

Love Letter from ...

Tree Loving Care

Lubbock, Texas (806) 785-8733 • Midland, Texas (432) 620-8733
Fall 2012 • Serving All The West Texas Tree Needs Since 1978

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Dear Friends and Fellow Tree Lovers

It has been a long hot dry summer. Granted, not nearly as hot, as dry or as windy as last summer, but since last summer was a record for all three, I'm very glad. There are still pockets of west Texas that are still under very severe droughts conditions, the rest are just severe.

I was reading a blog a few weeks ago about a rain event in Midland in August of 2011 and the writer pointed out that in 37 minutes, Midland received more rain than the previous 319 days. I think that Midland has had about 2" since then. Since the middle of July, 2010 until the middle of September, 2012, Lubbock has received 19.02 inches of rain. That is 1/2 "more than Lubbock's annual average. All of that adds up to the most severe drought that I have seen in my lifetime, which includes the severe drought of the mid 1950's.

I have been trying to get an update, but the latest figure that I heard from the Texas Forest Service in May, 2012, was that we had lost 5.6 million urban trees and over 13 million non-urban trees in 2011. The Texas Forest Service also estimates that we will lose between 100-500 million trees before the drought is over. Trees will continue to die from drought for several years and we may never know how many trees we will ultimately lose from this drought. One estimate is that we have lost about 10 0/0 of our urban trees.

I have been saying all year that if you live in Lubbock and you don't have a dead tree in your yard, there is at least one on your block somewhere. If you live in Odessa and don't have a dead tree in your yard, there is at least one dead tree next door, maybe on both sides of you. If you live in Fort Davis and don't have a dead tree, either you have never had a tree or the fires last year killed it and there are at least 5 dead trees next door, unless the fires got them, too.

Some other figures of note is that the estimated loss of economic and environmental value due to the loss of trees have already exceeded \$280 million and just the cost of removing all these trees will exceed \$560 million. I do know that this year, Tree Loving Care has removed more trees and more large trees including the largest tree than we ever have before.

Tree work is dangerous!!! Even safety conscious companies such as Tree Loving Care deal daily with that fact. We recently bought a boom truck (crane) and a spider lift that will travel into just about any back yard in our ongoing effort to make our work safer. Our arborists are very well trained in all aspects of rigging for removal. We would much rather keep your trees alive and healthy, but this drought has been very severe and when all else has failed, we are very good at removal.

James Tuttle, Certified Arborist TX0117A



Fall 2012

Tree Of The Quarter

Maples are often denigrated in west Texas. That is because the best known and most widely planted Maple is the Silver Leaf Maple, *Acer saccharinum*, which is a very poorly adapted tree anywhere in west Texas. A cousin, the Bigtooth Maple, *Acer grandidentatum*, is native to the limestone canyons of central and far west Texas. It is drought and heat tolerant, although, just like everything else, needs supplemental watering in severe droughts.

Bigtooth Maple is a medium size tree, growing to 40-50' tall with a spread of 30-40', and should have a good yellow fall color. In the Lost Maples State Park, near Uvalde, it is noted for its fall color. It is also becoming more available in the nursery trade. Be sure to mulch the root zone.



Bigtooth Maple



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Give Your Trees TLC

One of the best things that can be done for trees in mineral soils such as are found in West Texas is to add organic matter. The 2 main ways that Tree Loving Care accomplishes this is through our organic deep root fertilization that we have begun to call 'Inject a Little TLC'. This is a combination of Humic Acid, kelp and our own compost tea. This product is mixed in a tank and pumped into the ground from the tree trunk out to at least the drip line. Tree roots extend well beyond the drip line, but we are often limited by boundaries such as property lines. This product is beaming with life, the same soil life that is normally found in a healthy forest soil. Injecting it into the soil as opposed to spraying it out on the soil surface means that there is less loss to drying out and the injection process also helps a little to break up soil compaction. You should 'Inject a Little TLC' in both spring and fall.

TLC has been improving our capabilities and capacities in making our compost tea and that has allowed us to lower our prices on 'Inject a Little TLC' by \$.25 per gallon. As an additional incentive, through the end of October, 2012, we are offering a \$25 discount on any of our services of \$500 or more for clients that refer a new client to TLC. The new client can also receive the same discount by going to our website, www.treelovingcare.com and printing the coupon from the offers page at www.treelovingcare.com/offers.

Another of the best things that anyone can do for their trees and other plants in their landscape is to mulch. A layer of mulch will conserve moisture, compost and return nutrients to the soil. The organic matter will support the soil life that is so vital to plant health. Tree Loving Care has plenty of fresh or composted wood chips. We can drop off a load fresh from the chip truck or deliver in a dump trailer. Both are great for your trees, flower beds or vegetable garden.

TLC Update

We have additions to the TLC family. Congratulations to Dominic Rendon on the birth of Sebastian James Rendon and to James and Katie Majors on the birth of Emily Grace Majors.

The new Midland office is up and running fairly smoothly. The biggest problem is dealing with a booming local economy and the tight labor market. Anyone like a job climbing trees? Or know someone in that area that does? TLC didn't intend to open an office in the Tri-County of Fort Davis/Marfa/Alpine area but we have been doing a lot of work in that area including removing the largest tree that Tree Loving Care has ever removed. We have worked on larger trees but, fortunately, never had to remove them. It was a pretty sad occurrence. The tree was killed by the fire that swept through Fort Davis over a year ago.



Critters and Cruds

This is a time of year that most critters are on a seasonal decline, preparing for the coming change to the winter season. An exception to this is various aphid species that feed on Red Oaks, Bur Oaks and Pecan. As leaves begin to senesce, they become relatively higher in nitrogen and are more attractive to these sap sucking critters. This feeding and the resultant honeydew raining down on cars and lawn furniture is more of a nuisance than harm. Lace wings, a predator on aphids are already handling the problem and these trees should not be sprayed with an insecticide. If you must do something, spray them with a very forceful spray of water. Your trees probably need the moisture anyway.

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at

www.treelovingcare.com