



Umbellularia californica

California Bay

Sun to shade

Moderate to little water

Origin: California

California bay is an intensely aromatic tree familiar to hikers especially in shaded canyons. The scent is pleasing but strong. It can be used a substitute for the Mediterranean Bay Laurel in cooking but use much less. In drier climates, this Bay forms a large shrub or medium size tree. It grows slowly and with age and forms a basal burl that can be used to make furniture and decorative objects. It makes an excellent tall screen or hedge. Laurel aphids often attack the leaves and secrete sugary honeydew which is then used by a fungus to form sooty mold. The gray leaves in the photo above are covered with sooty mold. Use a soap spray to keep the aphids in check.