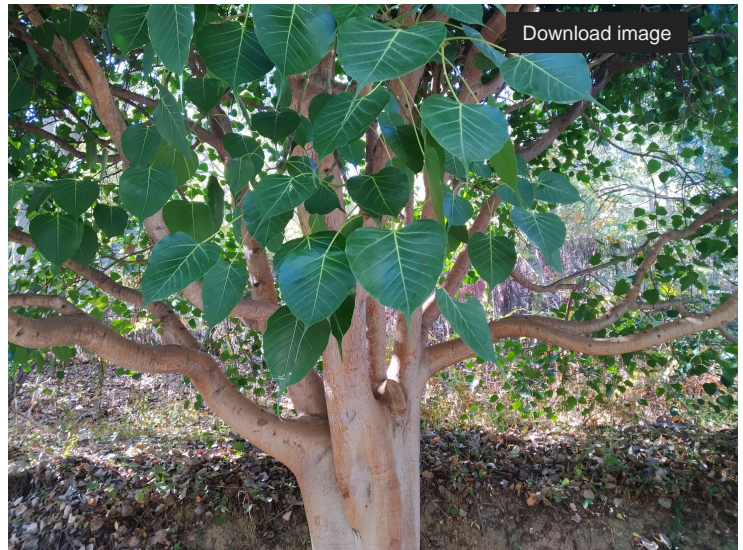


Friday, May 12, 2023

The Moreton Bay or 'magnolia leaf' fig tree

Of all the species of ficus to be found in Malaga, this is without doubt the most spectacular, thanks to its enormous crown and eye-catching roots. The specimen on show at La Concepcion stands at the end of the old road bridge. Originally from Australia, it is known in Latin as *Ficus macrophylla*, the 'macrophylla' epithet being a reference to its large leaves which, along with the reddish brown colour of their undersides, lead to the tree being confused with the magnolia, hence its common nickname of 'magnolia leaf fig tree'.

Nowadays, it is cultivated for its immense decorative value, though it should not be planted near buildings as it can grow to considerable sizes. It was formerly used to obtain rubber before being substituted by another species which offered better results, namely the rubber tree or *Hevena brasiliensis*.



Ficus macrophylla

Interesting fact: this enormous species is from the same family, the Moraceae, as the familiar fig tree.