

Peepal tree

Sacred Fig
Ficus religiosa



Leaves and trunk of a Sacred Fig.
Note the distinctive leaf shape.

Scientific classification

Kingdom: Plantae
(unranked): Angiosperms
(unranked): Eudicots
(unranked): Rosids
Order: Rosales
Family: Moraceae
Genus: Ficus

Species: *F. religiosa*

Binomial name

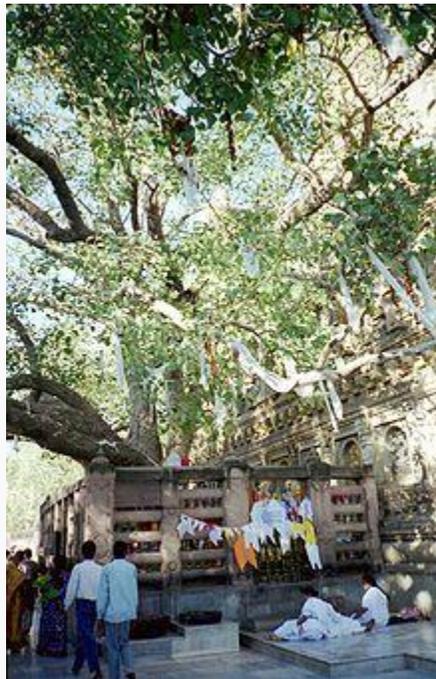
Ficus religiosa
L.

Description

Ficus religiosa is a large dry season-deciduous or semi-evergreen tree up to 30 metres (98 ft) tall and with a trunk diameter of up to 3 metres (9.8 ft).

The leaves are cordate in shape with a distinctive extended drip tip; they are 10–17 cm long and 8–12 cm broad, with a 6–10 cm petiole. The fruits are small figs 1–1.5 cm in diameter, green ripening to purple.

Religious sacredness[edit]



The Bodhi Tree at the Mahabodhi Temple. Propagated from the Sri Maha Bodhi, which in turn is propagated from the original Bodhi Tree at this location.

The Bodhi Tree at Anuradhapura Sri Lanka is believed to be the oldest tree planted by humans with a recorded year of 289 BCE.



The peepal tree is considered sacred by the followers

Buddhism

Buddhist legend tells that Gautama Buddha attained enlightenment (bodhi) while meditating underneath a *Ficus religiosa*. The site is in present day Bodh Gaya in Bihar [India]. The original tree was destroyed, and has been replaced several times. A branch of the original tree was rooted in Anuradhapura [Sri Lanka] in 288 BCE and is known as Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi; it is the oldest flowering plant (angiosperm) in the world.

In Theravada Buddhist Southeast Asia, the tree's massive trunk is often the site of Buddhist or animist shrines.

Not all *Ficus religiosa* can be called a 'Bodhi tree'. A 'Bodhi tree' must be able to trace its parent to another Bodhi tree and the line goes on until the first Bodhi tree under which the Lord Gautama Buddha gained enlightenment.

Hinduism



A huge Peepal tree

Sadhus (Hindu ascetics) still meditate beneath sacred fig trees, and Hindus do pradakshina (circumambulation, or meditative pacing) around the sacred fig tree as a mark of worship. Usually seven pradakshinas are done around the tree in the morning time chanting "Vriksha Rajaya Namah", meaning "salutation to the king of trees."

It claimed that the 27 Stars (constellations) constituting 12 Houses (Rasis) and 9 Planets are specifically represented precisely by 27 trees—one for each star. The bodhi tree is said to represent Pushya (Western star name γ , δ and θ Cancri in the cancer constellation).

Vernacular names[edit]



Uses

Traditional medicinal uses

Ficus religiosa is used in traditional medicine for about 50 types of disorders including asthma, diabetes, diarrhea, epilepsy, gastric problems, inflammatory disorders, infectious and sexual disorders.^{[7][8]} Peepal tree is of great medicinal value. Its leaves serve as a wonderful laxative as well as tonic for the body. It is especially useful for patients suffering from Jaundice. It helps to control the excessive amount of urine released during jaundice. The leaves of Peepal are highly effective in treating heart disorders. It helps to control the palpitation of heart and thereby combat the cardiac weakness. Ayurveda makes an extensive use of the leaves of peepal due to the numerous benefits it provides.

Cultivation

Ficus religiosa is grown by specialty tree plant nurseries for use as an ornamental tree, in gardens and parks in tropical and subtropical climates. Peepal trees are native to India and thrive in hot, humid weather. They prefer full sunlight and can grow in most soil types, though loam is the best. When planting, use soil with a pH of 7 or below. While it is possible for the plant to grow indoors in a pot, it grows best outside. Young peepal needs proper nourishment. It requires full sunlight and proper watering.

Gallery



Coppersmith Barbet *Megalaima haemacephala* feeding on its figs



A 200 year old, 50 feet circumference Peepal



Black-hooded.



Trunk of Sacred Fig at Flamingo Gardens

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Fruits of Sacred Fig at Flamingo Gardens

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Leaves of Sacred Fig at Flamingo Gardens

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The Bodhi Tree in Bodhgaya

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bodhi tree

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leaves of pippal

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fruits of *Ficus religiosa*