**Ficus microcarpa**

**LAUREL FIG**

*Moraceae*

**Common Synonyms:** *Ficus nitida, Ficus retusa, Ficus thonningii*

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**FLEPPC Category:** 1  
**FDACS Listed Noxious Weed:** No  
**IFAS Assessment**  
North: **OK**  
Central: **CAUTION**  
South: **CAUTION**  

**USDA Hardiness Zone:** 9b-11  
**Growth Habit:** Tree  
**Origin:** India, Malaysia, Africa  

**Description:** An evergreen tree up to 15 m tall. Has smooth gray bark, a dense rounded crown, and produces adventitious roots. Leaves are alternate, simple, dark glossy green, are oval elliptic to diamond shaped at 13 cm long, and produce milky sap. Flowers are inconspicuous and hidden beneath the a fleshy, specialized receptacle known as a “fig”. The fig develops into multiple fruits, in pairs at leaf axils, 1 cm wide, and turn yellow to deep red when ripe. Does not need soil to germinate, and is often found growing in building crevices, sidewalk cracks, or in the boots of cabbage palms. The native strangler fig (*Ficus aurea*) has larger leaves with yellowish veins.

**Habitat:** Disturbed sites.

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**Florida Introduction Date:** Pre-1912  
**Control Methods:** Chemical: Basal bark (10% Trichlopyr ester). [IFAS].  
**Useful Resources:**  

**Comments:** Began invading natural areas after accidental introduction of its pollinator, a species specific wasp, in the 1970s. Able to survive in little or no soil.