

Best Trees for Parker County

The following list is the result of a survey of Parker County Master Gardeners. They were asked to rate the trees they had experienced growing or observing.

Number after name of the tree shows first place votes it received from Parker County Master Gardeners.

1. Live oak (3)	Best tree in Texas. Like it because it is evergreen in a landscape with other trees that are bare. I like it because it is evergreen and huge shade tree.
2. Bur oak (3)	Majestic. Beautiful tree. Love the huge acorns and the beautiful leaves. I like the rough bark and the big acorns.
3. Possumhaw holly	Be sure you get a male and a female tree or you won't get any berries. Great wildlife food. Great berry production. The winter berries make this worth not having any leaves in the winter.
4. Leyland cypress (1)	Beautiful shape and foliage. Evergreen doing very well. Little concern of ice storms. Lost one that I had loved for years. Will not plant another. Leaves a big bare space in landscape when they die.
5. Chinquapin oak (1)	Great tree for the home landscape. I like the serrated edges of the leaves. OK but I feel there are better trees for here.
6. Redbud	My favorite is the forest pansy. Love these trees, especially the Forest Pansy, but it has to be in complete shade. I have Alba and love it except for the pods. I prune them off because they are ugly.
7. Yaupon holly (1)	Beautiful structure and berries, too. I think of this as a large shrub but shrub or tree, it is great and the berries on the female plant are stunning. Also love the weeping form. I love the Pride of Houston because of the berries and being evergreen. Weeping yaupon is absolutely beautiful in winter and the birds love the berries.
8. Post oak	Messy in spring but a native beauty. I have several post oak trees and don't like them. They remind me of cottonwood trees because the dead branches are constantly falling on the ground and make a mess and causing more work for me. Cannot transplant. If you have them leave alone and let grow. Does not like to have sprinkler system water it, in our clay soils.

9. Mexican plum (1)	<p>One of my favorite native trees – 1st spring bloomer. Planted these from seed and they are lovely little trees. The birds love the plums... sometimes they make a mess. Mine is out by the creek so it's OK. I wouldn't want one anywhere else. Beautiful in spring. Fragrant. Like them in pasture and nature but not in landscape.</p>
10. Desert willow (2)	<p>Invasive. Lots of seedlings. Excellent plant for drought. Great for a wispy look. Does not bloom long enough even though it is drought tolerant.</p>
11. Chinese pistache (1)	<p>Pretty fall colors but otherwise overrated. Love the color of the foliage in the fall. Great tree. Better than pecan since it does not have aphids and does not self-prune.</p>
12. Shumard red oak (1)	<p>Best fall color. Beautiful color in the fall. I like the shape of the leaf and the fact that (some do this and some do not) they hang on the limbs all winter long even though they are brown.</p>
13. Saucer magnolia	<p>I didn't know when I planted this tree that it gets so large, so beware. My blooms have freeze burn every year.</p>
14. Cedar elm	<p>Mine grow fast and bud out nearly first in spring. Excellent shade tree. Beautiful butter yellow color in the fall, large and long lived Gets mistletoe and worms in spring but a very dependable tree.</p>
15. Little Gem magnolia	<p>Nothing bothers this tree. Even drought tolerant. White blooms are magnificent.</p>
16. Pecan (1)	<p>Messy trashy tree; many others make better shade trees. A good shade tree but messy. Messy tree that gets web worms, and aphids.</p>
17. Arizona cypress (1)	<p>I'm using this as a future screen. Love the color of the silver/grayish foliage. Like the light gray green leaves.</p>
18. Shantung maple	<p>I like this tree but lost one after 5 years- I think to drought or cold weather.</p>
19. Lacey oak	<p>The tree leans so is rarely straight trunked.</p>
20. Carolina buckthorn (1)	<p>I love this one. Mine is only a shrub now, but it has really grown fast so give it a few more years and it will really be nice. The birds love its berries. Good but invasive. Anything with thorn in the name makes me nervous.</p>

21. Ginkgo	<p>Get a male tree.</p> <p>Slow growing but worth the effort because of the beautifully shaped leaves and the butter yellow color in the fall also its ancestors were here when dinosaurs roamed.</p> <p>Grows slowly but love the shape of the leaves.</p>
22. Aristocrat pear	<p>Yuck.</p> <p>Can't tell the difference between the Aristocrat and Bradford—limbs do break off with age but I love the oval shape and the spring blooms.</p>
23. Golden raintree	<p>Got one for my neighbor-it's a beauty.</p> <p>This tree was only a 1 ft twig 6 years ago planted on the side of my yard. My husband even mowed it down once. It has had no supplemental watering, as it is not in reach of the irrigation system.</p> <p>It's a hardy, tough small tree now and has withstood with no TLC. Planted a sapling three years ago, so do not know much about this trees personality yet.</p>
24. Vitex	<p>Amazing bloom all summer and attracts butterflies.</p> <p>Easy, tough tree.</p> <p>Hardy and beautiful blooms.</p> <p>I don't currently have this tree but love it. Do not like the sparseness of the leaves but like the flowers. The white one has dirty white flowers so I like the purple one the best.</p> <p>Drought tolerant and looks good in landscapes.</p>
25. Japanese maple	<p>Great tree if you have the right spot for it.</p> <p>Must have shade.</p> <p>Can't tolerate bright sun and/or the heat.</p> <p>They are great for my shady garden.</p> <p>Have many varieties and they all are beautiful in the shade.</p>
Rough-leaf dogwood (1)	<p>Outstanding.</p> <p>Nice but invasive.</p> <p>Too rough looking for my landscape.</p>
Bird-of-paradise	<p>Grows easily.</p> <p>Blooms extremely well all summer.</p> <p>Absolutely love the blooms.</p>
Texas mountain laurel	<p>Slow grower.</p> <p>Gets worms in spring.</p> <p>Love the fragrance in the spring.</p> <p>They do great on the south side of my yard and they take no special care.</p> <p>Like that it is evergreen but dislike that it grows so slowly.</p>
Mexican buckeye	<p>Like the bloom but is too ordinary looking</p>
Southern magnolia (1)	<p>The deer got mine.</p> <p>Beautiful large tree but would be happier located in better soil than my caliche offering.</p> <p>A bit messy because of large leathery leaves that fall much of the year but I still love the one I have had for almost 50 years.</p> <p>May get too large for most home landscapes</p>

Eve's necklace	Beautiful for fall. Interesting attribute for this tree are the black seeds that form the "necklace". Like the black berries.
Eastern red cedar	Drought tolerant and dependable.
Rusty blackhaw viburnum	Never grown this tree...looks sort of unkempt to me.
Cherry laurel	Has issues with borers but I love its smell and the fact that it is evergreen.
Bigtooth maple	The ones at Botanic Gardens in Fort Worth are beautiful. Like the big leaf and the shape of leaf.
Bradford pear	No. Short lived, disease prone. Weak. No. Beautiful blooms in the spring and color in the fall. Should be planted away from entries because it is a bit messy with blooms, small "fruit", and then falling leaves in autumn. Would not plant others because of the weak branching.
Texas elbow-bush	Pesky. Very invasive. Got to be kidding. I cut these down every chance I get.

For more information on these trees, refer to:
[the real dirt: A Gardening Handbook for Parker County](http://www.pcmg-texas.org/therealdirt.htm)
<http://www.pcmg-texas.org/therealdirt.htm>