

Fichas Técnicas de Humedales Mediterráneos/Mediterranean Wetlands Technical Data



Punte Alberete (Italy)

Photo: Tobias Salathé

LOCATION

10 km north of the city of Ravenna along the Romea state road (which forms the eastern boundary). Coordinates: 44°31' N 012°14' E. Area: 480 ha.

WETLAND TYPE

Freshwater wetlands resulting from reclamation works. Seasonally flooded woodland, shrub-dominated marshes and reedbeds, a reservoir and canals.

HYDROLOGICAL / PHYSICAL NOTES

Punte Alberete is a naturally occurring wetland, formed by the overflowing of the Lamone River onto the paleodunes of the Ravenna coast. Mandriole Valley is also natural in origin, but embankments have been built around the perimeter so that it acts as a reservoir. Water circulates constantly at Punte Alberete, entering from the Lamone River and the Fossatone canal and then flowing through the Taglio canal into the Pialassa della Baiona and from there into the sea. Mandriole Valley is normally charged only once a year in autumn, and maybe again in spring, by means of intakes from the Lamone and Reno Rivers. Both the wetland areas play an important role in improving the quality of the waters through natural phyto water purification. The soils are sandy on the dunes and silty in the lower parts, where the river waters deposit sediment.

BIOLOGICAL / ECOLOGICAL NOTES

Punte Alberete is the last example of flooded woodland on the lower Padana plain. It is linked both hydrologically and ecologically to the River Lamone and forms an important marginal basin. It has a high level of biodiversity, with many species of flora. Those threatened at a national level include: *Leucosium aestivum*, *Nymphaea alba*, Orchidaceae, *Thelypteris palustris*, *Salvinia natans*, *Sagittaria sagittifolia* and *Utricularia australis*. The site is an important breeding, resting and feeding area for many fauna: *Ardeola ralloides*, *Nycticorax nycticorax*, *Egretta garzetta*, *Phalacrocorax pygmaeus*. There are regularly more than 20,000 waterbirds present, in particular Ciconiiformes, Anatidae, Accipitriformes, Charadriidae and Sternidae. The flooded woodland is dominated by *Fraxinus oxycarpa*, often with undergrowth of *Carex elata*, gradually alternated in the higher areas with *Salix alba*, *Alnus glutinosa*, *Ulmus minor*, *Populus alba* and *Quercus robur*. Reedbeds dominate in the lower areas with *Phragmites australis*, *Typha latifolia*, *Schoenopletus lacustris* and *Cladium mariscus*, with laminae of *Nymphaea alba* and *Salvinia natans*. Mandriole Valley is dominated by extensive reedbeds of *Phragmites australis*, *Typha latifolia* and *Schoenopletus lacustris* with open waters covered by *Nymphaea alba*. Wooded areas of *Salix cinerea* are found between the reedbeds in shallow water.

HUMAN USES / CONSERVATION MEASURES

The site is entirely publicly-owned, 40% by the Municipality of Ravenna and 60% by the State and is important for nature conservation and research. The surrounding areas are mainly agricultural. The entire Ramsar site (designation date: 14/12/1976) is situated within the perimeter of the Po Delta regional park. The regulations of the Territorial Plan, which identifies management objectives and priorities, have been in force since 1991. Hunting is banned and there is no access to the Mandriole Valley, apart from two observation points. Management of the nature reserve is a collaboration between the Municipality of Ravenna, WWF of Ravenna, local associations and the Emilia-Romagna Region. There has been a Life-Nature project "Management Plan for the San Vitale Site".

ADVERSE FACTORS

The agricultural run-off into the Lamone River results in poor water quality, which prevents discharges into Punte Alberete or Mandriole Valley. Low rainfall during the summer and the use of the Lamone waters for irrigation creates a shortage of water, a decrease in water quality and drying out of wetlands. Poaching and hunting constitute a serious threat for the Anatidae, in particular for *Aythya nyroca*. Introduced animal species including *Myocastor coypus*, *Pseudorasbora parva* and *Silurus glanis* are having negative impacts. The Romea state road runs through the site creating numerous problems including pollution from traffic.

From: *A Directory of Wetlands of International Importance*.
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