

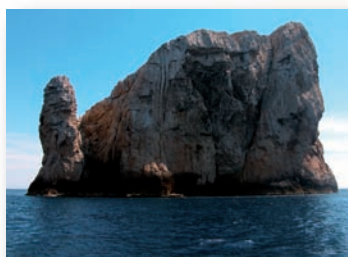
# CAPO CACCIA - ISOLA

National status :	Marine Protected Area
Year of Creation :	23 March 2003
Founding text:	Ministerial decree
Management body:	the Alghero municipality
Surface area:	2 631 ha
Management category:	IV (IUCN 1994)



## Territory

The Capo Caccia – Isola Piana marine protected area is on the north-west coast of Sardinia. The land frontiers are as follows: the Mesozoic calcareous cliffs of Capo Caccia to the west, the southern edge of the plain of central Nurra (Gulf of Porto Conte) and the calcareous cliffs of Punta Giglio and Capo Galera to the east.



## Specificity and Importance

The marine protected area has ecosystems which are specific to the Mediterranean (coralligenous, *Posidonia meadows*, *Lithophyllum byssoides* and habitats of endangered species (*Corallium rubrum*, *Pinna nobilis*, *Hydrobates pelagicus*) and is of particular scientific interest.

The flowering of *P. oceanica* in the Porto Conte bay coincides with the flowering noted in other sites of the Mediterranean. The shallow circalittoral level of this area is characterized by fine, homogenous sand and silt. The communities of the upper rocky infralittoral are dominated by calcareous red algae belonging to the genus *Jania* and *Corallina*. The assemblages of the medium part of the infralittoral level are well structured with photophile algae belonging to the families of the Dictyotaceae and Gelidiaceae. Deeper assemblages on the vertical or sub-vertical hard substrates are characterized by facies made up of *Halopteris*, *Dilophus* and various Corallinacea and other species such as *Codium bursa*, *Acetabularia acetabulum* and *Padina pavonica*.

Another well represented facies are the *Halimeda tuna* algae and several species of the *Peyssonnelia* genus.

Fauna are rather rare in this area. The sponge *Crambe Cramb* is found easily as it prefers sunlit environments. *Spirastrella cunctatrix*, *Axinella verrucosa* and *Reniera crater* are also commonly found.

*Arbacia lixula* and *Paracentrotus lividus*, followed by order of importance by *Sphaerechinus granularis* and *Echinaster sepositus* the sea star, are the most common echinoderms.

The deeper assemblages are often dominated by *Petrosa ficiformis* in association with the nudibranch *Peltdoris atromaculata*, *Eunicella cavalinii*, *Leptopsammia pruvoti* and *Parazoanthus axinellae*. The other common sessile organisms are the polichaete *Serpula vermicularis*, *Sabella Bispira mariae*, the gastropod *Bolma rugosa*, the Bryozoan *Myriapora truncata*, *Sertella beaniana* and the tunicate *Halocynthia papillosa*.

Submarine caves are rather common and the external and central parts are in general colonized by sciaphile forms and sometimes dominated by recent small low density colonies of *Corallium rubrum* which is suggestive of a recent process of recolonisation.

the Capo caccia-Isola MPA has been a SPAMIs since 2009 due to the presence of ecosystems which are specific to the Mediterranean (coralligenous, *Posidonia meadows*, *Lithophyllum byssoides* and habitats of endangered species (*Corallium rubrum*, *Pinna nobilis*, *Hydrobates pelagicus*) and is of particular scientific interest.

## Physical characteristics

The Capo Caccia – Isola Piana marine protected area is characterized by Mesozoic calcareous cliffs on its higher peaks with Triassic and Cretaceous facies. In the Capo Caccia promontory are reminders of a strongly evolved continental paleomorphology such as hanging valleys and truncated sides. In general the forms of the relief have typical features of calcareous regions with non-existent drainage of surface waters. The main mediolittoral habitat is the formation composed of *Lithophyllum byssoides* and its development seems to be favoured by the limestone of the cliffs where the hydrodynamic and wind conditions are most intense.



## Threats and Pressure

The Capo Caccia MPA littoral with its alternating cliffs and sandy coasts is facing both natural threats and those of human origin. The present erosion of the coast was detected along the sandy coast mainly due to the dynamics of the waves and also the exploitation of the coast for tourism purposes. As for the rocky coast with its calcareous cliffs, the threat of erosion and landslides due to the precarious static conditions is quite evident in some areas.



## Management

The annual management plan is established by the MPA Management in line with the suggestions of the Committee and approval of the Alghero municipality.

The annual Management Plan is approved by the National Ministry of the Environment.

Surveillance is carried out by the national Coast Guards, police, forest wardens and the police force. Information boards have been set up in the Alghero port and in all the other marinas. The present protection could be deemed to be adequate in terms of the objectives of the MPA Declaration even if there are still some illegal activities going on.

The laws in force and any subsequent sanctions are considered to be adequate to dissuade most of the offences but the MPA personnel is not authorized to impose any sanctions.

At present 10 persons are available for the following tasks:

- Chief manager
- Administration and secretariat, research
- Project development and coordination, support for information and surveillance of the MPA
- Boats and public relations support

Basic financing stems from an annual activity plan which is tied to the management plan.

Both are fine-tuned by the MPA director in line with the reservations and suggestions of the Committee and approval of the Ministry of the Environment.

