

PARRANO

Parrano is a secluded but easily accessible town. It is just 10 kilometres from the A1 motorway exit of Fabro and 8.5 kilometres from the Fabro-Ficulle railway station.

The area of Parrano has been populated since the Upper Paleolithic (30,000 – 10,000 years ago), and there is evidence of this in the numerous finds discovered in the nearby "Tane del Diavolo" (meaning "Devil's dens"); these cavities can be found along the walls of the gorge of the Bagno stream, a left tributary of the Chiani river.

In its countryside, Etruscan and Roman tombs have been found, as a clear sign of the classical periods of ancient history.

Parrano castle is located in a strategic position, crucial for the control of the underlying Chiani Valley. The site of the settlement is a narrow promontory that slopes down to the valley, where the Chiani river flows.

In the 12th century, the Bulgarelli, one of the most powerful families in Etruria, made their entrance into the history of Orvieto's territory and Parrano was their first property in Umbria. From this point, their feudal domain grew more and more each day.

The fief of Parrano never submitted to the City of Orvieto. Instead, it was always "a small state in its own right", until feudalism was abolished in 1816.

The area of Parrano has several distinctive features:

HAMLETS

- Canton: it is the largest hamlet of the municipality of Parrano. Located 512 metres above sea level, about five kilometres south of the administrative centre, it is located on a cliff between the valleys, at the bottom of which flow two tributaries of the Chiani: the Vallone and Volpara.
- Pievalunga: formerly Montelungo, then Pieve di Montelungo, it is a small village located on the top of a crag overlooking the Migliari stream, in front of Mount Peglia, at 488 meters above sea level. About six kilometers from Parrano, it was built around a parish church, a religious facility with baptismal functions, called "pieve" in Italian. The site is supposed to be named after the old name "Montem Longum: a land located above a mountain, and after its shape it shall take its name". It is home to a church built in 1026 on an Etruscan temple and later converted to a Christian church. Inside, the baptismal font consists of an Etruscan sarcophagus, as does the holy water font. Here is also located Girolamo Ricci's stone garden.
- Frattaguida: it is a hamlet consisting of about twenty scattered houses, located on a tableland at 493 meters above sea level, on the slopes of Monte Peglia, about fifteen kilometers from Parrano. News of the villa of Fractarum Guidi, part of the parish of Montelungo, dates back to the 12th century, while there are records of the existence of a castle, in 1300, of which no evidence is left today.

BAGNO DEL DIAVOLO THERMAL PARK

The Bagno del Diavolo Thermal Park is located just outside the town of Parrano. The area presents the fascinating gorge of the "Tane del Diavolo", surrounded by woods. The presence of thermal water springs has always been a distinguishing feature of the Bagno stream. The very name of this place, "Bagno", meaning both "bathroom" and "bath", testifies how these springs were used in ancient times. The therapeutic qualities of the thermal water (alkaline-earthy and hypothermal,

containing bicarbonate and carbonate), which is excellent both for the reduction of digestive disorders and for the treatment of liver dysfunctions, are also particularly valuable.

TANE DEL DIAVOLO

On the slopes of the upland where the town of Parrano is located, on the walls of a gorge along the Bagno ditch, there is an intricate cave system of karstic origin, known by the evocative name Tane del Diavolo, "The Nests of the Devil". Significant archaeological material from different epochs has been found in these caves, ranging from the Eneolithic Age (the transitional period between the Stone Age and the Metal Age, at the beginning of the third millennium BC), until the late Bronze Age. In the first part of the gorge there is a spring and its water presents a rather intense thermal phenomenon, gushing at a temperature of approximately 28°C. Visitors will find a small thermal lake here, where one could take a nice relaxing bath, after seeing the caves.

THE TERRITORIAL DOCUMENTATION CENTRE OR MUSEUM OF THE TERRITORY

It is a small exhibition complex located at the entrance of Parrano, in the same building hosting the Sante De Sanctis Elementary School, on the lower floor. It includes four sections: the first one is about the territory's geology and the formation of the canyon, where the Tane del Diavolo are located. The second section focuses on the history of the archaeological excavations in the area and their results, with an exhibition of materials dating back to the early Palaeolithic and the late Bronze Age. The third presents the discovery and the excavation of the Etruscan tomb in Soriano, with some items exposed, including important vases of the Orvieto Group (6th century B.C.). The last one is about the history of Parrano's castrum, from the Middle Ages until our times, with the reproduction of a number of archive documents, including a few from the Statute of the Parrano's castrum, dating back to 1559.

