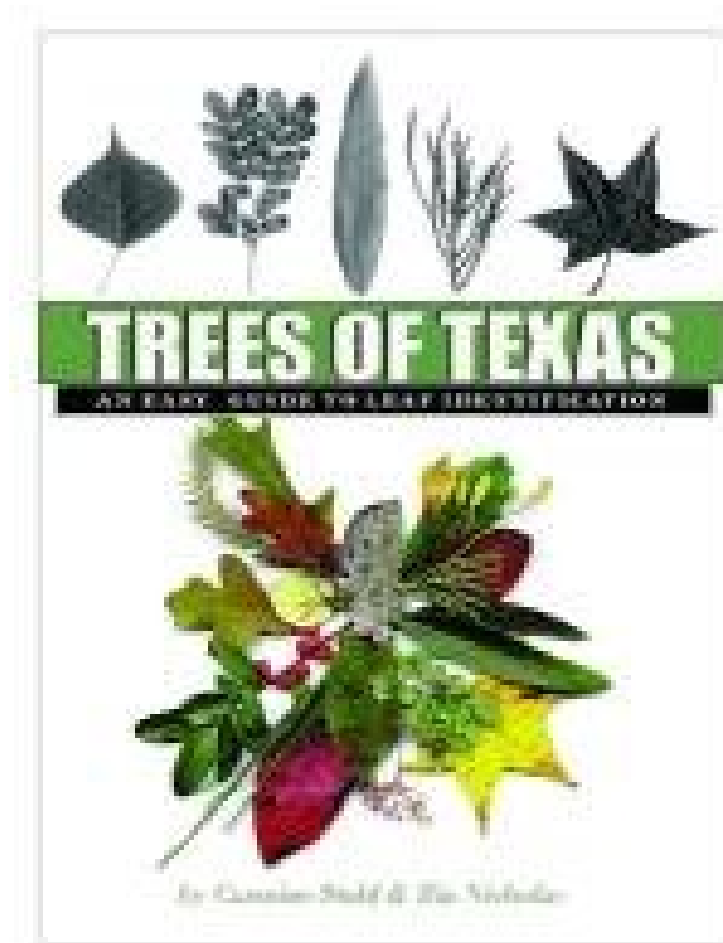


Trees of Texas: An Easy Guide to Leaf Identification (W. L. Moody Jr. Natural History Series)

Carmin Stahl, Ria McElvaney

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Carmin Stahl, Ria McElvaney : Trees of Texas: An Easy Guide to Leaf Identification (W. L. Moody Jr. Natural History Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Trees of Texas: An Easy Guide to Leaf Identification (W. L. Moody Jr. Natural History Series):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Could be very usefulBy H. Mauricio FryeI haven't had a chance to use in the field, but it appears it could be very useful and will come in handy on the new land we just bought in East Texas.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. good, but would be better if photos were in colorBy tThis is a great book, but I just wish the pictures were in color instead of black and white. Maybe it doesn't matter if you're trying to identify shrubs and trees, but it would be a nicer book. The first few pictures in the book ARE in color, making the black and white throughout the rest of the book even less appealing.0 of 0 people found the following

review helpful. One StarBy Linda StrangeNot happy with this book because the pictures are black and white which make it almost impossible to identify.

Texas is long overdue for a new, accessible, innovative tree book. This guide to the identification of just over two hundred of Texas most common native and naturalized trees brims over with life-sized, black-and-white photographs of leaves, fruit, flowers, and bark. Scanned directly from actual specimens, these images accompany species descriptions that include height, growth rate, commercial or wildlife value, family, and vegetation region of the trees, alongside captivating folklore and interesting cultural and historical annotations. To aid in identification, the authors have organized the book by leaf shape and provide a simple but clear, illustrated key to help the reader match the leaf he or she is looking at to the pertinent description. For the more knowledgeable reader who may not need help with actual identification, scientific and common names appear in the index. Appendixes list trees by family, by scientific and common names, by region, and as introduced species. Just for fun, the authors have added appendixes for wild edible recipes, light and water requirements, and butterfly host trees. A brief introduction and a glossary are also included in the manuscript. McElvaney and Stahls *The Trees of Texas* is innovatively organized and friendly to the novice, using life-sized illustrations as a visual guide to common native and naturalized trees. Perfect for people who want to learn to identify trees without wading through confusing technical terms, it makes a handy reference for libraries, schools, and nature centers. It is also suited for people with interests as diverse as the historical uses of plants, native plant gardening, attracting wildlife, and Texas history.

Texas harbors an astonishing array of trees, from the towering Bald Cypress and Loblolly Pine of deep East Texas to the Alligator Juniper and Arizona Cypress of the Trans-Pecos mountains. Some, like the Flowering Dogwood and Eastern Redbud are renowned for their lovely spring flowers; the Pecan, for its tasty nuts. Scattered throughout the state, however, are countless trees less well known to all but the most proficient botanist. The Rio Grande Valley, for example, offers habitat for such subtropical species as Sierra Madre Torchwood, Tenaza, Tepeguaje, Colima, and Baretta that occur nowhere else in the United States. Carmine Stahl and Ria McElvaney, in *The Trees of Texas*, have created a book that will allow even the beginning naturalist to identify this bewildering array. A convenient key sorts the species by leaf shape, the most obvious characteristic, and life-size photographs of those leaves illustrate the species accounts. Trees with elongated leaves are group together, as are those with paddle-shaped or heart-shaped foliage or the various types of compound leaves. Entire leaves may have pointed or rounded tips, each with smooth or rough edges. The reader has only to find the proper leaf shape in the key and then peruse those species that apply. Both text and illustrations also contain useful and diagnostic information on range, growth form, bark, flowers, and fruits. Although nontechnical, *The Trees of Texas* contains a wealth of fascinating information on both native trees and those introduced species that are widely naturalized. The authors discuss the potential size and growth rate of trees valuable for landscaping purposes; they also warn against highly invasive aliens that should not be cultivated. The appendix even contains some recipes for using wild edibles, long a trademark of Carmine Stahl. Stahl and McElvaney have packed an enormous amount of data into their species accounts. They show how Native Americans and early pioneers used the various trees for food, medicine, clothing, and shelter, and they also discuss the origin of both the common and the scientific names, information that is ignored in most botanical references. Here one finds, for example, brief biographies of the early botanists and naturalists who blazed floral trails across Texas and the nation. The reader not only can identify Mohr, Lacey, Havard, Emory, and Vasey Oaks or Wright, Gregg, and Roemer Acacias, but learn about the people for whom they were named. Stahl and McElvaney have done a commendable job in producing *The Trees of Texas*. Crisscrossing this enormous state, they found and photographed a vast array of fascinating species and share the results of that quest with their readers. Here beginner and experienced naturalists alike can learn to identify most Texas trees while, at the same time, delving into the folklore, history, and wildlife ecology of the Lone Star State.--John and Gloria Tveten