



Walking in the heart...



Routes to suit all tastes

People have always got around on foot on Elba, and fine walking is to be had on all the islands of the Tuscan Archipelago. Climbing the slopes, walking down the valleys, reaching the seashore, crossing the maquis and striding down the ancient paved tracks in cheerful groups are enjoyable, healthy ways of spending leisure time. Visitors may also prefer to take their walks alone or with their closest companions to experience the full emotional impact of their surroundings in greater tranquillity.

The splendour of blossom, with its heady fragrance, announces the arrival of spring in the maquis. On the rocky mountainsides, the petals open day by day in a stunning sequence of shades of white, yellow, pink and turquoise. In the warmth of the sun, the young plants give off a perfume that mingles and blends to surround the walker with sudden gusts of intoxicating fragrances. Delicate perfumes vary in intensity as the hours pass, and gain fresh strength at dusk with new, particularly aromatic scents.

The early awakening of dawn, the fierce heat of noon, the dusk breeze and the cool of the night all create different scenes. There are an infinity of opportunities to listen to the voice of nature as one explores these wonderful islands on foot. Every island has its own flora and fauna; some

...of the Archipelago



species are common but others are rare and even unique. We have chosen a number of routes for you, to guide your personal explorations.

The red and white waymarks will lead you along the paths and the brief description in this booklet will help you to understand where the path leads, the distances to be walked and what you may see. The degree of difficulty stated is based on the amount of climbing and the length of the entire route.

Recommended equipment

When walking in natural surroundings, it is important to wear comfortable, tough clothes appropriate to the time of year. Bright colours should be avoided to achieve a degree of camouflage so you do not disturb the fauna and will have a better chance of interesting sightings. Footwear suitable for walking, such as conventional walking boots that fit high at the ankle, is recommended, together with a handy rucksack to carry some water, especially in summer, and everything you need on your walk. If you wish to observe the landscape and its fauna in greater detail, a pair of binoculars will be useful – especially for birdwatching – and you may wish to record your sightings with a camera or a small notebook: the Tuscan islands will have a permanent place in your heart!

1

Pietre Rosse Walk

Starting point

This is a circular walk that starts and ends at the beach at Nisportino in the municipality of Rio nell'Elba (on the island's north-east coast), accessible from Rio nell'Elba and Nisporto by a paved road.

Things to be seen

Leave your vehicles by the beach at Nisportino and head northwards. The landscape in this area is still unspoilt: until not long ago this zone was extremely isolated, with just a few farmers and especially wine growers, a little quarrying of the local limestone to make lime, and basic traditional fishing.

The path climbs steeply onto the Punta delle Casette promontory; a short detour leads to a viewpoint overlooking the bay and the coastline. This is the realm of the kestrel and peregrine falcon, which nest on the sheer cliffs nearby. The path leads on through low maquis vegetation which also includes ampelodesma, an eye-catching grass that grows even on the harshest, most windswept terrain. The path starts climbing again and reaches the length of coastline called Pietre Rosse, or Red Stones, because of the blood-red rocks that form the hills and cliffs. These stones are jaspers and



Length: 8.1 km

Total climb: 430 m

Average time: 6 h

Type: rough walking

Difficulty: long route with a fairly stiff climb and rough ground

radiolarites, also clearly visible later in the walk, along the section of coastline below Monte Grosso. The path leads into a dense ilex wood. Further on, before starting to descend towards Mangani beach, the path passes quite close to the sheer cliff and special care must be taken not to wander off the beaten track. Down by the sea, the path reaches the small, quiet Mangani beach of coloured shingle, the ideal place for a cooling dip during the summer. At the other end of the beach, the path climbs steeply through the maquis onto the limestone foothills of nearby Monte Grosso. The view over the sea and the bay is particularly lovely. A little later, near to the Parata road, the path joins the GTE (Cross-Elba Trail); the route follows the trail southward. This is a particularly shady section of the Trail, which leads through dense woods of ilex and other Mediterranean trees growing on the slopes of Monte Peritondo and Monte Serra. The walk route follows the Trail to the picnic area called Aia di Cacio, where it takes a track that leads down steeply through another shady ilex wood back to the Nisportino beach, the starting point.

Map 1



Map 1

Pietre Rosse Walk





2

Mausoleo Walk

Starting point

Cavo is accessible from Rio Marina along the coast road (no.26) or from Rio Elba along the inland Parata road (no.33). The route starts and ends at this charming seaside village.

Things to be seen

Cavo is a pretty seaside resort on Elba's north-eastern coast. The large Villa Tonietti, also known as the Castle, was built there in the late 19th Century. This impressive building, with its eclectic architectural style, also symbolised the power and wealth of the family that used to run the local mines.

From the centre of the village, take lungomare Kennedy along the sea-front: the view of the sea is wonderful, given extra interest by the small islands of Palmaiola and Cerboli. Beyond the Capo Scandelli and Capo Castello promontories lie the lovely Frugoso beach and the small island of Topi. Here the route leaves the paved roads to take a track that leads into dense maquis, offering an amazing biodiversity in terms of Mediterranean trees and shrub varieties. What's more, since this area is north-facing there is also the occasional manna ash. In spring the path gets its colour from cistus and broom flowers, in early summer it is adorned with myrtle blossoms, and in autumn and



Length: 5.5km
Total climb: 200 m
Average time: 3 h
Type: rough walking
Difficulty: path with fairly gentle climbs

late winter it is the turn of the blue flowers of the rosemary bushes. The path climbs in broad hairpins up the slopes of Monte Lentisco: when the sea-view returns there is a panorama of the beautiful stretch of coastline leading from Capo Vita towards the Gulf of Portoferraio. Amidst intoxicating fragrances of rosemary and myrtle, follow the path through the maquis as it climbs slightly before descending a little and reaching an ilex wood: in the wood the view is lost and the path is shadier. The path climbs a little towards the top of the hill above Cavo, where there is the distinctive Tonietti Mausoleum, designed in Neogothic style by Adolfo Coppedè. By the Mausoleum there is also a fork, with one road leading quickly back to Cavo and another that climbs higher onto Mount Lentisco and then to Solana Alta. This is the start of the GTE, the Cross-Elba Trail, which leads along Elba's central ridge from one end to the other. The loop ends at Solana Alta, where a lane leads quickly back to the village of Cavo below.

Map 2



3

Monserato Walk

Starting point

This loop walk starts from Porto Azzurro, a picturesque harbour on Elba's eastern coast.

Things to be seen

The walk begins in the heart of the old Porto Longone, an ancient harbour fortified in the 17th Century by the Spanish to give them control of the Gulf of Mola.

The path starts at the feet of the old San Giacomo fortress, now a prison, and continues along streets around the southern and eastern fortifications before dropping down to the sea near the Barbarossa beach, which still bears the name of the famous Turkish pirate who brought terror to the Mediterranean in the first half of the 16th Century.

The route crosses terraces and plots of land which used to be cultivated but are now largely abandoned. From the path there are amazing views of the large, ancient gulf of "Longone", the lovely Naregno beach, Forte Focardo and Monte Calamita.

At the pretty Barbarossa beach, take the lane that leads towards the main road. Crossing the road, the route takes another country lane that leads into the Monserato valley, growing gradually narrower as it progresses. Along the lane there is



Length: 7.6 km

Total climb: 400 m

Average time: 5 h

Type: rough walking

Difficulty: some very steep sections,
rough terrain

a majestic pine tree, a magnificent and very old specimen. The path starts to climb more steeply and soon reaches the Madonna di Monserrato chapel on the top of a rocky outcrop in the centre of the valley. In the background, steep hills suddenly appear: they are not very high, but the unusual form of the landscape, the sanctuary's perfect siting in the centre of the ravine and the impervious hillsides all convey a sense of wonder to the visitor.

