

WONDERS OF INDIA

Trees





An imprint of The Energy and Resources Institute

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First published in 2011 by
The Energy and Resources Institute
TERI Press

Darbari Seth Block, IHC Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi 110 003, India
Tel. 2468 2100/4150 4900, Fax: 2468 2144/2468 2145
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Email: teripress@teri.res.in ■ Website: <http://bookstore.teriin.org>

ISBN 978-81-7993-349-7
ISBN 978-81-7993-382-4 (set of 5 books)

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Photo credits:

Peepal (page 10): Virender Singh

Peepal with a Buddha idol underneath and leaf (page 11), Teak (page 20): Seed pods of pride of India (page 27), Rhododendron flower (page 12), Seed pods of Indian laburnum (page 29): Anchal Sondhi

Thanks to Aparna Watve (BIOME, Pune) for reviewing the manuscript.

Printed and bound in India

This book is printed on recycled paper.

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The Energy and Resources Institute

A note by Dr R K Pachauri

India has made tremendous progress in the last century, with growth in business, industry, and science and technology. But our population has increased at a tremendous rate, and our cities are expanding rapidly into huge concentrations of human activity, often swallowing up forests and other natural spaces.

This series endeavours to acquaint children with India's natural and man-made heritage. We are endowed with a wide variety of flora and fauna and have also inherited beautiful monuments—forts, places of worship, palaces, and tombs—reflecting our glorious and multicultural past. Children, especially in towns and cities, are not very familiar with these. We need to take pride in these wonders around us, and preserve them for future generations.

I hope that by highlighting the rich heritage and natural diversity of India, these books will inspire our youth to make personal and civic choices that are better for families, communities, and our natural heritage. Children, being leaders of tomorrow, are ideally placed to create a beautiful, peaceful, and healthy future for the nation.



R K Pachauri

Director-General, TERI

Chairman, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

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Trees: our friends

There are many types of trees. Some are short, while others are tall.

Some, found in the Himalayas, are conical so that snow can slide off their branches, while there are others that look like big domes.

Trees like peepal and teak that shed their leaves are called deciduous. On the other hand, banyan, coconut, and others remain covered with leaves all year round. They are called evergreen.

Trees grow everywhere—in dry areas, on mountains, and along the sea coast.

Trees absorb carbon dioxide and give off oxygen.

They cool the atmosphere and provide us with shade from the harsh sun.



Royal palm



Banana



Mangrove

Wonders of India: Trees

Trees are home to many creatures such as insects, snakes, birds, and animals. Trees provide us with wood, and are also a source of food and medicines.

Today, trees are being cut down to make space for more houses and roads. It is necessary for us to save our forests and trees.

