

THE LENSİ ORNITHOLOGICAL COLLECTION



For the second “Along the Migratory Routes” project, the Fucecchio Marshes Centre for Research, Documentation and Promotion intervened to restore, re-arrange and set up the A. Lensi Ornithological collection, financed by the Municipality of Fucecchio and the Region of Tuscany.

The A. Lensi collection, until now held in the Fucecchio Town Hall, consists of almost 300 specimens which were collected between the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. The collection is preeminently of local origin and for this very reason it is of important historical and naturalistic interest, testifying the wealth of avifauna present in the Fucecchio Marshes at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Among the water birds, which are obviously the most represented, we can find rare species like the White Headed Duck, now extinct in our country, the Purple Swampphen, which now occurs only in Sardinia, and the Ferruginous Duck. In the eighteen hundreds this duck also nested in large numbers in the Fucecchio Marshes, in fact there were so many that the bird gave its name to Morette Port (its name in Italian is Moretta tabaccata).; now it only frequents the marshes during its migrations.

The Lensi collection required urgent intervention for its restoration and re-arrangement to avoid dust and parasites destroying the specimens and to guarantee the survival of this precious material. Moreover, for some time it had been hoped that various specimens would find a more appropriate display so that their value would increase both from the scientific and educational point of view.

The project for re-arranging, restoring and setting up the display in the collection inside the Fucecchio Museum was coordinated by the expert Fausto Barbagli, technician from the University of Pavia, and Dr. Silvia Felicioni of the Fucecchio Marches Research Centre. The work was mostly carried out by specialized staff in the Centre.

The first interventions were aimed at halting deterioration, cleaning and restoring the collection, so that in future it will require only routine maintenance. This was followed by creating didactic displays for the benefit of schools and a wider public in general; these are also linked to the itineraries of visits to the Fucecchio Marshes Nature Reserve.

Museum opening hours: Wednesday and Friday 10.00-13.00, Saturday and Sunday 10.00-13.00, and 16.00-19.00. Other days: on appointment for groups and school visits.







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