

Comparison of Similar Looking Plants

Ficus microcarpa and *Ficus benjamina*



Scientific name:

Ficus microcarpa

Common name: Malayan Banyan

Family name: Moraceae

Origin: India, Thailand, Malesia to Australia

Status: Common



Scientific name:

Ficus benjamina



Common name: Weeping Fig, Malayan Banyan

Family name: Moraceae

Origin: India, Myanmar, Thailand, Malesia, Indochina to Australia.

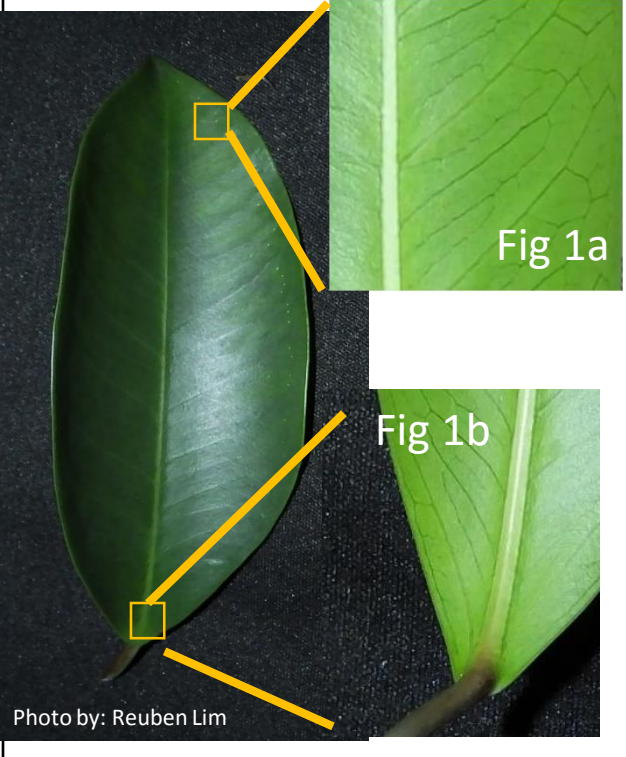
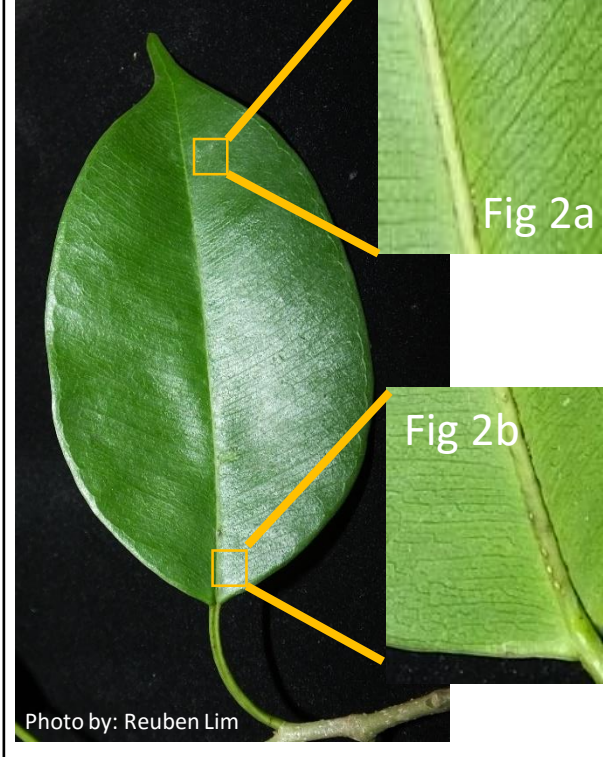
Status: Cultivated

Character comparison

	<i>Ficus microcarpa</i>	<i>Ficus benjamina</i>
Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A strangler fig with an upright crown.• Abundant free hanging aerial roots.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A strangler fig with drooping branches.• Less abundant free hanging aerial roots than <i>F. microcarpa</i>.
		



Character comparison

Foliage

<i>Ficus microcarpa</i>	<i>Ficus benjamina</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green foliage • Midrib is usually flat on the upper surface. • Lateral veins are visible on the underside of the leaf and branch at an acute angle to midrib. (See Fig 1a) • Basal lateral veins are distinct (up to 1/5 - 1/2 the length of the lamina) (See Fig 1b). • Shorter lateral veins are not clearly visible on the upper surface of the leaves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glossy green foliage • Midrib is slightly impressed on the upper surface. • Lateral veins are visible on the underside of the leaf and branch at a wide angles (almost 90°) to midrib. (See Fig. 2a) • Basal lateral veins are less distinct (up to 1/10 – 1/4 of the length of the lamina) (See Fig 2b) • More lateral veins are visible on both sides of the leaves.
 <p>Photo by: Reuben Lim</p>	 <p>Photo by: Reuben Lim</p>

Character comparison

Fig

<i>Ficus microcarpa</i>	<i>Ficus benjamina</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fig turns from pink to dark purple at maturity. • Apex is slightly convex to flat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fig turns from green to orange to dark red or purple at maturity. • Apex is convex to slightly concave. 

Reference

Berg. C.C & Corner, E.J.H. (2005) Moreaceae: Ficeae. Flora Malesiana series 1, 17 (2): 1 – 70.

Ng. A.B.C, Ng, A., Lee. B., Chuah, A.L., Goh, S.G., Lai, J.T.K, Tan, G.C. & D’Rozario, V. (2005). A Guide to the Fabulous Figs of Singapore. Singapore Science Centre, Singapore. 152 pp.

Tee, S.P. (2009). Tree of our Garden City. National Parks Board, Singapore. 309 pp.

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