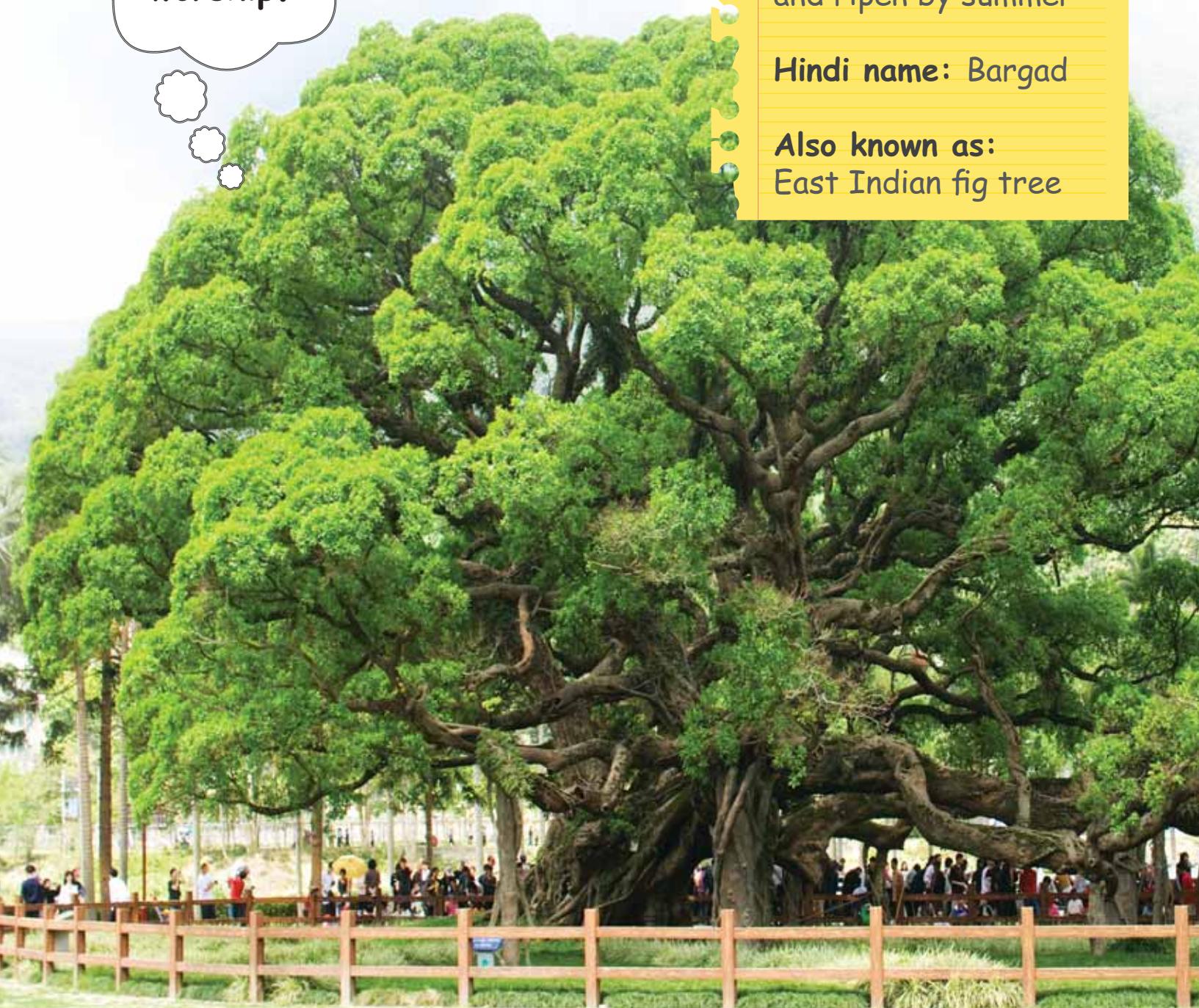
You can help by planting saplings and looking after them till they can survive on their own.

If all of us together do our own little bit, we can save our forests and trees from disappearing.



Banyan

I am a
sacred tree
that Hindus
worship.



Scientific name:
Ficus benghalensis

Flowering season:
Summer

Fruiting season:
Figs form in late spring
and ripen by summer

Hindi name: Bargad

Also known as:
East Indian fig tree

Wonders of India: Trees

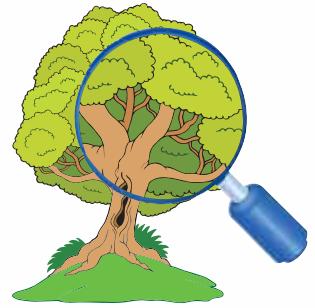


How can you recognize the banyan tree?

It is a huge evergreen tree with large, oval green leaves and long branches. The branches spread out to form an umbrella-shaped shade. Its roots grow above the soil. They hang down to touch the ground and support the tree.

