

Italian Dolomites

Holiday Report
30 June - 7 July 2015



Armeria maritima alpina

Greenwings Wildlife Holidays

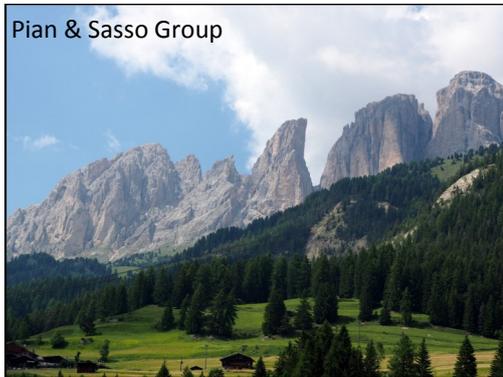
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Introduction

The Dolomites are a distinctive and beautiful area that takes its name from the crystalline magnesium limestone rocks that make up the peaks that tower vertically above the valleys. The shape of these mountains is unique, having risen out of the sea around 250 million years ago. Ice and wind modelled the rocks creating the steep walls, towering spires and pinnacles typical of these mountains which have always been a source of wonder and a favourite destination of rock climbers. The crevices hold a distinctive flora of magnesium loving plants.



The holiday was based in the Val di Fassa, in the village of Campitello, at a very hospitable family run hotel. Valle di Fassa lies in the north-east part of Trentino on the borders of the province of Bolzano and Belluno. The river Avisio flows through the valley and it is surrounded by the most spectacular and famous Dolomite peaks, such as the Sella Group, Sassolungo, and the Catinaccio with the Torri del Vajolet and the Marmolada. The Val di Fassa is one of the places of the area where Ladin, the oldest language in the Alpine region is still spoken.

From our base in pretty Campitello we explored the valleys of the area on day-long but easy walks and visited a number of different habitats to enjoy as wide a range for flora and fauna as possible.

The guests who joined us were Margaret, Una and Judy. The tour was led by Yiannis Christofides

Day 1: Tuesday 30th June

We had late afternoon arrivals from London at Marco Polo airport in Venice, where we were met by Yiannis and our bus. The transfer to our destination to Campitello di Fassa passed through the dramatic scenery of the Dolomites and gave us a taste of things to come during the following days in this wonderful part of Italy.

Day 2: Wednesday 1st July

It was cloudy but warm on our first day in **Campitello**, clearing up later. We set off from Campitello in the morning on our first walk towards Canazei through meadows and woodland. We started to examine the walls by the road, finding *Thymus serpyllum*, *Acinos alpinus*, *Campanula cochlearifolia*, *Plantago media*, Wall rue fern.



We soon met the first of the banks which were adorned with a riot of colourful plants. We started identifying the commoner ones, which were the pink *Onobrychis montana*, blue *Salvia pratensis*,



Amanda's Blue

pink *Aster alpinus*, white *Leucanthemum*, *Scabiosa dipsacifolia*, yellow *Rhinanthus*. Dotted here and there the orange *Lilium bulbiferum* was beginning to flower. Butterflies were also flying about and we saw beautiful Apollo, Small blue, Amanda's blue and Small tortoiseshell.

We then moved to a path through forest with a different habitat. Here we found the bright pink cushion plant *Saponaria ocymoides*, *Bupthalmum salicifolium*, *Polygonatum odoratum*, both *Prunella vulgaris* and *P. grandiflora*. *Gymnadenia albida* was growing in profusion on the banks. A patch of *Campanula scheuchzeri* was seen. *Cirsium eristhales*, Melancholy thistle, and *Cirsium helenoides*, Sad thistle, as well as *Aquilegia atrata* were growing by the path.

A small detour produced several spikes of *Corallorhiza trifida*, *Neottia nidus-avis*, *Pyrola media* and *Orthillia secunda*. Other plants suited to a woodland habitat were also found such as whorled Solomon's seal, *Polygonatum verticillatum*.

