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***Populus* ‘Zbigniew Stecki’ – a new columnar cultivar  
of poplar**

*Populus* ‘Zbigniew Stecki’ – nowa kolumnowa odmiana topoli

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**ABSTRACT:** A new columnar cultivar of poplar is described and illustrated. It originated spontaneously in the Kórnik Arboretum from seeds of *Populus maximowiczii* and is probably a hybrid of this species with *P. simonii* ‘Fastigiata’.

**Key words:** *Populus maximowiczii*, *Populus simonii* ‘Fastigiata’, hybrid

Narrow, columnar tree with well developed trunk and upright branches. Long-shoots olive-grey or grey and terete below, brown and slightly angular with very narrow ridges above, with white, narrow lenticels, minutely puberulent to glabrous (on stronger shoots). Buds 8-15 mm long, brownish-red, shining, usually more or less sticky. Leaves coriaceous, dark green above, greyish-green and distinctly reticulate beneath, with minutely densely puberulent main veins (lens!), densely crenate-serrate; the adult upper and medium leaves of long-shoots variable in size, up to 12(-14) cm long, up to 10(-12) cm wide, broadly elliptic or broadly ovate-elliptic, rarely obovate-elliptic (on weaker stems), rounded at the base, with a very short-subacuminate apex, teeth on leaf margin with brown or black glands. Petiole 1-3(-4) cm long, narrowly furrowed on adaxial side, densely, minutely puberulent, usually slightly reddish above. Leaves of short-shoots up to 11 cm long up to 7 cm wide, elliptic to broadly elliptic, cuneate to broadly cuneate, rarely rounded at the base, acuminate at the apex, minutely puberulent on the midrib, short-ciliate on



Fig. 1. *Populus* 'Zbigniew Stecki' in the Kórnik Arboretum  
(Phot. by M. Dziurla)

Ryc. 1. *Populus* 'Zbigniew Stecki' w Arboretum Kórnickim  
(Fot. M. Dziurla)

the margin, otherwise glabrous. Petiole as in leaves of long-shoots but (3-)3.5-5(-5.5) cm long. Male specimen.

The standard plant is cultivated in the Kórnik Arboretum. The type herbarium material is kept at the Herbarium of the Institute of Dendrology in Kórnik (KOR).

The plant with columnar habit appeared in 1974 among progeny of free-pollinated *Populus maximowiczii* Henry growing in the Kórnik Arboretum. Maternal tree was damaged by the gale and died several years ago, but earlier it was propagated vegetatively and numerous plants of different age are planted in the Kórnik Arboretum. The oldest ones are 20 years old, 22-23 m tall and 28-35 cm breast height.

Morphological characters of new poplar suggest that it can be a hybrid between *Populus maximowiczii* and *P. simonii* Carrière 'Fastigiata'. Except the habit it shows an intermediate character between supposed parent species, but the influence of each of them is different in different part of the hybrid plant. Broad, shortly acuminate leaves of long-shoots resemble very much leaves of *P. maximowiczii*, while leaves of short-shoots are much more similar to leaves of *P. simonii* 'Fastigiata'. Contrary to the latter culton *Populus* 'Zbigniew Stecki' has much narrower crown. Its trunk is rather thick, well developed almost to the top, the branches are relatively slender and short. The tree can be suitable for forming dense lanes while its wood for fuel or pulpwood.

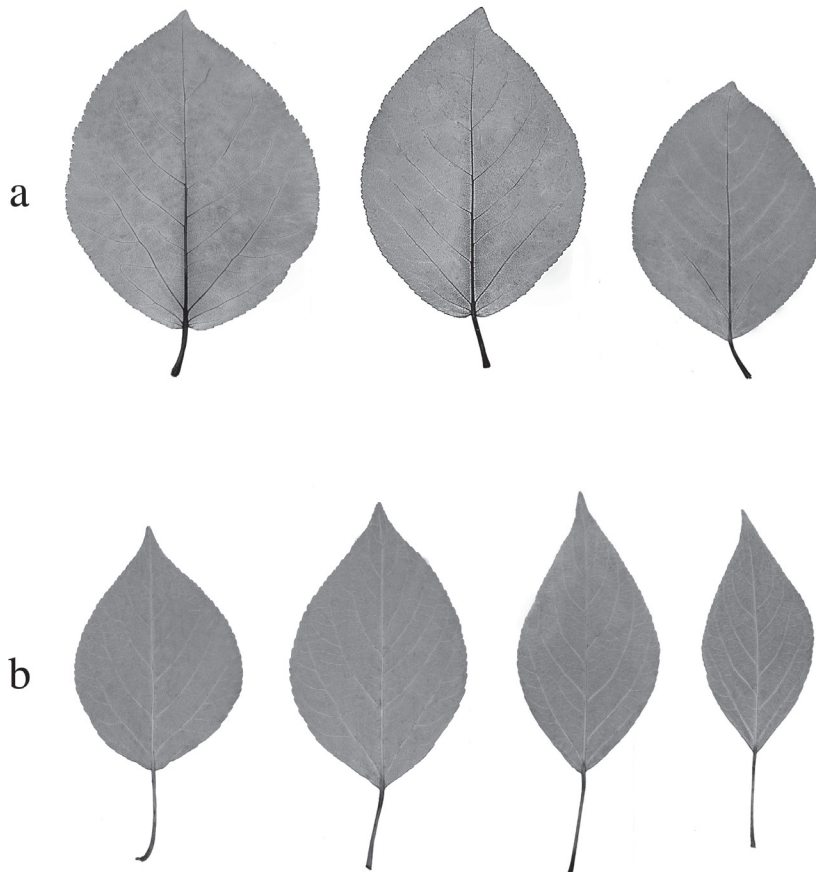


Fig. 2. *Populus 'Zbigniew Stecki'*; a – leaves of long-shoots, b – leaves of short-shoots  
(Phot. by M. Dziurla)

Ryc. 2. *Populus 'Zbigniew Stecki'*; a – liście długopędów, b – liście krótkopędów  
(Fot. M. Dziurla)

The name of the new cultivar is to commemorate Prof. Dr. Zbigniew Stecki (1930-1994) who found the above plant during his research on poplar breeding.

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