

Volunteer work programme information package



Marsican brown bear



Sirente Velino Regional Park

Dear Volunteers,

We would like to welcome you to our **Traineeship Programmes** for our projects [*Bear Smart Community*](#) and [*A passage for the bear*](#).

You will find below a general programme, which may vary according to weather conditions and locations, because we may need to arrange agreements with local institutions – especially nature reserves and national parks – on some specific activities. We offer traineeships of 1-12 months for groups of students who will possibly arrive and depart all together. Please, read the following programme and choose the best period for your traineeship, possibly concentrating arrivals on these dates:

- 1st week of February
- 1st week of April
- 1st week of June
- 1st week of August.

Creating a Bear Smart Community in the home range of the **Marsican brown bear** (*Ursus arctos marsicanus*, Altobello 1921) is an ambitious task and we do rely on your skills and abilities to achieve this important goal.

What is a Bear Smart Community?

The **Bear Smart Community** programme consists of a set of **proactive conservation measures to prevent conflicts between humans and bears** and educate local communities on how to coexist with bears. This project is in progress in the area of Pettorano sul Gizio and Rocca Pia and received a grant from IBA ([*International Association for Bear Research & Management*](#)) in the years 2015-2017.

Conflicts with humans occur more often in areas that bears are gradually recolonising. Scientists agree that the conservation of this **critically endangered** brown bear population is strictly dependent on its ability to spread into suitable territories. Our project ***A passage for the bear*** aims to favour this vital

process. AISPA ([Anglo Italian Society for the Protection of Animals](#)) is supporting this conservation project with yearly donations.

General programme of the traineeship

Scientific research

- Camera trap management (systematic and random wildlife monitoring)
- Study of man/bear relationship
- Monitoring of bear presence in the study areas
- Wildlife observations



Gioia Vecchio, municipality of Gioia dei Marsi



Marsican brown bear

Scientific research in agreement with protected areas

- **Female bears with cubs count** (FWC, only in agreement with the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park)
- **Chamois count**
- **Deer count**
- **Nightjar count**
- **Wolf howling**
- **Road kill monitoring**
- **Birds of prey count**

NB: These activities are dependent on agreements with protected areas authorities and their availability. So, please, consider them as optional.

Structure management

- Construction and maintenance of electric fences
- Setting up road reflex reflectors, road signs and delineators for road ecology purposes
- Cleaning of underpasses for road ecology purposes
- Removal of waste from natural environments
- Removal of barbed wire from the natural environment



- Control of the efficiency of bear-proof waste bins
- Pruning of wild or abandoned fruit trees to increase food sources for bears and other species outside the urban centres

Communication

- Writing or reviewing articles for the association newsletter
- Organisation of public events and fundraising events
- Help in writing pages on social networks regarding the traineeship's activities

Education/Learning by doing

- GPS elementary course
- Course of cartography
- Advance wildlife monitoring techniques (trail camera setting and management; observation by binoculars or telescopes; identification of wildlife signs of presence and their eventual collection for genetic analysis etc.)

Knowledge, skills and competences to acquire by the end of the traineeship (expected Learning Outcomes)

- Knowledge of the best practices of wildlife management (especially in mitigating conflicts between man and large carnivores)
- Skills and competences in wildlife monitoring
- Knowledge, skills and competences in electrical fences installation and maintenance
- Skills and competences in the use of GPS
- Road ecology techniques for the mitigation of wildlife-vehicle collisions
- Skills and competences in data collection and process
- Skills and competences in dissemination of the bear smart community's best practices
- Skills in the organisations of events and activities to raise local people's environmental awareness
- Skills and competences in the identification of botanical and faunal species
- Knowledge of Italian language, culture and traditions

Evaluation plan

- Weekly report: at the end of every week, the volunteer will report the actions performed and their effectiveness to the volunteer supervisor
- Scientific research: the volunteer will conduct a scientific research about a specific issue related to the conservation of the bear or other wildlife species or their environments



Lake of Barrea, ALMNP



Sperone, hamlet of Gioia dei Marsi

Hikes (once a month)

- Hike in the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park
- Hike in Majella National Park
- Hike in the Gran Sasso and Monti della Laga National Park
- Hike in Sirente Velino Regional Park
- Hike in the Monte Genzana Alto Gizio Nature Reserve
- Hike in Montagne della Duchessa Nature Reserve
- Hike in Abetina di Rosello Nature Reserve
- Hike in Zompo Lo Schioppo Nature Reserve

