

## ***FERRO DI CAVALLO (HORSEHOE PATH) n. 15***

**LENGTH:** about 8 Km

**DIFFERENCE IN ALTITUDE:** light, regarding the quarry of M.Croce.

**WALKING TIME:** about 4 hours, including detours in the quarry.

**DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY:** none

**BEST SEASON:** spring, winter.

**Geology.** Worth of notice is the quarry on M.Croce, whose structure is made up of volcanic rock, Latite, intercalated with a layer of sedimentary rock, the Marn. Here marine fossils have been found which have allowed the exact geological dating of the Euganean Hills, about 33 million years ago.

**Flora.** The path develops mostly on the plain, crossing cultivated fields and inhabited areas. The most characteristic feature is the presence of the prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia compressa*) on the volcanic rock exposed to the sun. A rare species, on the southern slope of M.Ceva, is the forked spleenwort (*Asplenium septentrionale*), which grows on volcanic soil and which is now dying out.

**Fauna.** On Mount Croce nest the rare redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*), the black redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*) and the blue rock thrush (*Monticola solitarius*). At the foot of M.Ceva you can see the large copper (*Lycaena dispar*), a very rare butterfly and the swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*). Near ditches and canals, where willows and poplars grow, there is the common tree frog (*Hyla intermedia*).

**History and art.** There are a lot historic and artistic features worth of value: the centre along the river of Battaglia Terme, the historic canals, the Navigation Museum, the statue of San Giovanni Nepomuceno, who prevented people from being damaged by the waters, the ancient paper-mill, the typical Venetian bridge “dei Scaini” and the Catajo Castle (1570).