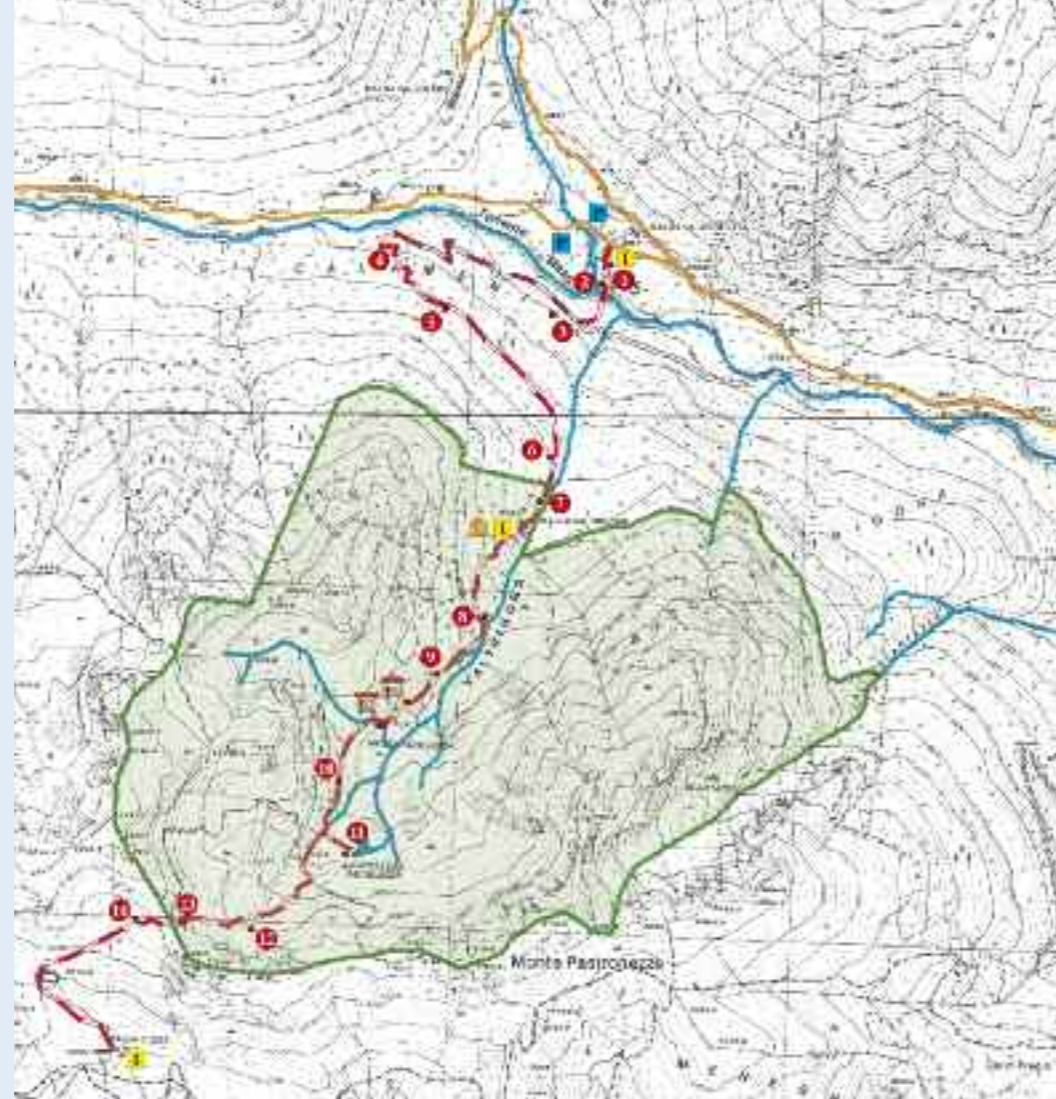




For the benefit of the nature reserve and others visitors are asked to follow the simple rules below:

- Never leave the nature trail CAI-SAT n.374
- Do not disturb or damage flora and fauna
- Do not introduce unleashed dogs
- Do not pick flowers, plants and fungi
- Do not light fires
- Do not leave rubbish
- Do not camp in the nature reserve
- Do not damage the buildings, information boards etc of the nature reserve
- Do not practice ski-mountaineering in any way.

In Valtrigona nature reserve all European and national regulations on nature conservation apply.



