from around Texas, mainland US, and as far away as Puerto Rico gathered to learn new climbing skills. While the workshop is centered around teaching how to climb, participants also learned how to teach what they learned to coworkers and friends. The TXWTCW also helps build and strengthen our community of arborists within Texas and connects participants to the wider arborist community.

Participants ranged from never climbed with gear, to only climbs at workshops, to climbs professionally, and were a mix of ages and backgrounds. The camp location along the Blanco River was gorgeous and amazing and participants enjoyed learning in the live oaks (which thankfully had only a little damage from the recent ice storm). Thanks to They Might Be Monkeys and Heritage Tree for providing crews to help get the trees ready for participants. Work stations included an "alligator pit" limb walking station, 2 hammocks, an elevated platform (the "trillium"), multiple trees for learning to ascend, swing, redirect, and practice safe work positioning, and a throwball station for practicing making the hard shots. Participants said "As a novice climber and as a professional who is envisioning a future in arboriculture, I found the WTCW to be just what I needed to propel me into a supportive network of women who are passionate about

trees and tree care. I learned not only climbing techniques and methods, but also the art of communication and the skill of teaching others. This was also an opportunity to rediscover the power of mindset, as it pertains to pushing our edges and creating an avenue for both personal and professional growth, which will support me in my path to becoming a budding arborist and a future leader in this important field of caring for trees and people." (Tamberly Conway)

"This was my fourth workshop, and while I'll never climb professionally, being in the tree helps me develop a better perspective for consultations and training. As I look back on the weekend, I no longer remember if we got into the trees that first day or not, I do remember that all of us got into the trees before the workshop was over. I watched as so many of the women displayed a natural talent for climbing that made me more than a little envious. I learned some fabulous training techniques that I look forward to implementing. By the end of the workshop, I was exhausted, sore, and fulfilled. And I was reminded that the Women's Tree Climbing Workshop is so much more than climbing, it's an empowerment retreat." (Rebecca Johnson)

"This was my second time attending the WTCW. Heading into the first year, I had no experience climbing trees and the workshop well exceeded my expectations. Even after having a year of climbing experience going into the second workshop, I learned more than I thought possible!" (Amy Galloway Medley)





# OOPS!...It Happened Again!

By Guy LeBlanc

Texas was hammered again by severe winter weather on February 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> 2023. Unlike the more statewide “Snowmageddon” of 2021, this time the tree damage was not as widespread. Based on state disaster declarations, the worst of the damage occurred in 23 counties, including all of central Texas and extending intermittently northeast to the OK-AR border. In 2021, damage was mostly from freeze rather than breakage. This time the amount of limb and tree breakage was far worse in the affected areas, necessitating a more urgent clean-up response, versus the more gradual clean-up that occurred in 2021 as we waited to see what trees had survived.

Farther northwest the precip fell as “grauple”, sleet or snow, resulting in little breakage; farther southeast it was above freezing. Fort Worth saw mainly sleet, very little ice and almost no tree breakage according to Jimmy Pritchard, owner of Integrity Tree Care. Due to temps hovering right around freezing for two days, with a slow constant drizzle, central Texas had ice thicknesses up to three quarters of an inch. Countless limbs snapped throughout the day on February 1, and even more failed on the second as more ice accumulated. Although weather persons in Austin referred to it as the “worst ice storm since 2007” this oft-made statement left many a seasoned arborist around here scratching their heads. In 43 years of doing tree work in central Texas, I’ve never seen ice storm damage that came close.

According to Kerri Dunn from Oncor, half an inch of ice is right around the breaking point, literally, for trees. This of course depends on the species, and ever-greens like Ashe juniper and live oak were the worst hit in Central Texas. Based on my observations, cedar elm was the hardest hit deciduous species, with Arizona ash and crepe myrtle damage also quite common. Strangely, “self-pruning” pecans (don’t you love that term?) barely lost a twig, from what I saw.

Like those of most quality arborists, my clients rarely see storm damage, whether it be from ice or wind. We’ve all see how much better well maintained trees handle such events. However, the severity of this event was exceptional in that even perfectly managed trees suffered extensive damage. My observations were that failures of limbs larger than about seven inches diameter for live oak and larger than about ten inches diameter in cedar elm almost always had some decay which was almost always visibly associated with an old pruning wound. Juniper stems and trunks over twelve inches in diameter

often failed without visible decay. I did consistently see something that will be quite controversial to report, and it was confirmed by another long-time local arborist: *lion-tailed live oaks lost fewer limbs*. My neighborhood saw some of the worst damage in Austin. We also have as much crappy tree care occurring as anywhere in the state. There are dozens of live oaks I have seen over a twenty year period that have been repeatedly stripped, gutted, etc., and some that have been only recently treated this way, and all of those trees had far less damage than nearby oaks that had been pruned properly or not at all. We all know the severely negative long-term impact of this practice, but my observations tell me that the greatly reduced surface area allowed these trees to collect far less ice, resulting in far less breakage. This *does not* mean I am recommending that practice. I would love to hear other arborists’ observations on this point.



