



## GUIDEMAPS



Nature, information, tour itineraries and path map

## PROTECTED AREAS IN THE PROVINCE OF AREZZO

**Aree Protette della provincia di Arezzo**

Nature Reserve Alta Valle Tevere Monte Nero

Realized by the Province of Arezzo with the contribution of the Region of Tuscany.

**VISITOR CENTRE**  
Visitor centre and environmental education centre  
Loc. Le Gualanciole - 52036 Pieve S. Stefano (AR)

**CREDITS**  
Photos: VINCENZO GONNELLI, HANS HILLENHAERT - Wikimedia Commons, MICKY ESTES, LUBAS HOUSKA, MATE MARKOVIC, SUBBANY - Pixabay, LUIGI TORREGGIANI - Compagnia delle Foreste, Records of the ex-Nature Conservation Office of the Province of Arezzo  
Pictures: RITA PETTI  
Texts: BARBARA ANSEMI, ESTER ARMANINI  
Cartography: DREAM Italia / Points of interest localization: LUCA VANNINI  
Graphic work: Compagnia delle Foreste  
Research of texts and iconographic material: VALENTINA GIOVANNINI  
Coordination: MAURO FRODINI  
Translations: VALENTINA GIOVANNINI

**HOW TO GET THERE**  
The Reserve is a few kilometres north of **Pieve Santo Stefano**, along the highway E45 that links Perugia and Cesena (exit "Valsavignone"). Follow road signs toward Valsavignone as far as the fork to Cerignone. The road, dirt in the last stretch, leads to Le Gualanciole.  
**From the Casentino valley**, beyond Chiusi della Verna and Biforco, the dirt road of Doccione leads to Le Gualanciole Pass.

Etruria mobilità - [www.etruriamobilita.it](http://www.etruriamobilita.it) - Toll-free number 800.115605

# The Apennine between the holy mount of **La Verna** and the springs of the **River Tiber**

**Black redstart**  
It likes noses but in winter it also stays in old buildings.

**Nuthatch**  
It prepares its nest in tree cavities narrowing the hole with some mud.

**Red-backed shrike**  
It arrives in the Nature Reserve in spring, after a winter in Africa.

**Monkey orchid**  
It is named after the peculiar shape of its flowers.

**Le Gualanciole**  
This refuge with its Visitor Centre is easily reachable and is strategically situated.

**Deer**  
In autumn you can listen to its stag bell during the love period.

**Big Turkey oak**  
Near the refuge of Gualanciole there is a thriving and imposing Turkey oak, which is 300 years old and dominates the grassland.

**Grazed meadows**  
They are a feature of the landscape of Alta Valle del Tevere.

**Alpine golden chain**  
It is a small tree not very common in the Apennines.

## PUBLICATIONS



- Riserve Naturali della provincia di Arezzo - Guida Provincia di Arezzo, Edizioni Compagnia delle Foreste, 2016
- Riserve Naturali della provincia di Arezzo - Cartoguide Provincia di Arezzo, Edizioni Compagnia delle Foreste, 2016
- Grande Escursione Appenninica (Vol. 1, Bocca Trabaria - Pracchia) di Mirco Setti, Gruppo Editoriale l'Espresso - 2011
- Grande Escursione Appenninica Carto-guida con cartine aggiornate in scala 1:20.000 di Gianfranco Bracci, Edizioni Tamari Montagna - Padova, 2011
- Le Riserve Naturali della Valtiberina toscana e del Sasso di Simone (DVD), Provincia di Arezzo, 2008
- Aree protette della Valtiberina toscana - Sentieri natura Provincia di Arezzo e Comunità Montana Valtiberina Toscana, 2007
- Valtiberina Toscana - Edizioni Compagnia delle Foreste, 2004
- Carta dei sentieri 1:25.000 "Sentiero 50 - Dal Trasimeno alla Verna" - Provincia di Arezzo e C.A.I. - Edizioni S.E.L.C.A., 2004
- Carta dei sentieri - Edizioni S.E.L.C.A., 2004

