

This park consists of a system of coastal wetlands made up of a series of basins supplied by channelled watercourses from the inland area. A sandy shore, which is as wide as 15 metres in some parts, divides the basins from the sea. The area is divided into three different wetlands known as 'Salina Vecchia' (meaning 'Old Salt Pond'), 'Salinella' ('Small Salt Pond') and 'invaso dell'Enichem' ('Enichem reservoir'). Dunes separate the strip of salt ponds from the sea. They have a limited height that does not exceed 1-1.5 metres and some dune stretches have pioneer vegetation with a prevalence of *Agropyron junceum* or a dense vegetation of marram grass. Basins are supplied by channels and freshwater springs, but they are affected by sea proximity and the seawater intrusion following sea storms. These basins, which dry up in summer, are home to underwater vegetation including *Ruppia cirrhosa*. The shores of the basins and the surrounding lowlying wetlands are covered with large stretches of glasswort. This area has a high natural value, as shown by the number and quality of its species and its habitats, which are included in the lists of the Red Book of the Animals of Italy. Some 14 bird species nest in this park and many other internationally relevant species belonging to other phenological groups can be found too. Besides being a major breeding site for rare and endangered avifauna, this area plays an international key role in the conservation of migratory birds crossing the eastern Adriatic Sea.

fonte:www.viaggiareinpuglia.it