

HARYANA

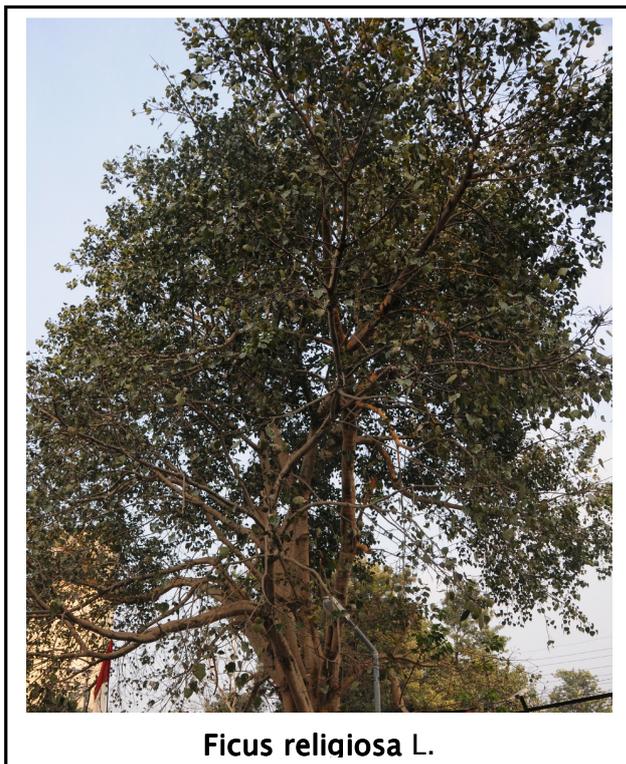
State Tree: Bhor (Punjabi).

Botanical Name: *Ficus religiosa* L.

Family: Moraceae.

Common Names: Pipal Tree (English); Pipal, Pipli (Hindi); Ashwattha, Bodhidruma (Sanskrit).

Etymology: The generic epithet '**Ficus**' means fig and the specific epithet '**religiosa**' signifies its religious status in Hinduism.



Description: A large, deciduous tree, to 20 m tall. Leaves are simple, triangular-ovate, entire or undulate at margins, caudate-acuminate apex, 10 - 18 × 8 - 10 cm, long-petioled, coriaceous, shining, drooping. Figs in axillary pairs, sessile, depressed-globose, dark purple on ripening; fruits 1-seeded minute drupelets or achenes, white or brown.

Flowering & Fruiting: May - September.

Range of Distribution: It is native to India and distributed from sub-

Himalayan tracts to the Peninsular India; widely distributed in Indian subcontinent and also across Southeast Asia.

Economic Importance: The resinous gum from bark is used as sealing wax and for filling up the cavities of hollow ornaments by artificers. The bark and leaves are sometimes used for tanning purpose. Branches and leaves are good fodder.

Traditional Uses: The tree is considered sacred in Hinduism and Buddhism. Spoon made from fig wood is used for pouring ghee into the sacred fire (homa).

Medicinal Uses: The root bark is aphrodisiac. The stem bark has astringent property, and used in gonorrhoea. Infusion of the bark is given internally in scabies. The leaves and young shoots are used as a purgative. Tender shoots boiled in milk are given with sugar as a nutritious and cooling drink. The dried fruits are pulverized and taken in water for a fortnight to cure asthma. Latex is used to heal cracked foot. Figs are digestive and laxative.

Ceremonial Uses: The tree is worshipped on every Saturday in the month of Shravan and on every Monday on which a new moon falls.

Note: The plant can be propagated through seedlings.

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