

The Physical Sycamine Tree

Usually planted where several paths meet

- Grows in open spaces either singly or in clumps.
- Does not particularly like upper elevations.

Fast growing always green 50 foot tree

- 50 feet tall
- Wide spread branches that go in all directions.
- Always green.
- Low growing branches
- Easy to climb

Massively Gnarled Trunk

Deepest Root Structure

- Tenacious and aggressive root system
- No way to pluck up by the roots when established

“invincible steadfastness”

Easy to grow and very hard to kill

- Place a cutting in the ground and water.
- If when removing it, you didn't get every last bit, it would grow again.

Grows best with little or no water

The Sycamine Wood

Preferred wood for coffins

- There are mummy cases over 1000 years old
- Porous wood that neither degrades under moisture or heat, making it ideal for preservation
- Due to its fast growth, it was plentiful.

The Sycamine Fruit

Fruit was a fig

- Small rounded figs about 1” long.
- Bore fruit often throughout the year.
- Grew on gnarled trunk or tortuous (twisting) branches.

- Fruit did not grow on twigs or branches with leaves.

Fruit was bitter

- Not a mulberry – sycamine-fig or sycamore-fig
- “tasteless and woody”
- “insipid”
- “extremely bitter”
- “tart and pungent”
- Fruit could not be fully consumed in one eating. It had to be nibbled.

The Sycamine Demographics

Ate only by the poorest of poor

- Rich people ate mulberry fruit.
- The poor ate sycamine fruit.

The Sycamine Pollination

Pollinated by the sting of a wasp

- Amos was a “nipper” or a “puncturer of sycamore fruit.”
- Nipping caused fruit to ripen in 4 days.
- If not harvested or gathered, it would be spoiled by gnats.

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