

# *Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*: Monterey Cypress<sup>1</sup>

Edward F. Gilman, Dennis G. Watson, Ryan W. Klein and Deborah R. Hilbert<sup>2</sup>

## 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. 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.



Figure 1. Middle-aged *Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*: Monterey cypress.  
Credits: Ed Gilman, UF/IFAS

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*

**Pronunciation:** hes-per-oh-SY-pair-iss mack-ro-KAR-puh

**Common name(s):** Monterey cypress

**Family:** *Cupressaceae*

**USDA hardiness zones:** 7A through 10A (Figure 2)

**Origin:** native to North America

**Invasive potential:** not assessed/incomplete assessment

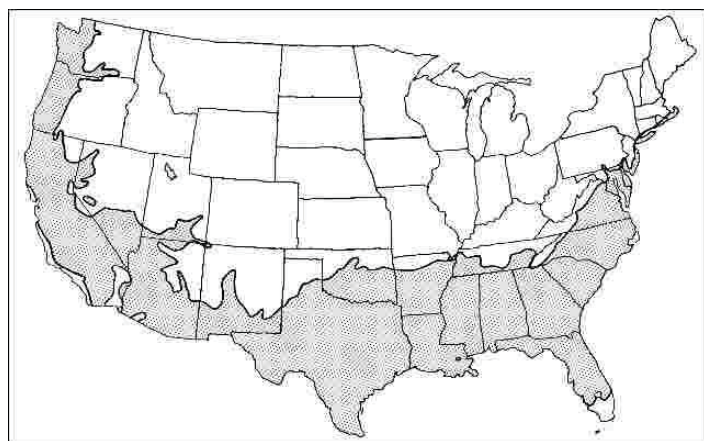


Figure 2. Range.

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2. Edward F. Gilman, professor emeritus; Dennis G. Watson, former associate professor, Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering; Ryan W. Klein, assistant professor, arboriculture; and Deborah R. Hilbert, UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research and Education Center; Department of Environmental Horticulture; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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## Description

**Height:** 40 to 70 feet

**Spread:** 30 to 40 feet

**Crown uniformity:** irregular

**Crown shape:** columnar, pyramidal

**Crown density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** moderate

**Texture:** fine

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**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 color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

## Flower

**Flower color:** yellow

**Flower characteristics:** not showy

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** round

**Fruit length:** 0.5 to 1 inch

**Fruit covering:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** brown

**Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; not showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** branches droop; not showy; typically one trunk; thorns

**Pruning requirement:** little required

**Breakage:** susceptible to breakage

**Current year twig color:** green

**Current year twig thickness:** thin

**Wood specific gravity:** unknown

## Culture

**Light requirement:** full sun

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

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Aerosol salt tolerance:** high

## Other

**Roots:** not a problem

**Winter interest:** no

**Outstanding tree:** yes

**Ozone sensitivity:** unknown

**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** resistant

**Pest resistance:** sensitive to pests/diseases

## 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.