

# Habitat worthy of conservation

The landscape of the islands of the Tuscan Archipelago consists of a mosaic of many different habitats, some of which are home of a rare and protected flora.

## THE MEDITERRANEAN MAQUIS



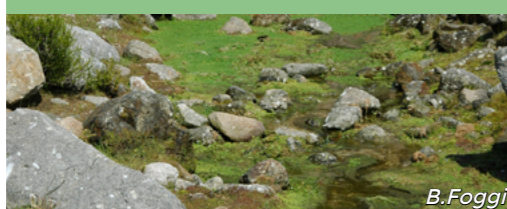
## THE SAND DUNES



## THE MEDITERRANEAN MEADOWS



## THE TEMPORARY PONDS



## THE VEGETATION OF THE ROCKY COASTS



## HOLM OAK FORESTS



# Make the right choice!

You too can help us to preserve the uniqueness and biodiversity of our archipelago. Avoid planting foreign plant species in your garden and give a helping hand to the native vegetation.



F.De Pietro



# Broken balances? Let's put nature back together!



[www.restoconlife.eu](http://www.restoconlife.eu)



Project co-financed by the European Commission



# WHAT ARE WE DOING?

The Tuscan Archipelago is rich in biodiversity with unique and exclusive animals and plants. However, these have often been impacted by the acts of human beings. The project "RESTO CON LIFE - Island conservation in Tuscany, restoring habitat not only for birds" aims to restore the delicate balance between the natural components of the Montecristo, Elba, Pianosa and Giannutri islands. Redeveloping these areas means counting on the natural recovery capacities of the ecosystems found within them and investing in the future of these Mediterranean islands.

## PIANOSA



We are **restoring** the plant and animal communities by eliminating certain species which are foreign to the autochthonous fauna and flora of the island. An example is the Black Rat which is especially harmful to the marine birds.

## MONTECRISTO



We are **protecting** strips of Mediterranean maquis from the wild goat, whose grazing is sometimes too intense.

## ELBA



We are **protecting** the rare sand dunes with supporting structures which aim to limit the effects of erosion and we are preserving a reproductive site for the Audouin's Gull by controlling the destructive action of large ungulates.

## GIANNUTRI



We are **planting** plants and trees native to the island to substitute the Hottentot Fig and other ornamental plants which are invasive and alien to the island's ecosystems.

## THE PROJECT IN NUMBERS

### 4 PARTNERS

Beneficiary in charge of project coordination:  
Tuscan Archipelago National Park;  
Associated Beneficiaries:  
The Institute for Environmental Protection and Research,  
State Forestry Corps,  
University of Florence - Biology Department

### 4.5 YEARS

la durata del progetto:  
giugno 2014 - dicembre 2018

### 6 OR MORE

the number of protected animal species that will benefit from the actions of this project.

### 15 OR MORE

the number of protected habitats that will benefit from an improved state of conservation thanks to this project's actions.

### 3 MILIONS EUROS

funding received.

The balance between all the plant communities of the Archipelago is the key to ensuring the survival of many natural species and to preserve this extraordinary biodiversity



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# THREATS

**FLORA** Some common plants on the islands are in fact foreign to our environments and threaten the survival of native species



This plant, originally from Central America and used for ornamental purposes, quickly colonises rocks and cliffs, to the detriment of natural vegetation. Planting it in gardens should be avoided, as it spreads all over with no difficulty.



Behind the beautiful pink and yellow flowers, this South African succulent plant hides an invasive nature. Its carpet of leaves suffocates the native flowers and shrubs and the only solution for their protection is to uproot it and prevent it from spreading.



There are various species from Central and South America found in the archipelago. Planted either for ornamental reasons or to make use of the edible fruit, they spread rapidly and took the place of traditional vegetation.



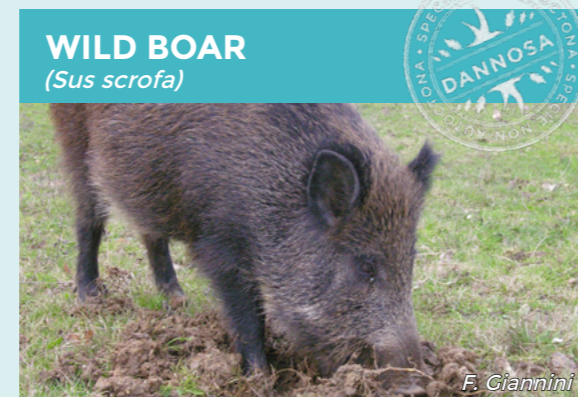
With leaves similar to that of clover, this plant comes from South Africa and blooms in spring with intense, yellow flowers that are of great aesthetic impact. It contains substances that are poisonous to livestock and has invaded vast areas of land, including on our islands. Removing it is very difficult due to the roots and bulbs that spread widely underground.

**FAUNA** The invasion of animals introduced by man to environments different from their original habitats causes devastation among local communities.



This species has caused more extinctions than any other in the world.

The rat has been eliminated from the islands of Giannutri, Montecristo and La Scola.



The cloven-hooved animal introduced for hunting on the Island of Elba in the 1950s and 60s has now spread everywhere. It damages fauna, flora, agricultural systems and residential structures, with financial consequences that cannot be ignored. A drastic reduction in numbers is the only solution, in order to reduce the impact the species has on the native community.



Suited to rocky, arid environments, this species was introduced to the three main islands of the archipelago and spread considerably, thanks to the absence of natural predators. A voracious herbivore, it prevents the growth of natural vegetation and damages crops. Current solutions include the drastic reduction of numbers and, where possible, total elimination.

# SPECIES TO RESCUE

**FLORA** The balance between all the plant communities of the Archipelago is the key to preserve this extraordinary biodiversity



This little plant with pink and lilac flowers grows on cliffs near the sea, together with other grasses suited to the salty air. This isolation has favoured the growth of various typical and unique species.



Once widespread, it was exploited by man for wood and substituted by the low Mediterranean scrub. On certain islands, there are protected, centuries-old trees remaining.



This tiny bird lives in the Mediterranean scrub and has a characteristic reddish-brown chest and very long tail, which it often holds upright. It prefers to nest in thick woodland of heather, rosemary and cistus, the protection of which is essential to its successful reproduction.



There are very few nesting pairs on the archipelago, unlike the more common species, the herring gull, with which it competes for survival. It can be spotted by its red beak and cerulean blue and white wings, flying over the surface of the sea in search of fish. Protection of its nesting sites is essential to population increase.



This unassuming orchid has white-pink flowers and a vanilla fragrance. It blooms in April and grows in pinewoods, under small bushes and in coastal bushy areas. It is quite widespread on Elba and can be found in a few locations on Montecristo that need to be protected from grazing wild goats.



This flower grows in the sand by the sea; it the summertime, the bright, white blooms and fragrance attract pollinator insects which, flying from one flower to another, keep the coastal dune communities alive. In order to protect it, it must not be trodden underfoot and collecting flowers and bulbs must be prohibited.



These excellent fliers, capable of long migratory journeys, pass most of their lives at sea, where they feed on small fish. They come to ground to lay their single eggs and raise the chick, which is vulnerable to foreign predators, such as rats and cats.



This tiny, elusive gecko is camouflaged in colour. It lives mainly on the islands and coasts of the Ligurian and Tyrrhenian Seas and is active at night, when it goes in search of small insects. It communicates and interacts with others of the species by emitting unusual sounds.