

THE LONELINESS OF LUMINARIES

The nature park is characterised by world-famous peaks such as the Drei Zinnen/Tre Cime, the Dreischusterspitze/Punta dei Tre Scarperi and the Sextner Bergsonne/Sundial of Sesto. Equally legendary are the first climbers of these imposing peaks, including Franz Innerkofler, Emil and Otto Zsigmondy and Antonio Dimai, who mastered these challenges on „solitary“ routes around 150 years ago.

Geology and water balance

In October 2007, a spectacular landslide down from the Einser/Cima Uno in Fischleintal/Val Fiscalina darkened the Sexten/Sesto Valley for hours. This incident shows how erosion works continuously on the Dolomites, including the Sexten/Sesto Dolomites, and constantly changes the landscape. This also happened during the Ice Age, when the ice accumulated in Pustertal/Val Pusteria to such an extent that the glacier flowed uphill to the South through Sextental/Valle di Sesto along the Kreuzbergpass/Monte Croce pass, as evidenced by glacier striations and erratic boulders from Pustertal/Val Pusteria. Even after the Ice Age, the Sextenbach/Rio di Sesto stream flowed into the Rienz/Rienza river and then into the Mediterranean. Only when huge deposits of detritus coming from the Silvesterbach/Rio San Silvestro stream sealed off the valley, creating a veritable international watershed, the Sextenbach/Rio di Sesto sharply deviated eastward at Innichen/San Candido and reached the Black Sea via the Drau/Drava and the Donau/Danube.



Debris trickles incessantly from the peaks, ridges and walls of the Sexten/Sesto Dolomites and piles up to form mighty heaps.
Photo: Nature Park Office



On 12 October 2007, a huge boulder of an estimated 60,000 cubic metres broke away from Einser/Cima Uno and crashed into the valley, creating a huge cloud of dust that covered Fischleintal/Val Fiscalina and Sextental/Val di Sesto.
Photo: Amt für Geologie und Baustoffprüfung / Ufficio geologia e prove materiali



The wild, rugged Schlern/Sciliar Dolomite gives the Haunold/Rocca dei Baranci, the Birkenkofel/Croda dei Baranci and the Dreischusterspitze/Punta dei Tre Scarperi peaks their bizarre shape.
Photo: Sepp Hackhofer

The Sextner Dolomiten/Sesto Dolomites form the north-eastern cornerstone of the Dolomites. Val Gardena Sandstone, Bellerophon and Werfen strata make up the wooded slopes of the park's flanks up to 2,000 metres above sea level. Above them tower formations of light-coloured and rugged Dolomite rocks. The Sextner Dolomiten/Sesto Dolomites are dominated by the wildly jagged Schlern/Sciliar Dolomite rock and the evenly stratified Dolomia Principale rock.



The world-famous monuments of the Sextner/Sesto Dolomites, such as Paternkofel/Monte Paterno (pictured), Zwölfer/Croda dei Toni and Drei Zinnen/Tre Cime (2,999 m a.s.l.) consist of regularly stratified Dolomia Principale rock.
Photo: Christian Tschurtschenthaler



Like colourful butterflies on the light-coloured rock: *Potentilla nitida*, *Campanula morettiana*, *Androsace hausmannii* are all endemic - i.e. native only to the Dolomites.
Photo: Sepp Hackhofer

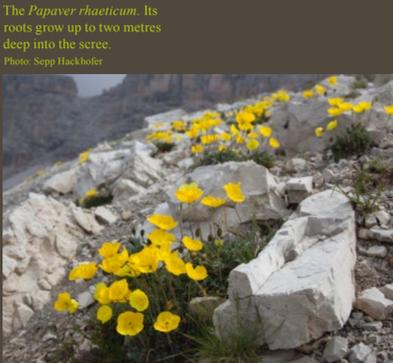
Habitats, animals and plants

Around two thirds of the nature park area consists of rocks and rubble. Pioneer vegetation – consisting of plants that have specialised in being the first to colonise inhospitable locations - is therefore of particular importance.

Rock and scree

Some of the most beautiful Dolomite flowers have taken root in crevices, cracks and on narrow ledges: the name „Dolomites“ indicates that they are mostly so-called endemics - plants that only occur in a specific, clearly defined area, and in this particular case only on this mountain range and not elsewhere in the world.

Plant specialists that colonize scree beds (crawling and debris dam species) perform a particularly important function in consolidating the debris flow. They form the first stable green islands in the scree. The yellow *Papaver rhaeticum*, for example, vividly decorates the monotonously grey scree beds.



The *Papaver rhaeticum*. Its roots grow up to two metres deep into the scree.
Photo: Sepp Hackhofer

Despite the harsh living conditions and the sparse ground vegetation, debris flows are still colonised by various invertebrates such as beetles, arachnids, butterflies, wasps, ants and bees. Bird species such as the Black redstart, the Northern wheatear and the Alpine accentor feed on these invertebrates.

