

Stop 181 Kid's Tour – Figs, Cool Temperate House

Along with the olive and grape, figs are one of the oldest fruit crops in the world! Fig trees supposedly grew in the Garden of Eden, where their leaves were used to keep Adam and Eve covered up. It's also said that figs were a favorite treat of the Egyptian queen, Cleopatra. And while there are over 1000 different kinds of fig trees, only one species produces the fruit that's sold around the world.

Fig trees are unique because unlike other fruit trees, they never have flowers blooming *on* their branches. The blossoms form *inside* of the fig. All those tiny flowers **growing** inside the fig produce a bunch of little seeds, which gives **the fruit** such a crunchy texture. What's even more amazing is that a special insect called a fig wasp has to crawl down into the fig so it can pollinate the flowers!

Figs are loaded with nutrition and can be eaten fresh or dried. A half-cup of figs has as much calcium as a half-cup of milk, which is something you might want to drink if you decide to eat one of the most famous cookies of all – the Fig Newton!