
How Windy??

Posted by oldtimer - 01/15/2008 03:48pm

I was reading yesterday at TreeWorld.com Site a discussion about how windy is too windy to climb and work on a tree. So, I was wondering how windy will have to be before a REC climber should pack the bags and go home for the day or until the wind dies down? I saw there some arborists claiming to be able to work in up to 50 mph winds and I think they are bluffing. That is a pretty strong wind to be cutting stuff and trying to lower it or just chunk it down to the ground. (Talking about Headache!) Any input or personal experiences anyone and please not need to claim crazy stories.... oh well crazy stories are Ok to get the conversation going again in the New Climbing Year. :P

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Re:How Windy??

Posted by moss - 01/15/2008 07:42pm

I was caught in a woods tree during a heavy squall. I was climbing on the lee side of a hill and couldn't see the severe weather coming in until it was right on top of me. It was interesting to say the least, basically a ride 'em cowboy situation. In the tree I couldn't detect the big movement of the trunk as much as a friend on the ground who could see how much I was moving back and forth per gust.

Assuming that you've done a good assessment of the tree before you climb it there's a low probability of the tree or the limb holding your rope coming down. That's if you get caught in the tree when a quick storm comes in. I wouldn't intentionally climb in high wind. Work climbers feel pressured to do so in critical situations where property is at risk but even then no property or thrill is worth risking your life over.

-moss

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Re:How Windy??

Posted by mark12 - 01/16/2008 06:45pm

I'll climb either for research or fun with (average) winds in the 20's, but start getting a bit nervous much beyond that. That said, tree surfing in winds up to that level is pretty fun; I'm prone to motion sickness in airplanes and cars but have never been hit by it in a tree.

One of the tricks to making assessments like this is the fact that the reported average wind speeds may be around half of the gust speeds, and particular landscape situations may magnify that. I suspect I've been through some 35-40+ mph gusts in the tops of tall pines during research this fall, which I don't care for much.

Ditto Moss's comment about tree inspection; one of our research trees was removed from further study after we discovered cracks in the trunk.

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Re:How Windy??

Posted by emr - 01/17/2008 08:36am

I commonly will climb 20 to 25 without much worry, I have climbed once or twice in winds up to 40 or maybe 45 but I was scared crazy. I dont have anything to prove by climbing in the wind and I am scared of roller coasters so I dont like the wild rides. Funny thing is that it really depends on the tree. I was in a co-dominate ash one time in about a 15 mph wind and was super scared that the leader might split out, flip side is climbing in a 50ft burr oak that is 150 years old. You could climb that in a hurricane and be fine.

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