

Bo-Tree, Peepul, fikas lissan al asfour

GENERAL

Origin	: tropical
Vigour	: fast growing
Humidity	: semi-arid, semi-humid, very humid
Propagation	: sowing and pricking out, cuttings, aerial layering
Maintenance	: moderate

CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: resistant
Dessication	: vulnerable
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: high
Salinity/ppm	: high (4500 ppm)
Hardiness	: -3°C

SHAPE

Type	: tree
Height	: 20 m-30 m
Spread	: 10 m-18 m
Foliage	: semi-evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: pale green
Size	: 0.3 cm
Period	: March - May

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: drupe(fleshy/ juicy)
Fruit size	: 1 cm
Toxicity	: inedible, fruit

The Peepul Tree, known in Arabic as lissan al asfour, is native to the Indian sub-continent and southeast Asia. It is a very large, erect and elegant semi-deciduous tree, which reaches a height of 20 metres in Arriyadh with a spread of up to 10 metres. Its trunk can have great proportions, sometimes up to 3 metres in diameter. The gracefully hanging leaves are a distinctive, dark green, attractively veined, with a long, pointed tip, something like the beak of a bird, hence its Arabic name. They are up to 15 cm long and ovate to 12 cm. New leaf growth is pinkish in colour. Greenish, insignificant flowers are borne in spring. The fruits are sessile figs turning purple when ripe. *F. religiosa* prefers a sunny position and a deep, fertile, mildly alkaline soil. With its shallow roots, it often forms above-ground buttress roots at maturity and, depending on the location, the tree's roots therefore may become a nuisance, especially if there is insufficient space and when paving is buckled. The tree requires regular irrigation, but will not tolerate waterlogging and it is only moderately tolerant to salinity and hard frosts. Propagation is by seed, hardwood cuttings or simple layering. It is occasionally prone to red spider mites. Pruning will help to keep its shape, but care must be taken not to spoil its natural habit. This majestic tree can be used as a specimen tree in parks and large gardens. It provides good shade along pathways and can be planted in urban open spaces, where there is room, and wide road medians.

