



## **Sand Live Oak**

The leaves of sand live oak overwinter and drop as the new leaves emerge in spring, usually two or three weeks later than live oak. Another difference is that sand live oak takes on different forms in different environments: When sand live oak occurs on coastal sand dunes it typically forms dense, impenetrable thickets with the crowns of the individual shrub-trees rounded and clipped smooth by windblown sand and salt. Where it occurs in scrub, sand live oak is typically a shrub, rarely more than 10 ft tall. In other locations, sand live oak usually grows as a fairly large individual tree, or sometimes, in a copse, with multiple stems. The largest known sand live oak, located in Gainesville, Florida, is 94 ft tall and almost 5 ft in diameter at breast height (dbh), but very few specimens exceed 30 ft in height and 2 ft in dbh. The acorns are an important wildlife food.

Sand live oak is native to Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina. It is a tough, enduring tree that is hardy from zone 7 – 10 and will respond with vigorous growth to plentiful moisture on well drained soil and once established it will thrive in almost any location and has very good wind and salt resistance along with being tolerant of poor sandy soils and drought. Sand live oak may grow faster than live oak, but it will not get as large, and is therefore more suitable for smaller landscapes, but care should be taken to properly locate the tree, taking into account its ultimate size, since the tree will look it's best if not pruned to control size. As with other trees, care must be taken to develop a strong branch structure early in the life of the tree; also mulch should be applied to the drip line, especially on young trees, to reduce competition with turf or weeds, assist with conserving moisture and regulating soil temperature.