

The springs are found where the base of the Cansiglio Cavallo massif meets the foothills, where there are practically impermeable rocks called Miocene conglomerates. The waters reemerge at the surface from three groups of springs: **San-tissima, Molineto and Gorgazzo**. All of the springs originate from the barrier created by the system of thrust faults on the Caneva - Mania-go Line. They contain very low levels of magnesium, indicating that the waters come from an area of almost exclusively limestone formations.

Livenza springs

The Palù di Livenza area, also known as Palù della Santissima, is a wetland spreading across the natural basin between the Cansiglio plateau and the hill of Longone, where the Livenza springs emerge, crossing the municipalities of Caneva and Polcenigo.



The toponym Palù, refers to the historical presence of Paliu are natural landscapes found in certain areas of Veneto and Friuli regions in north-eastern Italy. They are clay-rich lands at a lower altitude than the surrounding landscape. This means that water tends to collect, replenishing the saturated zone and feeding the Fontane Bianche natural springs. This landscape of wet meadows, ditches and bordering plant life is unique in Italy and in Europe.

What is a Palù?



FOR MORE INFORMATION

July and August

Infopoint in Longone (Caneva)
Tel. +39 389 6251918

Infopoint in Santissima (Polcenigo)
Tel. +39 389 6187125

Monday to Friday, throughout the year

Municipality of Caneva Tel. +39 0434 797465

Municipality of Polcenigo Tel. +39 0434 74001



Scan the QR code to discover activities, events, restaurants and accommodation in and around Caneva and Polcenigo.



DETAILS OF THE PALÙ TRAIL

Hike
 Distance ↔ 2.8km
 Duration ⌚ 45min - 1hr 15min
 Ascent ▲ 11m
 Descent ▼ 11m
 Height above sea level 33m / 28m

The new visitor centre

Palù di Livenza will soon be home to a new **visitor centre** covering 1,000 square metres, built into the surrounding environment and preserving the local archaeological landscape. **The project will attempt to capture the history of an ancient prehistoric village**, structured over time to exploit natural resources, **illustrating a largely invisible archaeological heritage for today's visitors.**



Palù di LIVENZA

Caneva • Polcenigo



UNESCO World Heritage natural-interest and pile-dwelling site

Activities in the Palù di Livenza area

The Palù di Livenza area contains signposted **archaeological and nature trails** that guide you around the most picturesque and historically important sites.

These trails offer easy, relaxing walks without any particular challenges. A good pair of trainers is all you need.

Palù di Livenza is part of the **Cammino di San Cristoforo**, a journey through a little-discovered area far from busy tourist destinations, where you can explore villages, hills and valleys steeped in history and tradition.

Guided educational tours can be organised for school groups (booking required).

During the summer, you can **explore the Livenza river and surrounding environment free of charge on small electric boats.**



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Why is Palù di Livenza so important?

Prehistoric pile dwellings represent invisible cultural heritage, the value of which is only revealed

through scientific excavations and close analysis of the many archaeological finds. The Palù archaeological site has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2011. Research and protection of this site are entrusted to the Archaeological Authority that handled the application process launched in 2009.

World Heritage status represents a further incentive to protect this unique heritage.

Pole-dwelling villages are crucial to developing an understanding of the most ancient European civilisation and how it adapted to the wetland areas of the Alpine region.



Excavations

The variety of vegetation and the wetland environment give this place its unique charm, made even more special by the fact that it has been used by humans since prehistoric times and is home to a now-buried pile-dwelling village.



The finds

The peak of human settlement of the site was in the Neolithic Age, between approx. 4,500 and 3,600 BC. Recent excavations have allowed us to establish three distinct periods of Neolithic settlement, with intervening periods in which the area was abandoned. The three layers of deposits identified have preserved many **wooden architectural elements of the huts** (piles driven into the ground, foundation plinths and stakes for fixing and consolidating structures) and **many ceramic and stone objects, as well as food remains**. Less common but illuminating finds include wooden objects that reveal various aspects of daily life: the use of boats, storage of goods or liquids in containers, agricultural work, carpentry and domestic tasks. Terracotta **pintaderas** have also been discovered. The term pintadera, from the Portuguese, refers to stamps used for the application of body paint or the decoration of fabrics. However these may also have been used to mark soft materials such as butter, wax, dough, bread and clay, before cooking. These objects enabled the creation of various decorative patterns: parallel lines, lattices, zig-zags, repeating circles and spirals. Interesting palaeobotanical findings tell us more about the agri-



cultural activity and the resilient habitat of the past, populated by red deer, roe deer and wild boar. Research has also uncovered a kind of **"Neolithic chewing gum"**.

Small lumps of birch pitch have been discovered with human teeth marks demonstrating that this substance was chewed, perhaps for its antiseptic and anti-inflammatory properties, or simply for pleasure.

A range of archaeological finds are on display at the Friuli Occidentale-Castello di Torre Archaeological Museum in Pordenone.

The Palù di Livenza biotope: a resource to protect



A biotope is a relatively limited area of an environment home to specific plants or animals of a single or multiple species. It is therefore the component of the ecosystem with abiotic (non-living) factors, such as the soil and its physical and chemical composition, considered along with the biological component.

The Palù di Livenza biotope, previously a lake that evolved into a marshland, was drained by humans who used it primarily for agricultural land and hay meadows.

Classification of the biotope, located to the southwest in the municipality of Polcenigo, was established in 2018. This recognised **the presence of environmental characteristics, flora and fauna of particular importance and globally under threat**. The site is a wetland fed by spring waters and acts as an **important location for the reproduction of various amphibian species**, many of which have national and international protected status. In fact, the various species of amphibians are those most heavily affected by anthropic impacts, including habitat alteration and the presence of the "Pedemontana Occidentale" Provincial Road no. 29, built at the end of the sixties.



Biodiversity of plant species

Palù di Livenza is a place of great natural interest, and home to a variety of species of wetland birds, animals and plants. 330 different plant species have been identified. Studies have distinguished between different types of habitat, based on the different plants found. Various prized species of aquatic plants have been identified within the biotope.



Inhabitants of the Palù area

Typical wetland bird and animal species can be found in Palù di Livenza throughout the year, including aquatic birds, amphibians, reptiles and insects.



Indicators such as tracks, excrement, dens, animal remains and burrows demonstrate the presence of mammals, unlikely to be spotted during the day.