We were in Canazei by now and as it was lunchtime we made our way through the village to a site near the river and had our lunch there. The nearby meadow provided *Gentianella germanica* and Heath Butterflies.

We then crossed to the other side of the river and walked by the edge of a wood, looking for typical woodland plants. We saw *Geranium sylvaticum*, *G. pratense*, *Moneses uniflora*, *Saxifraga rotundifolia* and *Saxifraga paniculata* growing on a rock.

We then came across a wonderful meadow which was full of Titania's Fritillaries. On the edge of the woodland we came upon a plant that perplexed us for a while, but eventually we realised it was *Ranunculus aconitifolius*. Our search for *Lilium martagon* continued until we found 3 plants with flowers almost ready to open. Nearby grew *Veratrum album*. Butterflies seen at this spot included Small Blue, Wood White, Red Admiral, Nettle-tree *Libythea celtis*, Mazarine blue, Amanda's blue, Titania's Fritillary, plus Large and Essex skippers. Other notable insects seen included the almost black Chimney sweeper moth.



Titania's Fritillary



Lilium martagon

Day 3: Thursday 2nd July



Today we took a bus to Alba di Canazei and then ski lift to Ciampedel. We started to walk up from the lift station and to explore the meadows there. Common plants here were *Pedicularis verticillata*, *Potentilla crantzii* and *Ranunculus montanus*. As we moved higher we began to find the last plants of *Pulsatilla alpina* ssp. *apiifolia* and *Troillus europaeus*. Other plants here were *Bartsia alpina*, *Gentiana acaulis*, *Gentiana verna*, *Gentiana germanica* and *Homogyne alpina*. As we started looking closer in the turf we found *Veronica bellidifolia* and *V. serpyllum*. We had by now climbed up the slope and could see patches of *Rhododendron ferrugineum* on the upper slopes. As we moved closer to see them we found *Nigritella nigra* in perfect condition as well as *Gymnadenia albida*, *G. odoratissima* and *G. viride* (Frog orchid).

We then started to move sideways across the valley where there was still *Pulsatilla vernalis* still in flower, *Leucanthemopsis alpina* and *Anemone baldensis*. On rocks we found wonderful *Sempervivum montanum* and *Phyteuma globulariifolium* in flower. Next to an area with a patch of snow we found *Soldanella alpina* and *S. pusilla* still in flower. Moving through some scree we found *Geum reptans* going over but still good *Papaver rhaeticum*. The weather had now turned thundery and we made a hasty retreat down the slope to catch the lift to the base station where our taxi was waiting for us.

Day 4: Friday 3rd July

We set off from **Campitello** towards **Pian**, revisiting the meadows by the track we were following. We saw *Erigeron atticus*, *Campanula persicifolia*, *Polygala nicaeënsis*, *Lathyrus pratensis*. Butterflies were much in evidence with Apollo, Mazarine blue, Small Tortoiseshell, Red Admiral and Large White on the wing, amongst a few others.

We soon came to the village of **Pian**, above Campitello where traditional building architecture and lifestyle hadn't changed for a very long time. The meadows were starting to be cut but there were still large areas full of blue *Salvia pratensis*, *Tragopogon dubius*, *Onobrychis montanum*, yellow *Rhinanthus* and *Lilium bulbiferum*.



On moving past Pian the habitat changed to woodland. We started to explore a small gulley where we found the remains of *Cypripedium calceolus*, many *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, *Gymnadenia albida*, *G. odoratissima*, *Tofieldia calyculata*,

Paederota bonarota and then along the path *Botrychium lunaria* and the thin spikes of what proved to be *Malaxis monophylla*, the **White adder's mouth** orchid. Other plants seen were *Clematis alpina*, *Thesium alpinum* and *Aquilegia atrata*. Lunch was enjoyed in beautiful meadow full of golden yellow *Crepis aurea* and lots of Arran Brown and False Heath Fritillary butterflies.



