

Common Horsetail

Regno: flora

Wet and marshland meadows

 [equisetumarvensis.jpg](#) [1]

Common Horsetail - *Equisetum arvense*

Horsetails are the last few descendants of a group of once gigantic plants which appeared on the Earth in ancient geological times (Carboniferous), when it was dominated by amphibians and the first reptiles.

Even externally they still keep several archaic characteristics which make them look strange and sets them apart from other plants.

Equisetum arvense is a herbaceous plant up to fifty centimetres high, with a long underground rhizome and two distinct types of aerial stems, both articulated into nodes and internodes.

The hollow vegetative (barren) stems are rough on account of the granules of silicon and green because they are capable of photosynthesis, substituting the small insignificant leaves.

The slender leaves form a sort of collar round each of the nodes, where they branch out in a ray.

The fertile stems are whitish or pale brown and are tipped with a small club-shaped spike that contains the spores. It is very common and widespread throughout Italy and grows in uncultivated fields and damp ground.

Equisetum arvense is also used in traditional medicine as a diuretic, haemostat and particularly as a source of mineral salts because of its high content (up to 15%) of silicic acid, soluble in water.

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