

Cupressus macrocarpa Monterey Cypress¹

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INTRODUCTION

Monterey cypress thrive near the sea on the west coast of the United States, where it is native to the Monterey Bay, California, area (Fig. 1). It has a high wind tolerance, becoming increasingly more attractive under heavy wind conditions. Narrow and pyramid-shaped when young, Monterey cypress spreads with age, and can become 70 to 90 feet in height. It is one of the major trees planted to hold the sands in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, but unfortunately many are dying. The plant is only grown in the western states.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Cupressus macrocarpa*

Pronunciation: koo-PRESS-us mack-roe-KAR-puh

Common name(s): Monterey Cypress

Family: *Cupressaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 7 through 9 (Fig. 2)

Origin: native to North America

Uses: not recommended for planting

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

DESCRIPTION

Height: 40 to 70 feet

Spread: 30 to 40 feet

Crown uniformity: irregular outline or silhouette

Crown shape: columnar; pyramidal

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: medium

Texture: fine

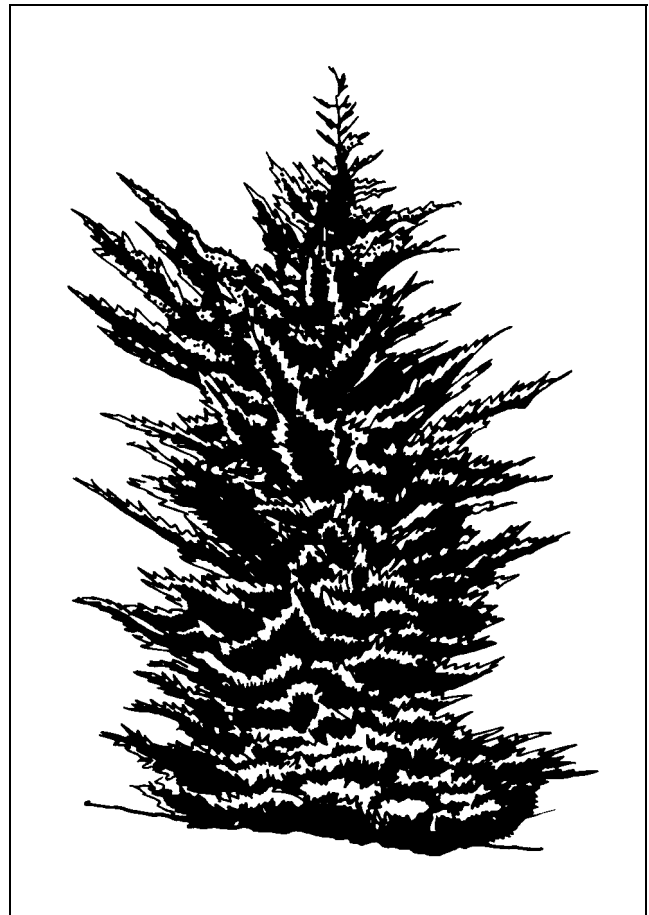


Figure 1. Middle-aged Monterey Cypress.

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf shape: scale-like

Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: less than 2 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 to 1 inch

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: brown

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; inconspicuous and not showy; no significant litter problem; persistent on the tree

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; not particularly showy; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns

Pruning requirement: needs little pruning to develop a strong structure

Breakage: susceptible to breakage either at the crotch due to poor collar formation, or the wood itself is weak and tends to break

Current year twig color: green

Current year twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: tree grows in full sun

Soil tolerances: clay; loam; sand; slightly alkaline; acidic; well-drained

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: high

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding tree: tree has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: not known to be susceptible

Pest resistance: very sensitive to one or more pests or diseases which can affect tree health or aesthetics

USE AND MANAGEMENT

Cypresses can be grown from seeds sown in sandy, peaty soil or from summer cuttings in a humid greenhouse under mist.

Pests

Cypresses may be infested with aphids, mealybugs, caterpillars, and scale insects. All can be controlled by washing with soap solution or with appropriate chemical spray.

Diseases

This tree is susceptible to coryneum canker fungus, for which there is no cure. Control of cankers consists chiefly in cutting out and burning affected parts. Badly infected trees may require complete removal.