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## PLEASE PROTECT ME

I am a very rare specimen tree in your area. Even though I may look indestructible, I am a very fragile tree. In order to ensure my survival, please protect me by following these suggestions:

1. Do not injure my trunk with any object or write graffiti.
2. Keep the lawn away from my trunk.
3. Keep all machines and weed whips away.
4. Do not pull or hang from my branches "Ouch!! It Hurts".
5. Do not over water me.
6. I will respond well to a good nutrient supply with an even NPK balance and supplemented trace elements.
7. Do not dump hot charcoal ashes around the trunk base.

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The Department of Recreation and Parks maintains and protects hundreds of heritage trees. Heritage trees are individual trees of any size or species that are specifically designated as heritage because of their historical, commemorative, or horticultural significance. Preserving these treasures is important for future generations to admire. For further information, please contact the Department of Recreation and Parks at the address below.



**CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS  
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Manuel A. Mollinedo**

Forestry Division  
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Los Angeles, CA 90039

Phone: 213-485-4826  
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Website: [www.laparks.org](http://www.laparks.org)

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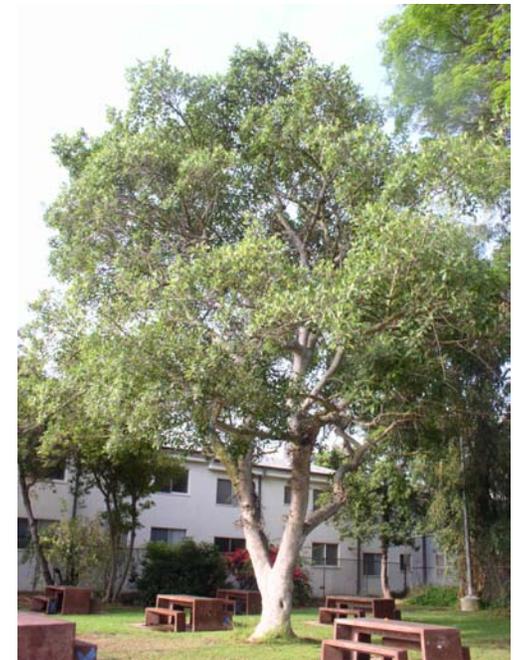


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# CAPE FIG

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## HERITAGE TREE



*Barrington  
Recreation Center  
333 S. Barrington Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90049*

**Tel: (310) 476-4860**

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## CAPE FIG

### *Ficus capensis*

Hello!!! Let me introduce myself... Botanists call me *Ficus capensis*, but you can refer to me as the CAPE FIG. You may have overlooked my presence in the past but I am here to inform



you of what a unique, interesting, and fascinating tree I am. I am native to tropical Africa and the Cape Islands. While you were enjoying your picnic, I was providing shade to protect you from the heat and the intense sun rays. Although you may find other fig trees planted throughout your neighborhood, I am the



only tree of my kind that is planted in this area. For that reason, it is very important that I be protected from any kind of harm. I was planted several years ago to provide beauty and shade for the public who visit this park. Please feel free to come over and visit me anytime. Inform your family and friends of my presence so that they can also admire my splendor and beauty.

## FLOWER

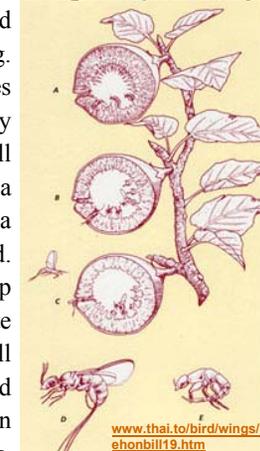
In comparison to other plants, my flowers are inconspicuous. I produce both male and female flowers in a special hollow, pear-shaped inflorescence called



“Syconia”. Many people refer to this inflorescence as a “FIG”. The fig has an ‘OSTIOLE’, or small opening at its tip, which is the site of entrance by a tiny sting

less wasp called the fig wasp. I share a unique relationship with this particular wasp that serves as my only pollinator. The fig wasp can only achieve growth and development inside my flowers. A female wasp carrying a load of pollen and looking for a place to lay

its eggs, will seek out and find the flowers inside the fig. When the female wasp locates the flowers, she will then lay several eggs. The wasp will also induce the creation of a gall or tumor around the area where the eggs were laid. After laying its eggs, the wasp will then deliberately pollinate each flower. The pollen will cause the development and expansion of my seeds. When the larva of the wasp emerges,



they will begin to feed on the cell from the tumor and on the developing seeds. When the wasps reach adulthood, and the female is once again fertilized, she will collect a load of pollen and will emerge out from the fig. Once outside of the inflorescence, she will search for another tree from the same species and the pollination cycle will start once again.

## FRUIT

After pollination, the fig begins to grow and expand producing a fleshy fruit. Even though some of my seeds are scarified by the wasps, many other survive



and they become the next generation of trees. I produce my fruit in a single or branched raceme. A very interesting characteristic is that the raceme of fruits are produced along the trunk and the main branches. The word “Cauliflory” is used to describe this phenomenon not commonly found in other plants. By producing the fruits along the trunk and large branches, I allow easy access to the fruit by climbing animals. Furthermore, the branches also serve as a perching

place for flying animals. Although my fruit is not edible to humans, many animals, including bats and lorikeets, enjoy dining on the ripe fruit. Many animals would rather carry the fruit away and eat it at a safer spot. By carrying the fruit away, animals are very important to me in dispersing the seeds that I produce.



[www.batcon.org/batsmag/v9n4-3.html](http://www.batcon.org/batsmag/v9n4-3.html)

[www.gu.edu.au/ins/collections/webb/nm17-3.htm](http://www.gu.edu.au/ins/collections/webb/nm17-3.htm)