January and February are excellent months to plant trees in your landscape or to move established small trees to a more desirable location in your landscape. Cool temperatures allow roots to become established in the new site before Central Texas temperatures warm up in late spring and summer. There a number of benefits to adding trees to your landscape.

The first benefit is that well placed trees add value to your property when reselling. A second is that trees reduce the energy usage in your home by proving shade, windbreaks, or screening.

Trees also add variety and interest to your property. Think colorful fall foliage, flowers, attractive berries, and shapely tree trunks. These will become focal points in your landscape. Also trees will provide protection and often food for various wildlife species. You will be providing a natural home for small critters and birds.

One often-overlooked benefit is the natural improvements to our breathing environment. Trees help to clean the air by removing dust and pollen and convert carbon dioxide to oxygen, which all humans and animals need to survive. Trees also provide protection from winds and help reduce noise on busy streets and screen views from nosy people.

Perhaps the most important reasons to plant trees are for water quality and erosion control. Trees reduce run-off, erosion, and flooding of rainfall during heavy downpours. By slowing rainfall run-off, trees allow the soil to absorb more water. This means less watering of your landscape and lower water bills. Also by shading other landscape plants, trees further reduce the need for future watering in stressful times.

To learn more about tree selection and planting and pruning trees here in Central Texas, explore the following:
http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/southerngardens/treestx.html
http://extensionforestry.tamu.edu/publications/shadetree.html
http://texastreeplanting.tamu.edu

Have any questions about gardening in Central Texas? Contact ask bcmga@gmail.com