## TOURIST INFORMATION



- Visitor Centre and environmental education centre (Exhibition is currently being set up)  
Open by reservation  
Loc. Le Gualanciole - 52036 Pieve S. Stefano (AR)
- Tourist Office of Valtiberina toscana  
Via Matteotti, 8 - 52037 Sansepolcro (AR)  
Ph. 0575/740536 - mail: [info@valtiberinaintoscana.it](mailto:info@valtiberinaintoscana.it)
- Unione Montana dei Comuni della Valtiberina Toscana Ufficio Demanio Forestale  
Via Pian Di Guido, 2 - 52036 Pieve Santo Stefano (AR)  
Ph. 0575/799097 mail: [demanio@valtiberina.toscana.it](mailto:demanio@valtiberina.toscana.it)
- Regione Toscana - Direzione Ambiente ed Energia Settore Tutela della Natura e del Mare  
Via A. Testa, 2 - 52100 Arezzo  
mail: [areeprotete@regione.toscana.it](mailto:areeprotete@regione.toscana.it)

## ACCOMODATION



Inside or near the Reserve

|  | facilities | bed number | toilets | restaurant             | kitchen-ette |
|--|------------|------------|---------|------------------------|--------------|
| Refuge and information point Casa Gualanciole  | ●          | 47         | ●       | ●                      | ●            |
| Hotel Santo Stefano  | ●          | 49         | ●       | ●                      | ●            |
| Open all year round - Via Tiberina, 95 - 52036 Pieve Santo Stefano (AR)<br>Ph. 0575/797129 mail: <a href="mailto:info@hotelsantostefanoarezzo.it">info@hotelsantostefanoarezzo.it</a><br>web: <a href="http://www.hotelsantostefanoarezzo.it">www.hotelsantostefanoarezzo.it</a>   |            |            |         |                        |              |
| Locanda La Pergola   | ●          | 6          | ●       | ●                      | ●            |
| Open all year round - Località Appalto Bonucci - Via Tiberina, 180 - 52036 Pieve Santo Stefano (AR)<br>Ph. 0575/797053 mail: <a href="mailto:locandalapergola@libero.it">locandalapergola@libero.it</a><br>web: <a href="http://locandalapergola.wix.com/locandalapergola">locandalapergola.wix.com/locandalapergola</a> |            |            |         |                        |              |
| Holiday farm Mogginano   | ●          | 73         | ●       | ●                      | ●            |
| Open from April to December - Località Mogginano, 34 - 52036 Pieve Santo Stefano (AR) - Ph. 0575/790107; 3471960747<br>mail: <a href="mailto:fattoriadimogginano@virgilio.it">fattoriadimogginano@virgilio.it</a> web: <a href="http://www.mogginano.it">www.mogginano.it</a>  |            |            |         |                        |              |
| Holiday farm Sant'Apollinare   | ●          | 60         | ●       | ●                      | ●            |
| Open all year round - Località Sant'Apollinare - 52036 Pieve Santo Stefano (AR) - Ph. 366/302532 mail: <a href="mailto:infosantapollinare@libero.it">infosantapollinare@libero.it</a><br>web: <a href="http://www.fattoriasantapollinare.com">www.fattoriasantapollinare.com</a>   |            |            |         |                        |              |
| Holiday farm Ca' Cerchione   | ●          | 18         | ●       | fr-sat-sun dinner only | ●            |
| Open all year round - Ville di Roti - Ca' Cerchione, 25 - 52036 Pieve Santo Stefano (AR) - Ph. 335/1380430 mail: <a href="mailto:cadicerchione@alice.it">cadicerchione@alice.it</a><br>web: <a href="http://www.agriturismotoscana-cadicerchione.com">www.agriturismotoscana-cadicerchione.com</a>                       |            |            |         |                        |              |
| Camper area Grey camper  |            | 6 places   |         |                        |              |
| Open all year round - Strada La Verna - 52036 Pieve Santo Stefano (AR)<br>Ph. 0575/799123 - 368/7858983  |            |            |         |                        |              |

