



The Beigua Park also features a wealth of historic and cultural evidence partly visible on site and partly in museums, showing how the human settlements present in the area evolved over the years. Starting from the palaeoethnological findings which bear witness to the fact that the woods on Mount Beigua were already inhabited by hunters and shepherds in prehistoric times, and then followed by the increasingly important role played by the area as a crossroads between important trading routes linking the coast with the plain of the Po valley. It also includes the strong influence exerted on the economy of the area around the Orba valley by the arrival of the Cistercian monks who settled here in the Tiglieto Abbey founded in 1120. More recently, there have been the traditional agricultural and forestry activities of the last few centuries. The area covered by the Beigua Park has always featured a significant presence of man, qualifying and reasserting, to protect the environmental resources of this part of Liguria. Such a precious resource to be handed down to future generations makes the Park all the more special, not just in order to preserve its biodiversity, but to safeguard and promote the cultural identity of each of the communities which inhabit the area.



TRACES OF MAN

A HILLSIDE BALCONY OVERLOOKING THE SEA

Untamated natural environments to be glimpsed on tiptoe, breathtaking scenery and views stretching as far as the eye can see, curious traditions waiting to be discovered, local products and specialities to be tasted and important monuments to be visited.

The Beigua Park, the largest regional nature reserve in Liguria, offers all this. It covers an area of 8,715 hectares straddling the provinces of Genoa and Savona, and is a perfect example of the contrasting elements so typical of Liguria.

This protected area overlooks the sea as if from a spectacular hillside balcony. Its twenty-six kilometres of mountain ridges at a stone's throw from the Ligurian Riviera, running from the Colle del Giovo hills to the Passo del Turchino.

The reserve follows the coastline passing Monte Beigua (1,287 m), Cima Frattin (1,145 m), Monte Rama (1,148 m) Monte Argentea (1,082 m) and Monte Reixa (1,183 m) and includes meadows and rare wetlands, thick beech, oak and chestnut forests, steep slopes and patches of Mediterranean scrub.



Thanks to its particular position straddling the Apennines range is considered one of the richest areas in Liguria in terms of biodiversity. It is a nature reserve of exceptional value - acknowledged as an "Important Birdlife Area" according to the Birdlife International classification - where the Golden Eagle nests regularly, as well as the Rock Thrush, the Common Whitethroat, the Dartford Warbler, the Nighthawk, the Red-backed Shrike and over eighty other ornithological species. Hidden from the sight of man, the wolf treads its most impervious paths and from the coast, it's not rare to catch a distant glimpse of the streamlines they swim along the coastal waters washing the shores of Varazze, Cogoleto and Arenzano. There are three important publicly owned Regional Forests within the reserve ("Deva" in the municipality of Sassello, "Lerone" in those of Arenzano and Cogoleto, and "Tiglieto" in those of Tiglieto, Masone and Campo Ligure) where the typical hoofed animals of the Ligurian Apennines such as wild boars, roes and fallow deer have chosen their habitat.

Furthermore, the great environmental value of the Beigua Park is confirmed by the fact that it includes a Special Protection Area (SPA) and three proposed Sites of Community Interest (SCI), on the basis of specific Community Directives ("Birdlife Conservation Directive 79/409/EC and "Habitat Conservation Directive" 92/43/EC). The Park, so rich in colour, landscape and sound, gives total priority to Nature in its purest sense.

The area guards much of the geological history of Liguria, revealed little by little by rocky outcrops, minerals, fossiliferous deposits and spectacular formations shaped unceasingly by the weather.

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It is also possible to spot a number of unique inhabitants belonging to the minor fauna (including the Montpellier Snake, the Alpine Newt, the Crested Newt, the European Common Brown Frog, and others) as well as colourful endemic species of flora (*Viola bertolonii*, *Cerastium utrinse*, *Asplenium cuneifolium*, *Daphne cneorum*, *Chelidonium maritimum*).

Inside the Park it is possible to enjoy the sight of flowering shrubs typical of Mediterranean scrub and just a few kilometres away, come across precious high-altitude wetlands, remnants from far-off times when the typical temperature in these areas was far colder than nowadays.