Arran Brown



False Heath Fritillary

We had reached the valley Duron proper by now and started to explore the meadows. We found *Nigritella nigra*, the black vanilla orchid, as well as several spikes of the rare *Traunsteineria globosa*. The weather had now turned and there was approaching thunder, so we took shelter in a refuge and availed ourselves of some strudel, before walking back to Campitello.

Day 5: Saturday 4th July

Once more we caught the cable car, to go up to Col Rodela this time. At the top the impressive mountain ranges of Sasso Lungo, Marmolada and the Selva mountains towered all around us. We then set off to explore an area of igneous rock next to the cable car station. Many interesting plants were also seen here such as *Linaria alpina*, *Achillea clavenna*, *Oxytropis jacquinii*, *Myosotis alpestris* and *Veronica fruticans*.



Potentilla nitida

Moving down the slope we found bright pink patches of *Armeria maritima* ssp. *alpina*, bright green cushions of *Saxifraga facchini*, *S. paniculata* and *Phyteuma globulariifolium*. Then an unexpected gem turned up, the pink flowers of *Potentilla nitida*, sitting amongst silver foliage and just coming into flower. We paused to take our photos and pleasure in seeing this lovely flower, before moving on.

As we were near the refuge at the top, at 2,450m we stopped there for coffee on their rooftop

terrace, where a Chough was enticed with pieces of strudel. We also had a close view of Snow finch in the same area. As we started to descend we found a patch of *Leontopodium alpinum*, Edelweiss, with several plants in flower. A good stand of *Hedysarum hedysaroides* overlooked the precipice down to Campitello.



Moving down to the lower slope we found the last plants of *Primula farinosa*, had lunch and then moved to explore the slope on the other side of the valley. There we found more *Hedysarum hedysaroides*, *Astragalus alpinus* and many *Nigritella nigra* orchids. It was now late afternoon when we retraced our steps back to the cable station and descended to Campitello. We then walked for a while along the river where were found *Pinguicula vulgaris* and the first plants of Martagon Lily in flower.

Day 6: Sunday 5th July

It was sunny today as we returned to Ciampac to explore the high altitude meadows. Whilst walking to the second lift station we found a new Gentian, *G. nivalis* with branched stems and *Campanula barbata*. We then took the chair lift to the high peak and continued on to the ridge. We found *Phyteuma globulariifolium* again, and soon after many rosettes of *Eritrichium nanum* (King of the Alps). Two orchids were spotted below the path, *Orchis ovalis* and *Traunsteineria globosa*, as well as many *Nigritella nigra*. The ridge way was very steep so we retraced our steps back to the lower slopes, finding *Trifolium alpinum* and *Pinguicula leptoceras* on the way. Lunch was at the disused cable car station and then we carried on exploring the slopes on the other side of the valley, finding *Soldanella* still in flower, good plants of *Geum reptans*, *Papaver rhaeticum*, and *Anemone baldensis*. New plants found were *Thlaspi rotundifolium*. We then continued to explore the slopes and rocks finding wonderful *Paederota bonarota* and *Potentilla nitida*, unfortunately too high up the slope. We then made our return to the lift station only to discover another gem, *Parnassia palustris* growing in profusion by the station.



Day 7: Monday 6th July

Rain was forecast this morning as we set off to visit the meadows above Campitello but in fact it never materialised. We saw the familiar plants we've been seeing all week, some going over. The meadows were also in the process of being cut. *Sedum acre* and *S. album* were seen growing on the walls on the way up and *Herniaria glabra* in the cracks in the pavement. We finally found a plant of *Epipactis atrorubens* in full flower by the side of the track.



