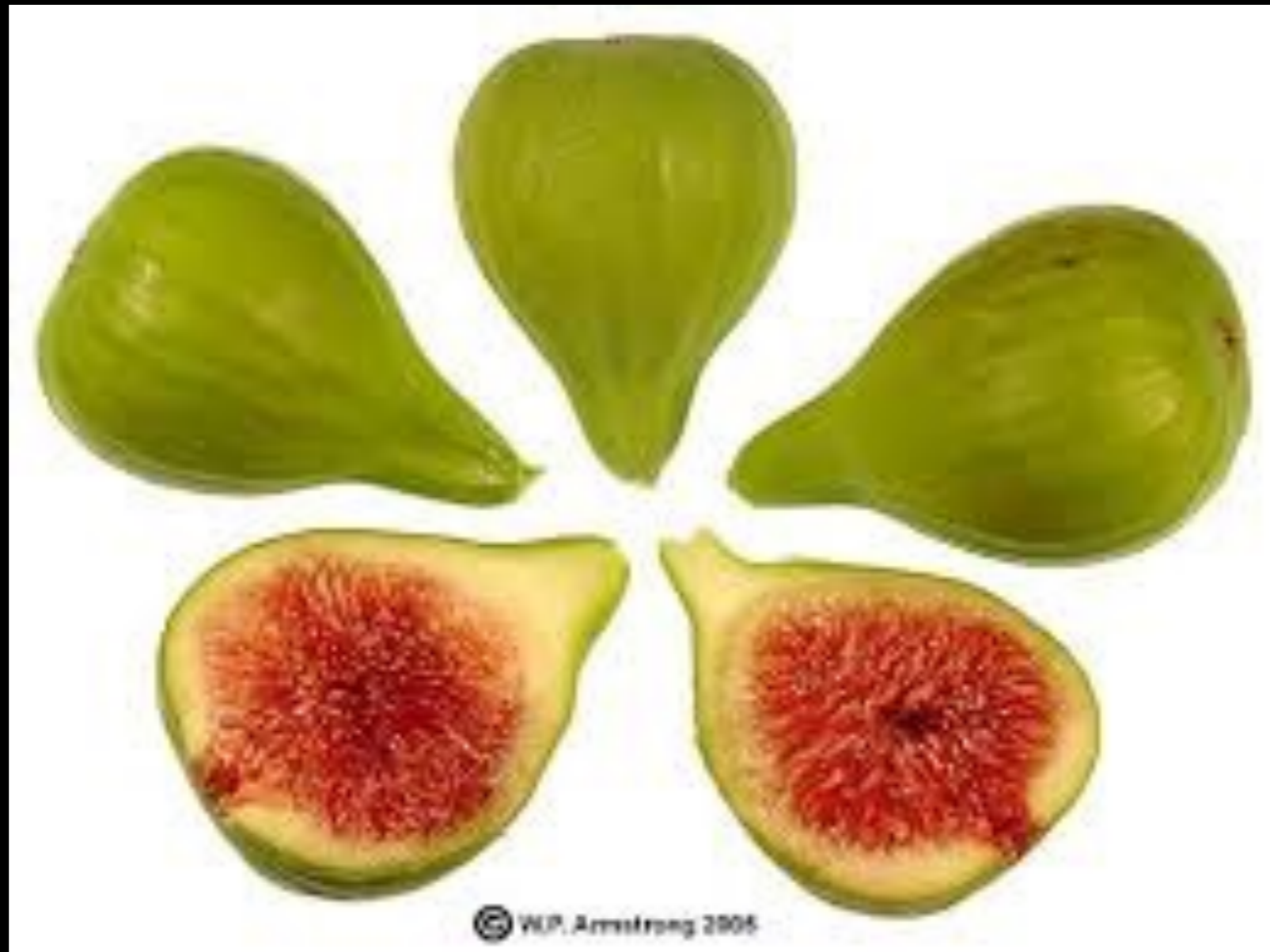


# MORACEAE

THE MULBERRY FAMILY





ALSO CALLED THE FIG FAMILY.

# A mostly tropical group

- 40 genera (depending on how you count)
- Over 1,000 species
- All with tiny, massed flowers crowded into “multiple”-type fruits
- Sticky or milky sap, the source of some kinds of commercial rubber.



The Mutiny on the Bounty  
... and breadfruit ...

Of note here,  
the tiled pattern of the fruit





OSAGE ORANGE  
of Texas & Oklahoma

FAMILY CONNECTION,  
multiple fruits made  
of crowded fruitlets



# THE MULBERRY TREE

genus *Morus* —  
from which the family  
gets the name Moraceae

Lots of drupelets,  
again all crowded  
in a multiple fruit



FUNNY LEAVES  
can be left or right “mitten”  
or have lobe on each side,  
or none



Left,  
blackberry  
flowers

Fruit resembles blackberry  
(rose fam) except blackberries  
come from single flowers;  
mulberries, from  
numerous tiny flowers.



