

## Coast Live Oak

*Quercus agrifolia*



### Description:

- Evergreen
- Live on the hillsides of the Central Coast
- 8-12 feet wide trunk
- 130 feet wide dense round crown
- Upright limbs or crooked wide



### Leaves:

- Dark green, waxy and tough
- Pale green underside
- Oval with curled edges
- 1-3 inches long
- Looks like holly with spiny tips
- Fuzzy armpits on the underside



### Acorn:

- ¾ - 1½ in. long,
- Thin shingle like scales and rich reddish brown caps



### Bark:

- Smooth and gray
- Reddish underside
- With age becomes brownish and shallowly furrowed



## Oak Identification Guide

### Valley Oak

*Quercus lobata*



### Leaves:

- Dull green
- Felt-covered tops
- Pale green on bottom
- 2-4 inches long
- Deeply lobed with round edges



### Bark:

- Grayish
- Thick blocky texture
- Looks like an alligator hide
- Vertical gaps

### Description:

- Deciduous
- Live in valley floors and foothills
- Like sun and moderate water
- 100 feet tall
- Largest in North America
- 6-7 feet wide trunk
- Umbrella shaped canopy
- Great limbs and craggy



### Acorn:

- 1-2 inches long
- Long and conical
- Slightly pointed tip
- Warty knobs on the cap
- Largest acorn



## Blue Oak

*Quercus douglasii*



### Description:

- Deciduous
- 60 feet Tall
- 2 feet wide trunk
- Lives in sunny slopes and plains
- Adapted to hot and dry weather
- Drought tolerant
- Canopy is compact and round
- Supported by many crooked branches

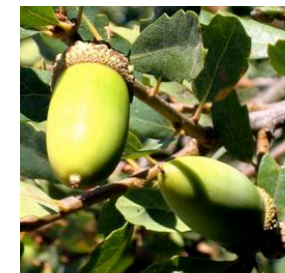
### Leaves:

- 1-3 in. long
- Bluish-green/ gray color
- Underside is pale green
- Some leaves slightly lobed



### Acorn:

- ¾ to 1½ in. long
- Oval, gently tapered
- Shallow caps with small warty scales



### Bark:

- Light gray or whitish
- Arranged in narrow shallow strips





## Identification Key

Three oaks on the Santa Margarita Ranch.  
Can you identify them?

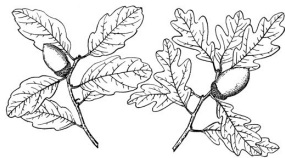
- A. Evergreen** (has leaves year-round)  
**B. The green leaves** look like holly and are waxy; the edges curl under and have fuzzy spots on the underside of the leaf near the veins (fuzzy armpits). The acorns are small and slender with a cap that has thin, flat, shingle like scales.  
**Coast Live Oak**



- Aa. Deciduous** (Loses leaves in the fall)



- C. Green leaves** with deep lobes, 2-4 inches long; Very large acorns 1-2 inches long with a deep warty cap.  
**Valley Oak**



- Cc. Blue-gray leaves**, 1-2 inches long with shallow lobes on some leaves. The bark is light gray, almost white. Acorns are small, ¾ - 1 inch long with a shallow, warty cap.

### Blue Oak

Oaks are from the genus *Quercus*  
 Quer=fine Cuez= tree

## Four Characteristics of an Oak:

- 1) Bare fruit, known as acorns
- 2) Wind -pollinated flowers
- 3) Strong, complex wood
- 4) Ability to live for many decades, if not centuries

"False" Oaks: Tan Oak, Poison Oak, and Silk Oak are not true oaks.

## Santa Margarita Ranch Oak Communities

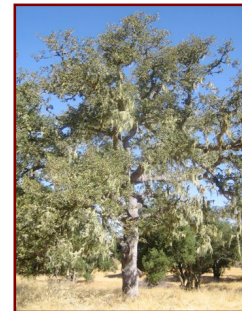
- 1) **Woodland:** Wooded areas where oak canopies cover more than 30-40% of the ground surface.
- 2) **Savannas:** Grassland areas where oak canopies cover less than 30-40% of the ground surface.

For more information visit:

•[californiaoaks.org](http://californiaoaks.org)

Reference:

- Oaks of California by B. Pavlik, S. Johnson, P. Muick
- The Life of an Oak: An Intimate Portrait by G. Keator
- Investigating the Oak Community by Kay Antunez de Mayolo, ~ California Oak Foundation
- Photo credit: Learning Among the Oaks volunteer docents
- Learning Among the Oaks is a program of The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County



Created by  
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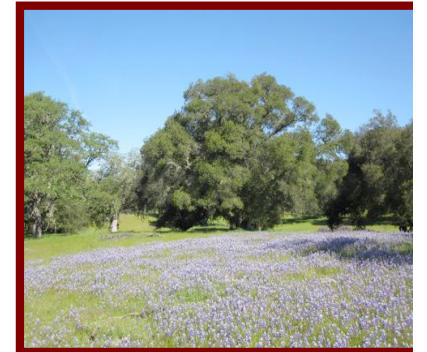
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# Oak Identification Guide

## Santa Margarita Ranch



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