As we climbed higher we saw that the meadow we had been aiming for had been cut and with it all the orchids that were growing there, including the special *Orchis ustulata* that we had come to see. However looking in a nearby meadow we found two specimens still in good flower. We then moved to the higher edge of the meadow where a few plants of *Linum viscum* had survived the cut. We then explored a little track into the woodland finding *Corallorhiza trifida*, *Neottia ovata*, one specimen of *Malaxis monophyllos* and many *Dactylorhiza fuchsia*, *Gymnadenia conopsea* and several spikes of *Goodyera reptans* still in bud. We retraced our steps looking at butterflies and saw Ringlets, Meadow brown, Red Admiral and Clouded Yellow. At lunchtime two Buzzards circled overhead. It was now very hot and we decided to return to the hotel for a rest.

Day 8: Tuesday 7th July

It was time to leave the Dolomites for our respective flights home or extended stay to enjoy a little of what Venice has to offer. It had been a superb week full of flowers, butterflies and other wildlife, with a thoroughly nice group. A heartfelt thank you must go to everyone for helping make the trip so enjoyable to lead.



Photo Gallery



Cirsium eristhales



Clematis alpina



Coeloglossum viridis

Doronicum clusii



Pyrola minor



Gentiana acaulis



Linaria alpina



Papaver rhaeticum



Pedicularis recutita



Parnassia palustris



Phyteuma globulariifolium



Saxifraga aizoides



Saxifraga paniculata





Veronica bellidifolia



Veronica fruticans

Italian Dolomite Checklist 2015

Day	DATE	Locations & Weather
1	30th June	Arrival
2	1st July	Walked from Campitello to Canazei through a forest track. Hot and sunny
3	2nd July	Taxi to Alba di Canazei and cable car to Ciampac. fine in the morning, rain in the late afternoon
4	3rd July	Campitello to Pian, then into the val Duron. Return straight down. Fine in the morning, much rain in the afternoon
5	4th July	Campitello to Col Rodela and area around there. In the late afternoon by the river in Campitello. Hot and sunny
6	5th July	Return to Ciampac, high slopes. Weather good.
7	6th July	Meadows above Campitello. Hot and sunny.
8	7th July	Departure

SCIENTIFIC NAME		
FERNS		
Asplenium ruta-murale		x
Asplenium serpentrionale		x
Botrychium lunaria		x
GYMNOSPERMS		
Pinaceae: pine		
Picea abies		x
ANGIOSPERMS: DICOTYLEDONS		
Apiaceae		
Heracleum sphondylium		x
Apocynaceae		
Vincetoxicum hirundinaria		x
Asteraceae		
Achillea clavennae		x
Achillea millefolium		x
Adenostyles alliariae		x
Antennaria dioica		x
Aster alpinus		x
Buphthalmium salicifolium		x
Carduus defloratus		x
Centaurea montana		x
Crepis aurea		x
Doronicum clusii		x
Homogyne alpina		x
Leontopodium alpinum		x
Leucanthemum vulgare		x
Leucanthemopsis alpina		x
Pilosella officinarum		x
Senecio incanus		x
Taraxacum agg.		x
Tragopogon dubius		x
Tussilago farfara		x
Berberidaceae		
Berberis sp.		x
Boraginaceae		
Echium vulgare		x
Eritrichium nanum		x
Myosotis alpestris		x
Myosotis sylvatica		x
Brassicaceae		
Arabis alpina ssp. caucasica		x
Biscutella laevigata		x
Pritzelago alpina		x
Thlaspi rotundifolium		x
Campanulaceae		
Campanula glomerata		x
Campanula barbata		x
Campanula cochlearifolia		x
Campanula persicifolia		x
Campanula spicata		x
Campanula scheuchzeri		x
Phyteuma sieberi		x
Phyteuma globulariifolium		x
Caryophyllaceae		
Cerastium uniflorum		x
Dianthus sylvestris		x
Herniaria glabra		x
Saponaria ocymoides		x
Silene acaulis		x
Silene doica		x

