

THE TRIASSIC GYPSUM:

Here is the Triassic gypsum valley geological wonder of the Apennines and Italy.

Secchia river deeply eroded these former evaporitic rocks originating steep slopes as high as 250 metres.

During the Triassic period of the Mesozoic era, more than 200 million years ago, the continental masses looked quite different from today and former Tethide seawaters evaporating in closed lagoons deposited chalk and salt.

Salt, more soluble than chalk, can be only found in depths today. It is actively dissolved in waters that infiltrate chalk outcrops. For this reason Poiano's spring water (which can be seen in front of you, on the other side of the road) is salty.

Gypsum is a water-soluble mineral. Streams and rainwater infiltrations widen rock fissures by dissolution, creating cup-shaped depressions in the limestone (the dolines) and karstic hollows named "lairs, "caverns" and "sinkholes".

The Triassic chalk outcrop area, which covers about 10 km of the upper Secchia valley, is a site of European Community Interest (SIC) because of the presence of a high number of animal and vegetable rare species due to the distinguishing geomorphological features of this environment.