Camphor laurel
*Cinnamomum camphora*

Camphor laurel was introduced into Australia from Asia in 1822.

Camphor laurel is an attractive shade tree, but it invades pastures and disturbed riparian systems. It tends to germinate under fences and power lines (wherever birds rest and deposit the seed). As a result, it can push fences over and disrupt power facilities. It is a troublesome weed on dairy farms throughout south-east Queensland.

Along the waterways of south-east Queensland, camphor laurels are replacing the native blue gums threatening koala populations.

Old camphor laurel trees develop a massive root system that can block drains and crack concrete structures. The average suburban backyard is far too small to accommodate a mature camphor laurel without problems. Removal of a mature tree can cost hundreds of dollars.

Description

Camphor laurel is a large evergreen tree, growing up to 20m tall. The leaves have a glossy, waxy appearance and smell of camphor when crushed. In spring it produces lush, bright-green foliage and masses of small white flowers. The spherical fruits are green (changing to black when ripe) and 10 mm in diameter.

Management

Removal of newly established or isolated seedlings by hand pulling or grubbing is effective.

Failure to remove roots of mature trees will result in regrowth. Fire kills plant tops but produces regrowth from the base.

If you would like further information on the control of camphor laurel, see the A–Z Listing of Weeds Queensland Government Website.