	SCIENTIFIC NAME	
	Silene nutans	x
	Stellaria nemorum	x
Cistaceae		
	Helianthemum nummularium	x
	Helianthemum oelandicum	x
Crassulaceae		
	Sedum album	x
	Sedum acre	x
	Sempervivum montanum	x
Dipsacaceae		
	Knautia arvensis	x
Ericaceae		
	Loiseleura procumbens	x
	Rhododendron ferrugineum	x
	Vaccinium myrtillus	x
Fabaceae		
	Anthyllis vulneraria	x
	Astragalus alpinus	x
	Astragalus leontinus	x
	Hedysarum hedysaroides	x
	Lotus alpinus	x
	Lotus corniculatus	x
	Onobrychis montana	x
	Ononis rotundifolia	x
	Trifolium alpinum	x
	Trifolium badium	x
	Trifolium montanum	x
	Trifolium pratense	x
	Trifolium repens	x
	Vicia cracca	x
	Vicia sepium	x
Gentianaceae		
	Gentiana acaulis	x
	Gentiana nivalis	x
	Gentiana punctata	x
	Gentiana verna	x
	Gentiana germanica	x
	Gentianella germanica	x
	Geraniaceae: geranium	
	Geranium pratense	x
	Geranium robertianum	x
	Geranium sylvaticum	x
Globulariaceae		
	Globularia cordifolia	x
Lamiaceae		
	Acinos alpinus	x
	Ajuga pyramidalis	x
	Horminum pyrenaicum	x
	Lamium album	x
	Prunella vulgaris	x
	Prunella grandiflora	x
	Salvia pratensis	x
	Stachys recta	x
	Teucrium montanum	x
	Thymus serpyllum	x
Lentibulariaceae		
	Pinguicula leptoceras	x
	Pinguicula vulgaris	x
Linaceae		
	Linum catharticum	x

	SCIENTIFIC NAME		
	Linum viscum		x
	Onagraceae		
	Epilobium angustifolium		x
	Orobanchaceae: broomrape		
	Bartsia alpina		x
	Melampyrum sylvaticum		x
	Orobanche gracilis		x
	Pedicularis recutitata		x
	Pedicularis verticillata		x
	Rhinanthus sp		x
	Oxalidaceae		
	Oxalis acetosella		x
	Papaveraceae		
	Chelidonium majus		x
	Papaver rhaeticum		x
	Plantaginaceae: plantain		
	Linaria alpina		x
	Paederota bonarota		x
	Plantago media		x
	Veronica bellidoides		x
	Veronica chamaedrys		x
	Veronica fruticans		x
	Veronica serpyllifolia		x
	Veronica spicata		x
	Veronica urticifolia		x
	Plumbaginaceae		
	Armeria maritima ssp. alpina		x
	Polygalaceae		
	Polygala alpestris	Mountain Milkwort	x
	Polygala nicaeensis	Nice Milkwort	x
	Polygonaceae		
	Persicaria vivipara	Alpine Bistort	x
	Persicaria bistorta	Common Bistort	x
	Primulaceae		
	Androsace obtusifolia	Blunt-leaved Rock Jasmine	x
	Primula farinosa	Birdseye Primrose	x
	Primula minima	Least Primrose	x
	Soldanella alpina	Alpine Snowbell	x
	Soldanella pusilla	Dwarf Snowbell	x
	Pyrolaceae		
	Moneses uniflora		x
	Orthillia secunda		x
	Pyrola media		x
	Pyrola minor		x
	Ranunculaceae		
	Actaea spicata		
	Anemone baldensis		x
	Aquilegia atrata		x
	Clematis alpina		x
	Pulsatilla alpina ssp. apiifolia		x
	Pulsatilla vernalis		x
	Ranunculus aconitifolius		x
	Ranunculus montanus		x
	Ranunculus pyrenaicus		x
	Trollius europaeus		x
	Resedaceae		
	Reseda luteola		
	Rosaceae		
	Aruncus dioica		x
	Dryas octopetala		x

