

FICUS INGENS



Kingdom: Plantae
Phylum: Tracheophyta
Class: Magnoliopsida
Order: Rosales
Family: Moraceae
Genus: Ficus
Species: Ficus ingens

General Features

- *Ficus ingens* is a fig species with a surprising range of sizes. Despite its name ("ingens" meaning "huge" or "vast"), it can be a shrub, a small tree, or even a large tree depending on the environment.
- It thrives in subtropical to dry tropical regions of Africa and southern Arabia.
- Leaves are variable, but typically ovate, lanceolate, or oblong-lanceolate, with a smooth, hairless surface.

- *The interesting part is that new leaves can be reddish, giving rise to the "red-leaved" common name. However, they turn green as they mature.*
- *Figs are small, spherical to slightly pear-shaped, and turn from creamy green to purple when ripe.*

Uses

- *Food: The ripe figs are eaten by birds and some people as a famine food.*
- *Medicine (traditional): Bark decoctions are used in some areas to increase milk production in cows (though with limited scientific evidence). However, be aware that the leaves can be toxic to livestock*
- *Ornamental: In some areas, it's cultivated as an ornamental for its interesting growth habit and the contrast between young red leaves and mature green ones.*