

White Poplar

Regno: flora

Riparian and marsh woods

 [populusalba.jpg](#) [1]

White Poplar - *Populus alba*

Up to 30 metres high and reaching over a metre in diameter, the White Poplar is the most majestic fast growing riparian tree.

It is easily recognisable by its white, smooth bark, interrupted by numerous cracks (lenticels) which cover not only the branches but also the trunk, at least until the plant is relatively large.

The leaves can vary greatly in shape and size, even on the same plant: those that grow on the short, flowering branches have short stalks and are ovoid with wavy or toothed margins; those on the longer, growing branches are larger and more or less triangular, the margins are incised giving five toothed lobes.

In both cases the upper page is smooth and a beautiful deep green, the lower page whitish and more or less tomentose. A dioecious plant, i.e. with separate male and female individuals.

The unisexual flowers, arranged in long drooping inflorescences (catkins) appear before the leaves in February to March. The sex of the tree can also be recognised by its bearing: male trees have pyramidal crowns and the branches do not spread much apart, the females have wider and irregular crowns.

It grows on alluvial flood plains, by running water, the banks of lakes and in marshlands, generally in association with Black Poplar, Ash, Alders and Willows. Although a typical tree of damp plain woodlands, in Italy it can occur as high as 1,500 metres altitude.

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Links:

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