SCIENTIFIC NAME		
Geum montanum		x
Geum rivale		x
Geum reptans		x
Potentilla crantzii		x
Potentilla erecta		x
Potentilla nitida		x
Rosa pendulina		x
Rubus idaeus		x
Sanguisorba minor agg.		x
Rubiaceae		
Galium verum		x
Santalaceae		
Thesium alpinum		x
Salicaceae		
Salix reticulata		x
Saxifragaceae: saxifrage		
Saxifraga aizoides		x
Saxifraga facchinii		x
Saxifraga paniculata		x
Saxifraga rotundifolia		x
Parnassia palustris		x
Scrophulariaceae		
Scrophularia canina		
Violaceae		
Viola biflora		x
Viola tricolor subsp. subalpina		x

MONOCOTYLEDONS		
Asparagaceae: asparagus		
Polygonatum odoratum		x
Polygonatum verticillatum		x
Colchicaceae		
Colchicum autumnale		x
Juncaceae		
Luzula nivalis		x
Liliaceae		
Lilium bulbiferum		x
Lilium martagon		x
Melanthiaceae		
Maianthemum bifolium		x
Paris quadrifolia		x
Orchidaceae		
Corallorhiza trifida		x
Cypripedium calceolus		x
Dactylorhiza fuchsii		x
Dactylorhiza viridis		x
Epipactis atrorubens		x
Gymnadenia albida		x
Gymnadenia conopsea		x
Gymnadenia odoratissima		x
Gymnadenia nigra		x
Herminium monorchis		x
Neottia nidus-avis		x
Neottia ovata		x
Orchis ovalis		x
Orchis ustulata		x
Platanthera bifolia		x
Traunsteinera globosa		x

	Poaceae	
	Briza media	X
	Tofieldiaceae	
	Tofieldia calyculata	X

ENGLISH NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME											
BIRDS												
Accipitridae												
Common Buzzard	Buteo buteo				x					x		
SparrowHawk			x									
Family Falconidae												
Kestrel	Falco tinnunculus							x				
Apodidae												
Common Swift	Apus apus		x	x	x							
Hirundinidae												
Crag Martin	Ptonoprogne rupestris		x	x	x	x						
Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica		x	x	x							
House Martin	Delichon urbica		x	x	x	x	x					
Motacillidae												
Tree Pipit	Anthus trivialis					x						
Meadow Pipit				x								
Grey Wagtail						x						
Turdidae												
Song Thrush	Turdus philomelos		x		x							
Mistle Thrush										x		
Ring Ouzel	Turdus torquatus								x			
Blackbird	Turdus merula					x						
Fieldfare			x									
Muscicapidae												
Robin	Erithacus rubecula					x						
Black Redstart	Phoenicurus ochruros		x	x	x			x	x			
Family Sylviidae												
Blackcap	Sylvia atricapilla		x		x							
Phylloscopidae												
Chiffchaff	Phylloscopus collybita		x		x			x				
Paridae												
Great Tit	Parus major									x		
Blue Tit	Cyanistes caeruleus											
Coal Tit	Parus ater					x		x	x			
Crested Tit	Lophophanes cristatus											
Sittidae												
Nuthatch	Sitta europaea		x		x							
Treecreeper			x		x							
Corvidae												
Magpie	Pica pica		x									
Carrion Crow	Corvus corone		x	x	x	x	x					
Raven	Corvus corax		x									
Alpine Chough	Pyrrhocorax graculus							x	x			
Chough						x						
Nutcracker						x						
House Sparrow	Passer domesticus											
Fringillidae												
Chaffinch	Fringilla coelebs	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Serin	Serinus serinus					x						
Bullfinch	Pyrrhula pyrrhula					x						
Snowfinch								x				
Emberizidae												
Yellowhammer	Emberiza citrinella		x	x								
Wheatear				x					x			
AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES												
Adder								x				
MAMMALS												
Alpine Marmot	Marmota marmota			x		x	x					
Bat						x						

