INTRODUCTION

This round-canopied, evergreen tree has broad, large-diameter, unusually strong branches and reportedly grows only to 40 feet in height with a narrower spread (Fig. 1). This contrasts to the large size of the species. The glossy green, thin but leathery leaves give off a camphor aroma when crushed and create dense shade. Leaves are larger than the species. The stems and bark on young branches of Camphor-Tree are bright green, tinged with red when young, maturing into a dark grey-brown, rugged-looking trunk which appears almost black when wet from rain. Trunk and branch structure on older trees appear similar to mature live oaks. The inconspicuous, tiny, yellow flowers are followed by a profusion of small, black berries which can become an annoyance on walks and driveways because they are messy but are quite attractive to wildlife. Fruits will stain cars. Some occasionally germinate below the tree but not nearly as much of a problem as some other trees. Birds can also carry the seed to remote areas where it will occasionally germinate. The leaves, twigs, and wood are the commercial source of camphor. The dried bark of *Cinnamomum zeylanicum* yields cinnamon.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Cinnamomum camphora* ‘Monum’

Pronunciation: sin-uh-MOE-mum kam-FOR-uh

Common name(s): ‘Monum’ Camphor-Tree

Family: Lauraceae

USDA hardiness zones: 9B through 11 (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: screen; shade tree; tree has been successfully grown in urban areas where air pollution, poor drainage, compacted soil, and/or drought are common

Availability: grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

Figure 1. Middle-aged ‘Monum’ Camphor-Tree.

1. This document is adapted from Fact Sheet ST-168, a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: November 1993.

2. Edward F. Gilman, associate professor, Environmental Horticulture Department; Dennis G. Watson, associate professor, Agricultural Engineering Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611.
DESCRIPTION

Height: 35 to 40 feet
Spread: 25 to 35 feet
Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms
Crown shape: round
Crown density: dense
Growth rate: medium
Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Fig. 3)
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: entire
Leaf shape: obovate; ovate
Leaf venation: pinnate
Leaf type and persistence: broadleaf evergreen; evergreen; fragrant
Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: no fall color change
Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: yellow
Flower characteristics: inconspicuous and not showy; spring flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: round
Fruit length: < .5 inch
Fruit covering: fleshy
Fruit color: black
Fruit characteristics: attracts birds; attracts squirrels and other mammals; inconspicuous and not showy; fruit, twigs, or foliage cause significant litter

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; showy trunk; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns
Pruning requirement: requires pruning to develop strong structure
Breakage: resistant
Current year twig color: green
USE AND MANAGEMENT

This cultivar of Camphor-Tree is ideal when used as a shade tree in parks or medium or large-sized landscapes. It might be suited for street tree planting where cars do not park and sidewalk usage is low. Prune to develop major branches, space 18 to 30 inches apart along a central trunk to develop good structure. Do not allow major branches to grow from the same spot on the trunk and avoid upright, multi-trunked trees. It may be difficult to maintain a lawn beneath the dense shade of a Camphor-Tree and a shade-tolerant groundcover may better suit the purpose. The trunk on older specimens of the species grows to six feet or more in diameter and is quite picturesque, but the cultivar is probably much smaller. Shallow roots can be a nuisance. The species has escaped cultivation in some areas.

Growing in full sun to partial shade, Camphor-Tree is amenable to a variety of soils, will grow but often develops minor element deficiencies on alkaline soils. Camphor-Tree is highly tolerant of urban conditions but will not tolerate water-logged soils. It is adapted to grow along the coast exposed to some sea salt.

Pests

Scales and mites are common problems on Camphor-Trees. Seeds of the species can germinate easily in the landscape but this is usually a minor problem. Has escaped cultivation in Florida, Louisiana, and parts of coastal Texas, so use it (if at all) with caution.

Diseases

Camphor-Tree is subject to a root rot, especially in poorly-drained soils.

Current year twig thickness: medium; thin

Culture

Light requirement: tree grows in part shade/part sun; tree grows in full sun
Soil tolerances: clay; loam; sand; slightly alkaline; acidic; well-drained
Drought tolerance: high
Aerosol salt tolerance: low

Other

Roots: surface roots can lift sidewalks or interfere with mowing
Winter interest: tree has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers
Outstanding tree: not particularly outstanding
Invasive potential: No entries found.
Verticillium wilt susceptibility: susceptible
Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests