



PLANT FACT SHEET

Ficus opposita Miq.

GENUS *Ficus* FAMILY Moraceae

COMMON NAMES Sandpaper fig

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit

The ripe fruit are eaten raw.

DESCRIPTION

A fig. It is an evergreen shrub or small tree. Trees can lose all their leaves in the dry season. It grows to 5-8 m high and spreads to 2-4 m across. The stem is erect and branching. It mostly has a rounded crown. The bark is rough, dark grey and deeply cracked along its length. It does not have aerial nor strangling roots. The leaves are produced opposite one another. They are stiff and coarse. They are oval or heart shaped and 3-11 cm long by 2.5-5.5 cm wide. Leaves can be larger and vary in shape. Young leaves can be of different shapes. They are hairy underneath. The edge of the leaf is wavy or finely toothed. The leaf stalk is hairy and 0.5-2 cm long. Trees are separately male and female. The fruit or figs are carried either singly or in pairs. They start pear shaped but become round. They are 1-2.5 cm across. They are green but turn red-brown to black when ripe. They are produced in the axils of leaves or just below the leaves. They are borne singly or in pairs.

HABITAT

It grows in tropical, subtropical and warm temperate locations. It does best in a rich well drained soil. It needs a protected partly shaded position. It is drought and frost tender. It grows from sea level to 750 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. Cuttings and aerial layering could also be tried.

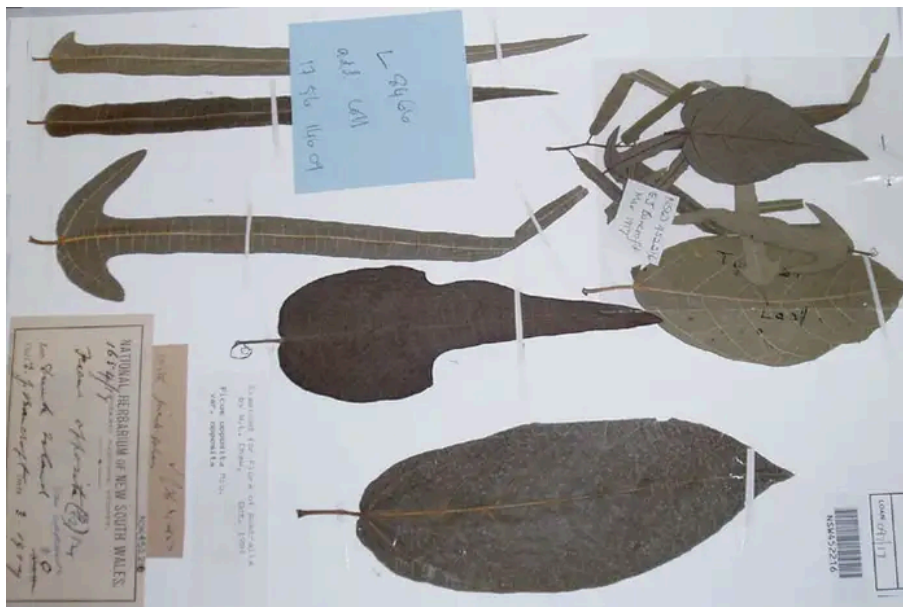
Harvesting and Seed Production

In Australia fruit are produced July to February.

NOTES

The leaves are used as sandpaper. There are about 800-1000 *Ficus* species. They are mostly in the tropics. There are 120 *Ficus* species in tropical America.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

