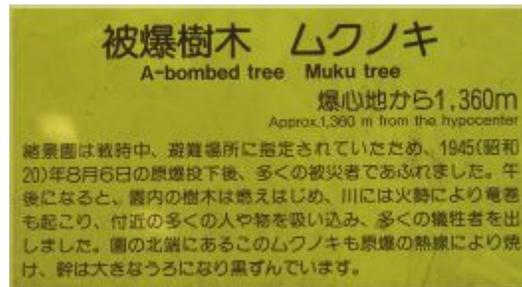


Muku Tree
Aphananthe aspera – Elm family

Native to China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam
Found on slopes and streambanks between 100 and 1600 m



Green Legacy Hiroshima has been established to safeguard and spread worldwide the seeds and saplings of Hiroshima's A-Bomb survivor trees. And muku tree is one of these survivors. The muku tree in the above plaque was approximately 1,300 m from the hypocenter. It was burned by the radiation from the blast. You can see in the picture the large hollow charred area on the trunk.



A-bombed muku tree in Shukkeien

This tree is in Shukkeien, which translates as 'shrunken scenery garden'. Shukkeien was begun in 1620 by the then feudal lord of Hiroshima and consists of a central pond surrounded by many inlets, bridges, cottages and a diverse range of vegetation. On the afternoon of August 6th, 1945, following the dropping of the atomic bomb, the woods inside the garden began to burn. Many of the well-known gigantic trees were almost all completely consumed, but muku tree survived.



Fruit of A-bombed muku tree in Shukkeien

Muku tree (*Aphananthe aspera*) is a deciduous tree growing to 20 m. It flowers in spring and the seeds ripen in fall. The flowers are monoecious (individual flowers are either male or female, but both sexes can be found on the same plant). Muku tree grows in light woodland or no shade. It is frost tender when young but is able to regrow from the base if cut back.

The Chinese name 'cao ye shu' means coarse leafed tree. Muku tree has small hairs on its leaves, making them rough to touch. Leaves gathered in autumn are used as fine sandpaper for polishing wood. It is not clear whether the effectiveness of the leaves as sandpaper depends on their roughness, or whether they contain abrasive phytoliths (minute mineral particles formed inside the plant).

The fine, strong wood is used to make furniture and the fiber for ropes and staple rayon. In Asia its bark is recommended for aches and weaknesses to the lower back. It is used as an ornamental plant in Chinese classical gardens.

Muku tree is one of 170 trees officially registered as an A-bombed tree. These trees are lovingly cared for by botanists, citizens' groups and individuals. They are identified by a name plate and the unique reference: 'hibakujumoku' (survivor tree).

<http://www.unitar.org/greenlegacyhiroshima>

http://practicalplants.org/wiki/Aphananthe_aspera

<http://www.pfaf.org/user/Plant.aspx?LatinName=Aphananthe+aspera>

<http://www.lang-arts.com/survivors/shukkeien.html>