

included in the protected area of the Nature Reserve of the Aniene Valley (about 700 hectares). Now they are waiting for a prompt intervention which will preserve them and enhance their value to encourage their inclusion in the cultural and tourist routes in Rome.



In fact here you can admire not only the archaeological and architectonic remains and trace the settlements in the territory, but you can also still observe plants (yellow irises, duckweed, elms) and animals (moorhens, nutrias, porcupines, freshwater crabs) which have been overwhelmed by building expansion elsewhere.



Yellow irises



Nutria



Willows

HOW TO GET TO THE CERVELLETTA

Entrance: Via M. Cingolani 10-Colli Aniene
Bus 309 (Piazzale Loredo)



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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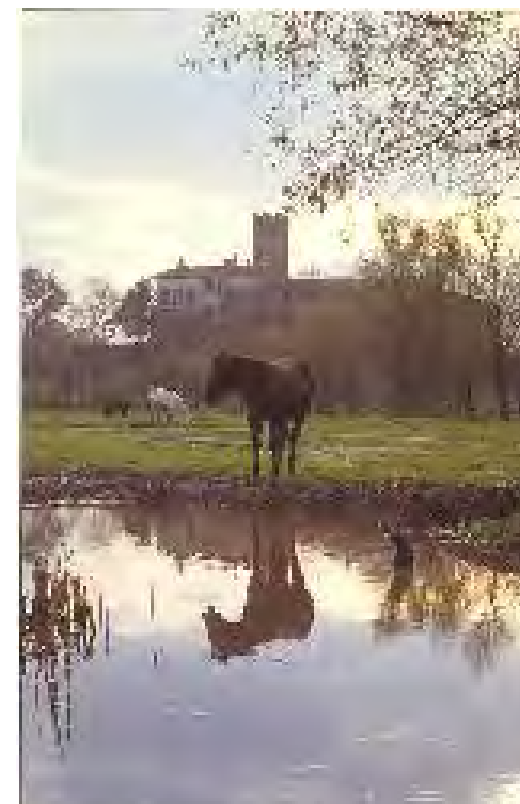
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A school adopts a monument

THE CERVELLETTA



A PARK TO BE SAVED

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The Cervelletta is an area of great naturalistic and historical interest which extends for about 45 hectares in the Aniene Valley, between the motorway A24, *Via di Tor Cervara* and *Colli Aniene*.

Its name probably derives from the Latin word "acervus"- which means heap, pile, mass, hill-maybe referring to the numerous deposits of tufa detritus left from the pozzolana quarries in Roman Times, or from the presence of a deer reserve in Medieval times.



Casale

The *Cervelletta* includes a green, mostly marshy area which enjoys unique botanical and faunal characteristics and an impressive seventeenth century architectonic complex. The architectonic complex was built on the site of a pre-existent Roman rural villa and consists of a seventeenth century *casale* - that is a large farmhouse - and a medieval tower. The area has been inhabited since the Prehistoric Age and was crossed in the Iron Age by pastoral routes for the transfer of flocks from the Apennines to the plains along

the Tyrrhenian Sea. It was characterised by a wide fluvial valley with marshy areas and low, tuffaceous hills which gave the name *Colli Aniene* to the present district.



Medieval tower

In the Roman, Republican and Imperial Ages numerous country villas were built by the Roman nobility on the hills. Here agricultural, pastoral, and hunting activities were carried out together with the quarrying of tuff which was transported from the quarries of *Ponte*

Mammolo and *Tor Cervara* to the capital by river. One of these villas was built on the *Cervelletta* hillock. In the Middle Ages the villa fell into disrepair and was replaced by a XIII century lookout-tower which, together with many other towers, defended Eastern Rome.

The tower was later used as the architectural nucleus of other buildings which were reshaped and included in a majestic complex by Scipione Borghese who bought this property in an auction in 1658 and restructured it impressively and harmoniously.



Unfortunately this magnificent architectonic complex, nowadays still visible from the motorway Roma-L'Aquila and unique evidence of a centuries-old route, is subject to an inevitable decay.

The rural village which surrounds it, the little church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Our Lady (1911) and the natural environment where it is situated, a nearly intact area of the famous Roman countryside, have been