In-kind contribution from Salviamo l'Orso

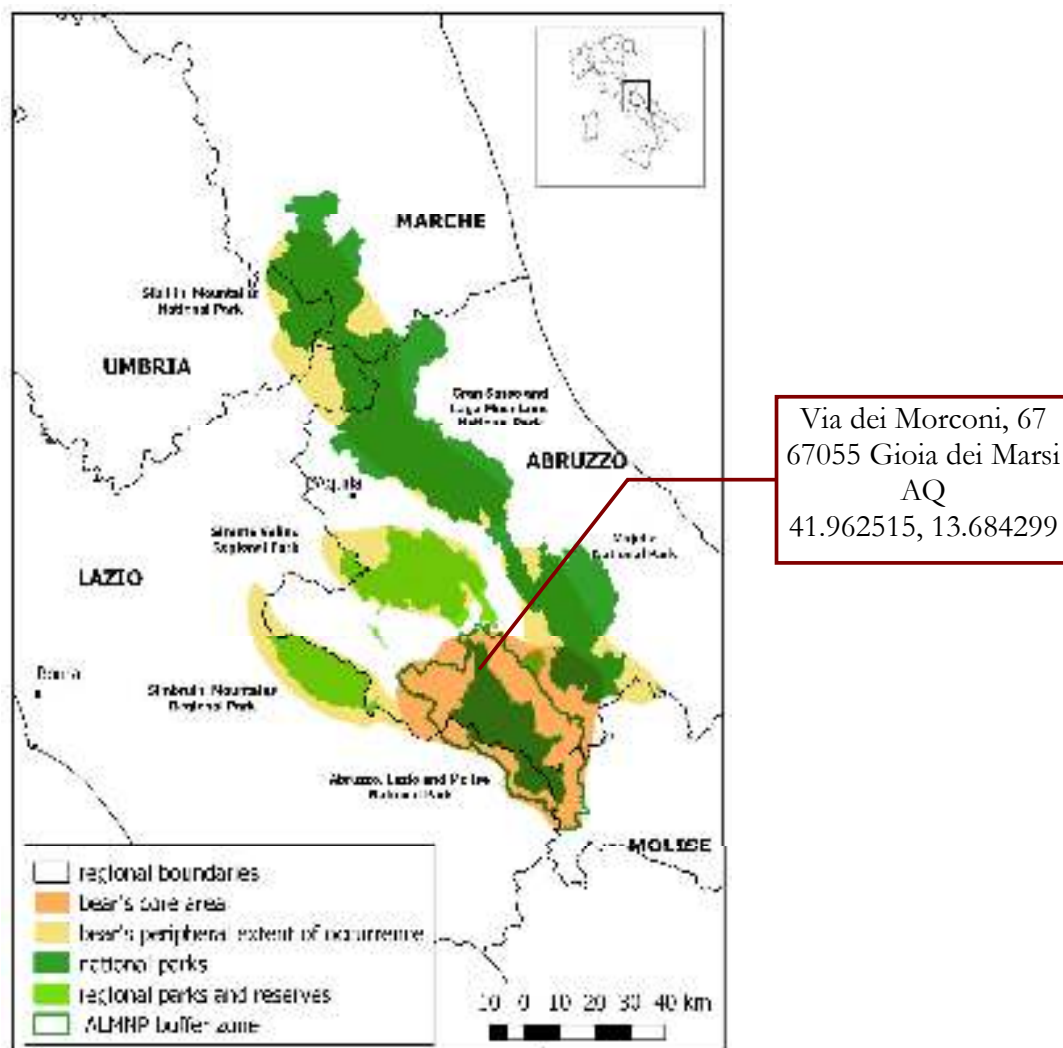
- First aid equipment
- Salviamo l'Orso's t-shirts
- Binoculars
- Trail cameras
- Walkie-talkies
- Working tools
- Working gloves and other personal protective equipment
- Reflective vests for road ecology interventions

Salviamo l'Orso's volunteers and Erasmus Plus trainees will play a key role in this programme. Please, use the above equipment with care and return it (except for t-shirts) to us at the end of the traineeship in the original conditions.

Number of traineeship hours per week: 40 (we will be flexible do not worry).

Territory

The map below shows the current Marsican brown bear home range. The project will be set in a part of the bear's core range, in particular at the border of the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park and its buffer zone (ZPE) in the Communes of Marsica and in the Sirente Velino Regional Park. The accommodation is located at about 20-minute drive from one of the best vantage points for bear watching in Europe.



Map of the current Marsican brown bear distribution.

Transports

By car: from A 25 motorway Rome-Pescara, exit at Pescara, then road SS83 Marsicana towards Gioia dei Marsi for about 15 Km.

