

Ficus sur (*F. capensis*)

Moraceae

Indigenous

English: Cape fig

Kunda: Kachele

Nyanja: Mukuyu

Senga: Chikuyu

Tumbuka: Chikuyu

Ecology: A large fig tree found all over Africa, 0–2,100 m. It prefers moist soils with a high water-table and grows in riverine forest and bush. It has been planted in villages even on the plateau.

Uses: Timber (carving), food (fruit), medicine (latex, leaves, roots, bark), **fodder** (leaves, fruit), soil improvement, dye (bark), gum (latex).

Description: A handsome semi-deciduous tree to 25 m with a heavy rounded crown, the base often buttressed. Sometimes fig seedlings on other trees grow up to strangle and replace that tree. **BARK:** smooth, pale grey, exudes latex if cut; rough with age. **LEAVES:** thin and shiny, broadly oval, to 20 cm long on a long stalk, veins very clear, edge often widely toothed. **FRUIT:** the figs grow in dense clusters from trunk and large branches. Each fig is rounded, orange-red when mature like a small “apple”, 3–5 cm. The soft fig is edible but not sweet, having many seeds and often full of insects.

Propagation: Cuttings strike readily.

Seed: –
treatment: –
storage: –

Management: Coppicing, pollarding.

Remarks: Leaves and fruits are reported to stimulate milk production in cattle. Moderately fast growing. Meetings are often held under this shady tree.

