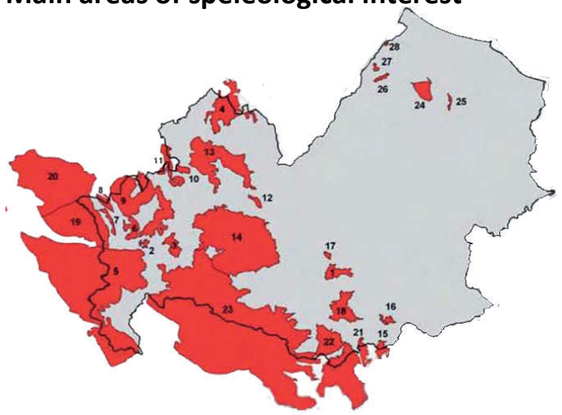
MOLISE SPELEOLOGICAL

SSI SOCIETÁ SPELEOLOGICA ITALIANA

Associazione Speleologi Molisani

Molise occupies an area of 4,437 km^2, of which about 19% consists of carbonate rocks and 0.1% of evaporitic outcrops (Messinian gypsum) located in the Monti Frentani. The karst areas are concentrated in the Lagonegrese-Molise area, which occupies the remaining 80%.

Main areas of speleological interest



KARST WATERS

Among the areas of speleological interest, Monti del Matese, Monti di Frosolone, Monti di Venafro, Meta-Mainarde massif and the gypsum of the central Frentani Mountains stand out. Molise is a mountainous and orographically articulated region. The main peaks and some Apennine plateaus reach 2,242 m of Monte Meta, 2,050 m of Monte Miletto in the Monti del Matese, 1,746 m of Monte Campo in the Alto Molise and 1,452 m of Montagnola in the Monti di Frosolone.

Many peaks of the sub-Apennines do not exceed 1,000 meters from which the territory slopes towards the sea through a complex system of clayey hills in which outcrops of compact sand and sandstones, typical of the Molise landscape, are very frequent.

Molise is also a very rich region of underground water resources in karst aquifers.

Most of the springs, which are collected for drinking water, also feed some aqueducts of the neighbouring regions of Campania and Puglia. The extreme environmental quality of karst areas, although not accompanied by targeted protection actions by the competent administrations, still guarantees, however, a good quality of water distributed in population centres, industrial centres and tourist locations.

A large part of the surface hydrographic network is fed by the most important karst sources that feed the main basins of the Volturno, Biferno and Trigno rivers.

SPELEOLOGICAL ACTIVITIES

In Molise there is only one speleological association which today has about 25 members, the “Associazione Speleologi Molisani” (ASM). Unfortunately, three other speleological groups, the Frisolo Speleological Group, of Frosolone, the Campobasso Caving Group and the Molise Caving Group, are no longer active, the latter two, progressively, merging into the current ASM. Up until a few years ago, an unidentified speleological group existed in Isernia, whose members operated mainly in the province of Isernia. The Cadastre of Natural Cavities is managed by the “Associazione Speleologi Molisani” and currently it has records for 82 cadastral caves fo r the whole region, although it is known that there are 113 caves; many others are just pointed on map. In Molise there are no tourist caves; moreover, the predominantly vertical development of most of the natural cavities does not allow even a "speleoturistica" visit, except for very rare cases.

THE MAIN CAVES OF MOLISE

NAME	Development (m)	Depth (m)
Pozzo della Neve	7000	-1045
Cul di Bove	3640	-906
Capo Quirino	2050	+ 100
Ianara	1000	+ 64
Risorgenza Vomero	440	+ 15
Buca del Vento	358	-35
Grotta di Colle Bianco	243	-15

THE MAIN AREAS OF SPELEOLOGICAL INTEREST

1	Monte Vairano
2	Unità di Colli a Volturno
3	Unità La Romana
4	Monte Campo
5	Monti di Venafro
6	Unità di Rocchetta a Volturno
7	Unità di Monte S. Michele
8	Unità di Monte La Rocca
9	Unità di Montenero Valcocchiara
10	Unità di Monte di Mezzo
11	Unità di Monte Pagano
12	Sub-unità di M.te Capraro - M.te Ferrante
13	Monte Capraro - M.te Ferrante
14	Monti di Frosolone
15	Unità Colle San Martino
16	Unità di Colle Saraceno
17	Unità di Oratino
18	Unità del monte La Rocca
19	Catena delle Mainarde
20	Monti della Meta
21	Unità di Collalto
22	Monte Tre Confini - Monte Moschiaturo
23	Monti del Matese
24	Gessi Frentani affioramento di Montecilfone
25	Gessi Frentani affioramento di Guglionesi
26	Gessi Frentani - affioramento primo di Mafalda
27	Gessi Frentani - affioramento secondo di Mafalda
28	Gessi Frentani - affioramento di Montenero di Bisaccia