## TERRITORY



The two long "arms" of the Nature Reserve protect an important and little known Apennine mountain spur on the border with Emilia Romagna, a short distance away from Monte Fumaiole and the springs of the Tiber. The Tiberina road (S.P. 77, former S.S. 3bis) skirts the first part of the river and joins Tuscany to the Adriatic coast in Rimini. The current route corresponds, with a few variations, to that of the so-called Via *Ariminensis* used by the Romans for the transport of goods and above all of timber, dispatched to Rome by the river Tiber. Pieve S. Stefano was in fact the Roman *Sulpitia*, an important trade centre of Massa Verona which together with the nearby Massa Trabaria supplied beams and timber of all kinds for the yards of Rome. In more recent times the same communication route was used by nomadic shepherds who - after spending summer on these ridges - moved down to Maremma with thousands of animals to exploit its winter pastures. These grazing areas largely moulded the landscape of the Upper Tiber which today owes much of its naturalistic interest to those pastures created and maintained for breeding animals, a trade which today has unfortunately diminished greatly.

## GEOLOGY



The mountain group of Poggio Tre Vescovi, Poggio Bastione and Monte Nero is the continuation of the Apennine ridge of Alpe della Luna and continues towards the slopes of the National Park in Casentino, with which it shares its geology. Here too the ridge coincides with the tectonic folding of the Mount Cervarola sandstone (or "Macigno del Mugello") with the marly-arenaceous formation occurred during the orogeny of the Apennines. The characteristic arenaceous rocks - alternated with more friable marls and clays - are clearly visible in the different rocky amphitheatres of Monte Nero and they are a recurrent landscape in this part of the Apennine. However, on the surface layer of this formation there are various "liscioni", unusual floors consisting of marls and clays, almost bare of vegetation. In the northern part of the Reserve slopes are very steep, while in the southern part the landscape becomes gentler for the outcrop of marly and clayed soils.

### IDENTITY CARD OF THE PROTECTED AREA



**Municipality:** Pieve Santo Stefano  
**Area:** 482 ha  
**Established:** March 18, 1998  
**Management:** Region of Tuscany in collaboration with the *Unione Montana dei Comuni della Valtiberina Toscana*

## FAUNA



Given its conformation and position the Nature Reserve acts an important role as a corridor for fauna among several protected areas of the Apennines. Just think that in less than three hours, it's possible to walk from the Gualanciole Pass to La Verna (in the National Park in Casentino), while just a little further away there are the Nature Reserves of Alpe della Luna and Bosco di Montalto (Montalto Wood). Its distance from the main communication routes and the limited human presence make it a quiet undisturbed place suitable for even the most elusive species. The wolf is a regular presence in this territory, as are the rare northern goshawk and the more common Eurasian sparrowhawk, both elusive forest birds of prey. For some years now the red deer has returned to populate the woods of Monte Nero, together with roe deer, wild boars and fallow deer, these ones heirs of previously introduced species. Ancient beech and oak woods house several woodpeckers, as the great spotted woodpecker, the lesser spotted woodpecker and the green woodpecker. Their abandoned cavities bored in the bark of trees are used by the Eurasian nuthatch and by small forest mammals such as the hazel dormouse, which hibernates there protected from the winter weather. The silver firs planted inside beech woods - today of an impressive size - have acted as an efficient replacement of the natural habitat of the Eurasian treecreeper, a probable "relic of the ice age" present in only a few other places in the Apennines. The rocky recesses of Monte Nero and Poggio Bastione, so isolated and well-hidden, seem to be favoured by the golden

eagle, a large bird of prey regularly present in the skies of the Reserve and certainly nesting here. Here it's quite easy to spot the black redstart and the rock bunting too, typical and precious inhabitants of rocky Apennine environments.

### The Eurasian treecreeper

It eats insects which catches with its hook bill in the bark of old trees.



