

Strangler Fig Life Cycle Cards

<p>Howler monkey eats a fig.</p>	<p>Fig plant survives by using nutrients available in aerial soil, as well as the sunlight and water available in the canopy.</p>
<p>Howler monkey defecates in the crook of a tree branch, depositing fig seeds.</p>	<p>Fig plant develops root tendrils, which grow down towards the ground.</p>
<p>Fig seed germinates in the canopy on a branch of the host tree.</p>	<p>Root tendrils reach the ground.</p>

Roots access water and nutrients from the soil on the ground.

Crown expands, blocking light from host tree's leaves.

Host tree decomposes, leaving an empty space in the center of the fig tree's enmeshed roots.

Fig tree produces fruit.

Suggested order of events for strangler fig life cycle:

Howler monkey eats a fig.

Howler monkey defecates in the crook of a tree branch, depositing fig seeds.

Fig seed germinates in the canopy on a branch of the host tree.

Fig plant survives by using nutrients available in aerial soil, as well as the sunlight and water available in the canopy.

Fig plant develops root tendrils which grow down towards the ground.

Root tendrils reach the ground.

Increasingly web-like root structures develop around the host tree as root tendrils intertwine and fuse.

Roots access water and nutrients from the soil on the ground.

Roots grow thicker and become more rigid.

Host tree's trunk can no longer expand (it gets "strangled").

Crown expands, blocking light from host tree's leaves.

Host tree dies.

Host tree decomposes, leaving an empty space in the center of the fig tree's enmeshed roots.

Fig tree produces fruit.

(This then cycles back to "Howler monkey eats a fig.")