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A HERITAGE OF BIODIVERSITY TO BE SAFEGUARDED



How to get there

By train: Linea F.S. Genova - Ventimiglia: stations of Voltri, Arenzano, Cogoleto, Varazze, Celle Ligure, Albisola; Linea F.S. Genova - Acqui Terme - Asti: stations of Campo Ligure e Rossiglione.
By bus: ATP Genova tel. +39 010 546741; TPL Savona tel. +39 019 22011.
By car: SS 1 Aurelia; SP 334 del Sassello; SP 456 del Turchino; SP 542 Varazze - Sassello.
Motorways: A10 Genova - Ventimiglia motorway tollgates of Genova - Voltri, Arenzano, Varazze, Celle Ligure, Albisola; A26 Genova - Gravello Toce motorway tollgates of Masone.

Useful phone numbers

Arenzano, Lungomare Kennedy tel. +39 010 9127581
Campo Ligure, Via della Giustizia 5 tel. +39 010 921055
Sassello, Via G.B. Badano 45 tel/fax +39 019 724020
Varazze, Corso Matteotti 56, Palazzo B. Jacopo tel. +39 019 935043



The Centro Servizi Territoriali (CST) in Sassello acts as the operational structure for the promotion and the enjoyment of the Alta Via dei Monti Liguri and the Beigua Park. The CST provides an integrated service for transportation and trails guides supported by qualified personnel with long experience in the Park activities. The service is available throughout the year on Saturday and on Sunday (with obligatory reservation).

Via G.B. Badano 45 tel/fax +39 019 724020
e-mail: cst.sassello@altaviadeimontiliguri.it



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e-mail: info@parcobeigua.it
www.parcobeigua.it

Parco del Beigua regional nature park Beigua Geopark

aree protette regione Liguria

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high quality wild mushrooms from the Erro and Orba "sona", as well as wild berries and "sello" to the tasty "crumiti di Massello" known as "amaretti di Sassello". These range from the traditional almond pastries of the park. There are various products available in the various municipalities. There is a particularly renowned production of local products (Ton). There is a particularly renowned production of local products (Ton). There is a particularly renowned production of local products (Ton).

The Beigua Park district offers a wide variety of interesting activities and events all the year round. Visitors can therefore choose the most suitable moment for a visit and various kinds of accommodation present on the territory, ranging from holiday farms and farmhouse rentals to countryside hotels/refuges, set right in the heart of the protected area, as well as a number of inns and bed&breakfast accommodation, which are quite frequent in the inland areas. One may also find more luxury accommodation in the inland areas. One may also find more luxury accommodation in the inland areas. One may also find more luxury accommodation in the inland areas.

A "NATURALLY" WELCOMING PARK

NATURE RAMBLING

There is a wide variety of excursion routes in the Beigua Park covering an area of 500 km. Visitors therefore have a great opportunity to admire and fully appreciate the beauty of this environmental, historical and cultural landscape.

Following the park trails on both sides of the hillside (Tyrrhenian and Po valley) or along the watersheds on the Alta Via dei Monti Liguri - tracing the backbone of this protected area - is rather like leafing through a magnificent book where the history of man and nature are told and illustrated.

To make the Park excursions even more inviting, the Park Authorities have also set up theme trails, supported by interpretive panels and leaflets, which can help the visitor get to know and better appreciate some of the naturalistic topics that can be seen along the chosen trail.

Within the protected area and the surrounding territory you will come across unattended shelters, refuges and other types of accommodation, enabling visitors to make the most of the opportunity to plan and choose a longer stay in the area and therefore enjoy the park itineraries to their best. The Park Authorities have created a well-organised network of picnic areas with amenities offering visitors a relaxing break.



