



MERCADANTE FOREST - FLOOD DEFENSE

Covering about 1,300 hectares, the Mercadante Forest was established in the 1900s to prevent the frequent floods that plagued the city of Bari, causing deaths and extensive damage to the inhabitants. Even today, the Forest plays a crucial role in mitigating hydrogeological risk: the area, in fact, is crossed by several lamas that, without the presence of the trees, would cause intense water runoff during spring and winter rains.

This place, recognized as a Site of Community Importance (SCI), is rich in habitats and flora and fauna species of conservation interest. The presence of the artificial conifer planting has allowed, after 100 years, the reintroduction of areas with primary forest of downy oaks and other broadleaf trees, demonstrating how the natural and geological landscape can only be restored over the long term. Particularly significant at the site is the presence of a path surrounded by ancient oaks, among the most important in Apulia.

The Mercadante Forest is a significant example of sustainable land management, hydrogeological risk mitigation and forest fire fighting. The site offers visitors several nature trails and picnic areas.

MG3 Geosite – national significance

Location: Cassano Delle Murge

Age: Early Cretaceous - Quaternary

Interests: Geology - Stratigraphy - Karst - Architecture - History - Water reserves, climate change - Hydrogeological risk

