

This species is unmistakable

for its large spatulate bill.

These ducks winter in this

Common

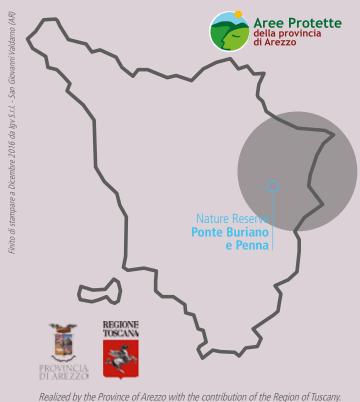
Arno tributaries.

It lives near the most unspoiled

shrew

Nature, information, tour itineraries and path

PROTECTED AREAS IN THE PROVINCE OF AREZZO



VISITOR CENTRE

"Il fiume e la sua storia"

Photos: Coradeschi Leonardo - Wikimedia Commons, Luigi Torreggiani -Compagnia delle Foreste, Ftanuki, Lisa Redfern, Saguari - Pixabay, Guido Tellini, Records of the ex "Conservazione della Natura" Office of the Province of Arezzo, Rondine Images - Flickr.com

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HOW TO GET THERE

From Arezzo: go along the road "SP 1 - Setteponti" to Castiglion Fibocchi as far as Ponte a Buriano or continue to Laterina as far as Penna. **From Florence:** go along the SR 69, turn toward Laterina and Castiglion Fibocchi as far as Penna or Ponte a Buriano or continue toward Arezzo as far as Pieve a Maiano. To arrive in Monte Sopra Rondine continue as far as Indicatore then turn left.

Etruria mobilità - <u>www.etruriamobilita.it</u> - Toll-free number 800.115605 ATAM - <u>www.atamarezzo.it</u> - Tel. 0575/984534

TERRITORY



The Nature Reserve is situated at the beginning of the Arno valley in the territory of Arezzo at the point where, not far from the city of Arezzo, the Arno receives the waters of the Canale Maestro della Chiana and bends abruptly to flow into the valley and run towards Florence. The protected area includes a 7km stretch of the watercourse. between Ponte a Buriano and the dam of La Penna. As in the nearby Nature Reserve of Valle dell'Inferno e Bandella, the fluvial landscape has undergone significant changes since the '50s, when the weir was built for the production of electricity, causing the flooding of the valley, the formation of the great "lake" of La Penna and the extensive wetland of Ponte a Buriano, a stopping place for many migratory birds today covered in cane-fields. Even more than in the nearby Reserve of Valle dell'Inferno e Bandella, here the ancient fortified settlements looking onto the river are numerous and still inhabited: Penna - from which the dam's name derives - Rondine and Monte Sopra Rondine - which are the main medieval fortified hamlets, with ancient parish churches and villa-estates, scattered among the surrounding hills such as the 18th century Monsoglio. This wealth of settlements may be explained by the military and commercial routes which passed through the area of Ponte a Buriano in Roman times, because Romans chose it as a passageway for the Cassia Vetus - a route which remained important in the Middle Ages too, when the present-day bridge was built to connect the two banks of the Arno and thus to improve the road network.

It is easily recognizable for the tuft of feathers on its head (" aigrettes").

Triturus carnifex

This aquatic species of newt

lives in ponds and on shores sheltered by vegetation.



Rondine Cittadella

The medieval village of Rondine is a residence for

students from countries in conflict who here live together while participating in training and study. After this unique life experience they return to their countries of origin as witnesses of dialogue and peace.

Ponte a Buriano

The Romanesque Ponte a Buriano is characteristic for its imposing

arches. It was built in 1276 and

according to some art historians it

is the bridge in the background of

the Leonardo Da Vinci's Mona Lisa.

della Pace



Great crested

Near Ponte a Buriano, in winter, there are several specimens of great crested grebe.

Reed thicket

The reed thicket in Ponte a Buriano is an area of great interest for its landscape, fauna and vegetation.

Little bittern

It hiddens in the reed thicket along the river

ACCOMODATION

Settore Tutela della Natura e del Mare

PUBLICATIONS

verso l'Arno tra storia e natura (DVD)

raccolte nel territorio di Laterina) - Volume

Loc. Ponte a Buriano - 52010 Quarata (AR)

Emiciclo Giovanni Paolo II (escalator) - 52100 Arezzo Ph. 0575/1822770 - web: www.arezzoturismo.it

Ph. 0575/880133 - mail: suap@comune.laterina.ar.it

Regione Toscana - Direzione Ambiente ed Energia

Piazza della Libertà, 1 / Piazza della Repubblica, 22/23 (railway station)