AREA SIC IT5220001 – MINERAL BATH - PARRANO

The SCI area, which measures 79 ha, is located northwest of the town of Parrano, within its municipal territory. The area is located in a deep gorge, mainly consisting of sandstones, with marls and clay, formed by the Bagno stream. Rich in mineral springs, it has numerous small waterfalls and shallow water springs, containing formations of Water Moss (*Fontinalis antipyretica*), a Briophyta, an excellent indicator of water quality. The rocky walls present caves, locally known as "Tane del Diavolo".

Within the area, there are woods of Turkey oaks (*Quercus cerris*), some of which are taken care of, so that they can reach full height, while the growth of others is limited. White willow (*Salix alba*) and purple willow (*Salix purpurea*) can be easily found in riparian vegetation areas.

The habitats of Community Importance, identified within the SCI area, are listed below:

- Habitat 3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with *Chenopodium rubri* p.p. and *Bidention* p.p. vegetation;
- Habitat 3270 Rivers with muddy banks with *Chenopodium rubri* pp and *Bidention* pp vegetation;
- Habitat 5210 Arborescent matorral with *Juniperus* spp;

- Habitat 8210 Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation;
- Habitat 8310 Caves not open to the public;
- Habitat 92A0 Salix alba and Populus alba galleries.

No plant species listed in Annex II of Directive 92/43 EEC have been reported within the SCI area; on the other hand, relevant plant species at a regional level have been identified:

- Water Moss - Fontinalis antipyretica.

The animal species of Community Importance, identified within the SCI area, are listed below:

- Birds species in Annex I Directive 79/409/EEC
- Woodlark – Lullula arborea;
- Red-backed Shrike - Lanius collurio.
- Mammal species in Annex II Directive 92/43/EEC:
- Wolf – Canis lupus;
- Mediterranean horseshoe bat – Rhinolophus euryale;
- Lesser horseshoe bat – Rhinolophus hipposideros;
- Geoffroy's bat – Myotis emarginatus.
- Amphibians and Reptiles species in Annex II Directive 92/43/EEC:
- Spectacled salamander– Salamandrina terdigitata.
- Mammal species in Annex II Directive 92/43/EEC:
- Leuciscus lucumonis;
- Vairone - Leuciscus souffia;
- Arno goby - Padogobius nigricans;
- South european roach – Rutilus rubilio.
- Invertebrate species in Annex II Directive 92/43/EEC:
- Stag Beetle – Lucanus cervus;
- Cerambyx longicorn – Cerambyx cerdo.

THE UNESCO WORLD BIOSPHERE RESERVE OF MOUNT PEGLIA

The Natural Reserve of the Mount Peglia is located in the area around Terni, enclosed between the river basin of the Tevere river, which borders it on the east, and of the Peglia river on the west. Northward, the hills on which the Reserve's luxuriant woods grow spread out towards the area of Lake Trasimeno, while in the south there are higher hills. Among these, Monte Peglia is certainly noteworthy.

Overall, the Reserve, comprised of the four municipalities of San Venanzo, Orvieto, Parrano and Ficule, has never known a strong demographic increase, unlike other towns in the Region. The towns and small villages scattered over its 40,000 ha have never exploited the resources of the territory, preserving its great variety of flora and fauna found in the local woods, remained untouched over the centuries. Holm oaks, oak trees and maples, together with many other tree species, such as turkey oaks and hop-hornbeams and shrub species, like tree heathers and chorleywoods, make up a small green area in the "Green Heart of Italy". 44 species of wild mammals are currently found in the area.

Monte Peglia is home to prehistoric sites dating back more than 700,000 years, and to the extinct volcanoes of San Venanzo, built on the ridge of one of them, where one can observe the

combination of extremely rare rocks found only in Quing Ling in China, Bunyaruguru, Katwe Kykorongo in Uganda and Mata de Corda in Brazil.

This is not to say that human activity has been completely non-existent: particularly interesting is the ancient route that leads from the small village of Poggio Aquilone into the Reserve, towards Parrano and the springs "Tane del Diavolo". A little further north, art enthusiasts can visit the Scarzuola, where the Milanese artist Tommaso Buzzi designed and built his visionary "Ideal City", based on a 13th-century convent.

Walking through these woods, or exploring the "slow" lifestyle of the local towns and villages, such as Parrano, Ficulle, Montegiove, with its castle, or Orvieto, the "slow city" par excellence, there is the perception of a rare harmony between man and nature. This righteous relationship has earned this area its status of UNESCO Biosphere Reserve under the MAB-Man and Biosphere Programme.