



# FAGUS SYLVATICA “PURPUREA”

Fam. Fagaceae

## DESCRIPTION

Adult specimens are majestic – the tree can grow up to 25-30 metres.

## LEAVES

Oval-elliptical leaves with wavy margins and slightly pointed apices. The leaves are generally dark-green, but in the *Purpurea* variation, they take on reddish shades.

## SEEDS

Triangular-shaped beechnuts wrapped, like chestnuts, in an involucre covered with blunt yet poisonous spikes.

## HABITAT

Spontaneously widespread throughout Europe.

## DISTRIBUTION

In Italy, it grows in woods up to 1000 metres above sea level, especially in those of the Alps and the Apennines. In gardening, beech trees are used for ornamental purposes to embellish parks, avenues and hedges.

## STEM

Erect, with a smooth bark in adult specimens, grooved or slightly scaly in the young ones. The stem branches upwards creating an expanded crown with a conical-or-bicircular shape.

## FLOWERS

Reddish, unisexual and substantially different: male flowers are spherical catkins whilst the female ones are arranged in pairs within a sort of dome. The beech blooms in spring, around May, and the flowers generally sprout at the same time as the new leaves.

## INTERESTING FACTS

Beech forests are known as the mother of the forests as they improve the soil, enriching it with nutrients. *Fagus sylvatica* “Purpurea” is a Beech cultivar and is spectacular as an isolated specimen in parks and large gardens.

## ROOTS

Taproot system that expands over the years without exceeding the projection of the crown.