Ph. 0575/401945 - 0575/26850 - mail: welcome@comune.arezzo.it

Tourist Office Arezzo Valley

mail: arezzovalley@creativearts.it

Information Office of Laterina

Via A. Testa, 2 - 52100 Arezzo mail: areeprotette@regione.toscana.it

Via Trento, 21 - 52020 Laterina (AR)

Welcome to Arezzo

turismo, 2016

Saida Grifoni, ASKA 2016

Provincia di Arezzo, 2006

TOURIST

Riserve Naturali della provincia di Arezzo - Guida

Provincia di Arezzo, Edizioni Compagnia delle Foreste, 2016

La Riserva Naturale di Ponte a Buriano e Penna - Un viaggio attra-

Inside or near the Reserve



	number	(i)
Hotel Residence Toscana Verde (with camper area)	158	Open all year round Loc. Penna, 2 52020 Laterina (AR) - Ph. 0575/89571 mail: info@toscanaverde.com web: www.toscanaverde.com
Holiday farm Lo Spicchio Casa Vittoria	8	Open from March 1th to 15 January. Lo Spicchio - Cincelli, 36 - 52100 Arezzo Ph. 0575/965090 mail: info@casavittoria.net web: www.casavittoria.net
Holiday farm Fattoria di Poggerello	6	Open all year round. Via Penna, 4 - 52020 Laterina (AR) - Ph. 340/1244988 mail: francesco@lombardodisanchirico.com web: www.poggerello.it
Rooms La Casa della Penna	9	Open from March to October and at Christmas. Via Penna, 8 - 52020 Laterina (AR) Ph. 335/5355901 - 335/5955344 mail: anny digennaro@libero.it web: www.lapenna.holiday
Apartment Le Bilodole	23	Open all year round. Loc. Cincelli, 11 - 52100 Arezzo - Ph. 0575/364655 - 338/5873707 mail: <u>info@bilodole.it</u> web: <u>www.bilodole.it</u>
Holiday farm Fattoria La Vialla	118	Open from Easter to November 1th. Loc. Meliciano, 26 - 52029 Castiglion Fibocchi (AR) - Ph. 0575/477720 mail: fattoria@lavialla.it web: www.lavialla.it
Holiday farm La Collina Toscana	6	Open all year round. Via della Casina, 46 - Pieve a Maiano - 52041 Civitella in Val di Chiana (AR) - Ph. 339/6341804 mail: <u>lacollinatoscana@</u> <u>hotmail.it</u> web: <u>www.beblacollinatoscana.it</u>
Holiday house La Casina	5	Open all year round. Via della Casina, 88 Pieve a Maiano - Civitella in Val di Chiana (AR) web: www.novasol.it/p/ITA785
Holiday farm La Buca	19	Open from Easter to November 1th. Via del Palaz- zone, 30 - 52041 Civitella in Val di Chiana (AR) Ph. 338/2666195 mail: marianna.meacci@alice.it
Holiday farm Fattoria Isola	23	Open all year round. Via Vecchia Aretina, 70 - 52020 Laterina (AR) - Ph. 0575/89019 - 338/6051198 mail: fattoriaisoladilaterina@ inwind.it web: www.fattoriaisola.com

Open all year round. Loc. Cincelli, 22 - 52100 Arezzo - Ph. 0575/364249 - 333/5467702 mail: <u>ivana.ducci@gmail.com</u> Open from March 1th to November 1th. Bed and Breakfast Loc. Meliciano, 21 - 52100 Arezzo Ph. 333/6194977 - 334/5248405 mail: info@giusybb.it web: www.g Open all year round, Loc. Poggio del Drago -52041 Ponticino - Civitella in Val di Chiana (AR) Ph. 331/5498767 mail: <u>poggiodeldrago@gmail.</u> Bed and Breakfast Poggio del Drago Holiday farm Open all year round, Loc, Indicatore, 102/B -

52100 Arezzo. Ph. 0575/987079 - 328/0971369 mail: <u>tabarrino@tiscali.it</u> web: <u>www.tabarrino.it</u> Open all year round. Loc. Rondine, 24/G - 52100 Arezzo. Ph. 0575/364222 mail: doccia@tin.it Open all year round. Via Pierluigi da Palestrina, Camper area



The Nature Reserve of Ponte a Buriano e Penna has a geological history in common with the nearby protected area of Valle dell'Inferno e Bandella. The geological events of this stretch of the Arno valley began with the formation of a deep tectonic valley which was home to an extensive lakebed until about one million years ago, when it took the Arno waters.

