

# *Osmanthus x fortunei* 'Variegatus': 'Variegatus' Fortunes Osmanthus<sup>1</sup>

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

## Introduction

This large, vigorous, evergreen shrub or small tree grows 15 to 20 feet tall and forms a dense, round or oval silhouette. Very old specimens form a spreading vase. A hybrid of Holly Osmanthus ( *Osmanthus heterophyllus* ) and Fragrant Tea Olive ( *Osmanthus fragrans* ), Fortune's Osmanthus has the spiny, holly-like, dark green, white margined, leathery foliage of one parent plant and the extremely fragrant white flowers of the other. Frequently trimmed into a hedge or screen, Fortune's Osmanthus could be used more as a specimen or container planting, and the barbed leaves also make it suitable as a barrier planting. 'Variegatus' has a nice appearance for a variegated plant.

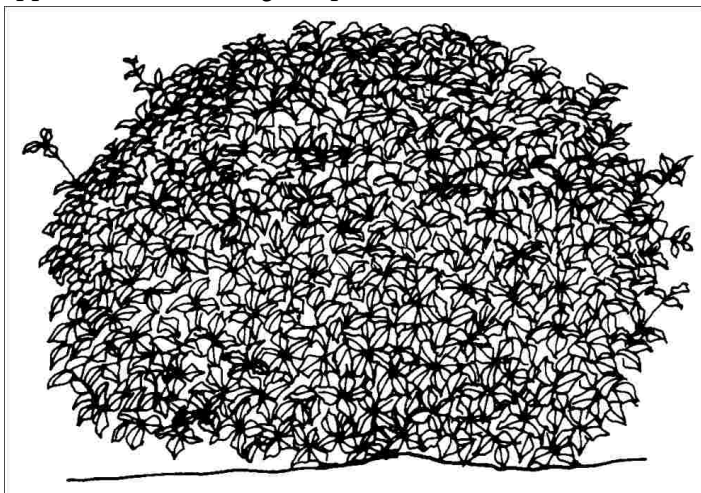


Figure 1. Middle-aged *Osmanthus x fortunei* 'Variegatus': 'Variegatus' Fortunes Osmanthus

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Osmanthus x fortunei*

**Pronunciation:** oz-MANTH-us x for-TOO-nee-eye

**Common name(s):** 'Variegatus' Fortunes Osmanthus

**Family:** *Oleaceae*

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

**Origin:** not native to North America.

**Invasive potential:** has been evaluated using the IFAS Assessment of the Status of Non-Native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas (Fox et al. 2005). This species is not documented in any undisturbed natural areas in Florida. Thus, it is not considered a problem species and may be used in Florida.

**Uses:** hedge; screen; specimen; container or planter

**Availability:** not native to North America

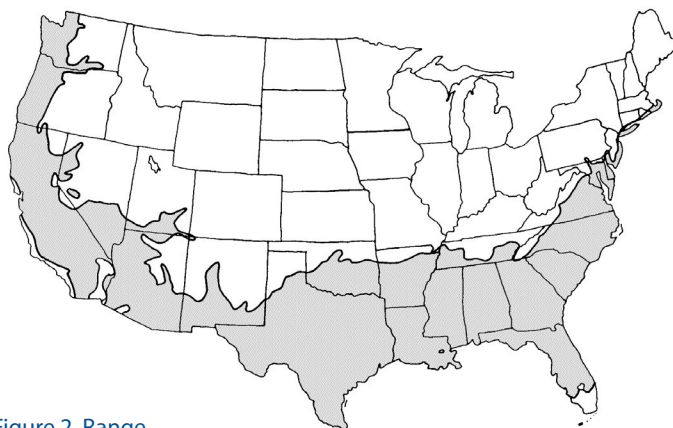


Figure 2. Range

1. This document is ENH-586, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date November 1993. Revised March 2007. Reviewed February 2014. Visit the EDIS website at <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

2. Edward F. Gilman, professor, Environmental Horticulture Department; Dennis G. Watson, former associate professor, Agricultural Engineering Department, UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

## Description

**Height:** 15 to 20 feet  
**Spread:** 6 to 10 feet  
**Crown uniformity:** symmetrical  
**Crown shape:** oval  
**Crown density:** dense  
**Growth rate:** slow  
**Texture:** medium

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite (Fig. 3)  
**Leaf type:** simple  
**Leaf margin:** spiny, serrate, pectinate  
**Leaf shape:** ovate, elliptic (oval)  
**Leaf venation:** pinnate  
**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen  
**Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches  
**Leaf color:** variegated  
**Fall color:** no color change  
**Fall characteristic:** not showy



Figure 3. Foliage

## Flower

**Flower color:** white/cream/gray  
**Flower characteristics:** not showy

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** round  
**Fruit length:** less than .5 inch  
**Fruit covering:** fleshy  
**Fruit color:** black  
**Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; not showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** branches don't droop; not showy; typically multi-trunked; thorns  
**Pruning requirement:** little required  
**Breakage:** resistant  
**Current year twig color:** gray  
**Current year twig thickness:** thin, medium  
**Wood specific gravity:** unknown

## Culture

**Light requirement:** full sun, partial sun or partial shade  
**Soil tolerances:** sand; loam; clay; acidic; well-drained  
**Drought tolerance:** high  
**Aerosol salt tolerance:** unknown

## Other

**Roots:** not a problem  
**Winter interest:** no  
**Outstanding tree:** no  
**Ozone sensitivity:** unknown  
**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** unknown  
**Pest resistance:** resistant to pests/diseases

## Use and Management

Fortune's Osmanthus should be grown in full sun or partial shade on any well-drained soil, including clay. Drought tolerance is good with established specimens apparently doing fine without irrigation.

The cultivar 'San Jose' has cream to orange flowers.

Propagation is by cuttings.

## Pests

Scales are one of the few problems. They can cause some defoliation if infestation is serious.

## Diseases

Mushroom root rot when grown on wet soils is a disease that may infect this tree.

## Literature Cited

Fox, A.M., D.R. Gordon, J.A. Dusky, L. Tyson, and R.K. Stocker (2005) IFAS Assessment of the Status of Non-Native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas. Cited from the Internet (November 3, 2006), <https://assessment.ifas.ufl.edu/>