

***aspō** Runic: 𐌱𐌰𐌶𐌵 Pronunciation: /'as.pɔː/

noun · feminine · ō-stem

Meanings

aspen; Eurasian aspen (*Populus tremula*)

Etymology

From a northern Eurasian tree-name **aps-* ~ **ops-* of uncertain origin, often treated as an old *Wanderwort* or substrate word rather than as a securely inherited Proto-Indo-European lexeme. Proto-Germanic **-sp-* apparently reflects metathesis of **-ps-*, perhaps encouraged by **askaz*. Compare Latvian *apse*, Old Prussian *abse*, Lithuanian *āpušė* and *ẽpušė*, and Proto-Slavic **opsā* and **ōpsīkā*, all denoting the aspen. Finnish *haapa* and comparable Turkic forms support a wider Eurasian *Wanderwort*, but neither its ultimate source nor the direction of borrowing can be established with certainty (Derksen 2008: 378, s.vv. **osa*; **osina*; **esika*; Jakob 2024: 219, 278, 289 n. 10; Kroonen 2013: 39; Matasović 2024: 58; Šorgo 2020: 434). Witczak (1991: 65–75) makes a compelling argument that Old Armenian *ն֫փի* (*op'i*) comes from PIE **ops-* (it cannot be derived from the alternative **aps-*). Mallory and Adams (1997: 33) make a case for the word being Indo-European if the Armenian and Old Indic forms indeed come from the same root, since this would prove that it is more widespread than just northern Europe. Nevertheless, this cannot disprove the possibility of an early, widespread *Wanderwort*.

Declension

Case	Singular	Plural
Nom.	aspō	aspôz
Acc.	aspō̅	aspōz
Gen.	aspōz	aspō̅
Dat.	aspōi	aspōmaz
Inst.	aspō	aspōmiz
Voc.	aspō	aspôz

Descendants

***aspu** (Proto-West Germanic)

 ***aspa**, ***espa** (Old Dutch)

espe (Middle Dutch)

esp (Dutch)

***aspu** (Proto-West Germanic)

æspe, **æsp**, **æps** (Old English)

aspe, **aspen** (Middle English)

asp, **aspen** (English)

***aspu** (Proto-West Germanic)

aspa (Old High German)

aspe (Middle High German)

Espe (German)

***aspu** (Proto-West Germanic)

 ***aspa** (Old Saxon)

aspe, **espe**, **hespe** (Middle Low German)

Äsp (Low German)

ɔsp (Old Norse)

øsp (Faroese)

ösp (Icelandic)

asp (Swedish)

qsp (Old Norse)

asp, esp (Danish)

asp (Norwegian Bokmål)

qsp (Old Norse)

osp, øsp, asp, esp, usp, ysp (Norwegian)

osp, åsp (Danish)

osp (Norwegian Bokmål)

***haapa** (Proto-Finnic)

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Related Words

Words mentioned in this entry

***askaz** noun