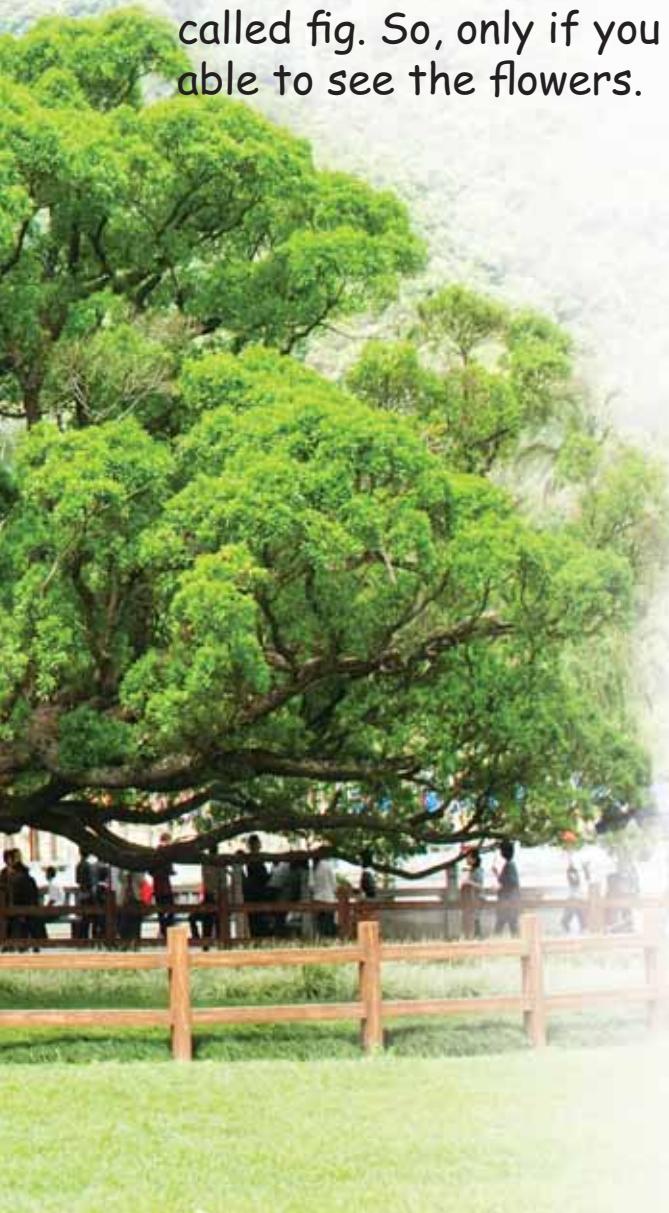
Where can you find the banyan tree?

It is found in many forests throughout India. Known for providing cool shade, it is often planted in parks, near temples, and along highways.



What do the flowers of the banyan tree look like?

The flowers of the tree lie inside a round, fleshy fruit-like pod called fig. So, only if you take a ripe fig and break it open will you be able to see the flowers.



What makes the banyan tree special?

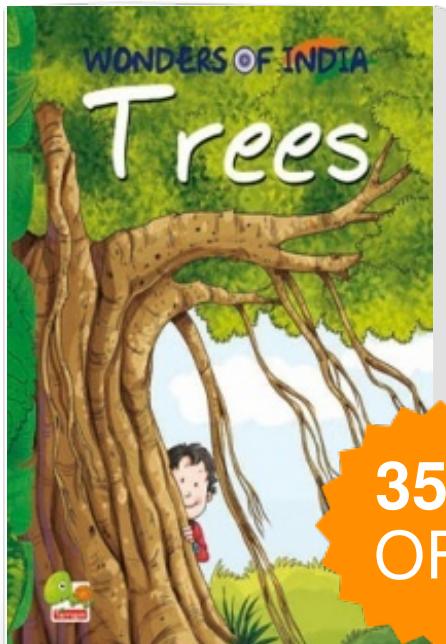
The tree is considered sacred by Hindus. That is why many woodcutters still refuse to harm this tree. It is very useful because medicines are made from its leaves, bark, figs, and seeds. In villages, banyan leaves are used as plates.



Did you KNOW?

The largest banyan tree is at the Indian Botanic Garden, Kolkata. It was planted in 1782, has around 2,800 roots, and looks like a small forest!

Wonders of India : Trees



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Publisher : TERI Press

ISBN : 9788179933497

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Type the URL : <http://www.kopykitab.com/product/8481>



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