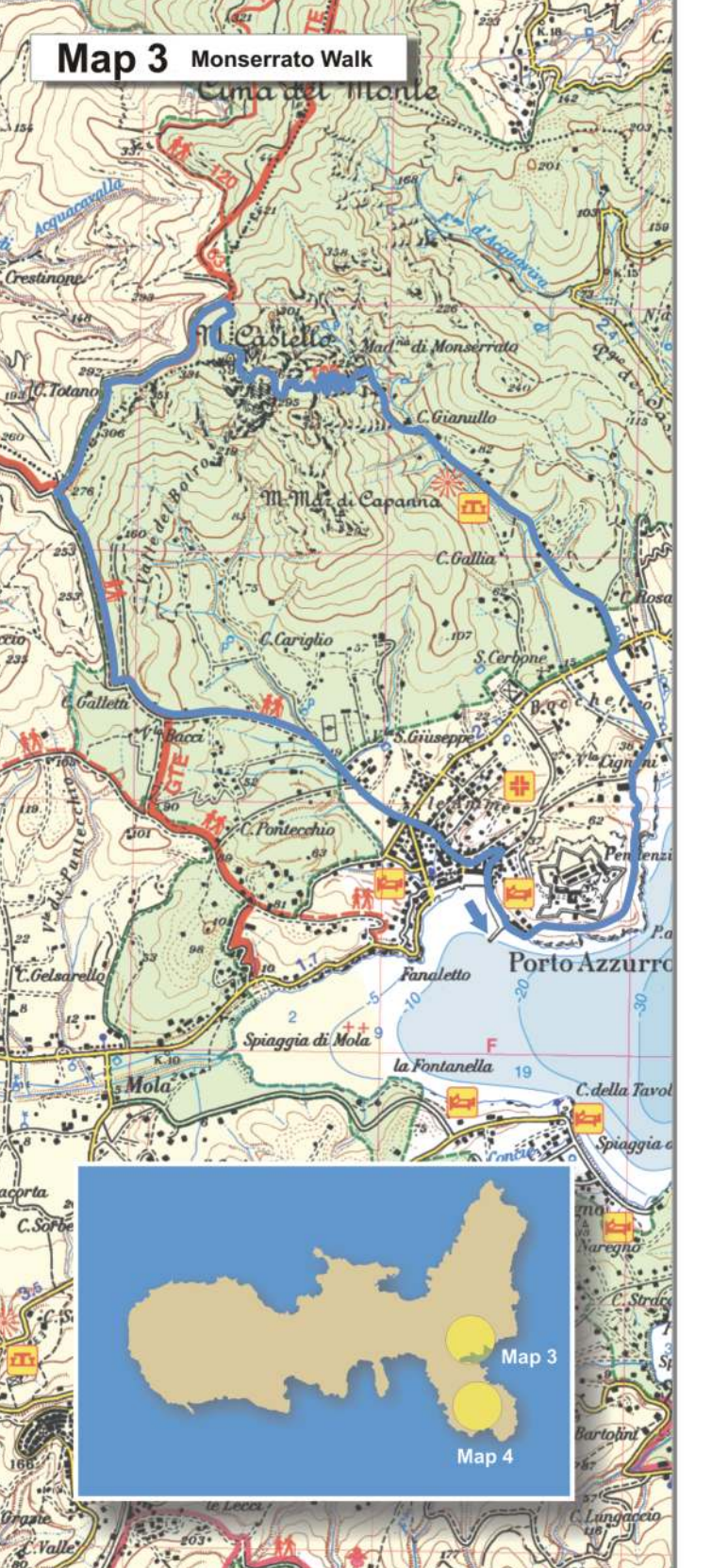
At the base of the small outcrop on which the Sanctuary stands, the route climbs onto the sides of wild Monte Castello, which consists of loose, crumbling rock. This is the most difficult part of the whole walk, since after the path crosses an ilex wood there is a section with bare rock underfoot. A large, flat grassy area with a number of pine trees marks the end of the most difficult stage of the walk.

From here, the route continues southwards along the forestry track (path no.63) which is part of the Cross-Elba Trail. The easy path offers splendid views of the maquis-clad slopes and the Gulf of Portoferraio and then leads gently downhill to a junction where the route takes the road leading south east, still downhill, to the centre of Porto Azzurro.

Map 3



Map 3 Monserrato Walk





4

Calamita Walk

Starting point

The walk starts from Piazza del Cavatore near Capoliveri Town Hall and heads for the summit of Monte Calamita: at this point, look out for the road signs indicating the walks on the high part of the mountain. Initially, the route follows a lane that leads not only to the Air Force radio beacon but also to the homes on the south-eastern outskirts of the town and on the slopes of Monte Calamita, so there will be some traffic along this part of the walk.

Things to be seen

The road climbs steeply with sweeping views of Elba's north-eastern coast and the Gulf of Mola. At the end of the steepest section, the road crosses the slopes of the Poggio del Pozzo hill, in the centre of a large fire-break surrounded by maquis vegetation. The views towards western Elba, from the Gulf of Portoferraio to Monte Orello and the Monte Capanne massif, are breathtaking. The path continues, surrounded by the vegetation and the many flowers that succeed each other through the year. In spring the scene is uniquely beautiful with white and pink cistus, yellow broom and purple lavender; there are also various kinds of wild orchid in the clearings on the edge of the maquis. Hares and red-legged partridge can also quite often be seen. The path now comes to a crossroads: the uphill path climbs to near the summit of Monte Calamita, while to the right and left is the path which leads around the mountain. Turn right towards the



Length: 12 km

Total climb: 250 m

Average time: 5 h

Type: rough walking

Difficulty: long route with a fairly stiff climb over good terrain

mountain's southern slopes. On the right is the large Fosso del Pontimento valley, covered in heather, broom, cistus, ilex and cork oaks with sparse pines: this vegetation will accompany you along the entire route. The views are of the green slopes and the sea, with glimpses during the walk of the islands of the Archipelago, Corsica and the Italian mainland. As the path continues along the southern slopes of the mountain, the upper workings of the Calamita mine also appear, with the distinctive colours of the iron oxides. Various types of butterfly flutter between the flowers of the maquis and clearings, the typical maquis songbirds flit amongst the branches of the trees and shrubs, and higher up kestrels and buzzards scan the ground in search of prey. Near the Poggio Fino hill is a crossroads that marks the most easterly point on the route; turn west, this time crossing the mountain's northern slopes. The view is now towards the north-eastern side of the island, with the Piombino strait and its islands: further on, the Bay of Mola, protected by the Focardo promontory, and Naregno beach will once more be in sight. On the northern slopes the vegetation is taller, with maquis and many kinds of trees, including mimosa, false acacia and pines in plantations. There are also a few cool, damp areas with many ferns, home to the common toad and the Tyrrhenian tree frog. After traversing almost all the north-facing side of the mountain, a turn off the main forestry track in a pine wood leads onto a path that drops down to another track at a lower level, which leads back to Capoliveri.

Map 4



5

Pietra Murata Walk

Starting point

The walk starts in the centre of the old village of San Piero in the municipality of Campo nell'Elba, accessible on road no. 29. The walk starts from the sports ground just outside the centre of the village and leads across the south-eastern flanks of Monte Capanne.

