

DEBELI RTIČ: A NEW LOOK AT AN OLD MARINE PROTECTED AREA

DEBELI RTIČ: NOV POGLED NA STARO ZAVAROVANO MORSKO OBMOČJE

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ABSTRACT

Debeli rtič is the northernmost Slovenian peninsula in the Gulf of Trieste close to the Italian border. The whole peninsula is characterized by mostly naturally preserved coastline and sea. It consists of two cliffs (*Valdoltra* and *Debeli rtič*) and a shallow silty bay of *Sv. Jernej*. All these sites are of great importance from the conservation point of view and enjoy, according to the Slovenian legislation, nature conservation status from several aspects: ecologically important areas, valuable natural features, and Natura 2000 sites. The cliffs, salt meadows, underwater meadows, algal beds, and sandbanks constitute significant habitats both within the Slovene and European frameworks. Among the numerous marine species, some rare and endangered ones are especially worth mentioning, such as *Pinna nobilis*, *Pholas dactylus* and *Hippocampus guttulatus*. In 2009, even a *Caretta caretta* turtle was seen some 200 metres from the coast. Despite the high natural value all around the peninsula, only a small part in the extreme part of the cape is protected as a natural monument by a municipal decree from 1991, based on the former Law on Natural and Cultural Heritage.

IZVLEČEK

Debeli rtič, ki leži v Tržaškem zalivu blizu italijanske meje, je najsevernejši slovenski polotok. Njegova poglobitna značilnost sta večinoma naravno ohranjena obala in morje. Sestoji iz dveh klifov (*Valdoltra* in *Debeli rtič*) in plitkega muljastega zaliva *Sv. Jernej*. Vse te lokalitete so izjemnega naravovarstvenega pomena in na osnovi slovenske zakonodaje zaščitene kot ekološko pomembna območja, dragocene naravne vrednote in območja Nature 2000. Klifa, slani travniki, podvodni travniki, zaplate alg in peščena obrežja so pomembni rastlinski in živalski habitati tako na slovenski kot evropski ravni. Med mnogimi morskimi bitji so posebne omembe vredne nekatere redke in ogrožene vrste, kot na primer leščur (*Pinna nobilis*), datljevka (*Pholas dactylus*) in dolgonosi morski konjiček (*Hippocampus guttulatus*). Leta 2009 je bila 200 m od obale opažena celo kareta (*Caretta caretta*). Kljub izjemni naravni vrednosti celotnega polotoka, je z občinskim odlokom iz leta 1991 (na osnovi nekdanjega Zakona o naravni in kulturni dediščini) kot naravni spomenik zaščiten le majhen del skrajnega dela rta.

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