THE BEIGUA GEOPARK

In March 2005 the Beigua Park territory joined the Global Geoparks Network supported by UNESCO and the European Geoparks Network. Such a prestigious form of recognition has officially crowned admission of the Beigua territory among the International Geoparks, thanks to documentation illustrating the great geological and geomorphological heritage. It represents the various disciplines related to Earth Sciences and reveals the particular importance in the reconstruction of Italy's geological history and the understanding of the evolution of the Alpine chain and its relationship with that of the Apennines.

The area boasts a large quantity of serpentinite outcrops with an Alpine, metamorphic imprinting that represents a fragment of the original, Jurassic, ocean basin (therefore originating about 160

million years ago), rarely appearing so frequently in the Alps. In the Geopark area, you may visit the various sites of geological interest ("geosites") where you can look out for the fascinating evolutionary history of the Beigua territory, such as the spectacular canyons, in the shape of conglomerates as in the Gargassa Valley (Municipality of Rossiglione) or the rich variety of fossil flora, made up of overland plants in the form of tree trunks and abundant leaves, in the palaeontological area of Stella Santa Giustina. Another amazing attraction is the fossil barrier reef present in Ponte Prina - La Maddalena (in the Municipality of Sassello) with its characteristic brightly-coloured colonies of coral, directly impressed on the ophiolitic substrate or the curious lherzolite spheroids (an intrusive dark green rock) in Lago dei Gulli (Municipality of Sassello).

The ideal "geological adventure" would imply an excursion to the meanders of the Orba River in the Tiglieto flat lands, where the first Cistercian Abbey to be built outside France was constructed in 1120, or an excursion in search of ophiolite outcrops at Passo del Faiallo, austere guardians of the precious "garnets", wonderful deep red stones which are crystal clear.

Last but not least, a visit to the fantastic "blockstreams" and "blockfields" in the watershed regions of the Geopark - at Torbiera del Laione, Prariondo, Pian Fretto - illustrating the geomorphological processes which came about in the peri-glacial environment.

The Beigua Geopark covers an area of 39,230 hectares, taking in the Municipalities of Arenzano, Campo Ligure, Cogoleto, Genoa (as far as the Valle del Cerusa and districts of Crevari, Sambuco and Fiorino are concerned), Masone, Rossiglione, Sassello, Stella, Tiglieto and Varazze. The "Beigua Regional Nature Park" lies at the heart of this vast territory.

MUSEUMS AND BOTANICAL GARDENS

MUVITA Science Centre Via Marconi 165, Arenzano (GE), tel. +39 010 910001, www.muvita.it

Civico Museo della Filigrana Pietro Carlo Bosio

Via della Giustizia 1, Campo Ligure (GE), tel. +39 010 920099 / +39 010 921166, www.museofiligrana.org

Museo Civico "Andrea Tubino" Piazza Castello 2, Masone (GE), tel. +39 010 926003 / +39 010 926493

Museo "Perrando" Via Dei Perrando 33, Sassello (SV), tel. +39 019 724100 / +39 019 724357, www.sasselloweb.it

Casa di Sandro Pertini Via Muzio 42/1, Stella San Giovanni (SV), tel. +39 019 706194, www.assopertini.it

Esposizione Archeologica Permanente Piazza IV Novembre - Frazione Alpicella, Varazze (SV), tel. +39 019 93901

Orto Botanico Villa Beuca Località Villa Beuca, Cogoleto (GE), tel. +39 010 9170200

Giardino Botanico di Pratorondanino Località Pratorondanino, Campo Ligure (GE), tel. +39 010 6988624 (G.L.A.O.)

VISITORS CENTRES AND INFORMATION POINTS

Centro Visite "Palazzo Gervino" Via G.B. Badano 45, Sassello (SV)

Centro Visite "Villa Bagnara" Via Montegrappa 2, Masone (GE)

Centro Ornitologico e di Educazione Ambientale "Vacca"

Loc. Vacca, Arenzano (GE)

Casa del Parco "Foresta della Deiva" ingresso Foresta Deiva, Sassello (SV)

Punto Informativo "Bruno Baccocoli" Loc. Prariondo, Cogoleto (GE)

Punto Informativo "Banilla" Viale Rimembranze - Loc. Banilla, Tiglieto (GE)