Things to be seen

On leaving the sports ground, the path leads straight into the area of San Piero's ancient granite quarries. Of the many quarries in operation until a few decades ago, now just two are still being worked, only just outside the village. Along the path, one can see the remains of the various stone-working sites, with chips and pieces of stone, some already partially shaped and then abandoned.

This is a circular walk which can be taken either clockwise or anti-clockwise, but bear in mind that if the anti-clockwise direction is chosen there is a difficult descent after the Pietra Murata hill. If the walk is done in a clockwise direction, this section is uphill, and although it is steep, it will be less of a strain on the leg joints. For those choosing to go anti-clockwise, the path continues uphill and at the end of the quarry area it soon comes to another junction. Here walkers can rest on the big blocks of stone to get their breath back and appreciate the view of Sant'Ilario and, in the distance, the old San Giovanni Tower. On the right, another path



Length: 6.15 km

Total climb: 325 m

Average time: 4 h

Type: rough walking

Difficulty: walk with average climb and some stretches on very uneven ground

leads to the Romanesque church of San Giovanni. The path which continues the circular walk is on the left and leads straight up to the Piane del Canale.

Here the route takes a wide, level forestry track. After crossing the Moncione stream the path becomes more uneven and at the end there are the ruins of an old goat shed with its enclosure. A path signed for "Pietra Murata" starts from near the ruins. Near the great block of granite there is a wonderful view of southern Elba, and across the sea to Pianosa, Montecristo and Giglio. Here there is another small goat shed, a shelter for the goatherds who once used the area. All around, large blocks of stone with strange shapes emerge from the maquis of cistus, broom, heather and myrtle. The route turns back onto the main path; not long afterwards the terrain becomes very difficult. Further down (420 m above sea level) there is a junction, where the walk route turns left, back to the east towards San Piero; the path to the right leads down to the west towards Vallebuia and Seccheto.

The route leads down to the large Moncione mill, an important piece of industrial archaeology. After crossing the Moncione stream again, the path crosses old fields and terraces that are a reminder of Elba's other traditional activity: vine growing. The circular walk through the granite area concludes with the return to San Piero.

Map 5





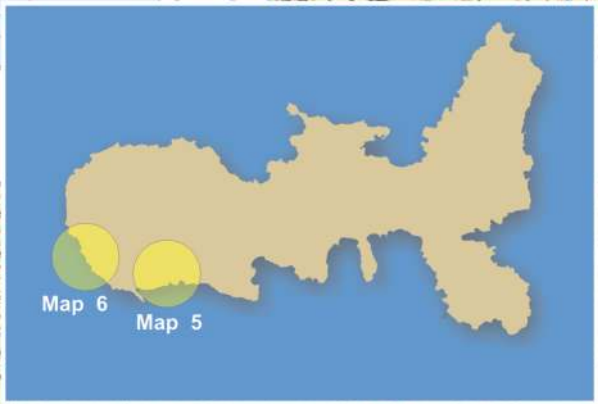
San Bartolomeo Walk

Map 6



Map 5

Pietra Murata Walk



Map 6

Map 5



6

San Bartolomeo Walk

Starting point

The village of Pomonte is accessed along road no. 25, which runs around Monte Capanne.

Via San Bartolomeo leads off the main square of the little village. The street leads through the village, with a series of flights of steps, to the bypass that runs around it. Path no. 4, signed for Colle San Bartolomeo, starts from this road.

Things to be seen

The path soon leaves the outskirts of the village and climbs into an area with a very long farming tradition. The southern slopes of Monte San Bartolomeo, which looms massively above the path, have been terraced since time out of mind to force the granite mountainside to yield some land for cultivation. There used to be vegetable plots and orchards closer to the village, and vine-covered terraces higher up. The mule track climbs steeply, giving a view of the whole Pomonte valley stretched out below like a great sea-facing amphitheatre, a large proportion of it still occupied by vegetable gardens and vineyards. In the upper part of the valley most of the fields and plots have been abandoned, and the maquis is regaining what was once taken from it.

Around the path, the flora consists mainly of shrubs – cistus, heather and broom. Close to some rare springs and small watercourses, almost dry in



Length: 6 km

Total climb: 490 m

Average time: 4 h 30 min.

Type: rough walking

Difficulty: very steep section

summer, there are reeds, bracken and calamint, plants that like cooler, wetter ground. South-facing drystone walls are the favourite haunts of lizards, which love to sun themselves, but may also be home to long grass snakes and, especially around the dampest places, vipers too. The kestrel and buzzard fly above, scanning the ground in search of reptiles and rodents, ready to plunge down onto their prey. The path continues to climb to 475 metres above sea level, where it joins path no. 3 for Chiessi: here the view over the Pomonte valley well repays the climb. The walk now goes on towards Chiessi. After a short descent and a view of the charming little village on the mountain's western slopes, with its white houses overlooking the sea, there is a turn off for the plateau beneath Monte San Bartolomeo with the ruins of the Romanesque church of the same name: the view from up here over the two valleys below is magnificent.

Now retrace your steps to start the descent to Chiessi. Here again, the landscape shows the signs of old abandoned fields and the drystone walls are covered with flourishing maquis. These slopes are western-facing and on a clear afternoon the sun will provide warmth. Near the square at Chiessi, head for the top of the village to the Cotoni stream and the start of the mule-track that leads back to Pomonte.

Map 6



7

La Cala Walk

Starting point

The walk starts at Marciana Marina, the coastal town on the northern slopes of Monte Capanne. Park near the town and head for the old tower that dominates the harbour. A paved lane leading up into the hills from the nearby Fenicia beach is the starting-point for the walk.

Things to be seen

The circular walk starts along the wooded slopes to the west of Marciana Marina, following a series of mule-tracks that were once the only links between the small towns, the farmhouses and the vineyards on the northern flanks of Monte Capanne. There was one mule-track lower down, near the sea, and another higher up, both connected to the wider network of paths which criss-crossed the Marciana area. The marked route leads to La Conca and then returns eastwards towards Marciana Marina. The route is cool and shady, passing through the maquis and ilex woods that now cover the slopes where vines used to be grown. The economy of the whole of western Elba used to be based on farming, centred around the growing of vines on the “salti” (“jumps”) or terraces created on the mountainsides by building drystone walls. Today, the flourishing maquis is winning back the old cultivated areas, although some parts are covered by the ancient woodlands that have always provided the local



Length: 6.5 km

Total climb: 410 m

Average time: 4 h

Type: rough walking

Difficulty: walk with average climb and some stretches on very uneven ground

population with chestnuts, mushrooms, timber, charcoal and game. The walk follows the higher path, coming to a typical farmhouse with its barn, cellar and wine-making area, and passes through one of the chestnut woods closest to the sea, which has grown up thanks to the cool microclimate of the mountain's northern slopes.

There are also stretches with beautiful landscapes and views, such as a narrow gulley with a small stream flowing through it, a fragment of mountain scenery a stone's throw from the sea, or the ridge that forms the north-eastern boundary of the Cappone Valley, with its fine views of the valleys around Marina, Monte Capanne, the coast and the sea, with the Enfola promontory, Monte Grosso and the Italian mainland to the east and Sant'Andrea, Corsica and Capraia to the west. This section also features a geological curiosity, pale eurite, a modified form of the igneous rock that makes up the western Elban massif: until quite recently, this mineral used to be quarried at nearby San Rocco.

