

MONTE VENDIA PATH n. 9

LENGTH: 5 Km

DIFFERENCE IN ALTITUDE: 50 m

WALKING TIME: 3 hours

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: none

BEST SEASON: spring and autumn

Geology. The first part of the itinerary of Monte Venda (601 m) is characterized by the Euganean Marl, the most recent sedimentary rock among those forming the Euganean Hills (about 40-45 million years ago). Volcanic rocks (trachyte) cross the mount from the north to the south-east, while the rest of the path is mostly composed of rhyolite. It is worth noticing on the southern slope a huge landslide of natural origin.

Flora. The southern slope is characterized by oak-groves with Mediterranean vegetation: pubescent oak (*Quercus pubescens*), flowering ash (*Fraxinus ornus*), hornbeam (*Ostrya carpinifolia*), and Mediterranean bush such as rockrose (*Cistus salvifolius*), wild asparagus (*Asparagus acutifolius*), heather, strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*), hairy broom (*Cytisus hirsutus*). The saddle which separates Monte Venda from Monte Vendevolo is mostly covered with chestnuts (*Castanea sativa*). Of great interest are some century-old chestnuts (*Castagnari de Baderla*) while in the ex rhyolitic quarry you can find the whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*).

Fauna. Along the path you can easily meet a variety of birds such as the hoopoe (*Upupa epops*), the blue tit (*Parus caeruleus*), the red start (*Phenicurus phenicurus*) and the spotted woodpecker (*Picoides major*). You can also encounter crepuscular or night animals: the beech-marten (*Martes foina*), the weasel (*Mustela nivalis*) and the dormouse (*Glis glis*). In the coolest parts it is possible to see the fire salamander (*Salamandra salamandra*) and other small amphibians.

History and Art. Worth of notice are the ruins of the Olivetany Monastery and a Roman boundary stone. On this stone, now housed at the National Atestino Museum, a Latin inscription sanctions the old division of the Euganean Hills into “agro patavino” and “agro estense”. Another evidence of the relationship between man and environment is given by remains of carbonyl once used to produce charcoal and still present in many blackish-earth clearings.