The Wallreeper, the nature park's mascot animal, is a typical rock dwelling bird. It half-flutters, half-climbs up the rock faces, searching for insects and spiders in the crevices with its long beak. Characteristic mammals living in the park are chamois, fox and marmot.

The marmot lives in ingenious underground burrows, which it uses as a safe retreat and to hibernate in in winter. In summer, it warns of imminent danger from the ground and from the air with shrill whistles. A fascinating creature in the rugged mountain world!
Photo: Claudio Sierra



The nature park is a refuge for animals, such as the chamois, that depend on an undisturbed habitat.
Photo: Sepp Hackhofer

The dwarf shrub belt

This habitat in the Sexten/Sesto Dolomites is dominated by mountain pines, in whose undergrowth are found the Hairy Rhododendron and other typical representatives of the alpine dwarf shrub belt. Here and there, larches and Swiss pines raise their crowns above the mountain pine stands.

A characteristic inhabitant of the alpine dwarf shrub belt is the black grouse. Every spring, the roosters visit the so-called courtship arenas and try to win the favour of the hens with their mating dances.



The black grouse inhabits sparse mountain forests and the dwarf shrub heathlands. In spring, „wild fights“ take place for the females.
Photo: Tetraon

The Swiss mountain pine grows mainly on limestone. As impenetrable undergrowth, Swiss mountain pines can even colonise slopes on which avalanches frequently occur, completely destroying all other tree species.
Photo: Sepp Hackhofer

The Hairy Rhododendron only thrives on calcareous substrates, while its relative, the Alpenrose, can be found on both calcareous soils and crystalline bedrock.
Photo: Sepp Hackhofer

The larch meadows

Light-flooded larch meadows spread out at the entrance to the Innerfeldtal/Campo di Dentro and Fischleintal/Val Fiscalina valleys. The larch is not only used for timber, but its open canopy also allows hay harvesting. In addition, its deep root system strengthens the soil without competing with the shallow-rooted meadow herbs. The scattered larch trees create a favourable microclimate because they slow down the wind and have a balancing effect during hot and dry periods. Blueberries and cranberries group around old larch tree stumps. Weathered haybarns made of larch wood and roofed with larch shingles complete the picture. Under extensive cultivation, these larch meadows are often colourful and rich in flowers.



The undulated surface of the larch meadows creates small-scale ecological niches: sunny and shady flanks, dry, stony hillsides and moist, fine sandy hollows. All of this promotes biodiversity.
Photo: Sepp Hackhofer



The autumn crocus adorns the larch meadows in the nature park with its pale pink to purple flowers in late summer and autumn. It forms leaves and fruits in spring and summer. The plant is highly poisonous.
Photo: Edith Bucher



Fellow soldiers bringing home the famous mountaineer, hut warden and World War I casualty Sepp Innerkofler.
Photo from „Die Bewaffnung des Auges“ by Anton Holzer

Climbing pundits from all over the world put their skills to the test on the vertical north faces of the Drei Zinnen/Tre Cime. Paul Grohmann, Franz Innerkofler and Peter Salcher were the first to reach the summit of the Große Zinne/Grande Cima (2,999 m a.s.l.) via the south side in 1869.
Photo: Elias Hackhofer



Man and nature

In the case of the Sextner Dolomiten/Sesto Dolomites and their environs, the relationship between man and nature was particularly volatile: for many years, the area was a secluded habitat for farmers and shepherds. When the railway line through Pustertal/Val Pusteria was opened in 1871, the Sexten/Sesto Dolomites became a tourist stronghold and an Eldorado for mountaineers and climbers. During the First World War, numerous paths and via ferratas were created. Today, millions of mountain enthusiasts travel along them, enchanted by the wonderful mountain landscape that surrounds them.

Natura 2000

Natura 2000 is a European nature conservation project. It aims to create a network of protected areas for the long-term protection of natural and semi-natural habitats as well as for wild animals and plants to safeguard biodiversity. All South Tyrolean nature parks are part of the Natura 2000 network, and their designation is based on two European directives: the Flora-Fauna Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive. Other Natura 2000 sites lie outside the nature park boundaries, for example the Seikofel-Nemes/Monte Covolo-Nemes Biotope in Sexten/Sesto and the Peagnaue Biotope in Toblach/Dobbiaco.

Dolomites UNESCO World Heritage Site

In 2009, the Dolomites, and with them the Drei Zinnen/Tre Cime Nature Park, were added to the UNESCO World Heritage List due to their scenic beauty and their geomorphological and geological significance. After careful selection, this list includes globally outstanding and unique natural and cultural assets whose preservation is of particular importance to the international community. This honour also means a special obligation and responsibility regarding the protection and sustainable development of this extraordinary mountain region!

