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Hurricane  
Season 2020 II

# Out on a Limb Tree Care Tips for the Tampa Bay Region

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*Quote*

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“Pruning is a ‘double – edged sword’ either helping or hindering the development of a strong tree structure.”

## **Tree Care Tip #1: Hurricane Pruning & Topping**

‘Hurricane pruning or trimming’ refers to the type of trimming that is often promoted by untrained tree workers. They convince homeowners cleaning out the interior of the tree’s crown will allow wind to more easily pass through and reduce the risk of the tree breaking up or falling over in high winds. In fact, this is not born out by the facts.

Wind tunnel experiments at the University of Florida confirm that the removal of foliage from the interior increases the likelihood of damage from high winds. Property owners who pay for hurricane pruning are at best throwing their money away, while increasing the likelihood that their tree will become more of a hazard.



*Baranoff Oak, Safety Harbor FL – estimated to be 200 – 500 yrs old*

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## Tree Care Tip #2: Topping

'Topping' is another myth that persists in our urbanizing landscape. Topping is the in-discriminant removal of whole sections of the upper tree crown without consideration of proper pruning standards.

Such cutting often leads to a loss of 50% or more of the trees leaf area, leading to stress and an increased vulnerability to insect and disease problems.

Topping also leads to increased rates of decay and weak branch attachments to larger limbs and the trunk increasing the likelihood that the tree will fail during a strong wind event.

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## Tree Care Tip #3: Don't Be Scammed - Hire an ISA Certified Arborist

University of Florida research has shown that proper pruning of trees can reduce storm damage.

Choose an arborist wisely, the wrong decision will have long-term consequences for your trees and may pose future risks to your personal property.

Watch out for scam artists. After major storms, it is not uncommon for people claiming to be tree specialists or arborists to go door-to-door offering their services to trim or remove trees. Unfortunately, many such individuals have little or no training.

Don't become a victim, make sure you are dealing with a reputable arborist or tree care company.

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*Read more about what UF scientists have to say about Pruning Trees and Hurricanes*

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**To learn more about what the University of Florida researchers learned about tree pruning and high winds visit their web site at:**

[Pruning reduces wind damage – a research project](#)

**To learn more about how to find and hire a reputable arborist visit the University of Florida website at:**

[Hiring an arborist](#)

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Please send in your questions and I will answer them via email or in upcoming issues of this newsletter.

Send your favorite tree picture and I will try to use it in the newsletter.

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[Hurricanes and Trees](#)  
[an online workshop:](#)  
[May 19<sup>th</sup> 1pm and 7pm](#)



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