

STUDY TOUR IN PROTECTED/RE-NATURALIZED AREAS
“Two projects for the Environment and Biodiversity” - Workshop
Mirandola
Saturday, June 21st

Language: English, Italian

The workshop takes place in the Mirandola valleys, in the most northern part of the province of Modena, a little known territory because its distance from most important city centers and main infrastructure. *Bassa Modenese* (Modenese lowlands) is the name given to this land, and it is called so because it distinguishes itself by minimal altitudes that vary from 22 m to 9 m above sea level. It is an area rich with history, tradition, culture and interesting natural characteristics, such as its numerous bird species nesting in the ponds of the *Valli Mirandolesi*.

During the workshop, there will be presentations on two projects promoted by the Province of Modena, intended to support biodiversity and conservation.

In the past, the territory of the Mirandola valleys has been subject to profound changes that have brought back its natural characteristics, those that characterized it before the restructuring works at the end of the 1900s.

Water streams have shaped the territory, forming depression areas that are enlarged for most part of the year, covered by vast marshlands, meadows and woodlands.

The territory has been re-naturalized and it has become a place of great value from nature's perspective, mostly due to the presence of over one hundred bird species, including protected species.

Expert ornithologists will present the results of studies under way since 1995. The reports will be presented in the “*Barchessone*” room, an antique building, historically used by the Minister of War for keeping mules and today reorganized and intended for other uses.

Over the years, the “*Odoardo Focherini*” farm, host of the workshop, has made conspicuous re-naturalization improvements that are now part, along with many others, of a special protected zone acknowledged by the European Union.

After the presentation of the reports, we will go to the “*La Tomina*” farm, found in a protected faunal reserve. There, at the Modena Ornithological Station, we will see how expert ornithologists ring birds for scientific purposes.

Participation to the workshop is free of charge.

Program

7.00 Departure from Modena

8.00 Arrival in San Martino Spino (Mirandola), at the “*Barchessone Vecchio*” environment educational centre, in the Odoardo Focherini farm

Welcoming coffee break and registration of participants

Workshop chairmen: Ariel Brunner, Responsible for agricultural policies European Bureau of BirdLife International (Bruxelles – Belgium) and Prof. Giovanni Tosatti, Professor of Engineering and Environmental Geology Modena and Reggio Emilia University (Italy)

- 8.30 - 9.00 Welcoming addresses by the Mayor of Mirandola, Mr Luigi Costi and the Chairman of Food and Agriculture Committee of the Province of Modena, Mr Graziano Poggioli
- 9.00 - 9.10 Introduction to the Projects, Mr Lorenzo Tosatti (amateur field ornithologist)
- 9.10 – 9.25 Lowlands Project (“Progetto Valli”): results after 13 years of activities, Ms Anna Greco, Chairwoman of the Environment and Town-planning Committee from Municipality of Mirandola
- 9.25 – 9.40 Agriculture and environmental measures for biodiversity and Nature Web 2000: the case of the Mirandola Lowlands, Dr Roberto Tinarelli, ornithologist
- 9.40 – 9.55 Biodiversity monitoring by means of bird ringing, Dr Fernando Spina, Scientific Supervisor of the Italian National Institute for Wildlife (INFS)
- 9.55 – 10.10 Ornithological studies in the wetlands of Mirandola, Mr Carlo Giannella, ornithologist
- 10.10– 10.25 Results of the “Parmesan Cheese and Wild Birds” research: two years of field studies, Dr Patrizia Rossi, Delegate for Agriculture from the Italian League for the Protection of Birds (LIPU), partner of BirdLife International
- 10.30 Visit to Modena Ornithological Station (SOM) of the Mortizzuolo lowlands Nature Reserve, inside “La Tomina” farm
- 10.45 – 12.30 Bird catching and ringing practical demonstrations
- 12.30 – 13.00 Discussion
- 13.00 – 14.30 Buffet lunch*
- 14.30 Departure to Modena
- 15.:30 Arrival in Modena