Oasis	Nature Trail	Notice boards	Visitor Centre
Car park	Roads	Landmarks	Showcases
	Watercourses		

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## The Nature Trail of Valtrigona WWF Oasis



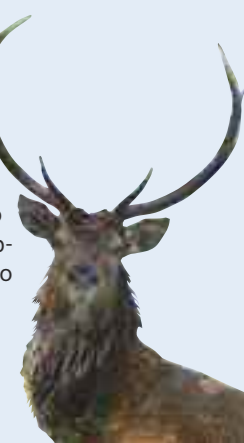
**Valtrigona nature reserve**, in the Trentino region of northern Italy, is located in the Lagorai mountain chain. It can be reached from Valsugana through Val Calamento.



The 234 Ha Oasis was acquired by WWF Italy between 1996 and 1998. The main entrance to the WWF Oasis is located at 1600 m. The Oasis has two dominating peaks, respectively known as *Cima Pastronezze* (2182m) and *Cima Agnelezza* (2234m). Valtrigona nature reserve is the only Alpine WWF Oasis and thus extremely important in WWF Italy's network of over 100 protected areas. In 2010 the Province of Trento designated the Oasis as a Provincial nature reserve. Valtrigona is also part of the Natura 2000 network, falling within the Special Protection Area "Lagorai" (SPA, Birds Directive 79/409/CEE).

Facilities at Valtrigona nature reserve include a Visitor Centre located in the renovated Alpine huts "*Malga Valtrigona*" and "*Malga Agnelezza*" (the latter especially used by shepherds and hikers). The Oasis can be visited by taking the nature trail that leads up to the pasture of *Malga Ezze* after crossing the variety of habitats of the Oasis. The nature trail follows the CAI SAT n.374 trail. Along the trail are located information boards and numbered landmarks (these refer to the local map).

The starting point for visiting the nature reserve is at *Malga Valtrighetta* (1434 m, car park). From here a hike will bring the visitor through *Valtrigona* (2112m) and up to *Malga Ezze* (1954m). Up to Valtrigona Oasis there is a 700m altitude variation. The trail is approximately 5 km and takes 3-4 hours to complete (1.30-2hrs to climb down). In a half-day visitors can reach *Malga Agnelezza* (2234m) from where it is possible to admire the high altitude habitats of the Oasis.



## The Nature Trail

Visits to Valtrigona nature reserve begin in *Malga Valtrighetta*, the starting point of the nature trail. From *Malga Valtrighetta* the trail takes a south direction ascending to the Maso river (1408m). A wooden bridge crosses the river. Here **landmark numbers 1 and 2** are located. Visitors are invited to observe the surrounding pasture



and the diversity of life in the Alpine river (the bustling activity of trouts and macroinvertebrates can be observed in its waters).

Once crossed the river the nature trails climbs heading West into the Norway spruce (*Picea abies*) forest where deer, foxes and squirrels live **landmark number 3** is located at 1450 while further up (1500m) the nature trail continues along the side of the mountain in a Southeast direction. The trail runs along a dense part of the forest where there is little undergrowth. It is the result of

the natural evolution of an old plantation of Norway Spruce The forest will eventually evolve towards a more natural and rich forest system.

The presence of decaying trees is a natural attraction for woodpeckers that feed on the larva that live within. At 1520m is **landmark number 4**. Further up the trail the at 1560m visitors will come upon a metal sign indicating a trigonometric point. From here through the vegetation the visitor can look over the “*Valsolero*” valley; observe the gradual change in the structure of the forest. This part of the forest is less thick and varied compared to the underlying area. In this portion of the forest grow a greater number of mature Norway spruce trees, some European larch trees (*Larix decidua*), the last common beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), and a thick undergrowth of grass and bushes. This area of the forest is the reign of the Western Capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*). Here visitors will find **landmark number 5**.



Western Capercaillie, *Tetrao urogallus*

Along this tract of the trail it is not uncommon to meet the Hazel Grouse (*Bonasa bonasia*) and find the signs of European pine marten (*Martes martes*) activity.

Further up the trail the visitor will soon distinguish the sounds of a running mountain spring.

**Landmark number 6** at around 1570m to 1580m defines the edge of the suspended glacial valley of Valtrigona (around 150m above the valley).

Below grows a steep woodland.

The nature trail continues up along the “*Agnelezza waters*” and at 1600m visitors reach Valtrigona Oasis (**landmark number 7** and bronze Panda).

