

Naturalistic Museum of the Tuscan Archipelago- NAT LAB

Verona, Italy

World Biodiversity Association

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award Category: **International Biodiversity Project Award**

Project overview: The NAT-LAB is the naturalistic museum located in the English Fort of Portoferraio, realized in 2019 by WBA in collaboration with the Tuscan Archipelago National Park. The NAT-LAB hosts important entomological, zoological and botanical collections from the Tuscan Archipelago and was born from the desire to preserve the extraordinary environmental heritage of the Park.

What were the biodiversity conditions on site prior to the enhancement? The museum was born from the desire of the citizen Leonardo Forbicioni to create a home for all naturalists who study, conserve and love the extraordinary environmental heritage present in the **Tuscan Archipelago National Park**, an area which has also obtained the prestigious recognition as a Biosphere Reserve, within the [UNESCO MaB Programme](#).

What were the reasons behind this project?

The creation of the Nat Lab was born from the desire of the World Biodiversity Association to offer a place at the headquarters of the Tuscan Archipelago to carry out activities in line with the missions of the association: :
"Conservation by Education" to affirm the fundamental role of education in the conservation of natural environments and protect diversity, the right to life of every organism, the environmental balance and avoid the extinction of thousands of species. **"Discovering Biodiversity"** to actively contribute to the inventory of our planet's biological diversity through naturalistic expeditions to biodiversity hot spots.



Il Museo Naturalistico dell'Arcipelago Toscano

NAT-LAB Logo



Naturalistic Museum of the Tuscan Archipelago

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

In the NAT-LAB, the visitor can explore biodiversity by passing through the three kingdoms of earth, water and air. In fact, 4 rooms have been set up in the museum, one dedicated to the naturalists who made history and the other three to the three kingdoms just mentioned.

The visit experience was designed to be engaging through the implementation of a multimedia path with the use of tablets and apps (NatLab available for [Android](#) and [Apple](#)). The multimedia path allows the visitors to deepen, through the use of viewers, the knowledge of the alien species of the archipelago territory, making visitors virtual sentinels of **biodiversity**. Through augmented reality, the visitors learn to recognize the alien species of the Park, to find them in the surrounding environment and to assess the environmental risks and threats associated with their spread.

Room 1 – Naturalists in history

In the first room 6 important naturalists of history await the visitors and welcome them with a phrase that has distinguished their studies.

Room 2 – Water room

In this room the 7 islands of the Tuscan Archipelago are represented, and it is highlighted that water is a limiting factor for the dispersion and diffusion of species.

Room 3 – Earth room

This room shows a cross-section of the terrestrial environment with all the animals that live above and below the ground, outlining almost all the natural trophic rings.

Room 4 – Air room

This room houses all those representatives of small fauna, which are considered excellent flyers, such as species of significant butterflies for the Tuscan Archipelago, Dragonflies, Wasps and Antlions. In this room a projector projects images of birds from the Tuscan Archipelago, making the visit even more impressive. In a niche there is a panel that explains the importance of pollinators and the honeybee.



Room 1- Naturalists in history



Butterfly collection

Further information

The NAT-LAB is an unexpected journey to discover the fabulous little world that inhabits our planet. The museum hosts entomological, zoological and botanical collections of the Tuscan Archipelago with specimens from the islands and an educational center equipped to enhance the environmental heritage. The visit to the museum is an engaging multimedia journey, an incredible macro-micro world to discover biodiversity.

From its creation to today, the Nat Lab has hosted numerous initiatives which have ranged from visits to the museum, workshops, courses, conferences, conventions, summer schools and much more.

Project Team

- WBA: World Biodiversity Association is a no-profit Association formed by naturalists, botanists, zoologists and simple nature lovers involved in studying and conserving the biodiversity hot-spots all over the world.
- Tuscan Archipelago National Park.



Education on biodiversity aimed at young people



Naturalistic sketchbook course