From Naples: from A1 motorway, exit at Cassino, then State Road Sora – Cassino, exit Avezzano, SP 20 towards Pescara, then SS83 towards Gioia dei Marsi.

By train: Trains from Rome, Pescara or L'Aquila to Avezzano or Pescara. Info: Trenitalia

By bus: TUA buses from Rome-Pescara and TUA and SATAM buses from Pescara-Naples. TUA buses Avezzano-Gioia dei Marsi.



From Rome, you can take TUA buses from Tiburtina station to Sulmona (about 1-hour trip) and then the sub-urban bus to Gioia dei Marsi. TUA and SATAM buses from Naples leaves from Stazione Garibaldi, buses from Pescara leave from the Bus Terminal, in the square in front of the Central railway station.

By plane: The closest airports are the [Abruzzo airport](#) in Pescara or Ciampino and Fiumicino airports in Rome. Who arrives in Rome's airport can take a [Prontobus](#) to **Avezzano** (the closest stop to the accommodation) directly from the airport. The trip takes about 1.5-2 hours (it depends on the traffic in Rome).

Those who want to spend a day or few hours visiting the Eternal City of Rome can take a train or a bus to Avezzano from Tiburtina station (underground line B). You will get to Avezzano in about 1 hour by bus and 2 hours by train.

Accommodation

Costs

300 € a month per volunteer including accommodation in a house with a large garden (heating, Wi-Fi, power and water consumption expenditures included), membership fee, tutoring and Italian incident and public liability insurance*.

Accommodation availability: 8 people in shared rooms (max 4 people in each room).

*To have also an insurance from the country of origin would be desirable.

Please, be responsible of the good maintenance of the accommodation and facilities for yourselves and following users.

Useful contacts

Please, write to volontariato@salviamolorso.it to get in touch with SLO's contact person. Once on the spot, we will provide the number of a volunteer, who can help you in town.

Carabinieri	Pronto soccorso	Carabinieri forestali	Vigili del Fuoco
112	118	1515	115

Nearest urgent care health services

The hospital of Pescina (about 10-minute drive from Casali d'Aschi) in Via S. Rinaldi, tel. +39 0863 8991.

Equipment to bring with you from home

- A pair of strong trekking shoes,
- Breathable clothes,
- Cap
- Protective cream (you can buy it also on the spot)
- Sun glasses
- Warm clothes for the evening



- Rain jacket
- Fleece sweatshirt and a heavy jacket for wildlife observation at dawn/sunset
- Sleeping bag

It would be wonderful if you had a GPS programme on your mobile. You can bring also a compass, even though we will make sure that you do not get lost, do not worry.

Electricity supply in Italy is 220 volts with 3 pin wall sockets. **You may need adapters.**

General recommendations and rules of behaviour

We are all volunteering our time to carry out all necessary actions for the conservation of the Marsican brown bear. Any problem, request or doubt, please, feel free to inform the contact person or tell the Reserve's staff. As volunteers, you are not forced to do things against your will, but do not forget that this is a great opportunity to learn and help the environment, the bear and the local community to coexist. Please, remember that you represent Salviamo l'Orso at all times as this programme includes your membership, and any misbehaviour may affect your relationship with our association and your final evaluation. Please, follow these simple rules of behaviour and feel free to ask for any further clarification.

Salviamo l'Orso believes that all planned activities are within your reach, but do not be shy and inform your supervisor if you do not wish to undertake some of them, please.

Please, be aware that sometimes we may have activities also in the weekends, because, as an association of volunteers, working people are usually more available on Saturdays and Sundays. If you work during the weekend, we will give you some working days off as compensation.

Please, be aware that you will be in charge of valuable material (GPS, trail cameras, binoculars, telescope), which is property of Salviamo l'Orso and of the partner Nature Reserves or National Parks. So, handle it with care.

Refrain from using any part of house equipment outside not to damage it, affecting the comfort of the next guests.

Inform the supervisor about any ill functioning of house systems so that our staff can fix the problem as soon as possible.

Dispose your waste according to local laws.

Please, do not wear earphones while you are in a natural environment to be able to listen to all sounds of nature. Refrain from talking loud not to scare animals, unless you do it on purpose to make them aware of your presence and avoid a potentially dangerous situation.

Please, communicate with a 1-2 day notice your arrival in Rome or Pescara so that our volunteers can pick up you on time at the closest arrival hub.

Never forget to inform the contact person if you are going on a trip.

Do not forget to give us your mobile phone number so that we can contact you if needed. We recommended you to buy an Italian SIM card once here (at least one a group).

Be eco-friendly in all your behaviour.

Have a pleasant journey and a wonderful experience!