



THE KARST AREA OF TRE PADULI – THE LARGEST FIELD OF DOLINES IN ITALY

The Tre Paduli karst area is a unique complex of dolines, including three large dolines - the Pulicchio of Gravina, the Gurlamanna karstic basin, and Tre Paduli Dolina - and two smaller unnamed dolines. The term “Paduli” is of dialectal origin and indicates a doline or blind valley, where water flows into a sinkhole or karst pond and is then absorbed into the water table. The presence of groundwater is a distinctive feature of this karst landscape and is closely linked to human practices and the unique fauna and flora of the entire plateau.

Dolina Tre Paduli stretches for about 1.2 km, Gurlamanna for 650 meters, and Pulicchio of Gravina, among the largest cavities in Puglia and covered with pine and coniferous trees, reaches a depth of 110 meters. These sinkholes are significant examples of karstification, as described by geologist Colamónico, an international pioneer in karst geomorphology.

The karst area of Tre Paduli was formed as a result of the collapse of giant underground structures, creating an area with varied biodiversity due to a substrate that holds water in different ways.

The area offers numerous nature trails, some of which are also accessible to the people with disabilities.

K4 Geosite – national significance

Location: between Altamura and Gravina in Puglia

Age: Early Cretaceous - Quaternary

Interests: Geology - Stratigraphy - Karstification - Archaeology - Sustainable agriculture - Water reserves - Climate change

