



La Torre di Palidoro

PICCOLO SCRIGNO DI NATURA

Do you know about Aliens ?



COMUNE DI FIUMICINO



Eucalypt (*Eucalyptus* spp)

The "alien" and invasive allochthonous species are animal, plant or fungal species introduced by human action in areas other than the original ones. Often, many of them manage to survive in new habitats, replacing native species and thus compromising biodiversity.

Alien species, such as the hottentot fig (*Carpobrotus acinaciformis*), the red-eared turtle (*Trachemys scripta elegans*) or the nutria (*Myocastor coypus*), have dangerously spread in our natural environments to the detriment of the whole ecosystem.

Some alien animal or plant species, however, such as fallow deer, porcupine, palm, eucalyptus or robinia have adapted to our habitats by conquering a space in ecological niches and becoming common presences in our culture and collective memory.

Knowing alien species is important to limit the introductions, even unconscious, of animal or plant species that could endanger the ecological balance of our natural environments.



Nutria (*Myocastor coypus*)



Red-eared turtle
(*Trachemys scripta elegans*)

AN ALIEN SPECIES: THE EUCALYPT SOME CURIOSITIES ABOUT THIS NATURAL COLUMN

Eucalypts are a genus of plants originating from Oceania, Australia and Tasmania and introduced to Europe in the 19th century. Used mainly in marshy areas, thanks to their ability to absorb large amounts of water from the ground, they were considered useful to keep away the anopheles mosquitoes, vector of malaria. Because of their rapid growth, they were often used for the creation of "windbreak belts". Today the eucalyptus is a plant much appreciated not only for its majesty, but also for its excellent wood, for the essential oils extracted from the leaves and for the excellent honey produced by bees with its flowers' nectar.

Hottentot fig (*Carpobrotus acinaciformis*)



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Flora and Fauna



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Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)

The considerable extension of the Reserve implicates the presence of natural habitats characterized by a significant biological variety including plant and animal species of particular importance.

Along the dune cordon in front of the tower you can observe plant species such as the mastic tree (*Pistacia lentiscus*), the juniper tree (*Juniperus communis*), the phyllirea (*Fillirea spp*), the sea holly (*Eryngium maritimum*), the sea fennel (*Echinophora spinosa*), the sea daffodil (*Pancretium maritimum*), the Kalli cyperus (*Cyperus kalli*), the Sea Wormwood (*Arthemisia maritima*) and the Sea Cudweed (*Othanthus maritimus*).

Among the animal species there are mammals, such as the fox (*Canis vulpes*), the weasel (*Mustela nivalis*) the porcupine (*Hystrix cristata*); birds, such as the osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), the red heron (*Ardea purpurea*), the great crested grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*), the egret (*Egretta garzetta*), the grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*), the mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*); reptiles, such as the marsh turtle (*Emys orbicularis*) and the Aesculapian coluber (*Zamenis longissimus*), whose presence is particularly significant.



Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*)



Marsh turtle (*Emys orbicularis*)



Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*)

THE KENTISH PLOVER: A VERY PARTICULAR "UMBRELLA" SPECIES

IN THE RESERVE YOU CAN SEE THE **KENTISH PLOVER** (*Charadrius alexandrinus*), THE SMALL WADING BIRD OF THE ITALIAN BEACHES. THIS TIRELESS TRAVELLER IS ALSO A BIOLOGICAL INDICATOR OF THE CONSERVATION STATUS OF THE COASTAL ECOSYSTEM IN WHICH IT LIVES. THE NESTING OF A KENTISH PLOVER HIGHLIGHTS THE GOOD HEALTH OF A BEACH. IT IS DEFINED, IN FACT, "UMBRELLA" SPECIES AS TO ACTIVELY CONTRIBUTE TO ITS CONSERVATION IMPLIES AT THE SAME TIME THE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF OTHER SPECIES SHARING THE SAME ENVIRONMENT.



Sea daffodil
(*Pancretium maritimum*)



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State Natural Reserve of the Roman Coast



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In the Municipality of Fiumicino, a few kilometres from Rome, the Palidoro Tower, also known as the Pearl Tower, stands out. The tower was part of a group of coastal artefacts, built between the eighth and ninth century, as lookout points to counter the Saracen invasions.

Its current appearance is the result of restoration work carried out between 1562 and 1563 on behalf of the arch-hospital of Santo Spirito in Sassia. The area of the Tower is included in the State Natural Reserve of the Roman Coast: over 15 thousand hectares of environments of fundamental historical and

naturalistic importance characterized by pine and oak woods, Mediterranean scrub, wetlands and magnificent dune stretches. These habitats have allowed the conservation of many species of flora and fauna, now increasingly in need of protection due to the spread of alien invasive species undermining their survival. Near the Tower, there are many species that characterize the Roman coast, including aromatic plants, typical of these areas, that have always been collected and appreciated for use in cooking and pharmaceuticals.



THE CARABINIERI OF BIODIVERSITY HAVE REDEVELOPED THIS AREA, ADDING TO THE MEMORY OF THE HISTORICAL EVENTS THAT INVOLVED THE TOWER, ALSO THE PROTECTION AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE SURROUNDING NATURAL TREASURES TO INCREASE THE VALUE OF THIS PLACE ALREADY A SYMBOL OF ALTRUISM, COURAGE AND SACRIFICE.



Silene colorata (Silene alicaia)



Lentisco (Pistacia lentiscus)



Pineta di pino domestico (Pinus pinea)



Eraglio marittimo (Eryngium maritimum)



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The Scent of Memories



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Unique perfumes, fragrances and smells bring us back to ancient traditions and farming culture. Thyme, rosemary, sage or helichrysum are wild herbs that have always been picked for various uses in the kitchen and herbalist's shop, the famous "pharmacy of simple people". The resilience and the bearing of some plant species, especially shrubby and herbaceous, are the result of a long evolutionary selection that has made their morphological and physiological characteristics "special", adapting them to "difficult" environments and making them recognizable and identifiable.

An invitation to discover the shape and characteristics of many species typical of the Mediterranean scrub and to let yourself be enveloped by intense scents.



Rosemary (*Salvia rosmarinus*)



Helichrysum (*Helichrysum italicum*)



Mirto (*Myrtus communis*)