

The birth of CTHEC

'CTHEC' is a strange, unusual name and its pronunciation sounds even stranger and more unusual: 'si-tech'! Well, yes,... I'm going to tell you about the birth, the creation of this...well..., I will tell you later. Now I would like to tell you how I found myself in this story and with an unexpected leading role.

It all started when I decided to go on holiday to a remote place where some of my very distant relatives have been living for thousands of years (since Tertiary or Cenozoic, that is since the disappearance of the dinosaurs), a tiny island on the extreme south coast of Sardinia, on the south-west of the old island of Sant'Antioco: the Isle of the Bull.



Rather than a small island, it should be classified as a big rock and, together with two other rocks -the Cow and the Calf -, they form a micro archipelago in this far away strip of Sardinia.

And now, please, let me give you some important geographic information about these isles: the Bull, the Cow and the Calf, lying

on the remote south-west part of Sardinia, are similar to the three big rocks, emerging from the sea, on the south-west of Ireland, nearby Dursey Island: Bull Rock, Cow Rock and Calf Rock. Sheer coincidence? Who knows... maybe just one of the many similarities between Sardinia and Ireland!

Ok, Ok, let's stop rambling and let's get back to us.



After a long crossing, at last I reached my destination!

A large community of *Podarcis Tiliguerta Toro*, (that is the scientific name of my relatives) gave me a warm welcome and asked me about

my life in Albufeira, in Algarve, where I currently reside.

We talked for many hours and I got along especially with Jenny, who told me that life on this island was not easy: there were many

natural enemies

such as the

herring gulls and

other birds but

she also told me

how they

succeeded in

establishing a

special

relationship with

a bird of prey, the Eleonora's Falcon (named after the Lady-Judge Eleonora d'Arborea).

They are often able to live on the preys that adult hawks catch for their baby hawks and the Eleonora's Falcons usually return the favour by capturing the parasites that use to insinuate themselves between the feathers of the adult and baby hawks.



Jenny Tiliguerta

However, after spending some days on this tiny isle, I decided to start my return journey and...Gosh...I discovered that my boat had pushed off from me, towards the high sea, maybe because of a big wave or a sudden blast of wind...so that I found myself alone on a huge volcanic rocky spur!

I must confess that...I was caught by a strong feeling of desperation: I started imaging myself fighting against several kinds of birds, particularly against unfriendly, arrogant and noisy seagulls.

Thankfully, a boat carrying a group of students reached the isle because they were going to make a research on the Sardinian endemism there. I didn't think twice about what I could do!



As soon as I could, while students and teachers were engaged in doing their environmental studies, I squeezed into one of their bags! Hopefully I was safe and I was now able to leave the isle...

I felt relieved but, while I was starting to doze off, I was woken up by the hustle and bustle and by the cheerful noisiness of the students who were returning to the boat.

Unfortunately, I didn't succeed in hiding in a safe place, without being seen, and one of the girls spotted me while she was looking for something inside one bag.

Surprisingly, she wasn't afraid of me, I was afraid of her! Especially because Gloria (this was her name, if I'm not wrong) was inviting her friends to see what was inside the wine bag “Come and see girls, there is a kind of gecko inside the wine bag...” .

I was trying to hide myself in a safer place when I found a round surface to which I immediately clung on. Meanwhile, another girl, Rachele, was saying “...but, it is not a gecko... it's a chameleon! And, where does it come from? ” .

But I was really struck by Michelle's cry of surprise, the third girl on the boat: “ I've got it! I've got it! Its colour changes!”

“So what? What's so unusual about that? I'm a chameleon so, as I now find myself on a red wine bottle...I turn red! ”, I thought.

And Gloria, supporting my theory, added: “ its colour must obviously change, it's the main features of all chameleons ” .

But Michelle kept on saying “ Nooo, can't you see? The colour changes! Our mini-enterprise's name will be related to the coaster's colour change! ”

At that point, Elisa and Giada joined the other girls and, all together, cried: “ Yes, too true! We'll call it C-

the-C, that stands for Change the Coaster! And the abbreviation will be CtheC but we'll read it *sitek* ”

To be honest, it took me some time before I could understand what they were talking about but, during my journey back to the coast of Sant'Antioco, I realised that they were talking about a small business,



an enterprise they had recently set up , whose main product was a coaster for wine bottles and whose colour changed depending on the temperature of the bottles.

In short, unbeknown to me, my ability to change my colour depending on the environment, resulted in the 'spark of creativity' useful to name a new-born business!

Pretty good for a chameleon who is simply fond of travelling!