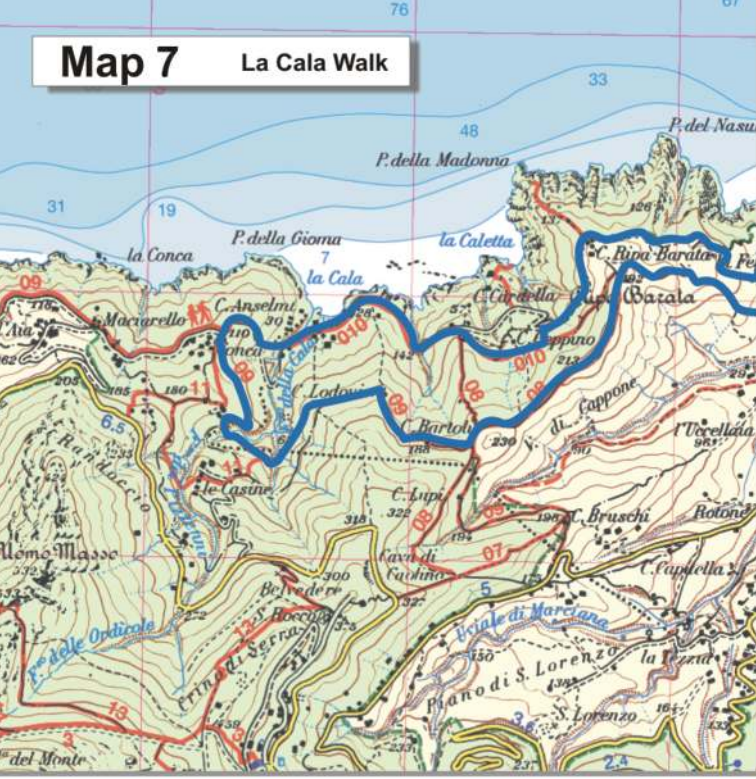
The landscape also has interesting characteristics in the lower part of the walk, near to the village of Conca, where there are still some vineyards and, lower down, close to the little Cala beach, where in the summer months walkers can refresh themselves after their exertions with an invigorating swim.

Map 7



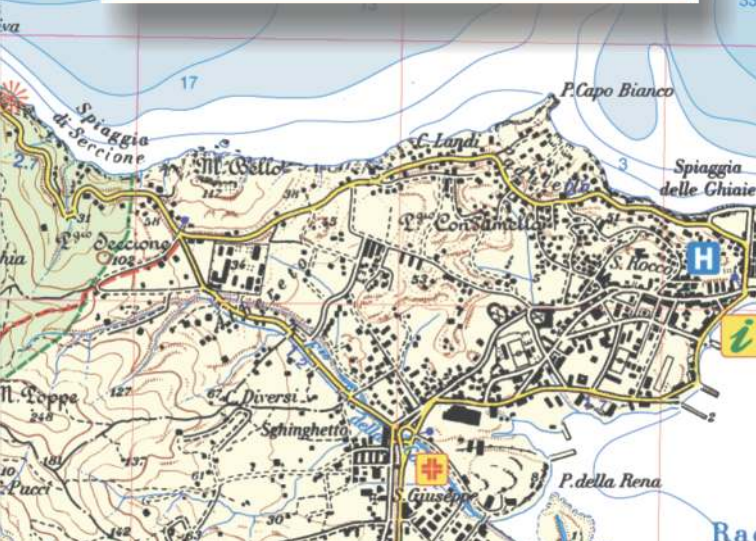
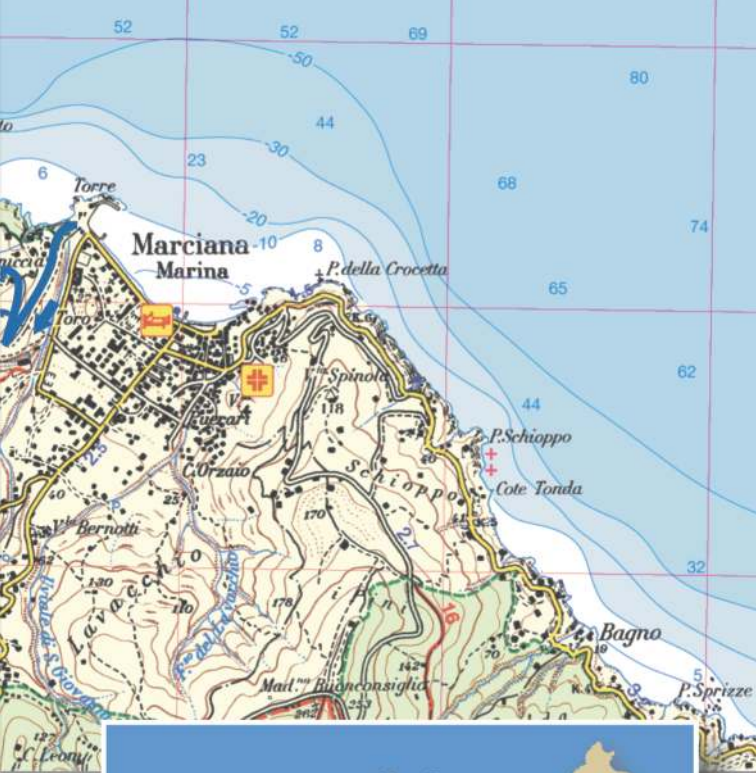
Map 7

La Cala Walk



Enfola Walk

Map 8



8

Enfola Walk

Starting point

The Enfola peninsula is accessible by the Enfola-Viticcio road no. 27 which leads from Portoferraio towards the municipality's north-western outskirts.

Park in the car-park on the isthmus that connects the promontory to the rest of the island and take the path that leads from the historic tuna fishing establishment towards the summit of the peninsula.

Things to be seen

Enfola is one of Elba's most important promontories in terms of the beauty of its landscape, its flora and fauna and its history. At the very beginning of the walk there is a reminder of the ancient tradition of tuna fishing, which began at the time of Grand Duke Ferdinand I and continued until 1958. The yard used to contain the sheds where the tuna fishing boats were stored, while the "marfaraggio" building, now home to the Park Authority, used to house the fishing and fish processing equipment. Leaving the building behind on the left, the road starts to climb and all the beauty of this walk's landscape and environment become obvious: this is the realm of the maquis with its fragrances and colours. Alongside the path are creeping rosemary, lentisk, Italian buckthorn, myrtle, broom, phyllyrea, ilex, strawberry trees and heather. The way climbs the hillside in broad hairpins, offering stunning views of the Gulfs of Viticcio and Procchio and towards Monte Capanne; to the north-east to the white cliffs, to Monte Grosso and towards the Strait of



Length: 2.5 km

Total climb: 220 m

Average time: 2 h 30 min.

Type: rough walking

Difficulty: short walk over good ground with only a moderate climb

Piombino. As it climbs, the path passes some ruins which are the remains of the massive “De Filippi” coastal battery, constructed by the Italian Royal Navy. The fire direction centre, controlling large-calibre guns, was near the top of the hill, with the accommodation for the personnel, the electricity substation, the power generator station and the water tanks lower down. Nearly at the summit of the promontory, there is the start of a circular walk around Mount Enfola, highly recommended for its views and environmental interest. After passing what was once the battery's munitions store, the path strikes into the maquis, which opens out to provide views of the sea: at the base of the promontory Schiappino, one of the two little islands nearby that are the base for many sea birds. Further on, after one of the firing ranges, the vegetation becomes taller and the path leads through woodland of pines, ilex, heather and strawberry trees. Where the microclimate becomes cooler, on the north-facing end of the promontory, is the start of the more difficult narrow path which leads down to the headland's tip above sheer cliffs, near to the Nave rock. This path runs through a low maquis of heather, broom and Jupiter's beard to low scrub of everlasting flower, cineraria and medicago marina, the favourite nesting place for a colony of herring gulls. From here, the route leads back along the same path to the circular walk around the promontory, which climbs up to end on the roads used earlier.

