

location

region	Tuscany
province	Massa Carrara
municipality	Carrara-Fivizzano
sector	Sagro
toponym/locality	Foce di Pianza

interest

scientific interest	palaeontology
contextual interest	didactic
	cultural
interest evaluation	rare
level of interest	regional

conservation status

characteristic/condition	fair
risk of natural deterioration	non-existent
risk of anthropogenic deterioration	medium

**geological and environmental description**

Foce di Pianza's marble banks are among the rare places within the Apuan tectonic window still conserving visible palaeontological signs, despite the effects of metamorphism. The geosite is found at about 1300 m of altitude, to the west of the glacial transfluence saddle, toward Mt. Borla (1465 m). It was discovered in 1945 by Enzo Beneo (1903-1988), who described a level of gastropods, with the same structure as marble, which called "*lumachelle*" (small snail) owing to their richness in tower-like formations. Subsequent studies identified ammonites, crinoids and fossilised algae.

Notoriously, Apuan Alps' metalimestones were subject to high temperature and pressure, which almost completely destroyed sedimentation levels and fossils in all known outcrops. Therefore, fossiliferous areas are rather rare in the Apuan Alps Metamorphic Complex and even rarer in Marbles *s.s.* of Autochthon *Auct.* Its attribution to the Hettangian, based on the few reliable and recognizable fossils, generated a period of confusion, uncertainty and discussions in geological literature.

description of the level of interest

Foce di Pianza's palaeontological geosite is interesting at regional level, especially considering its rareness within the geographical area. Moreover, the level of interest of this geosite is increased, indirectly, by scientific importance always attributed by geological studies to the Metamorphic Succession of the Tuscan Domain.