Title: Forest fire at Castel Fusano near Rome  
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The Castel Fusano pinewood belongs to the “Riserva Naturale Statale Litorale Romano”, a national natural reserve of the Roman coast, covering a region of about 15,900 ha located around the delta of the Tiber River, about 20 km away from the main Rome urban centre (see image below). The reserve is characterized by different types of surroundings, typical of the coastal area of the Mediterranean: oaks and pines dominate the arboreal vegetation, with a large part of the park covered by the tall evergreen Mediterranean bush. The Castel Fusano Park is located in the southern part of the Reserve, 5 km from the Tiber delta, and extends over an area of approximately 1100 ha; its main vegetation types are characterized by Holm oak (*Quercus ilex* L.), Green olive (*Phillyrea latifolia* L.), Mastic (*Pistacia lentiscus* L.) and Stone pine (*Pinus pinea* L.) plantations, introduced near the coast from the 18th century. In fact, “the old pinewood” aged 130–150 years and “the young woodland” 50–70 years old, live side by side in the park.

Until 3rd July 2000, the pinewood was only slightly damaged by not particularly serious, although frequent, fires. Nevertheless, on 3rd and 4th July 2000, the pinewood was severely devastated by a fire that burned about 350 ha of the wood. About 250 ha were completely destroyed, while another 100 ha were seriously damaged. The 4th July fire was particularly devastating, with more than one fire point in the south-west part of the pinewood, where it borders the Natural Reserve of Castelporziano Presidential Estate.

Soon after the fire, the Rome Town Council agreed on a plan for the rehabilitation of the area and for the restoration of the local ecosystem. The plan’s main objectives consisted in cutting and removing irremediably damaged vegetation, singling out trees for which spontaneous recovery was still possible, and replanting of the main plant species, principally Stone pine (*Pinus pinea* L.) and Holm oak (*Quercus ilex* L.). Moreover, some experimental areas were left to allow spontaneous re-growth.

References


The Castel Fusano pinewood belongs to the "Riserva Naturale Statale Litorale Romano". It is located in the south part, five kilometres from the delta of the Tiber River, and extends over an area of approximately 1,100 ha.
Before the fire

After the fire

Vegetation regrowth