## VEGETATION



The Nature Reserve lies mainly at an altitude of over 900m, for this reason beech woods dominate its forested surface. As happened with many Apennine woods, the beech woods of Monte Nero were also used intensively for their timber and for pasture and at the beginning of the 1900s many of the woods were sparse and over-exploited. Therefore about 70 years ago various improvement projects were embarked on. The beech woods were thickened by the plantation of beech trees and silver firs while in the poorer soils were planted Douglas firs and European black pines, highly adaptable conifers which today form dense dark forests in the area of Poggio Tre Vescovi. On the eastern slope of Monte Nero, the steep slopes favour mixed forests of turkey oak, hop hornbeam and Italian maple, which one crosses to reach the Canili ridge in the northernmost tip of the Reserve. However, on steep slopes rich in landslide deposits the mixed forest becomes very rich in other arboreal species: the common ash, the littleleaf linden, the wych elm, the European hornbeam, the Scotch larch and various species of maples (Norway maple, Italian maple, sycamore maple, hedge maple). This is the Tilio-Acerion forest. In the south of the Gualanciole Pass the different geology has produced slopes with gradual ascent and more fertile ground: the nature trail here crosses picturesque grazed pastures, an attractive turkey oak wood and in the southern tip of the Reserve it penetrates a beech wood no longer used for several decades containing trees of a large beak which here has probably one of the few known nesting places in Tuscany.

Nature Reserve Alpe della Luna, which shares various important species with the rocky environments of Monte Nero. Recently, the Alpe della Luna thistle (*Cirsium alpis-lunae*) has also been noted in this Reserve (described and discovered only in the Nature Reserve of Alpe della Luna once), there are also small grasslands of Italian sesleria (*Sesleria italica*), an endemic Apennine grass, as well as rare species such as the Alpine Daphne (*Daphne alpina*), the delphinium (*Delphinium fissum*), the Bertoloni's sandwort (*Arenaria bertoloni*) and the *Laserpitium gallicum*.

### The summer pastures

Until the mid 1900s the grasslands of Le Gualanciole and of Poggio Bastione - today mainly re-colonized by shrubby or woods - were the scene of large-scale movements of flocks which spent the summer here after returning from their winter pastures in Maremma. Today the flock is reduced to a few horses and cattle in the area of Le Gualanciole and Canili, but its preservation is of great ecological importance for the woodlark, the red-backed shrike, the common white throat and other small passeriformes associated with grasslands. The more isolated shrub grasslands of Poggio Bastione are preferred by the tree pipit, an anonymous and rare bird with terrestrial habits, and by the hawfinch, a passeriform with a large beak which here has probably one of the few known nesting places in Tuscany.

## EQUIPPED DEPARTURE POINTS

The rural complex of Le Gualanciole - refuge, bridleway refreshment stand and visitor centre - is a good point of departure for visiting this area.

From Pieve Santo Stefano go along the E45 or S.P. 77 "Tiberina" as far as Valsavignone, here take the turn for Cerignone-Gualanciole and continue for about 5km, in part along an unmade road. A pleasant alternative for people arriving from Bibbiena or the National Park of Casentino is to reach the Reserve by going along the S.P. 62 as far as Rimbocchi and from here along the unmade road toward Biforco, which - after 8km through the valley of Corsalone - reaches the Gualanciole Pass (the road is unmade in the last 2km between Doccione and the Gualanciole Pass).

## TOUR ITINERARIES

The Monte Nero ridge is crossed by the main Apennine walking excursion routes. In fact, along the crest the GEA (Great Apennine Excursion), the CAI paths no. 00 and no. 50 overlap, as well as many other CAI paths and an excursion trail of the Nature Reserve.

### The Reserve's nature trails

#### The Gualanciole trail (Nature Trail)

Length: 4 km

Travel time: 1h 30'

Behind Le Gualanciole refuge begins a cycle which explores the southern part of the Reserve and coincides with the first part of the CAI path no. 12 to Bulciano. The path crosses the grassland and shrubbery of Le Gualanciole, the most extensive and richest open space in the Reserve, venturing into an attractive turkey oak wood and - at the southernmost tip - into a beech wood with majestic trees left to grow freely after the periodic felling was abandoned many decades ago.

