

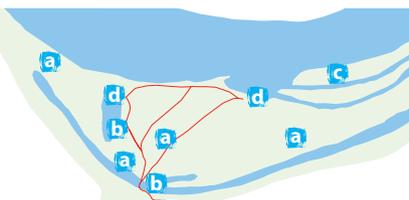
Isola Boscone Nature Reserve

"Daughter of the river, mother of the wood"

Managing institution: Town of Carbonara di Po
Established in: 1984
Area: 131 hectares
Protection status: Regional nature reserve, Site of Community Importance, Special Protection Area, Wetland of International Importance
Year of joining Mantuan Oltrepò Parks System: 2007

Information

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— Cycling/walking paths



On the banks of the Po, behind the village of Carbonara, **Isola Boscone** contains the **second largest spontaneous woodland area in the Province of Mantua**, a particularly relevant element in a region such as Lombardy where just 3.5% of the plain area is wooded. Founded in 1984, the nature reserve covers an area of 130 hectares, is part of the Natura 2000 European ecological network and is one of the **51 Wetlands of International Importance** in Italy. The love of the residents of Carbonara for their wood can be seen from the work that has taken place over the last decade leading to the replacement of large portions of primigenial willow groves - which were heading towards dreadful ecological conditions - with bay oak, elm and poplar (a). Hence the typical vegetational succession of the forests of the lower course of the Po has been arranged which, due to the widespread anthropisation of the flood plain environments and the trivialisation of the surrounding countryside, has become increasingly rare, to the extent that the survival of much of the riparian woodland has been threatened. Alongside the forest environments, Isola Boscone hosts all the typical environments of the Great Po River: **oxbow lakes** and **forming oxbow lakes** (b); **sandy banks**, ideal nesting sites for bee-eaters and sand martins; the short-lived **sandy areas** (c), which are home to important bird species such as the **little tern** and the **little ringed plover**. Apart from the birds already mentioned, the **black kites**, the **hobby**, the **osprey**, the **red and green woodpecker** and various species of **heron** are worth noting. Joined to land for many years now, Isola Boscone is easily reached from the village of Carbonara di Po. A convenient turf track runs through it, leading visitors on a half hour walk to discover the most suggestive corners of the nature reserve (d). It is freely accessible on foot or by bike all year long, the water level of the river permitting. Isola Boscone is connected to the wilderness areas in the **Mantuan Oltrepò Parks System** by the **Parks Cycle Route**. It is also on the **Eurovelo EV8** cycle itinerary and the **Province of Mantua cycle route 2d**. The old Carbonara elementary school near the reserve has been turned into the **Eridano Tourist Centre**, which hosts a small guest quarters and a rest area for cyclists.