Map 8



9

The Orchid Oasis



Starting point

There are a large number of walks around the Monte Calamita promontory, near Capoliveri, and across its slopes. One of these is an easy track, the unpaved road once used to access the mines, which remains fairly low down and provides mainly level walking. It starts from the Town Hall at Capoliveri and heads south, staying on the level (165 m above sea level) for a fairly long stretch. Once it reaches the Capoliveri mine workings, it goes on to the Ripalte estate (221 m above sea level), after which it is not accessible by vehicles. Another, higher path also starts from piazza del Cavatore, and consists of a lane that passes close to the local Police Station and then climbs steeply up to the Cavallacce ridge. After this the lane is no longer accessible to motorised vehicles, and a little further on it comes to a crossroads; to the right and left is the circular path around the summit of Monte Calamita, while the path which goes straight on climbs towards the Air Force Radio Beacon. Other paths lead off from these trails. (Also see the Calamita Trail and Mountain Bike route).

Length: about 20 km

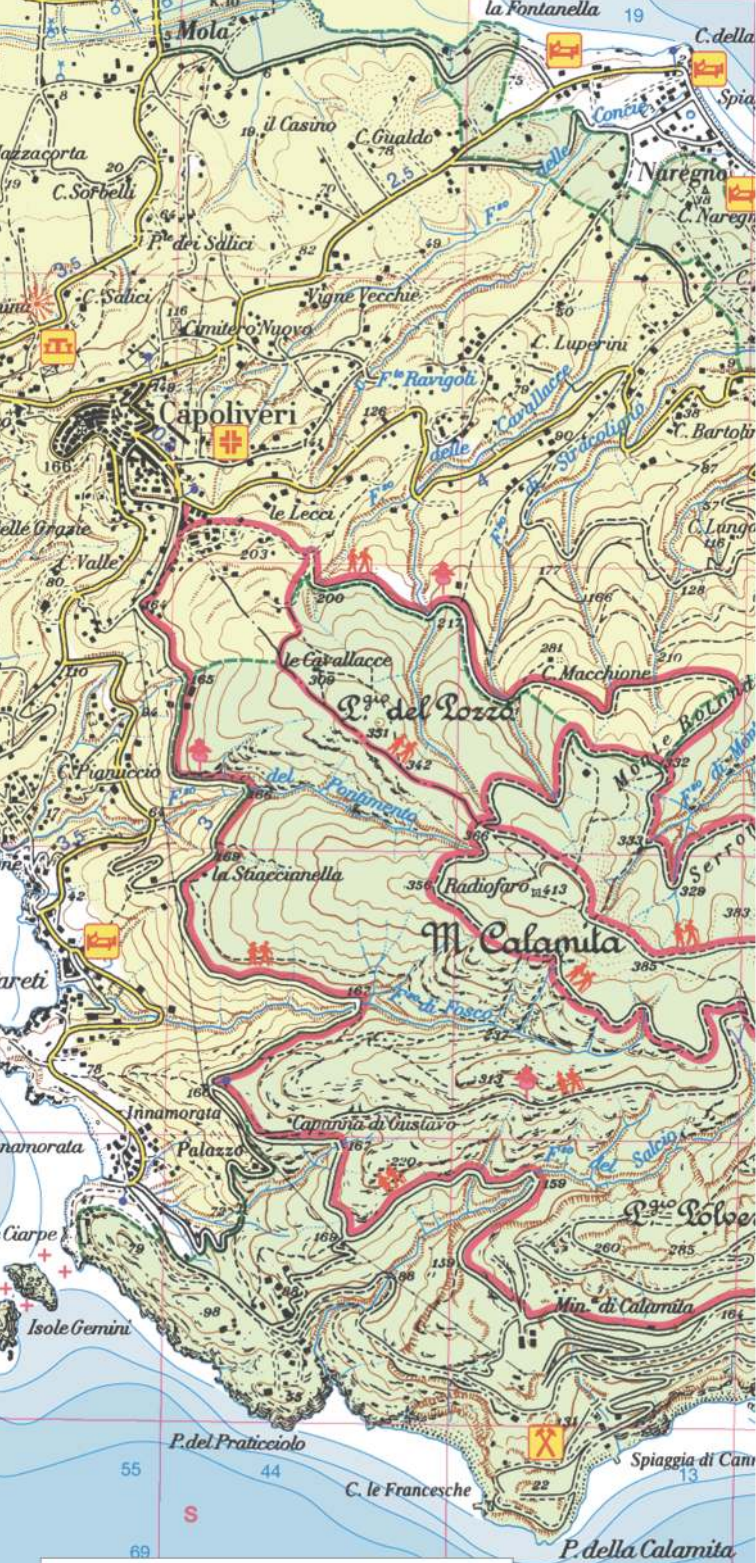
Difficulty: difficult if the whole area is walked



Things to be seen

Walkers wishing to observe the area's orchids may wish to try all the paths which cross the Calamita area; exploring the area more thoroughly will allow them to find a variety of habitats and increase their chances of observing various species of orchid.

The Orchidaceae family includes species at serious risk of extinction, so no flowers of this species may be picked, even for scientific purposes. Gathering wild plants to transplant them into gardens is also no use, since they require very specific growth conditions and once out of their natural habitat their chances of survival are very poor.



The Orchid Oasis **Map 9**



Tavola 37

70

75

80

ggia di Naregno

Forte Focardo

Faro

F

78

F

P. Perla

76

82

Straccoligno

34

44

P. Liscolino

Spiaggia di Straccoligno

Spiaggia Ferrai

P. di Cal

C. di Calajuste

C. di Calajuste

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Map 9

M. Sassi Neri

Capo Cal

43

Spiaggia dello S

P. Bian

52

M. del Canepr

C. delle

P. Rossa

13

Spiaggia di Remaiolo

6

Scoglio di Remaiolo

64

P. di Vallemorta

P. dei Ripalti

14

41

10

The Dunes: a habitat



Starting point

The Lacona habitat is on Elba's southern side by the gulf of the same name and is also accessible by public transport during the holiday period. From the coast road, the beach can be accessed close to the sign of a discotheque, which marks the start of a track that leads through the pinewood and onto the dunes.