After crossing a sparse turkey oak wood alternating with dense thickets, one comes out a little under the Gualanciole Pass.



### Other itineraries

#### From the National Park to the Reserve

The Gualanciole Pass can be reached on foot from the S.P. 62 (Bibbiena-Rimbocchi) which skirts the bottom of the valley of the stream Corsalone. From the road, nearby the town of Montefalucchio, begin two panoramic CAI paths, varying in length and difficulty (former CAI paths no. 057 and no. 059), for which we advise to consult specific maps.

## THE CAI PATHS

#### The ridge from Passo delle Gualanciole

Length: 9 km

Travel time: 3h

The northern part of the Reserve can be reached from Le Gualanciole or from the Pass having the same name by following the signs along Path no. 50 and Path no. 00 toward Poggio Tre Vesovi. From Poggio Bastione, for the return journey (if you do not want to follow the same route), go back a little and take an unmade road (former CAI path no. 093) which goes along the hillside.

#### The Canili meadows and the ridge

Length: 11 km

Travel time: 5h

If you have two cars available or make arrangements with the Guides for a guided tour, you can go on a longer and more demanding excursion, leaving from Canili - a rural settlement now abandoned - and arriving at Le Gualanciole. From Canili the CAI path no. 091 goes through pastures and woods as far as the crest, joining Poggio Bastione by the Path 00, which continues along the ridge as far as the Gualanciole Pass.

#### From La Verna to the Nature Reserve

Length: 18 km

Travel time: 6h

The Reserve can be reached on foot from La Verna (in the National Park of Casentino) taking the GEA path which joins the sanctuary to the Gualanciole Pass in a little less than 3 hours. For the return journey cover the same route or, calculating another 5km, go along the CAI path no. 12 which begins in Le Gualanciole and the no. 066 which joins the GEA at Passo delle Pratelle.

