

Tavolara - Punta Coda Cavallo

Legal status	Marine Protected Area
Foundation year	1997
Foundation text	Ministerial Decree
Management body	Consortium of three littoral local administrations
Superficy	15091 ha
Management category (IUCN, 1994)	IV



Territory

The MPA boundaries are delimited by Ceraso Cape, in the North, and Finocchio Creek, in the South including the Islands present in this zone (i.e. Tavolara, Molaro and Molarotto Rossa and Piana).



Tavolara-Punta Coda Cavallo has been a SPAMI since 2008 because it shelters some threatened species, holds archeology sites and has an effective management based on adapted regulations

Physic features

The South part of the Island, is characterised by an almost level rocky line that divides two different sides: the Eastern side presents several pebbles inlets delimited by granitic rocks and the Western side forms a large sandy gulf that ends at the base of an high limestone cliff rich in conglomerates. The North and Western part of Tavolara Island, facing the open sea, is characterised by a hill whose base resembles a wide cone. Pink granular pegmatite constitutes the granitic basement and Pegmatite outcrops constitute the concave base. The Island is surrounded by active cliffs incised in limestone and dolomites. In the North and Eastern sector of the Island, more exposed to the wind and sea action, there are many caves and littoral arches. The submerged bottoms are characterised by isolated relieves.

Specificities and Importance

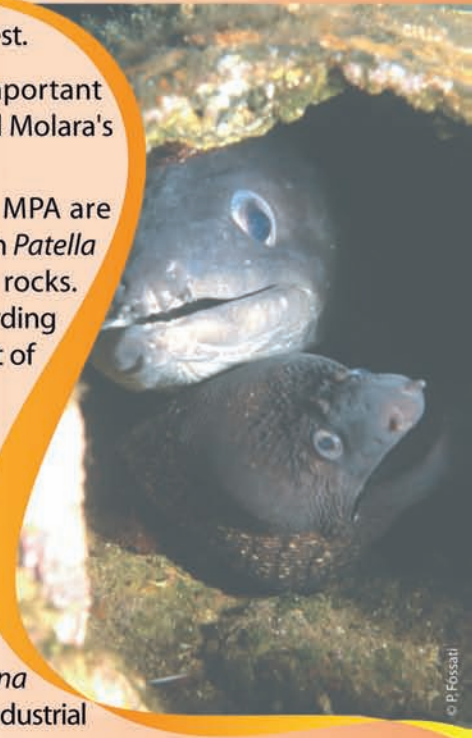
The terrestrial vegetation is very rich with 34 endemic species. Among the 34 endemic plants 7 create a particular biotope of high scientific interest.

The islands use to shelter important species of marine birds. (i.e. the most important colonies of mediterranean shearwater (*Puffinus yelkouan*) nests on Tavolara and Molaro's islands.)

The marine biocenosis of the lower mediolittoral rock present in Tavolara MPA are characterised by *Lithophyllum byssoides* bends, a coralline algae, associated with *Patella ferruginea*, the *Posidonia oceanica* meadows and the paleo-beaches or beach rocks. Deeper, the bottoms are populated by photophilic communities developed according to a light gradient. Brown, red and green algae create the base for the development of high biodiversity.

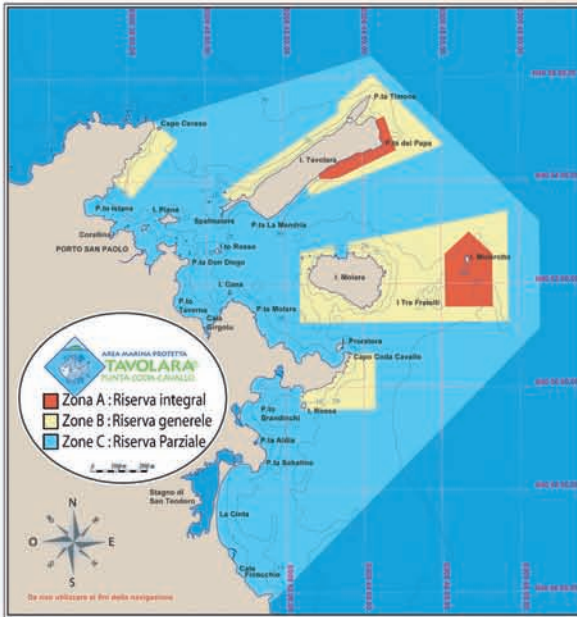
Among the benthos fauna, the big Mediterranean bivalve *Pinna nobilis* is well represented. The Mollusca distribution, resembling that found for the Liguria Sea with the presence of two Eolidi rather rare in the Mediterranean. Regarding the fish fauna young, *Epinephelus marginatus* individuals are common in the infralittoral while bigger individuals are mainly present in the circalittoral. The bottoms of Pope's point (Tavolara) and Arresto Point (Molaro) are rich in Gorgonians.

In the submerged cliffs it is common to find different fishes such as moray (*Muraena helena*), conger (*Conger conger*) and several groupers. Tavolara is considered a site of industrial archaeology because of the presence of lime furnaces of the 1800.



Threats and pressures

The main exploitation activity of natural resources is represented by the fishery and the high human pressure during the summer related production of solid waste is the higher threat to the environment of the Island.



Management

The Management Plan has been approved in 2006.

The delimitation of the MPA Tavolara as well as its division into the 3 areas:

- Zone A : no take zone
- Zone B : general reserve
- Zone C : partial reserve.

The staff is compounded by 14 members, supported by the help of the volunteers of the Marine Mammals Research Centre.

The MPA is annually financed by the Environmental Ministry and by the local administrations involved in the Management Body.

The surveillance service is present the whole year.

The scientific interest allowed a well knowledge on both terrestrial and marine parts. As a result, different maps of the area have been produced. Many monitoring programmes are led such as Monitoring of *Paracentrotus lividus* populations, Monitoring of the fishery, etc.

The MPA collaborates with the Institute of Marine Civilities concerning archaeological finds, and also with the Centre for the Recovery of Marine Mammals where an Info Point has been created to distribute information about the MPA and its rules.

Monitoring Projects and scientific researches are conducted with the collaboration of universities and national research centers.

The MPA promotes important actions of awareness and environmental education, addressed to the local communities and the visitors.