Things to be seen

Just inland from the stretch of about 500 m of beach, very heavily used in summer, there are still some patches of natural sand dunes, largely decapitated by pine plantations and damaged by flattening to extend the beach area. However, this area is still the only surviving example of a natural sandy coast habitat in the whole of the Tuscan Archipelago, and action is therefore needed to defend it. The dunes are not necessarily incompatible with the holiday industry, and measures are being taken to combat the loss of the biodiversity heritage. A group of Elba's citizens, both natives and incomers, have therefore come together to form the "Friends of the Lacona Dunes" and raise money to buy the areas offered for sale to ensure their protection for educational and environmental conservation purposes. This will allow maintenance work to be done to consolidate the important sand barrier that protects the beach, and make it possible to

to protect

Length: 500 metres
Difficulty: short walk with
easy access

Gli Amici delle dune



Con il giglio di Lacona



create educational paths to promote the area's great environmental value while ensuring that visitors take clearly defined routes through the dunes and do not trample on the very rare wild flora, and preventing the dumping of litter. The National Park has adopted this purchasing project and is working to facilitate the transfer of the central area of the dunes to public ownership and the creation of an Environmental Education Centre. The sequence of plant cover starts from the shoreline and consists of a succession of ephemeral species which gradually give way to perennial plants that form more stable communities. The part of the beach near to the shoreline is home to annual plants such as sea rocket. Communities of agropyron and cottonweed appear on the mobile dunes and their roots help to bind the grains of sand together, while the first strip of consolidated dune is home to *Crucianella marittima* and *vedovina*. The tops of the innermost dunes are occupied by broom scrub and on the other side of the crests of the dunes, in just a few areas, there are some low-lying areas that still contain marshy zones with reeds and small ephemeral grassland areas with *Malcolmia ramosissima*. The flowers in the area are stunning: in winter and early spring the saffron crocus appears, to be followed throughout the spring by wild violets and sea chamomile. Finally, during the summer, the sea daffodil, symbol of the Friends of the Lacona Dunes, and *Centaurea sphareocephala* come into bloom.

Map 10

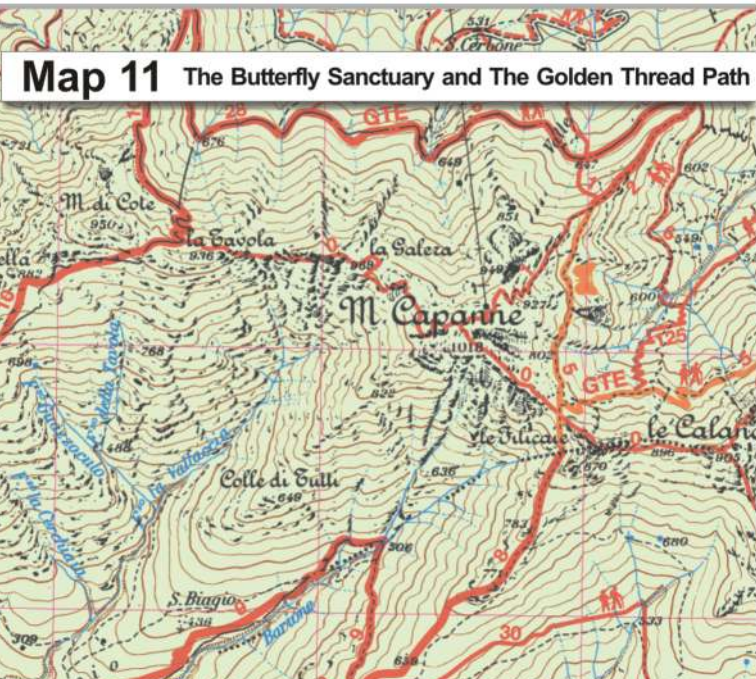
Map 10

The Dunes: a habitat to protect



Map 11

The Butterfly Sanctuary and The Golden Thread Path





11

The Butterfly Sanctuary



Starting point

The path follows the section of path no. 5 which runs along the ridge from the Monte Perone picnic area (630 m above sea level), passes close to Monte Maolo (794 m above sea level), continues along the northern slopes of Monte Calanche, crosses the edge of the Filicaie zone (830 m above sea level) and leads on to the junction with path no. 1 on the north-eastern flanks of the summit of Monte Capanne.

Things to be seen

This walk basically passes through three environments. The first stretch of path passes through a pinewood. Here, although the woodland is actually a plantation, many species of butterfly find a cool, light-filled environment with plenty of flowers, where they can find refuge and feed protected from the heat in the summer months. This is the place where three species hardly ever found on Italy's other small islands, the southern festoon, the small southern white and the gatekeeper, can be observed. At the end of the climb through the pinewood, the path reaches the meadows around the summit. Here the woodland and heather maquis give way

Length: about 3 km

Difficulty: walk with average climb and some stretches on very uneven ground



to clearings and rocky outcrops occupied by herbaceous plants, broom and everlasting flower. Broom and the nectar of everlasting flowers are a common source of nourishment for most of Elba's native butterfly species. Thanks to this distinctive mosaic of habitats, the butterflies in the Sanctuary achieve a density that makes them the most numerous of all Elban species.

After a short stretch over level ground the path forks. The path on the left leads to the Le Calanche hill, where the mosaic of small grassy areas continues between the rocks, while to the right the path enters maquis woodland.

There are fewer butterflies in this environment, but the caterpillar of the lovely two tailed pasha feeds on the strawberry tree. In addition, species which love tree nectar and the cool of the woods, such as the purple hairstreak, can be found hidden in the small clearings in the maquis.

There are informative signboards along the whole walk, installed in association with Legambiente Arcipelago. The Sanctuary is dedicated to Ornella Casnati, a keen Elban naturalist who died recently.

Map 11

12

The Golden Thread Path



Starting point

The walk runs along the flanks of Monte Perone, accessible from both Marciana and Campo along the Monte Perone road, no. 37. At the pass which links the two sides of the mountain there is a very large pinewood with two unpaved parking areas where cars can be left.

Things to be seen

The guided path for the visually impaired runs for about a kilometre along the southern side of Monte Perone, just below the summit ridge. It is an easy walk intended above all for those with mobility problems arising from visual impairment, but it is also a short educational trail offering fine views, suitable for all.

The walk is along a forestry track with return along the same route. There is a handrail throughout the walk, all the way to the destination point, a small panoramic natural amphitheatre above the valley of Campo, equipped with informative signboards and benches for rest and picnics. There are a number of signboards along the handrail that describe the characteristics of the surrounding environment and the type of vegetation: the texts are written both in traditional

Length: 700m

Difficulty: trail suitable for all



format and in Braille to enable all visitors to get the most from their walk. The trail is wide and runs through a sparse pine plantation and flourishing maquis vegetation which is gradually becoming established: here there are a number of points where walkers are encouraged to make direct contact with some of the species present. During the outward walk the top of the mountain is on the left and the lower slopes on the right. The trail leads to the final viewpoint containing a table with a relief model of the zone to illustrate the shapes of the surrounding landscape. Its tranquillity and rich flora and fauna make this an enchanting place: at the end of the trail, a panorama of the Gulf of Campo and the coasts and promontories of southern Elba opens out before our eyes. On clear days, the horizon is marked by the outlines of the coast of southern Tuscany and the islands of Giglio (south-east) and Montecristo (south).

Map 11

13

Let's go biking



Starting point

The ride starts from Piazza del Cavatore, outside Capoliveri town hall, close to the small roundabout with an old mine truck loaded with magnetite near it. Follow the road signs for the Calamita mine.

Things to be seen

The route runs around the southern outskirts of Capoliveri and for a short section it follows a smooth paved road. For Capoliveri's older inhabitants, this is still the road to the iron mines, that used to take the miners to the Capo Calamita and Ginevro workings: the mines, closed in 1982, were a source of income for eastern Elba for centuries. Many of the miners used to use bicycles (not modern mountain bikes, of course) to get to work. The paved road soon gives way to an unpaved surface, although the road is still wide and fairly good. It remains at around 165 metres above sea level until it reaches the old mine workshop.

