

Ficus glumosa

(Miq.) Del.

Moraceae

LOCAL NAMES

Afrikaans (Afrikaanse rotsvy, Afrikaans rosvy); English (African rock fig); Hausa (kawuri); Somali (berde); Tigrigna (chekomte, check lang)

BOTANIC DESCRIPTION

Ficus glumosa is a small- to medium-sized tree, 5-10 m tall, or it may become a large tree reaching 24 m and 2 m in girth. Branches widely spreading, more or less horizontal, often supported by stilt roots. Bark yellow, grey or green-grey, smooth to slightly rough with a few flaking pieces; slash reddish with white streaks; branchlets twiggy, finely hairy to hairy and may be marked with large leaf scars.

Leaves broadly ovate to oblong, 5-20 x 7-15 cm, green or greyish-green, the young leaves, young branchlets and petioles frequently with long, tawny, golden to grey silky hairs, giving a shaggy appearance to the young shoots, or hairs may be almost absent. Mature leaves usually glabrous above with the lower surface finely hairy, stiffly papery or leathery, and may have scattered long hairs; the ultimate veins forming an extremely fine network, midrib flat above and raised below, with 6-12 pairs of usually distinct, stout lateral veins branched at the ends and looped near the margin, the basal pair more prominent than the rest; apex broadly tapering to rounded; base rounded to shallowly lobed; margin entire; petiole comparatively short, 2.5-9 cm. Stipules present, pinkish-brown, conspicuous, velvety, sometimes falling early.

Figs small, less than 10-14 mm in diameter, in pairs in the leaf axils and often clustered at the ends of branches among the leaves, globose, paired, glabrous or with fine silky hairs, green turning red, sweet and succulent; stalkless or shortly stalked.

Ficus is the Latin name for fig, derived from the Persian word 'fica'.

BIOLOGY

Figs are produced from January to June; birds, which probably disperse the seeds, eat them.



(Joris de Wolf, Patrick Van Damme, Diego Van Meersschaut)



Ficus glumosa slash (Joris de Wolf, Patrick Van Damme, Diego Van Meersschaut)



Ficus glumosa leaves (Joris de Wolf, Patrick Van Damme, Diego Van Meersschaut)

ECOLOGY

F. glumosa occurs on rocky outcrops, where it splits rocks; along dry watercourses or in open country; frequently in valleys, where it reaches its greatest size. The species also occurs in fringe forest in savannah areas, especially in swampy ground, and in swamp forest in coastal areas. Originally collected in Ethiopia, it occurs in many parts of tropical Africa and is typically found in dry country in wooded grassland and bush. In Uganda, it is found in dry localities, usually among rocks, being abundant in the Mt Kei Forest Reserve in Arua District. It also occurs in the northern region and in Masinde District. In swampy ground, the numerous aerial roots develop into stilt roots.

BIOPHYSICAL LIMITS

Mean annual rainfall: 200-1000 mm, Altitude: 0-500 m, Mean annual temperature: 17-25 deg.C

DOCUMENTED SPECIES DISTRIBUTION

Native: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome et Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Yemen, Republic of

Exotic:



The map above shows countries where the species has been planted. It does neither suggest that the species can be planted in every ecological zone within that country, nor that the species can not be planted in other countries than those depicted. Since some tree species are invasive, you need to follow biosafety procedures that apply to your planting site.

PRODUCTS

Food: The figs are edible.

Fuel: *F. glumosa* is a source of firewood and is used to produce charcoal.

Fibre: Cloth is made from the bark in Sudan.

Tannin or dyestuff: In Sudan, the bark is also used for tanning.

SERVICES

Shade or shelter: Lines of the tree can be planted as a windbreak.

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FURTHER READNG

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Coates-Palgrave K. 1988. Trees of southern Africa. C.S. Struik Publishers Cape Town.

Dale IR, Greenway PJ. 1961. Kenya trees and shrubs. Buchanan's Kenya Estates Ltd.

Katende AB et al. 1995. Useful trees and shrubs for Uganda. Identification, Propagation and Management for Agricultural and Pastoral Communities. Regional Soil Conservation Unit (RSCU), Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA).

Keay RW. 1989. Trees of Nigeria. Clarendon Press Oxford.

Palmer E, Pitman N. 1972. Trees of Southern Africa Vol. 2. A.A. Balkema Cape Town.

SUGGESTED CITATION

Orwa C, A Mutua, Kindt R , Jamnadass R, S Anthony. 2009 Agroforestry Database:a tree reference and selection guide version 4.0 (<http://www.worldagroforestry.org/sites/treedbs/treedatabases.asp>)