“My observations tell me that the greatly reduced surface area allowed these trees to collect far less ice, resulting in far less breakage.”

—Guy LeBlanc

Ogden, owner of Ogden’s Tree Service. What I found is that all of us were using the same pruning practices, at least right after the storm. Basically this means completely broken branches, especially larger and/or longer ones, were being cut right below the damaged area (yes, we are “topping” trees. *See before and after pictures*). The reasoning for this is that with species likely to resprout, we believe it is better to leave these stubs, with the intention of doing some restoration pruning in the future. The cleanly cut end reduces the surface area for decay. If these broken limbs are cut all the way back to a sizeable fork, then there’s a possibly permanent “hole” in that part of the canopy, as well as a possibly quite large pruning wound, which, even if made perfectly, is not likely to close over for decades on a mature tree. For species unlikely to sprout from large stubs, like junipers, personally I’ve been cutting them back to a fork.

Now that we have reached bud break and are starting to see adventitious buds emerging near these broken stubs, local arborists are diverging a bit in their treatment. Some are leaving these stubs completely alone. I am still removing them if I believe the tear has removed too much of the diameter in the torn area (more than half), but not cutting them back as far as I was if I see some sprouting.

Of course the big question in central Texas is *always*, “What about oak wilt?” With the TAMU-TFS-AgriLife-ISA joint recommendation to avoid pruning oaks beginning February 1, the question is what would the impact of the storm and subsequent pruning be in regards to oak wilt? The good news is that due to the cold weather that persisted for a few days after the storm,

So how should arborists handle ice damage? I’ve managed to get answers from several local ISA certified arborists, who were willing to share their thoughts despite being- um- a little bit busy right now? I spoke with Jackson MacIntosh and Dorian Davey, owners of Treeweaver Arboriculture, Vincent DeBrock, owner of Heritage Tree Care, and Nevic Donnelly, owner of They Might Be Monkeys Tree and Landscape, and Jon

the probability of oaks becoming infected during that time was pretty much nil. Too cold for flying insects (yeah I know, you’ve seen nitidulids active when it was five degrees, *whatevs*), and with the drought we’ve had, fungal spores have been far less common. And the theory regarding infection court is that after about three days, exposed live tissue on an oak is no longer susceptible due to compartmentalization internally and surface drying externally. So the wounds on branches that completely broke off within those first few days were extremely unlikely to be infection courts and so painting was not necessary, unless of course the torn ends were cut off afterwards.

But what about the countless cracked/ hanging limbs still out there? As the weather warms up, and many of these then break off, new tissue is exposed, and the risk of oak wilt theoretically increases. These limbs obviously need to be removed for safety reasons. The local arborists I spoke to are and will continue to cut these back to stubs of sound wood, while retaining as many emerged sprouts as possible. *Immediate* painting is recommended (*not after lunch or at the end of the day, okay??*)

*The author has owned and operated Arbor Vitae Tree Care in Austin, TX since 1983 and has been an ISA Certified Arborist since 1992.*



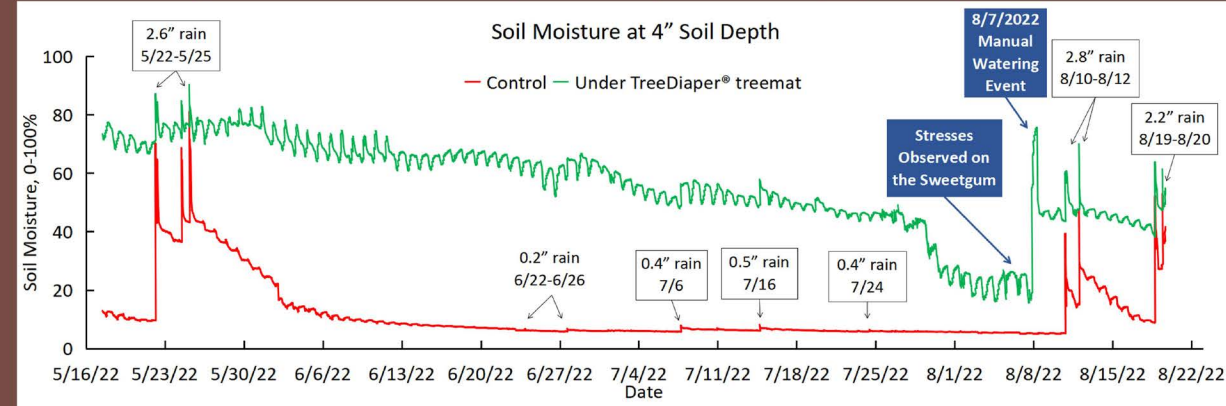


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## Member Spotlight

### Ulises Jimenez

#### What inspired you to become an arborist?

Becoming an arborist was a long walking trail for a guy that started as a grounds man, climber, and eventually crew leader/foreman. I became certified when I was promoted to do customer service as a utility pre-planner for vegetation management back in 2005/2006. At the time, this certification was mandatory, but it put together all of my experience and hands-on experience and allowed me to service the customer better.