The route then continues along the flanks of Monte Calamita (410 m above sea level), which contains the oldest rocks on the island, deeply scored by a number of valleys and seasonal watercourses, which force the track to take long zigzags along the mountainside. On the right are striking views of the sea, over Golfo Stella and the



Length: 12 km
Total climb: 10 m
Type: mountain bike trail
Average time: 2 h
Difficulty: completely flat

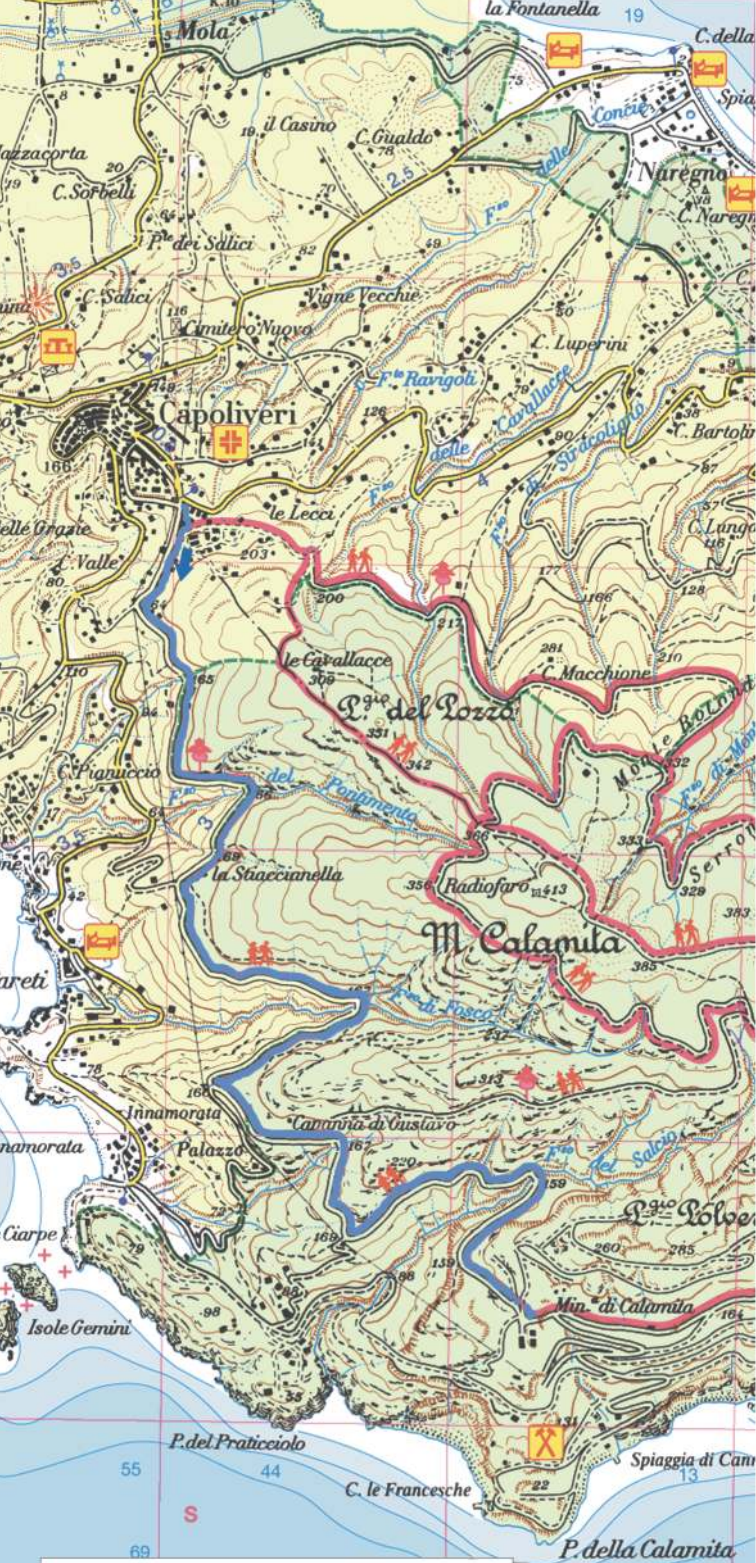
promontories to the west, their colours matching the massif of Monte Capanne, the island's highest mountain. Below are the beaches and small seaside villages of Morcone, Pareti and Innamorata, charming south-facing resorts sheltered by the mountain. The slopes are covered with rich maquis vegetation, while on the stonier, harsher patches there are agave and prickly pear, which have now become naturalised on Elba's southern side.

There is a sea view all along the trail. The islands of the archipelago mark the line of the distant horizon, with Pianosa lying long and low to the south-west, Montecristo to the south and Giglio, further away to the south-east, appearing on the clearest days. On these clear days, the long, mountainous outline of Corsica also appears to the west.

The trail continues to lead south, to the old mine workshop, today a location for guided tours, and the Capo Calamita mine workings, with very large magnetite deposits. The old workings can be seen both above and below the workshop, with vast quarrying terraces and deep gashes in the iron oxide-coloured ground, still visible in spite of the vigorous regrowth of the maquis.

Map 12





Let's go biking **Map 12**



The Route

From the village, the route takes the mule track that leads to Piana and then turns left towards Stagnone before climbing towards Monte delle Penne, 420 metres above sea level. It then descends towards the small harbour, across the former penal colony, and then, after crossing the stream that runs down to the harbour, it takes the old street on the right that leads back to the square in the centre of the village.

Things to be seen

The path starts beside the church of San Nicola across open ground of special interest for the spring flowering of rare orchids and many meadow plants, which grow under the hedges. A few hundred metres later the path is already deep in the low maquis and there is a view of the broad valley cut by a small seasonal stream, the “Vado”, its course marked by a line of wild oleanders. On the upper slopes there is dense wood of tree heather with cistus and lentisk, which thins out in the Piana area, where a flourishing farm has been established, reusing the old vineyard terraces. This area is particularly good for sighting small birds. After this first flat stretch, follow the signs for Stagnone and the path climbs up to an asphodel meadow that forms an amphitheatre opening towards the sea.



Length: 10 km
Total climb: 450 m
Average time: 5 h 30 min.
Type: rough walking
Difficulty: tough climbs

Stagnone

From this point there is a fine view of Corsica but the Stagnone pond is not yet in view because it is concealed by a small rocky crest. The path climbs again to a hollow where water is retained to form marshes, and soon afterwards it comes to the natural pond, a habitat of vital importance as a stopping place for migrating birds arriving from Africa in spring. The walk now continues with a wonderful view towards the small Peraiola island and soon, passing an area with an intense fragrance of rosemary, it reaches the rocky crest of Penne, the furthest point in the loop, since the descent back towards the village now begins. The path crosses asphodel meadows and the outline of the village, dominated by the castle, can be seen in the distance. Some of the former farmland of the old penal colony is now used as pasture for goats and by a holiday farm which promotes the use of natural produce. Here visitors can observe the prison buildings and read a page on the island's past. In broad hairpin bends, the route leaves the penal colony and joins the coast road. Beside the bridge is the extraordinary *linaria capraria*, the little native plant that belies its importance by thriving near the paved road. The return walk along the old road provides a convenient reminder of everything you have just learnt about the vegetation of the maquis.

Map 13



Map 13

Capraia – Walk of the Stagnone





Starting point

The starting point is piazza Gloriosa at Giglio Castello, served by public transport.

