

The Banyan tree, scientifically known as *Ficus benghalensis*, is a large, long-lived, and fast-growing evergreen tree that belongs to the fig family. It's characterized by its wide, leafy crown and extensive aerial roots, which can spread over a large area, sometimes even covering several acres. These aerial roots, also known as prop roots, descend from the branches and grow into thick, woody trunks, creating a dense thicket-like appearance.

Here's a more detailed description:

- **Strangler Fig:**

The banyan tree is also known as a "strangler fig" because it initially grows as an epiphyte, starting as a seed on another tree. Its aerial roots then descend and gradually envelop the host tree, eventually strangling and killing it.

- **Large Size and Spread:**

The Banyan tree can grow to a significant height and spread, with some specimens reaching over 100 feet in height and covering multiple acres in diameter.

- **Wide Leafy Crown:**

It boasts a wide, horizontal canopy of leaves, providing ample shade.

- **Extensive Root System:**

The aerial roots become strong and trunk-like, further expanding the tree's footprint.

- **Unique Fruit:**

Banyans, like other figs, have a unique fruit structure and rely on fig wasps for pollination.

- **Sacred Tree:**

The banyan tree is revered in Indian culture

and is considered the national tree of India, Unacademy states.