REFERENCES

- Anon., 2003, Native Plants for the Fitzroy basin. Society for Growing Australian Plants Inc. (Rockhampton Branch) p 55
- Beasley, J., 2011, Plants of Tropical North Queensland - the compact guide. Footloose publications. p 51
- Bodkin, F., 1991, Encyclopedia Botanica. Cornstalk publishing, p 473
- Brock, J., 1993, Native Plants of Northern Australia, Reed. p 188
- Calvert, G., 2010, The Burdekin Delta Tree Guide. Lower Burdekin Landcare Association., Inc., Ayr p 81
- Cooper, W. and Cooper, W., 2004, Fruits of the Australian Tropical Rainforest. Nokomis Editions, Victoria, Australia. p 326
- Crawford, I. M., 1982, Traditional Aboriginal Plant Resources in the Kalumburu Area: Aspects in Ethno-economics. Records of the Western Australian Museum Supplement No. 15
- Elliot, W.R., & Jones, D.L., 1992, Encyclopedia of Australian Plants suitable for cultivation. Vol 4. Lothian. p 288
- Fell, D.G. & Stanton, D.J., 2015: The vegetation and flora of Mabuyag, Torres Strait, Queensland. Memoirs of the Queensland Museum - Culture 8(1):1-33. Brisbane. ISSN 1440-4788.
- Flora of Australia, Volume 3, Hamamelidales to Casuarinales, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra (1989) p 56
- Hardwick, G., 2001, Economically Useful Plants for Northern Australia: Master Species List. Crusader eBooks.
- Hibbert, M., 2002, The Aussie Plant Finder 2002, Florilegium. p 102
- Hiddins, L., 1999, Explore Wild Australia with the Bush Tucker Man. Penguin Books/ABC Books. p 161
- Jackes, B.R., 2001, Plants of the Tropics. Rainforest to Heath. An Identification Guide. James Cook University. p 66
- Jackes, B. R., 2010, Plants of Magnetic Island. 3rd Edition. James Cook University, Australia. p 57
- King, M. & Horsfall, J., 2023, Kimberley Bush Food. Edible Plants of the Kimberley Region of Western Australia. UWAP. p 320
- Lands, M., 1987, Mayi: Some Bush fruits of Dampierland. Magabala Books, Broome West Australia. p 53
- Lazarides, M. & Hince, B., 1993, Handbook of Economic Plants of Australia, CSIRO. p 114
- London J. Bot. 7:426. 1848
- Low, T., 1991, Wild Food Plants of Australia. Australian Nature FieldGuide, Angus & Robertson. p 147
- Melzer, R. & Plumb, J., 2011, Plants of Capricornia. Belgamba, Rockhampton. p 207
- Miller, J. B., James, K. W. and Maggiore, P.M.A., 1993, Tables of Composition of Australian Aboriginal Foods. Aboriginal Studies Press. Canberra
- Milson, J., 2000, Trees and Shrubs of north-west Queensland. DPI p 172
- Mua Bioersity Profile, 2013, Profile for Management of the Habitats and Related Ecological and Cultural Resources of Mua Island. Torres Strait Regional Authority Land & Sea Management Unit. p 142
- Paczkowska, G. & Chapman, A.R., 2000, The Western Australian Flora. A Descriptive Catalogue. Western Australian Herbarium. p 331
- Petheram, R.J. and Kok, B., 2003, Plants of the Kimberley Region of Western Australia. UWA Press p
- Salem, L., Thompson, E., and Elvin, H. L., Bush Tucker in Kidney Failure and Diabetes. AMGEN
- Smith, K & I., 1999, Grow your own bushfoods. New Holland. Australia. p 35
- Smith, N and Wightman, G.M., 1990, Ethnobotanical Notes from Belyuen Northern Territory Australia. Northern Territory Botanical Bulletin No 10. Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory. p 14, 15
- Smith, N. M., 1991, Ethnobotanical Field Notes from the Northern Territory, Australia, J. Adelaide Bot. Gard. 14(1): 1-65
- Smith, N., 1993, Bushfoods - an Annotated List: Fruit and Seeds Eaten by Aboriginal People in Northern Australia. Winnellie, Northern Territory. The Archives of the Rare Fruit Council of Australia.
- Taylor, D. & van Leewen, S., Aboriginal Names for Pilbara Plants.

- Townsend, K., 1994, Across the Top. Gardening with Australian Plants in the tropics. Society for Growing Australian Plants, Townsville Branch Inc. p 213
- Townsend, K., 1999, Field Guide to Plants of the Dry Tropics. Society for Growing Australian Plants, Townsville Branch Inc. p 57
- Vigilante, T., et al, 2013, Island country: Aboriginal connections, values and knowledge of the Western Kimberley islands in the context of an island biological survey. Records of the Western Australian Museum Supplement 81: 145-182
- Wheeler, J.R.(ed.), 1992, Flora of the Kimberley Region. CALM, Western Australian Herbarium, p 80
- Wightman, Glenn et al. 1991. Alawa Ethnobotany: Aboriginal Plant Use from Minyerri, Northern Australia. Northern Territory Botanical Bulletin No 11. Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory. p 16, 15.
- Wightman, Glenn et al. 1992, Mangarrayi Ethnobotany: Aboriginal Plant Use from the Elsey Area Northern Australia. Northern Territory Botanical Bulletin No 15. Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory. p 26, 27.
- Smith, Nicholas et al. 1993, Ngarinyman Ethnobotany: Aboriginal Plant Use from the Victoria River Area Northern Australia. Northern Territory Botanical Bulletin No 16. Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory. p 26, 27.

Full reference list (3 more) at <https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/fa0c2efa-c180-43e6-a7c2-34ab9423e100>

PROVIDED BY Food Plants International

French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

LICENCE CC BY-NC-SA 3.0

ONLINE FACT SHEET <https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/fa0c2efa-c180-43e6-a7c2-34ab9423e100>