

History and traditions



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In the past, Lake Sibolla was almost certainly larger than it is today.

A notarial deed of 1130 and a deed of sale of 1132, in which the place name "Sivolla" appears for the first time, give an idea of the marshy and flooded nature of the area. In fact, the second document refers to a "quado" (quado=ford) near Sibolla, so evidently the water was too deep to be crossed elsewhere.

This is confirmed in another, later deed dated 1221, which carries the phrase "aqua que dicitur Sivolla" (water which is called Sivolla).

In spite of some reclamation, fortunately never finally completed, Lake Sibolla has managed to substantially retain the integrity of its biotope and its wetland aspect.

During 20th Century, starting from the sixties, several interventions were still carried out and contributed to deteriorate the area, even though its naturalistic importance had already been recognised.

As well as the construction of industrial factories, the Firenze-Mare (Florence-Sea) motorway and a high voltage cable still run across the basin, but by far the worst damage is the poor condition and demolition of the water works that for centuries had guaranteed the lake exceptionally regular water levels.

Together with recent changes in the climate, this has led to a dramatic fall in the mean and minimum water levels of the lake, with serious consequences for the bio-coenosis.

Only since 2004 has a series of interventions carried out by the Province of Lucca with co-funding from the Regional of Tuscany managed to invert the trend and brought water levels back nearer to historical ones.

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