The variety of outlines in the Sexten/Sesto Dolomites makes this mountain range unique in the world.
Photo: Sepp Hackhofer



Drei Zinnen/Tre Cime
Photo: Sepp Hackhofer

Drei Zinnen/Tre Cime Visitor Center
Photo: Sepp Hackhofer



DREI ZINNEN/TRE CIME NATURE PARK VISITOR CENTER
Kulturzentrum Grand Hotel Toblach/Dobbiaco
Dolomitenstr. 37, 39034 Toblach/Dobbiaco
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info.dz@provinz.bz.it



Opening hours:
nature-parks.province.bz.it/en
Free admission!

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SÜDTIROL - ALTO ADIGE



DREI ZINNEN/TRE CIME NATURE PARK
The loneliness of luminaries

6/7



Map: Emano Dolgner



DREI ZINNEN/ TRE CIME NATURE PARK

The loneliness of luminaries

The loneliness of luminaries
Photo: Stefano

Alpine rescue signal

- 1 Within 1 minute, emit 6 acoustic or visual signals (at 10 second intervals)
- 2 Pause for 1 minute
- 3 Repeat the signal (until response arrives)
- 4 Response: 3 signals within 1 minute

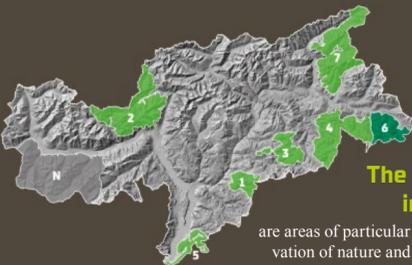
Emergency call centre **112**

Key

- Nature park boundary
- Marked hiking trail
- - - - - Difficult trail
- x x x x Regional border
- + + + + + Via ferrata
- + + + + + National border
- + + + + + Mountain pass
- Access road
- Water body
- Blocked road
- Mountain hut
- P Car park
- Inn/Rest area
- Ascent system
- Mountain hut
- Nature Park Visitors' Centre
- Camping

Rules of behaviour

- No vehicles
- No fire
- No drones
- No noise
- Don't pick
- Dog on a leash
- No fire
- No drones
- Don't destroy



The nature parks in South Tyrol

are areas of particular value for the conservation of nature and landscape, research, awareness-raising and environmental education. They offer numerous opportunities for direct and respectful interaction with nature.

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p>1 Schlern-Rosengarten
Sciliar-Catinaccio</p> <p>2 Texelgruppe
Gruppo di Tessa</p> <p>3 Puez-Geisler
Puez-Dolles</p> <p>4 Fanes-Sennes-Prags
Fanes-Senes-Braies</p> | <p>7,288 ha
2,156 m
★ 1974</p> <p>31,407 ha
2,857 m
★ 1976</p> <p>10,729 ha
1,499 m
★ 1978</p> <p>25,485 ha
1,929 m
★ 1980</p> | <p>5 Trudner Horn
Monte Corno</p> <p>6 Drei Zinnen
Tre Cime</p> <p>7 Rieserferner-Ahrn
Vedrette di Ries-Aurina</p> | <p>6,873 ha
1,571 m
★ 1980</p> <p>11,878 ha
1,961 m
★ 1981</p> <p>31,334 ha
2,610 m
★ 1988</p> <p>53,447 ha
3,255 m
★ 1935</p> |
|---|--|---|--|

The Drei Zinnen/Tre Cime Nature Park in a nutshell

The 11,878-hectare Drei Zinnen/Tre Cime Nature Park was established in 1981 and covers the area of the municipalities of Toblach/Dobbiaco, Sexten/Sesto and Innichen/San Candido. It is bordered to the north by Pustertal/Val Pusteria, to the east by Sextental/Val di Sesto, to the west by Höhlensteintal/Val di Landro and to the south by the border with the Belluno province. Several mountain valleys lead from the valley bottom up to the Drei Zinnen/Tre Cime plateau, the centerpiece of the nature park: Rienzental/Val della Rienza, Innerfeldtal/Val Campo di Dentro and Fischlental/Val Fiscalina. An extensive hiking trail network offers numerous hiking and mountain experiences, while the many mountain huts provide rest and shelter on long hikes. The protected area is characterised by outstanding landscapes: vertical Dolomite rock faces alternate with the green meadows around the Drei Zinnen/Tre Cime and the charming larch meadows down in the valley.

The nature park's municipalities

- Toblach/Dobbiaco**
Nature park's share 4,115 ha
Tourist office Ph +39 0474 972 132
www.toblach.info
- Sexten/Sesto**
Nature park's share 4,021 ha
Tourist office Ph +39 0474 710 310
www.sexten.info
- Innichen/San Candido**
Nature park's share 3,742 ha
Tourist office Ph +39 0474 913 149
www.innichen.info