

TREES: THE ROOTS OF OUR LIFE

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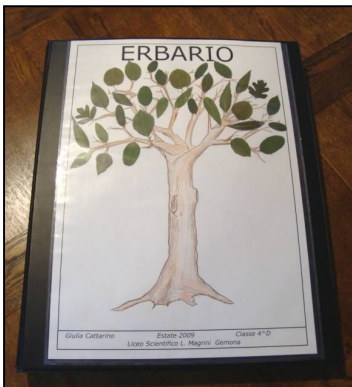
Via de Cocule 13, 33030 Buja (UD)

LICEO SCIENTIFICO STATALE "L. Magrini"

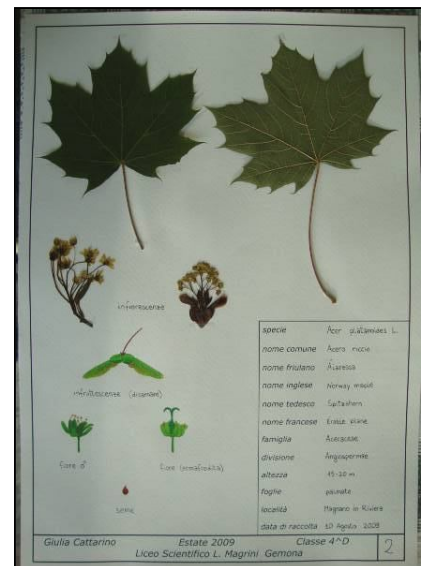
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What does a tree mean to us? Until last summer, I would have answered this question superficially because, like most people, I did not have a deep knowledge of trees, as I do not live in close contact with nature. Last summer I had to make a herbarium as part of a school project: collecting leaves encouraged me to study nature and particularly trees, and in this way I discovered a new interest which turned into a true passion. The objective of my work was to deepen my knowledge of plants and trees. I hope those who see my herbarium can perceive the emotions and passion I felt in this experience and understand the importance of respecting and appreciating the works of nature.



The first page of my "herbarium" The steps of my work were the following: identifying the trees, collecting leaves and other parts (fruits and/or flowers), drying and pressing the specimens and finally preparing the cards. Each card has two samples of leaves, to show the upper and lower surfaces, drawings and when possible dried flowers and fruit. As some fruit and flowers could not be pressed and filed in the herbarium, they were stored in a plywood box divided into several compartments, each of which contains a sample. The efforts and patience dedicated to this work have been rewarded by the satisfaction of the outcome and by the awareness of learning to look at trees with new eyes. I learned their names, how to distinguish the different species and to appreciate their variety and diversity. I discovered the various ways of spreading the seeds, the existence of medicinal and poisonous plants, dioecious plants, and plant associations. I realized trees are not simply woody plants and a source of nourishment and oxygen but they are part of our roots and our history (let's think for example that in my region the names of many villages come from the names of some trees).



The Norway maple's (*Acer platanoides* L.) card