

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE Costières de Nîmes AREA TARGETED BY THE PROJECT

**Name of the project area:** Costières de Nîmes

**Surface area (ha):** 86 291 ha

**Other protection status according to national or regional legislation:** ZICO, ZNIEFF

### **Main land uses and ownership status of the project area:**

This project site is private owned and its participation to the project will be on a voluntary basis.

According to RGA 2000 data (overall agriculture census), the project area is composed of:

- vines at 35%,
- cereal crops at 7%,
- orchards at 18%,
- market gardening at 13%,
- and permanent crops at 19%.

All the area is owned by private farmers.

It is implemented on 24 municipalities, which mean urban areas are also available on the project demonstration site.

### **Scientific description of project area:**

Costières de Nîmes encompass different types of landscape: scrubland hillsides and low scrublands; uncultivated areas; woods; flat landscape close to urban areas and steady slopes in vines; open and more partitioned areas; vine monoculture and polycultures with orchards, several canals to reach the Camargue. The geological specificity of the region is round pebbles areas.

Besides, in landscapes of vines alternatively with orchards (*Orchis lactea*,...) or *Serapias vomeracea*, hedge separations is the habitat of the endemic bird called *Tetrax tetrax* (300 to 400 singer males observed in 2004-2006). *Burhinus oedicephalus*, *Lullula arborea*, *Milvus migrans* and *Merops apiaster* are also rare species available on the Costières de Nîmes territory.

### **Importance of the project area for biodiversity and/or for the conservation of the species / habitat types targeted at regional, national and EU level:**

The habitats and species listed above are endangered by urban spread. BioDiVine project would be integrated in a process initiated 2 years ago by professional organisations to halt the spread and protect the local terroir. It will provide scientific credibility and reinforce the actions by widening the area layed out. The project would preserve natural habitats and hence increase the arthropod population that is an unavoidable link in the food chain.

Concrete conservation actions foreseen are : A2 (cartography study), A3 (scientific features study), C1 (introduction of ground covers), C2 (introduction of hedges), C3 (restoration of low walls), C4 (use of pheromones), C5 (introduction of grainlands), E3 (monitoring and evaluating actions: implementation of traps and analysis of capture results).

**COSTIERES DE NIMES DEMONSTRATION SITE**      **LIFE+ Nature & Biodiversity 2009**