#### What do you find most useful about being an ISAT member?

The training opportunities that increase my knowledge and skills are very helpful. The qualification workshops and Conference keep us well-informed to share the industry information and tree care to our customers.

#### What's the most interesting thing you've come across in your time in the tree care industry?

The people. I feel lucky to have met so many incredible, interesting, and enthusiastic humans and trees in this industry and I always learn something from them.

#### When you're not working, what do you like to do?

This is a hard question. In a perfect world when I'm not working, I would be jogging, riding my bike, or exercising. I also love to play soccer on the weekends and kayaking with my friends from a forestry fishing group.



## Texas Tree Critters

Forest Tent Caterpillar: *Malacosoma disstria* Hubner

- Caterpillars are a greyish color with yellow and blue stripes on their sides and a band of white, keyhole-shaped markings on top; the stripes and keyhole-shaped markings run the length of their bodies
- Mature caterpillars can grow to 2-2 ½ inches in length
- Usually active in March/April
- They don't make a tent; they make silky mats on tree trunks
- Pest Status: Defoliators of hardwood trees, especially oaks





## Storm Damage Mitigation



### General Mitigation

Protect Distressed Trees  
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Emerald Ash Borer



Asian Longhorn Beetle



Cottonwood Borer



Soapbox Borer



### Oak Wilt Prevention

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# 2023 Events Update

The ISA Texas 2023 events calendar is in full swing. The first two full TRAQ courses in Austin and Arlington sold out. The third, in Houston, is almost sold out. If you cannot get into the Houston TRAQ, be on the lookout for one in the Austin/San Antonio area in late fall.

Dr. Appel and Sheila McBride hosted a sold-out Diagnosis Workshop in College Station at the Plant Diagnostic Clinic on March 13-14. In conjunction with the Texas A&M Forest Service, we are hosting a sold out Wildfire Risk Reduction Qualification course on April 20-21. The Decay Workshop with Chris Luley and Frank Rinn scheduled for April 24-25 maxed out. The Texas Oak Wilt Qualifications will be in Glen Rose May 25-26 at the Hye Meadow Winery June 8-9; there will also be a virtual option.

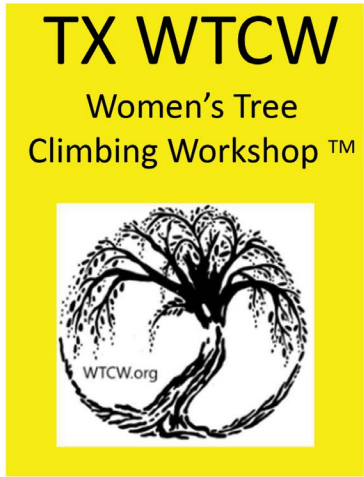
- Next Steps:**
- 1) Renew your ISA Texas membership (registration links emailed directly to members first)!
  - 2) Look for the registration link emails from ISA Texas
  - 3) Periodically check the Events Calendar on the [ISATexas.com website](https://www.ISATexas.com)

Date	Event	Location
April 11	TRAQ Renewal	Arlington
April 12-14	TRAQ	Arlington
April 24-25	Master's Series Workshop: Decay, Testing, Biology and Mechanics	Arlington
May 3	TRAQ Renewal Online	Virtual
May 18*	TTC workshop	TBD
May 19- 20*	Climbing Comp	TBD
May 25-26	Oak Wilt Qualification	Glen Rose
May 25 & June 7*	OWQ Virtual	Virtual
June 8-9	Oak Wilt Qualification	Fredericksburg
June 20-22	TRAQ	Houston
Last week of June	Full TRAQ	HCFCF Office Houston

\*Dates will be confirmed soon. Make sure to check the ISAT Events calendar online at [www.ISATexas.com](https://www.ISATexas.com)!



Image by Catherine Kay Greenup on Unsplash.



# Thank YOU!

## March 3-5, 2023

## Sponsors and Volunteers

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## What's the Big IDEa?



### Can You Identify this Texas Tree?

If you know this tree, look for the photo on our Facebook page and correctly identify it in the comment section under the photo, using the full scientific name and one or more common names. If you don't know it, check the page for an answer in a few days. The winner gets bragging rights and the chance to submit a tree to stump fellow arborists in the next issue.

Hint: "Luke 15:24"

## Last Issue's Tree ID



Last issue's winner (Late Winter 2023) was: Pete Smith

New challenge was submitted by Pete Smith.