

Villa Giovanni

MIGRANT BIRDS AND THE MOUNTAIN PASS OF BOCCA D'ARDOLE

My report deals with the migration of birds across the mountain pass of Bocca d'Ardole, in Monte Baldo, in southern Trentino. I analysed two topics that I like a lot: birds and the environment of Monte Baldo, the place where I live. Monte Baldo is a largely green area with some particular and rare species of flora and fauna such as orchids and insects. In fact, there is the possibility that it will become a nature reserve, and thereby be protected from hunting. I hope for that and, in addition, think that this area is a beautiful place for tourism. I believe that it is very important to pay attention to the development of the resources of Monte Baldo. This mountain is also crossed by many small and large migratory birds. Some examples are: crossbill, hawfinch, chaffinch, brambling, siskin, linnet, redpoll, bullfinch, house martin, saint martin, swallow, swift, wren, grey wagtail, white wagtail, meadow pipit, tree pipit, robin, redstart, fieldfare, songtrush, redwing, mistletrush, blackcap, chiffchaff, goldcrest, long-tailed tit, coal tit, blue tit, great tit, starling, serin, green finch, gold finch, peregrine falcon...

These birds cross Europe. They migrate from the north of Europe to the south-west of Europe or the north of Africa.

My plan is to study a subject difficult to describe and discover a method useful for more in-depth study.

My work has been lovely because during my observation I can see a lot of beautiful species of birds and be in the fields, the meadows, and the woodlands, that I like. There I have classified the different species of plants, wild flowers and trees: the source of food for the birds. In addition, I have counted the number of different species of birds that were crossing the mountain pass.

At first I chose a particular place, from which I could see the birds well with binoculars and then I wrote down the species and the numbers in a list.

In my work I have observed many migrant birds in the fields and in the woodlands. In these places they find a safe refuge and a good quantity of food. I think that there is a strong relationship between agriculture and migration. In particular, biological and sustainable agriculture create a better habitat for bird species. In fact, there is a connection between crop production and its effects on the environment that birds choose for the pauses in their migration. The biological and sustainable agriculture may improve the cultivated environment because they, with natural systems, maintain and increase the long term fertility of the soil, the use of renewable resources, avoid all forms of pollution and allow an adequate return and satisfaction for the farmer. These methods achieve these goals substituting expensive and harmful additives, especially fertilizers and pesticides, with agricultural and ecological knowledge, labour and non-chemical products. Using knowledge of different fields, such as information science, this type of agriculture obtains the conservation of flora and fauna in and around the fields and guarantees an ideal environment for bird life. It is important that the farmers leave more crop residues, grasses and weeds on the ground.

Farmers have a growing opportunity to help birds by planting hedges and cultivating different species of crops. Luckily, agriculture now looks ahead to preserve the natural resources for future generations. In addition, in the last two decades people's sensibility towards environmental problems has increased. For all these reasons I suggest some activity to improve the agricultural environment and the bird habitat, such as the woodlands and the wetlands. These last two areas are important for the birds and their migration and must be protected.

In this study I have observed a great number of migrant birds and some rare migrant species in the mountain pass, like starling, white wagtail, woodpigeon. At the end of the migration period I saw, in about 65 days, 3274 Fringillidae, 585 Hirundinidae, 572 Turdidae, 384 Montacillidae, 218 Apodidae...

From the number of migrating birds observed on the mountain pass of Bocca d'Ardole, I think that all the methods of environmental conservation can be applied in the Monte Baldo area.

So we can start some activity to promote tourism, ornithology and deeper ecological awareness.