Things to be seen

The walk begins at Giglio Castello, an old medieval village still completely surrounded by its ancient walls. Standing 400 metres above sea level, it dominates the view of the southern islands of the Archipelago and the nearby Argentario coast. From piazza Gloriosa the route starts along the paved road leading to Capel Rosso, the island's southernmost point. On the right, following the sign for the “La Felce” walk, the path leads into a wood of maquis trees called “Il Dolce” (“Sweet”); with an alternation of clearings and low maquis, this gives way to the ancient ilex wood which is one of the island's most important natural environments. Here, natural springs mean that the undergrowth has a particularly rich plant and animal biodiversity, more than in other parts of the island. In the spring, when the rainfall is abundant, the stream that flows down beside the path to the sea creates pools that provide a habitat for the tadpoles of the Tyrrhenian painted frog, a amphibian that only lives in the limited area of the southern Tyrrhenian islands. The adult is more or less the same size as an ordinary frog but is much more difficult to sight than the



Length: 3.6 km
Total climb (descent): 374 m
Average time: 2 h
Type: rough walking
Difficulty: easy walk with moderate climb

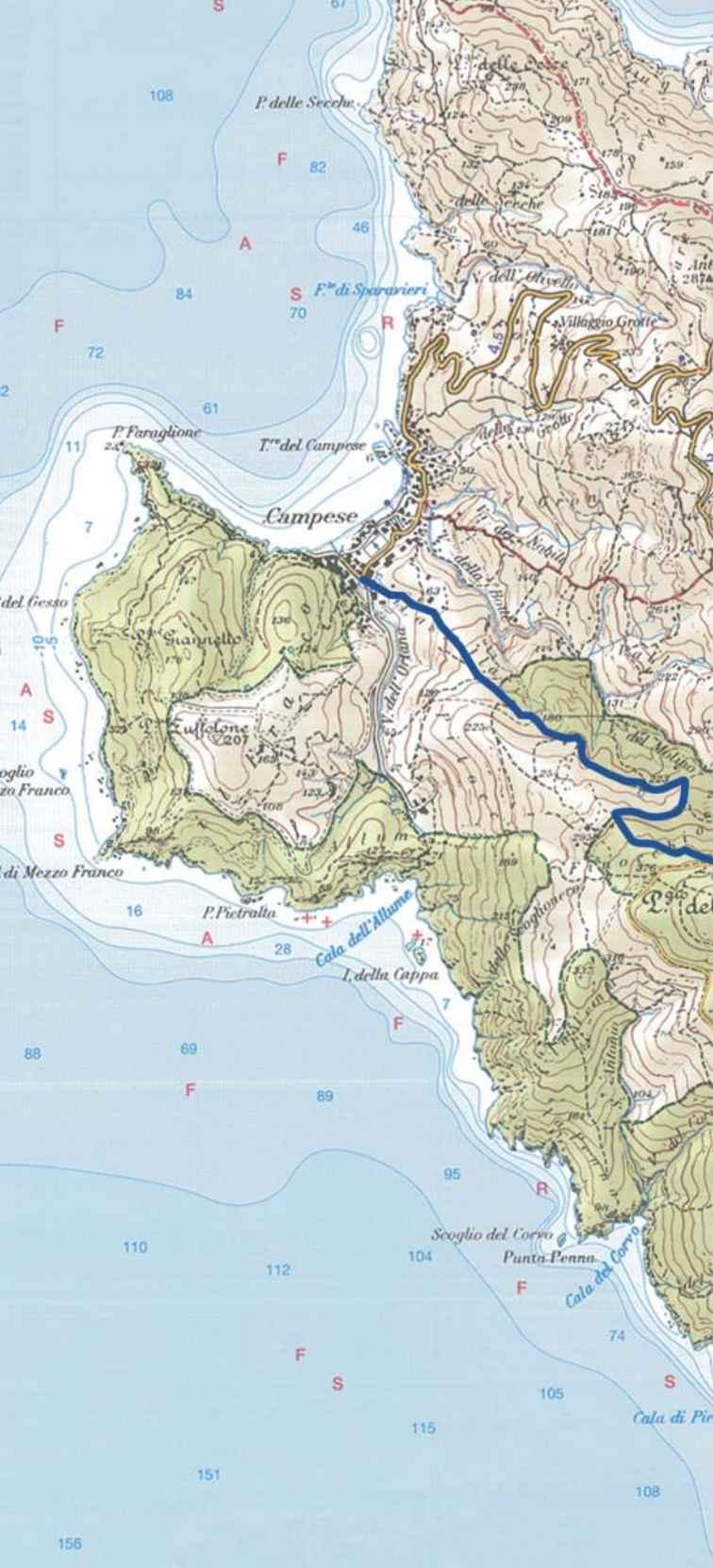
Walk

tadpoles. The signs of man's use of the woodland, exploited since ancient times, can be seen in the many flat areas where wood was once burned to make charcoal, a valuable fuel. More signs of human activity are provided by the Palmenti, the small barns called "capannelli" by the islanders and used for crushing grapes, a reminder of the island's main source of income for centuries: the growing of vines to make the "Ansonaco" wine. The barns contain two troughs, often hewn straight from the granite rock: the bunches of grapes were placed in the upper trough for treading, while the grape juice was collected in the lower one. Now the ancient vineyards have been replaced by woodland and maquis, interrupted occasionally by clearings, the ideal place for observing many species of butterflies. The path along the whole route is wide and clearly marked, but since there are some stretches of loose ground suitable footwear is required.

The path now comes to the seaside resort of Giglio Campese, which has the island's largest beach; it is hard to believe that pyrites was once mined here. It has now been transformed into a well-equipped seaside resort. There are fine sunsets from the lovely west-facing shore, bounded to the south by a cliff with a pinnacle rock and to the north by an ancient defensive tower. Buses run from Campese in every direction.

Map 14









Capraia (1) is the harsh rock of volcanic origin, almost without trees, with its valleys covered as far as the eye can see with flourishing maquis criss-crossed by narrow paths. A few hundred metres of road link the harbour to the village. Access is from the port of Livorno, with a regular ferry service.

Giglio (2) is mainly granite, with natural corners interspersed with small cultivated areas of flat land around the largest settlements. Giglio Porto, Campese and on the summit Giglio Castello welcome the visitors who travel to the island by regular ferry services from Porto Santo Stefano.

Giannutri (3) consists of limestone-dolomite rock and is a small island inhabited virtually only in the



The Smaller Tuscan Islands

summer. Access is by ferry from Porto Santo Stefano and with private carriers.

Gorgona (4) is a small gem of metamorphic rocks which most people have never seen since it used to be a prison island: it can now be visited with regulated access.

Pianosa (5) is a slab of fossil-rich sedimentary rocks with traces of ancient proto-historic settlements and important Roman remains – it is an architectural heritage site. There is a weekly ferry service and private carriers also serve the island.

Montecristo (6), consisting wholly of granite, is a natural sanctuary strictly protected by the Council of Europe, which allows only very limited access.

(5)



(3)



(6)





The National Park Visitors' Centres at Marciana and Rio nell'Elba. The Visitors' Centres are open from April to October, with seasonal opening hours. They are run by the Park in association with the municipalities of Marciana and Rio nell'Elba, which provide the staff. There is no entrance charge and illustrative materials and documentation are on sale.

All about the Park

The Tuscan Arcipelago National Park Authority has produced this handbook, which describes just 15 of the many routes available for exploration along the dense network of paths featured on the general walking map that includes Elba and the other



The Visitors' Centres



One day a week, at set times, short guided walks are scheduled to enable visitors to get to know local places of interest. The Park Tourist Information Office at Portoferraio (0565-914671) is able to provide any information. Further information is also available on the National Park website www.islepark.it

islands.

The keenest nature-lovers and others who wish to find out more will find additional Park publications on sale at the Marciana and Rio nell'Elba visitors' centres, at the headquarters at Enfola and in specialist shops.