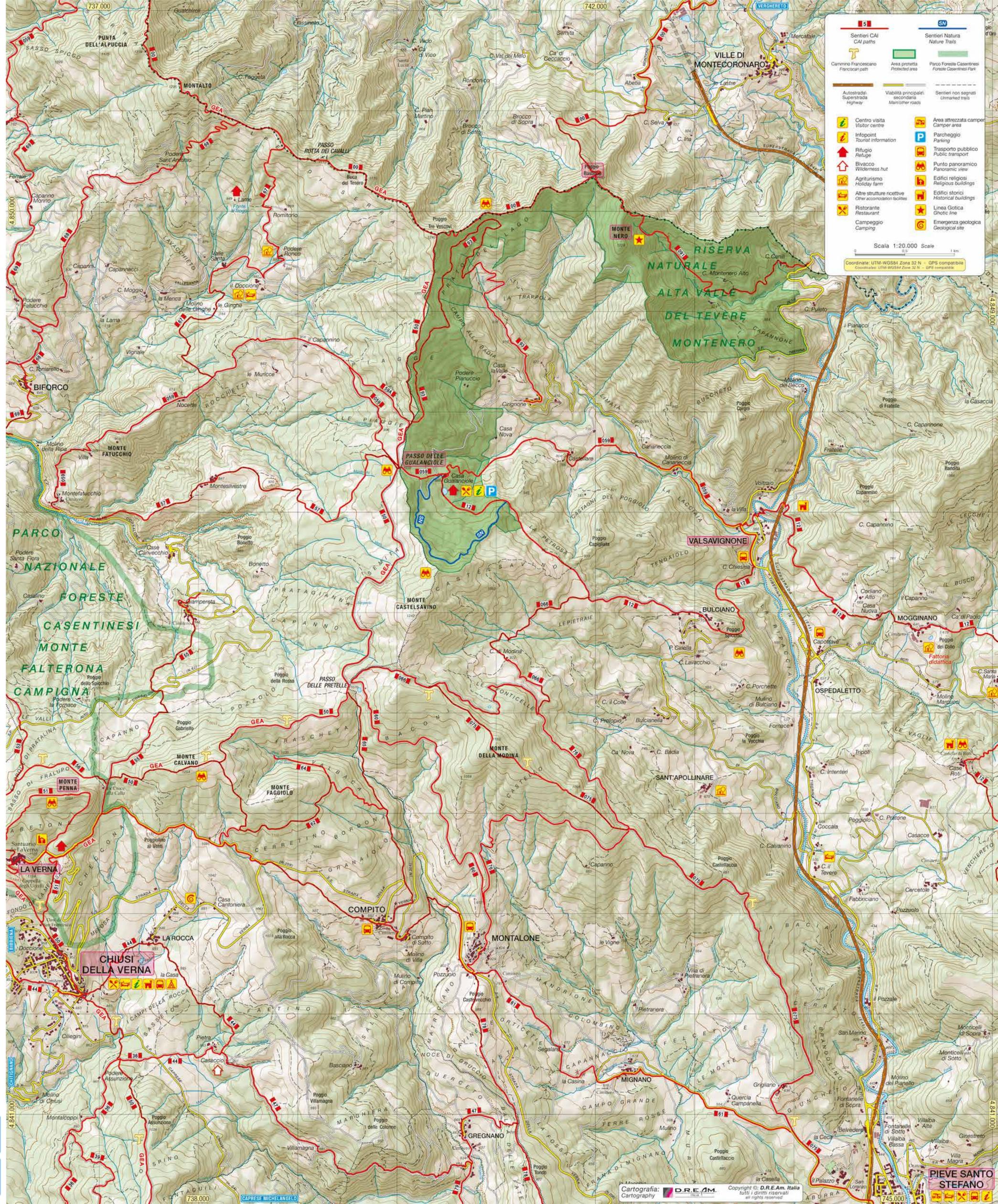
## THE GREAT COMMUNICATION ROUTES OF THE APENNINES

The Reserve may be a stop on a several-day itinerary traced out along the GEA routes, path no. 00 or path no. 50, for which we advise to consult specific maps. The GEA or Great Apennine Excursion runs all along the northern Apennines from the Tuscan border with Liguria (Passo dei Due Santi) to the border with Marche (Bocca Trabaria). Path 00, which in part coincides with the GEA, joins Bocca Trabaria to Poggio dei Tre Vesovi going along 52km inside the Nature Reserve. From Poggio dei Tre Vesovi, begins the path no. 50 which crosses the pre-Apennine mountains of Arezzo to reach Passignano sul Trasimeno.

Mobile version available for GPS enabled smartphones



Install Avena Maps and download this Map



| S5                        |   | SN                               |   |
|---------------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|
| Sentieri CAI<br>CAI paths |   | Sentieri Natura<br>Nature Trails |   |
|                           | Cammino Francese<br>Franciscan path                         |                                  | Area protetta<br>Protected area                         |
|                           | Autostrada<br>Superstrada<br>Highway                        |                                  | Viabilità principale/<br>secondaria<br>Main/other roads |
|                           | Centro visita<br>Visitor centre                             |                                  | Sentieri non segnati<br>Unmarked trails                 |
|                           | Infopoint<br>Tourist information                            |                                  | Area attrezzata camper<br>Camper area                   |
|                           | Rifugio<br>Refuge   |                                  | Parcheggio<br>Parking                                   |
|                           | Bivacco<br>Wilderness hut                                   |                                  | Trasporto pubblico<br>Public transport                  |
|                           | Agriturismo<br>Holiday farm                                 |                                  | Punto panoramico<br>Panoramic view                      |
|                           | Altre strutture ricettive<br>Other accommodation facilities |                                  | Edifici religiosi<br>Religious buildings                |
|                           | Ristorante<br>Restaurant                                    |                                  | Edifici storici<br>Historical buildings                 |
|                           | Campaggio<br>Camping  |                                  | Linea Gotica<br>Gothic line                             |
|                           |   |                                  | Emergenza geologica<br>Geological site                  |

Scala 1:20.000 Scale

Coordinate: UTM-WGS84 Zona 32 N - GPS compatibile  
Coordinates: UTM-WGS84 Zona 32 N - GPS compatible