



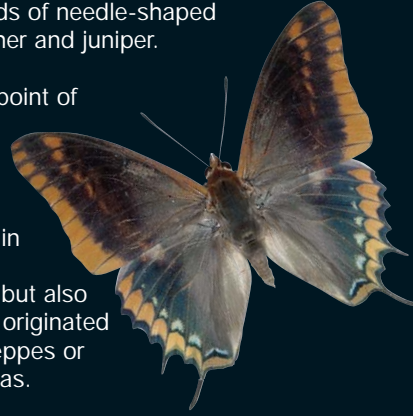
A green belt covering hilly slopes near the sea which, especially in spring, are a delight to the eye, covered with the yellow flowers of broom, the white and pink of rockrose, and the blue of rosemary: this is the Mediterranean maquis.



Seen closer, the maquis is a dense weave of branches of holm oak, strawberry tree, buckthorn and phillyrea, where it is not dominated by massive, ancient cork oaks or coated with the myriads of needle-shaped leaves of heather and juniper.



From the viewpoint of fauna, the maquis contains not only typical species found in different environments, but also species which originated from far-off steppes or sub-desert areas.



Found mainly along the Mediterranean coastline, subjected to the negative impact of man, most of the original maquis has been destroyed over the centuries.

In an accessible but scientifically rigorous form, this volume presents the aspects of the animal and plant populations of the maquis, in the various forms it takes on along the Italian coastline, and highlights problems of the management and protection of this unique environment.



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ITALIAN HABITATS

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Ministero dell'Ambiente e della Tutela del Territorio  
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