At 1600m is located the main entrance to the WWF Valtrigona Oasis. Here the pastures of *Malga Valtrigona* (1632m) begin. A large boulder from the last glacial age introduces the visitor to the block of Alpine huts of the nature reserve. The complex of Alpine huts are formed by three single huts: the “*Barco*”, a stable once used for herds; the “*Casera*” used by the locals and for the production and storage of cheese, and the little “*Barcheto*” used for the rearing of pigs. All the buildings have been renovated to meet the needs of the Oasis yet maintain their original appearance. The *Barco* houses the new Visitor Centre and lodgings for visitors. The *Barcheto* hut is used as a storage room and the *Casera* is for nature reserve staff. In front of the Visitor Centre is located a small but very interesting botanical garden. The buildings rely on photovoltaic panels for their energy supply while a phytodepuration system filters wastewaters.

From the Visitor Centre the nature trail climbs quite steeply up to the mountain forest where European larch, mixed with Swiss Pine (*Pinus cembra*) grow. Noteworthy are the Mountain Ash trees (*Sorbus aucuparia*) and some young European silver fir (*Abies alba*). At 1740 m visitors get the chance to recover their breath, and will also find **landmark number 8**. The view is spectacular: above the alluvial plain a slope of rocks and boulders is what remains of ancient and recent landslides partially colonized by the Mountain pine (*Pinus mugo*). From here visitors can also observe the first peaks of the Oasis. Climbing up the trail visitors may be lucky enough to see individuals of Chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra*). The trail continues to climb uphill along the crest of a lateral moraine (10-12.000 years), residues of ancient glacial periods following the great ice ages.



At the end of the moraine the trail becomes less steep and the trail enters a secular forest of European larch until recently used as wood pastures (a sustainable past management system of pasture). Here at 1790m is **landmark number 9**. Climbing across the forest the trail reaches an area of porphyritic rock. The site, at 1830m, is particularly interesting for the plants and flowers that grow in the crevices of the rocks. Here the visitor can get a feel and reflect on the meaning of biodiversity by observing the variety of flowers and plants that grow. An information board guides the visitor in species identification. Visitors are encouraged to pay attention to where they place their feet to avoid any unnecessary damage to the plants and flowers.



Saponaria Alpine, *Saponaria pumilio*

Further uphill the trail reaches *Malga Agnelezza* (Alpine hut) recently renovated with the aid of many volunteers. Here is the “*Roberto Spagolla Bivacco*” hut where visitors can stopover to recover in case of need. The hut is always open. At the main entrance is an information board illustrating the geomorphology of the high *Valtrigona*.



Here at 1850m the Alpine hut is built on a small hill, the end part of an ancient moraine. This moraine isolates a small wetland area from where a small spring flows.



Chamois, *Rupicapra rupicapra*

In this area the valley is considerably wider.

On the opposite side is a cirque surrounded by the peaks of Mount Pastronezza. Again with a bit of luck visitors will be able to watch the chamois feed on the grasslands. Visitors are reminded not to leave rubbish and any food for the well-being of the wildlife. Your good intentions could alter their ability to forage during the winter season and thus decrease their survival.

From *Malga Agnelezza* the trail climbs along a moraine crest and then continues along the steep eastern sides of the Tornion Agnelezza. This is the site where during the winter season the avalanches come down. The trail continues along the last remaining woodlands of Swiss pine and European larch. At 1890m visitors will come upon **landmark number 10**. Here visitors are encouraged to think about the ecology of the woodlands at the extreme margins of their range. At the end of the steep climb the trail gradually turns crossing the valley towards the small lake of Agnelezza, one of the wonders of the nature reserve. In this small lake the European common frog (*Rana temporaria*) and Alpine newts (*Triturus alpestris*) breed. Here visitors will find **landmark number 11** (1935m). Once again visitors are encouraged to admire the surrounding landscape and diversity of life.



Returning to the centre of the valley the trail becomes quite steep and climbs up to an area dominated by the dark walls of Mount Pastronezza. Here the altitude reaches 2020m and visitors will find that they are crossing the common Alpine pastureland. **Landmark number 12** recalls the attention of visitors to the flora and fauna of the area. In this area live the Rock ptarmigan (*Lagopus mutus*), Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), Black Grouse (*Tetrao tetrix*) and mountain hare (*Lepus timidus*). The trail then climbs up to the Valtrigona pass from where a breathtaking view (**Landmark number 13**) dominates the *Esze* pastures, the valley just crossed and the Lagorai mountains. Here visitors will come upon another bronze panda which identifies the perimeter of the WWF Oasis. The perimeter runs along the crests on the two sides of the pass. Climbing down across the Alpine pastures, home to the Alpine marmot (*Marmota marmota*) (**Landmark number 14**), visitors will soon reach the typical Alpine hut *Malga Esze* (1954m). This Alpine hut is the second entrance to the nature reserve.



Rock ptarmigan, *Lagopus mutus*