GEOLOGY

Until that time the Arno had a completely different course: from Casentino it went straight down to present-day Valdichiana, ignoring the Valdarno stretch. Significant tectonic movements altered the incline of the valley and the river was forced to change direction and flow into the Valdarno valley where it rapidly began to dig its bed, today rich in sandy banks and rocky spurs of sandstone of the Macigno formation, revealed by the fluvial erosion. The events concerning the Canale Maestro della Chiana are just as interesting and tormented; in fact, at least until Roman times this watercourse ran in the opposite direction to the current one, gushing into the Tiber after crossing the wetland of Valdichiana valley. Once again, after tectonic shifts the valley gradually altered its incline and, as a result, the Chiana adapted its course helped by land reclamations which facilitated its journey towards

The tough Macigno sandstone which surfaces in the central part of the protected area has forced the river to flow among steep rocky banks for a number of kilometres after it merges with the Chiana in the so-called "Stretto dell'Imbuto" [Funnel Strait], before widening in the "lake" of La Penna, where the valley enlarges once again. It's no coincidence that the main historic settlements of the area lie along this stretch, impervious but strategic and easy to defend.

FAUNA



Tree-frog

among tine canes.

La Penna lake

The lake of La Penna was

formed in consequence of the

construction of the dam with

the same name, at the end of

The tree-frog is an amphibian that during the day remains hidden on willow branches or

springtime visit to one of the huts bordering on the canefield of Ponte a Buriano provides an excellent opportunity to observe some species of waterfowl which nest among the reeds, such as the Eurasian coot, the common moorhen, the mallard, the little European reed warblers and the Cetti's warblers, as well as rarer species, less commonly observed such as the little bittern and the purple heron, two species of heron which hide their nests among reeds and willow bushes.

In winter, if one is patient enough to wait till dusk, one can see the reeds fill up with hundreds of passeriformes which spend the night here after a day of flying around the surrounding meadows and shrubbery in search of food. The common reed buntings are the most important and numerous guests, though the presence of the corn bunting is highly significant too, because it is another passeriform which has wintered in the Reserve for several years with around one hundred specimens. During periods of migration in spring and autumn the Nature Reserve achieves its maximum variety of species, with the ar-

rival of birds of prey such as the osprey and the hen harrier, of shorebirds such as the black-winged stilt, the spotted redshank and the common greenshank as well as occasional visitors such as the bluethroat. As well as the cane-field of Ponte a Buriano, the "lake" of La

Penna is another good spot for observing waterfowls. The deeper water attracts great crested grebes, common teals and mallards. However the greatest concentration of birds is in winter when this area is frequented by over a hundred great crested grebes and used as a dormitory by almost 400 cormorants which gather in the evening in a group of trees overlooking the lake. In winter the presence of the black-headed gull is even more massive (almost two thousand specimens), which is an extremely rare event in inland Tuscany, since this species prefers to frequent wetlands along the coast.

In the cleanest Arno tributaries - crossed by the trails of the Reserve - one may be lucky enough to spot the Italian stream frog, camouflaged among the rotting leaves, or the spectacled salamander, which at the beginning of spring enters the water

to reproduce. Here live the Italian freshwater goby - a small fish which lives in the waterdepth, exclusive to the watercourses of Tuscany, Umbria and Lazio, and the Miller's water shrew, a minute mammal which hunts insects and the larvae of fish and amphibians. The woods are also the daytime refuge of wild boars, roe deers, North African crested porcupines and predatory mammals such as the western polecat which loves hunting - among its other preys - crabs and frogs on the edges of streams.

Artificial wetlands

The pools of water formed as a result of the construction of dams, weirs and expansion chambers can, over time, become highly important environments for fauna, if designed and operated with this in mind. In fact they help to limit the effects of the widespread disappearance of natural wetlands which has taken place over the last two hundred years; in Italy as much as 60% of these areas have disappeared as a result of land reclamation, pollution and alterations of various kinds.