# FICUS, THE FIG TREES, the really big genus

- About 850 species, mostly tropical
- Enclosed inflorescence — the “fig” — is lined with tiny flowers
- Pollinated by tiny wasps, unique for each species
- Super-important in rain forests; keystone species, sheer number of species





Fiddle leaf fig



Sycamore fig;  
its figs, right



L., Ficus  
benjamina;  
R., Indian  
rubber plant



# AERIAL ROOTS

Moreton Bay fig, right

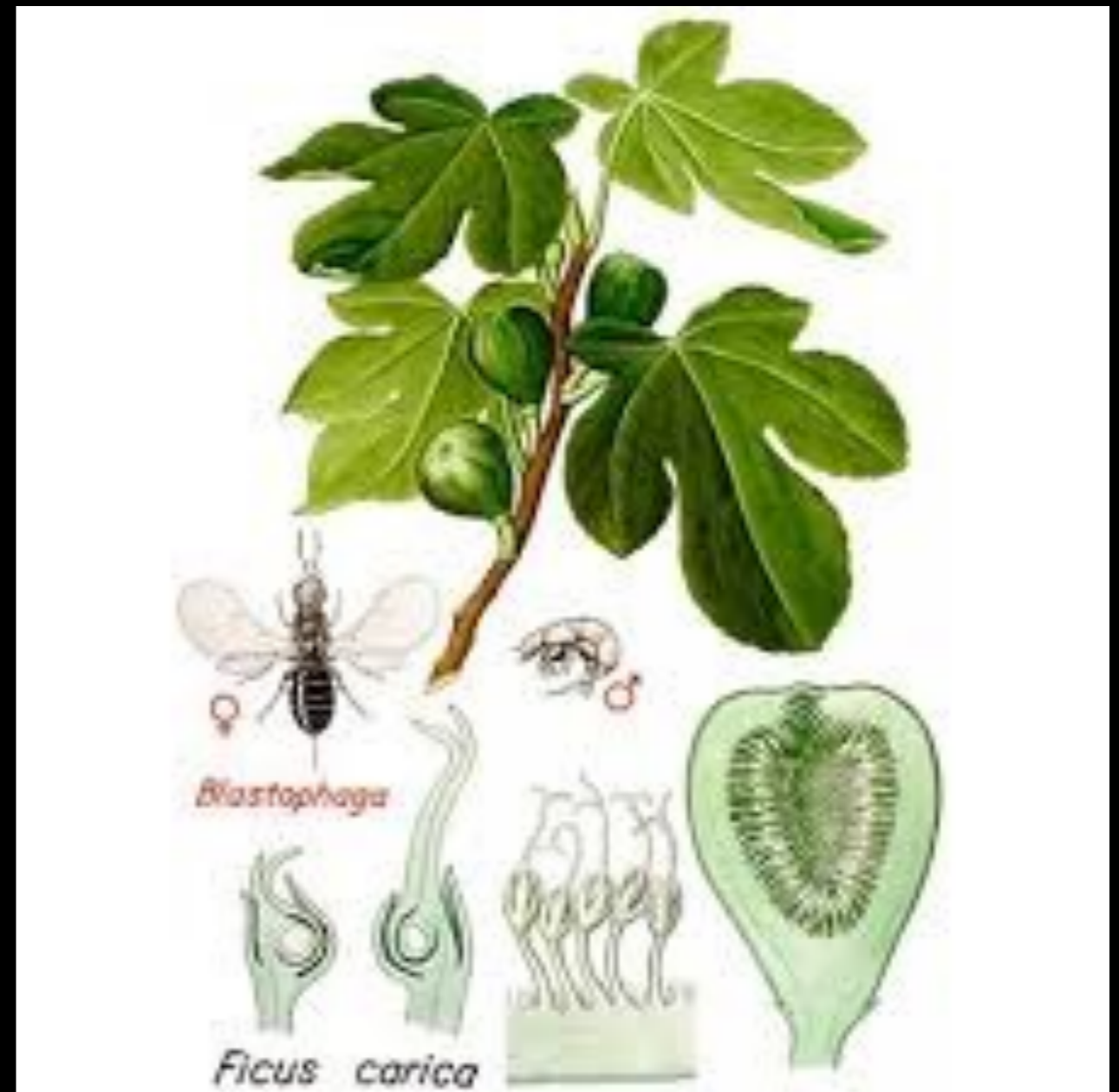
Indian rubber tree, bottom left

Banyan, bottom right



# The edible fig, *Ficus carica*

- Arrived in California with the Spanish missionaries
- ... who brought the Mission fig, which is still popular
- Its flowers are all female and parthenocarpic — they develop without pollination (therefore without seeds)



# Along came the Smyrna fig, and something was missing

## THE FIG WASP AND THE CAPRIFIG



- Caprifig, a wild fig that harbors the tiny wasp
- Which squeezes through a pore in the Smyrna and pollinates it
- The figs have seeds ... giving Fig Newtons their crunch
- Not to worry. All backyard varieties are like the Mission fig in not needing a pollinator.