

# *Fraxinus texensis*: Texas Ash<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

Texas Ash creates a wonderful shade tree, its short trunk supporting a broad, rounded crown of seven-inch-long leaves divided into leaflets. Unfortunately, it is rare in the trade. Trees slowly grow to about 50 feet tall but most are seen 25 to 30 feet tall. The leaves are dark green to olive green above and paler green below and cast a medium shade beneath the tree. Petioles are an attractive pale red to pink, and fall color is showy ranging from orange/red to purple. The inconspicuous flowers appear before the leaves emerge in spring, and are followed by the production of 1.5-inch-long, light red to pink, winged fruit, or samara. It often grows as a multi-stemmed tree in the wild on limestone soils in central Texas.

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Fraxinus texensis*

**Pronunciation:** FRACK-sih-nus teck-SEN-sis

**Common name(s):** Texas Ash

**Family:** *Oleaceae*

**USDA hardiness zones:** 5A through 9A (Fig. 2)

**Origin:** native to North America

**Invasive potential:** little invasive potential

**Uses:** reclamation; shade; street without sidewalk; deck or patio; specimen; parking lot island < 100 sq ft; parking lot island 100-200 sq ft; parking lot island > 200 sq ft; tree lawn 3-4 feet wide; tree lawn 4-6 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft wide; highway median

**Availability:** not native to North America



Figure 1. Middle-aged *Fraxinus texensis*: Texas Ash

## Description

**Height:** 30 to 40 feet

**Spread:** 25 to 35 feet

**Crown uniformity:** symmetrical

**Crown shape:** oval, upright/erect

**Crown density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** medium

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Figure 2. Range

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite (Fig. 3)

**Leaf type:** odd-pinnately compound

**Leaf margin:** serrate, entire

**Leaf shape:** ovate, obovate

**Leaf venation:** pinnate, reticulate

**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous

**Leaf blade length:** less than 2 inches, 2 to 4 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** orange, red, purple

**Fall characteristic:** showy

## Flower

**Flower color:** green

**Flower characteristics:** not showy

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** round

**Fruit length:** .5 to 1 inch

**Fruit covering:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** pink

**Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** branches don't droop; not showy; typically multi-trunked; thorns

**Pruning requirement:** needed for strong structure

**Breakage:** resistant

**Current year twig color:** gray, brown

**Current year twig thickness:** thick

**Wood specific gravity:** unknown

## Culture

**Light requirement:** full sun

**Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; loam; alkaline; acidic; occasionally wet; well-drained

**Drought tolerance:** high

**Aerosol salt tolerance:** unknown

## Other

**Roots:** not a problem

**Winter interest:** no

**Outstanding tree:** yes

**Ozone sensitivity:** tolerant

**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** susceptible

**Pest resistance:** resistant to pests/diseases

## Use and Management

Texas Ash grows in full sun on well-drained soil, either dry or wet, and prefers alkaline soil. It is very popular in Texas and Oklahoma, but could be cultivated and planted more in other areas. Trained to a central leader and a straight trunk it could be used for city street and parking lot tree planting. It could be grown in the east in areas with good drainage especially on sites which are not irrigated due to its low water requirement or drought tolerance. Texas Ash will tolerate both soil compaction and air pollution, making it well-suited for use as a street, parking lot or median tree. Not as susceptible to borers as other Ashes.

Propagation is by seed.

## Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern. Probably borers on recently transplanted or stressed trees.