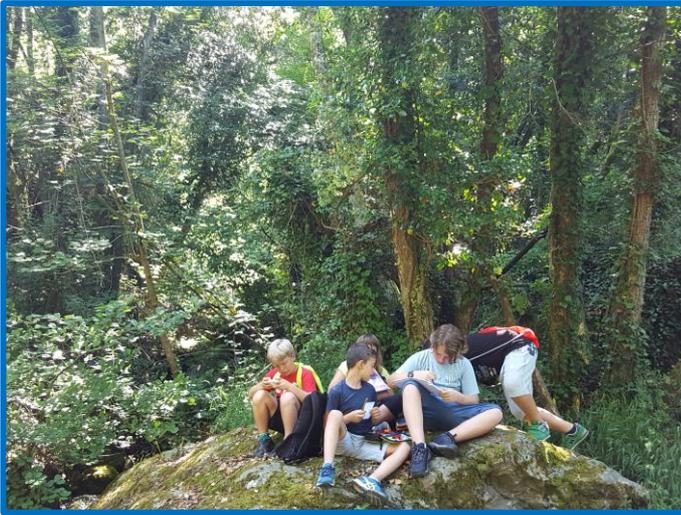


Rediscover Deiva Marina's hidden spots

Rediscover the hidden lakes



Deiva Marina offers a wide variety of enchanting walks. In one of the most suggestive trails, an old mule track (*mulattiera*) takes you to the hamlet of Caraschi, where Nature reveals the outstanding natural beauty of her ponds, waterfalls, and lush green vegetation. Enter a world of spellbinding beauty, of peace and tranquility, an oasis from the hubbub of 21st century living. There are two ponds, hidden from the main track, that offer nature lovers a respite from material concerns. Nature built her secret home here and

the local residents of Deiva Marina guard her verdant palace jealously.

Rediscover a historic plant

If you go for a walk on one of many Deiva Marina's footpaths, in the undergrowth, beneath the oaks and pines, you'll find an evergreen prickly shrub with bright red berries called "pungitopo". The word is derived from the verb *pungere* (to prick) and *topo* (mouse). In English, the same shrub is called *butcher's broom*. Its cladodes, which are easily mistaken for leaves, are like those of holly but end in a single sharp spine.



In order to deter mice from eating their food supplies, Italians would tie branches of *pungitopo* in a bundle and hang them with the preserved meats (salami, dried sausages, pancetta etc.) from the rafters or ceilings. As the bundle dried, the branches didn't lose any of their spiny 'leaves' while the spines became increasingly sharper and pricklier.

In English, the term *butcher's broom* has its origins in the 16th century when butchers bundled these prickly branches together to make a "broom" and sweep their chopping boards clean. In fact, recent research suggests that the plant contains antibacterial oils. Furthermore, its diuretic properties are used in herbal medicine to improve blood circulation, and to relieve symptoms of edema, itching and swelling.

Today, "pungitopo" is a protected plant in Liguria and locals know not to snap off its branches, as tempting as it might be.

This is what the pupils at the state school, De Amicis, in Deiva Marina, had to say about the walks.



I was surprised by the name of the plant in english and the castagnole [chestnut] wood. Giacomo, 9.

I liked the second walk, It was very fun and interesting. We discovered two lakes, one of these has got a waterfall! We listened to the birds and all was peaceful. Nadia, 13.

I liked the second walk. It was very interesting going to discover the lakes. In the second lake, there were fish too! Gaia, 12.

On 18th June 2019, in the wood I discovered a yellow plant. It looks like little tree. It's a plant that grows near the lake. The emotion I felt was peace. Chiara, 9.

I like the second walk, It was interesting. We saw 2 lakes very beautiful in the nature and there was a waterfall. It was peaceful. I was very

peaceful too. In the second lake there were fishes and they were very beautiful. Silvia, 12

Between the two daytrips, my favourite was the second. I saw two lakes, one has a mini waterfall. The second has a beautiful bridge. In the second lake there are also fish. I had fun. Elena, 11

On 18 June, we went on a daytrip to discover new things, we saw two lakes, a long wall, an old bomb and a bunker. Gabriele, 9

The second daytrip was the most beautiful of all. On the second walk, we saw plants and two lakes where we listened to the water. It was beautiful and it was peaceful. Sara, 11

On the second walk at the "Mulattiera" there are two lakes: the first lake is small but beautiful and the second lake is small like the first, and there is a waterfall. Ludovica, 11.

The old mule track, “la mulattiera” from Deiva Marina to Caraschi



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