BOZZA

MADONIE GEOPAK

The Ente Parco Delle Madone is a public institution, no profit, established pursuant to and for the purposes referred to in the regional law 6 May 1981 n. 98. The park is ubicated in north- central Sicily between the Tirrenan Sea in the north, the Imera river n the west, the Pollina river in the est and the cities of Sclafani Bagni, Caltavuturo, Polizzi Generosa, CastellanaSicula e le Petralie in the south

The "Parco Delle Madonie" covers an area of approx. 40,000 hectares and includes 15 municipalities.

The Ente Parco has the task of ensuring the management of the Madonie Nature Park for the following objectives: Protection, preservation and defense of the environment and landscape with its historical and cultural values; Environmental management, transformation of natural values in the park and reconstruction of degraded ones; Social and public use of environmental goods, supporting cultural, social, recreational, touristic, sports and other activities can improve the quality of life of the local population.

Proper layout and use of the territory that makes up the park, programming and project design for this purpose; Promotion of activities that can improve and develop the economic and social condition of the local population, especially traditional and production activities; Promotion and development of scientific research.

FLORA

Madonie is one of the areas of greatest phytogeographical interest in the Mediterranean with the presence of over 1,800 plant species. There are about 170 endemic entities, including species and subspecies. Among them, Abies nebrodensis, Viola nebrodensis, Senecio candidus, Rhamnus lojaconoi, Jurinea bocconei, etc. are exclusive to the Madonite area.

The most relevant case is that of Abies nebrodensis, whose population, at the limit of survival, consists of only about thirty individuals limited to Monte Scalone and Vallone Madonna degli Angeli.

More widespread is Genista cupanis, specialized on siliceous substrates where it is domesticated in environments originating from the degradation of forest occupied by pastures, while Astracantha nebrodensis, a thorny shrub that thrives, exclusively on more or less inconsistent calcareous substrates that have been freed by the retreat of beech forests and forests directly below.

Cultivated plants also have their own peculiarities.In this connection, we must mention the manna (Fraxinus ornus and F. oxycarpa) of which Francesco Minà Palumbo researched thirty different varieties in 1876, most of which cannot be found today.

FAUNA

Madonie hosts all the indigenous species of mammals, amphibians and reptiles that inhabit the island, almost 70% of the species of nesting birds and a percentage of certainly close to 60% of the Sicilian invertebrate species.

Today, the Madonie Mammal fauna still includes wild cats, martens, porcupines, foxes, hares, hares and various species of small rodents, including rare puffins.

Of the diurnal birds of prey, Madonie is still home to peregrine falcon, kestrel, buzzard and 4 pairs of golden eagles.

Among the nocturnal birds of prey we remember: owls and buzzards.

Species associated with the thicket and forest: various species of great woodpeckers, warblers, woodpeckers, great woodpeckers, along with climbers, blackbirds, jays and crows.

During the winter, there is a rich population of wintering species, which is added to the sedentary one, as is the case with the finch.

Even in rupestrian environments, it is possible to observe the recluse sparrow, which above 1400 meters is replaced by the very rare ruffed grouse and still muciatto bunting, granary sparrow, lagia sparrow, black ruffed grouse and coral bunting... Another typical inhabitant of the rocks of Madonia is the Sicilian rock partridge, which is now rare or extinct in many areas of Sicily.

Of the fauna of the rivers, there are still white porpoises, yellow shepherds and bee-eaters.

From reptiles and amphibians: lizards, gongyls, luscengols, rats, water snakes, grasshoppers, green frogs, very rare land and marsh turtles, tree frogs, discoglossus and green toads.

The invertebrate fauna includes endemic species such as Parnassium apollo from Sicily, an elegant butterfly that only lives in the highest areas of Madonia.

MINERALS

The Madonie, in their geodynamic structure, are mainly made up of calcareous and siliceous rocks, on which clayey and evaporitic sediments can be distinguished.

Among the minerals constituting these rocks, the following can be found on the outcrop:

- Calcite (CaCO3). Mainly used as a building material, as a rock for art collection or even for crystal therapy.

- Flint (SiO2) of various chromatisms due to impurities of iron oxides. Mainly used as landscaping material for construction or rock of collection. In remote times flint was used in the Mesolithic/Neolithic for the manufacture of weapons or tools of daily life (Grotta del Vecchiuzzo, Grotta di Scillato).

- Clays (hydrated aluminum silicates). Mainly used, in the Madonie, for ceramic handicraft.

-Gypsum(CaSO4<2H2O)calciumsulphatedihydrate. Used as a cement mortar in construction, but also as Embellishment or collection rock.

- Rock salt (NaCl). Mainly used for food preparation.

GEOFOOD

In the territory of the Madonie park there are ash trees, vineyards, olive groves, orchards and medicinal plants, vegetables and farms that give life to raw materials such as Madonie manna, extra virgin olive oil, bright orange, Scillato apricot, Badda di Polizzi beans, oregano, mushrooms basilisks, hazelnuts, ancient grains, Sicilian black bee honey, etc. Furthermore, cheeses such as provola delle Madonie, Sicilian pecorino, scamorza, scacciata, etc.

Numerous typical dishes and desserts. Among them, sfoglio, one of the oldest sweets typical of Madonie, dates back to the 15th century. The main ingredient is tuma, fresh cheese enriched with candied pumpkin, cinnamon and chocolate.