



## *Cinnamomum camphora* 'Monum' 'Monum' Camphor-Tree<sup>1</sup>

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson<sup>2</sup>

### 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

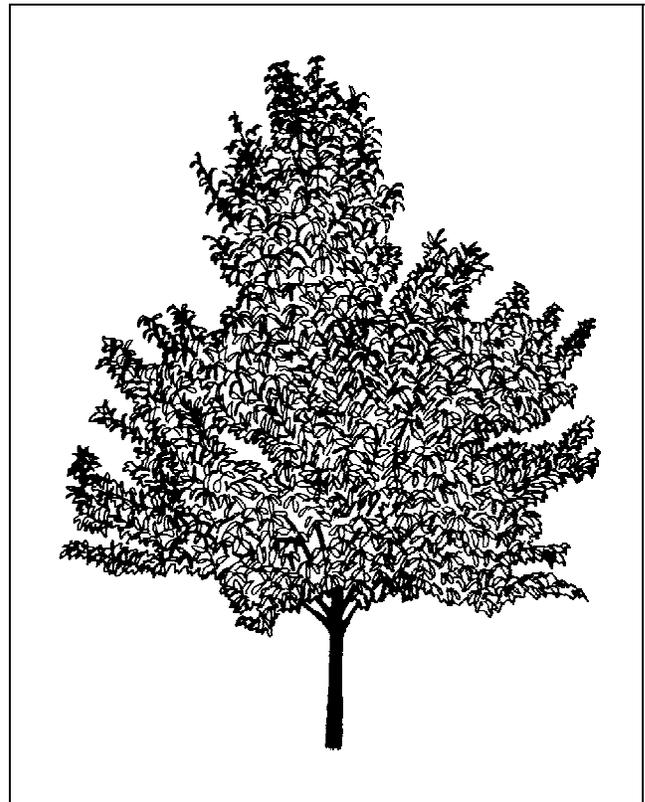


Figure 1. Middle-aged 'Monum' Camphor-Tree.

**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

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.



Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

### 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

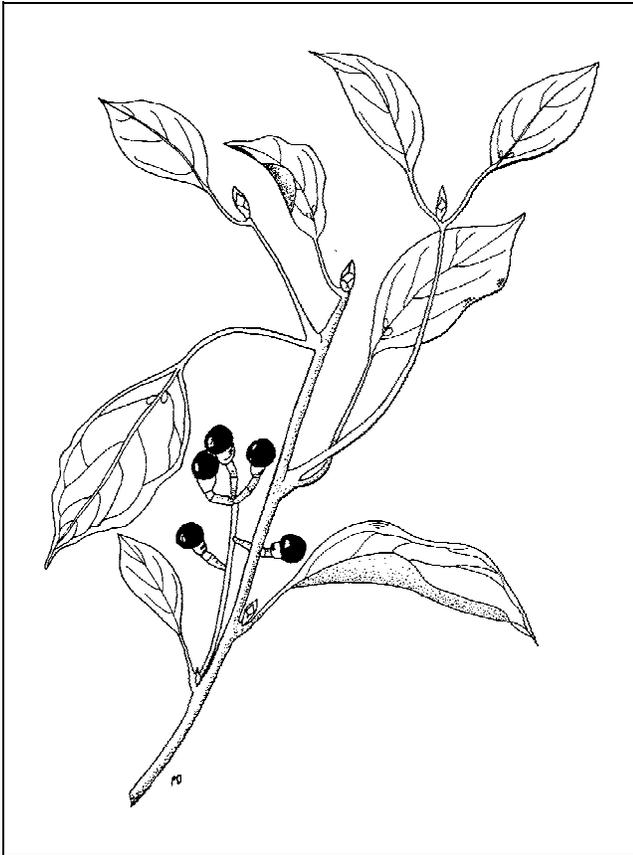


Figure 3. Foliage of 'Monum' Camphor-Tree.

**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

## 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.