VEGETATION



The agelong presence of man in this stretch of the Arno has created a varied mosaic in the landscape of the Nature Reserve. The many medieval towns bordering on the river have found their main source of survival in the surrounding land, as well as in the woods and the river itself. The farmland, some of which is still farmed or has recently been transformed into grazing pasture and shrubbery, has taken over almost all the hillsides, leaving to the forest vegetation only the steeper slopes and the watersheds of streams. In the last decades the presence of the dam has encouraged marsh and riverine vegetation which is particularly extended around the Penna "lake" and the area where the Canale Maestro della Chiana flows into the Arno, where the banks are wider and flatter, given to the presence of sand and clay. This type of vegetation has become rarer and rarer following the land reclamation which has affected the whole of Italy over the last two centuries. Specifically, the cane-field of Ponte a Buriano, with its 20 hectares of land, is a particularly rare environment in inland Tuscany and is certainly the largest in the province of Arezzo. It largely consists of the common reed (*Phragmites australis*) which - with its dense and intricate rhizomes - leaves little room for other plants, forced to squeeze in along the edges where rushes, sedges, pale yellow iris and some uncommon aquatic plants grow, such as the water plantain (Alisma plantago-aquatica) and the arrow head (Sagittaria sagittifolia), with only their leaves and flower heads emerging from the water. The cane-field also embraces the Canale Maestro della Chiana, where it alternates with willows and poplars to form a riverine belt along the banks of the Penna "lake" in the western part of the Reserve, where the speckled alder also appears. In this environment in late spring flower the large yellow loosestrife (*Lysimachia punctata*), a robust plant with a large yellow flower head, the hemp agrimony (Eupatorium cannabinum) and the purple loosestrife (Lythrum salicaria), both with gaudy pink blossoms. The forest vegetation - relegated to the edges of the river and its tributaries - still retains interesting characteristics, especially in the valley bottom where the English oak, the European filbert and the mazzard cherry also appear mixed with turkey oaks and hop hornbeams. However, on the sunnier slopes with a poorer soil the downy oak prevails, mixed with occasional holly oaks and the species typical of the Mediterranean vegetation.

IDENTITY CARD OF THE PROTECTED AREA



Municipality: Arezzo, Civitella in Val di Chiana, Laterina Area: 667 ha (contiguous area 422 ha)

Established: July 10, 1996 Management: Region of Tuscany in collaboration with the interested Municipalities.

























EQUIPPED DEPARTURE

The Visitor Centre of Ponte Buriano

The main entrance to the Nature Reserve is in Ponte a Buriano: the fastest way to reach it from Arezzo is to take the S.P. 1 "Setteponti" towards Castiglion Fibocchi or, for those coming from Florence, the S.R. 69, taking the turn-off for Laterina and Castiglion Fibocchi and continuing towards Arezzo. The Visitor Centre of the Nature Reserve provides publications about the protected area as well as further information on fluvial areas, the history of the river Arno and fauna of these environments.



TOUR ITINERARIES

Part of the Nature Reserve trails begin close to the Visitor Centre. If you contact the Guides you can access the observation huts. Other locations suitable for starting an excursion in the protected area are near Pieve a Maiano and in the villages of Penna, Rondine and Monte Sopra Rondine. Information about how to book a guided tour of the Penna dam installation may be obtained from the Visitor Centre or the Guides, who will check availability with ENEL.



The trails in the Reserve

The Nature Reserve has a network of paths making it possible to visit both sides of the Arno valley and to choose varying lengths of route. All the paths are freely accessible but remember that to make the most of your visit and to use some facilities you need to make arrangements with the Guides.

The Canale Maestro (A and B)

Length A: 2 km Travel time A: 40'

This trail starts at the foot of the village of Monte Sopra Rondine, a natural panoramic terrace overlooking the reed thicket. The trail leads to the confluence of the Arno with the Canale Maestro della Chiana and skirts the river as far as the old paper mill, offering the chance to use the facilities provided here to observe the aquatic fauna without creating inconvenience. In the other direction the trail runs along the Canale Maestro and beyond it into the shrubbery and panoramic agricultural areas surrounding the wetland. The visit ends by going back along the same route or taking the footbridge (opened from summer 2017) which crosses the Canale Maestro. In this case continue along trail B, which leads through the wetland to an observation hut and ends in Ponte Buriano. The circuit B, inside the reed

La Penna Lake (C)

Length: 4 km Travel time: 1h 30'

About a kilometre beyond the village of Pieve a Maiano, on the S.R. 69 going towards Civitella Val di Chiana, you can park the car and take the nature trail C, ideal for familiarising with the forest environment of the Reserve and for birdwatching on La Penna reservoir. From the car park the trail leads to observation huts (accessible only through guided tours), skirts a stretch of the reservoir and crosses the Acquaforte watercourse to the hills, offering numerous panoramic views of the river. The trail ends in the village of Case al Cincio and the return trip may be made along the same route or, alternatively, along the road to Pieve a Maiano (considering more or less the same time as the outward journey).

The GERDA

The Great Hike of the Arno Reserves (GERDA) is a trail of approximately 25 km which connects Ponte a Buriano to Acqua Borra in the Nature Reserve of Valle dell'Inferno e Bandella, running along the right bank of the river. The stretch of GERDA in the Nature Reserve from Ponte a Buriano to Penna is 9.4 km long and takes about 4 hours for the outward journey; the route back goes along the same path unless you use two cars or take a taxi or public transportation. Along the GERDA several short detours lead - among other historic relics which are plentiful in Valdarno - to the medieval hamlets of Penna and Rondine and to the attractive 18th century villa in Monsoglio.



Mobile version available for GPS enabled smartphones











