network

national parks

MINISTERIO
DE AGRICULTURA, ALIMENTACIÓN
Y MEDIO AMBIENTE

ORGANISMO
AUTÓNOMO
PARQUES
NACIONALES

CENTRO NACIONAL
DE EDUCACIÓN AMBIENTA

table of contents

Photos *CENEAM photo library*
Texts *CENEAM Documentation Centre*
National Parks
Design and layout *Álvaro García Cocero - CENEAM*

Mayo 2015

network national parks

The National Parks Network is an integrated system for the protection and management of a selection of the foremost examples of Spanish natural heritage. It is made up of the national parks, the regulatory framework, the material and human resources, the institutions, and the system of relations necessary for their operation.

Its aim is to ensure the conservation of the national parks and enable their use by the general public and the expansion of scientific knowledge of their natural and cultural values, as well as promote social awareness of the need for conservation, the exchange of knowledge and experiences with regard to sustainable development, training and qualification of the professionals working therein, and their integration and participation in international networks and programmes. In the Network, 4 of the 6 biogeographical regions in Europe are represented: Alpine, Atlantic, Macaronesian, and Mediterranean. A national park is a protected area with high ecological and cultural value which has been little changed by human activities. Due to the beauty of its landscapes, the representativeness of its ecosystems, or the uniqueness of its flora, fauna, geology or geomorphological formations, it has certain outstanding ecological, aesthetic, cultural, educational, and scientific values whose conservation deserves priority treatment and is thereby declared to be of national interest for the Spanish State. National parks can be a driving force behind the economic development of the regions where they are located, enabling sustainable use of their resources which is consistent with an improvement in the quality of life of their inhabitants.

In Spain, there are 15 national parks at present, although the Cumbres de la Sierra de Guadarrama will soon be declared one as well.

data sheet

PICOS DE EUROPA

Autonomous Community
Asturias, Cantabria, and Castile-Leon
Area
67,127 hectares
Establishment
Law of 24 July 1918
Enlargement
Administrative Decision of 4 February 2015

ORDESA Y MONTE PERDIDO

Autonomous Community
Aragon
Province
Huesca
Area
15,608 hectares
Establishment
Royal Decree of 16 August 1918
Reclassification and enlargement
Law 52/1982 of 13 July

TEIDE

Autonomous Community
Canary Islands
Province
Santa Cruz de Tenerife (Tenerife Island)
Area
18,990 hectares
Establishment
Decree of 22 January 1954
Reclassification
Law 5/1981 of 25 March
Enlargement
Administrative Decision 14 October 1999

CALDERA DE TABURIENTE

Autonomous Community
Canary Islands
Province
Santa Cruz de Tenerife (La Palma)
Area
4,690 hectares
Establishment
Royal Decree of 6 October 1954
Reclassification and enlargement
Law 4/1981 of 25 March

AIGÜESTORTES I ESTANY DE SANT MAURICI

Autonomous Community
Catalonia
Province
Lleida
Area
14,119 hectares
Establishment
Decree of 21 October 1955
Reclassification
Law 7/88 of 30 March
Enlargement
Decree 234/96 of 26 June of the Government of Catalonia

DOÑANA

Autonomous Community
Andalusia
Province
Huelva and Seville
Area
54,252 hectares
Establishment
Decree 241/69 of 16 October
Reclassification and enlargement
Law 91/1978 of 28 December
Administrative Decision of 6 February 2004

TABLAS DE DAIMIEL

Autonomous Community
Castile-La Mancha
Province
Ciudad Real
Area
3,030 hectares
Establishment
Decree 1874/73 of 28 June
Reclassification
Law 25/80 of 3 May
Enlargement
Administrative Decision 21 January 2014

TIMANFAYA

Autonomous Community
Canary Islands
Province
Las Palmas (Lanzarote Island)
Area
5,107 hectares
Establishment
Decree 2615/74 of 9 August
Reclassification
Law 6/81 of 25 March

GARAJONAY

Autonomous Community
Canary Islands
Province
Santa Cruz de Tenerife (Gomera)
Area
3,948 hectares
Establishment
Law 3/81 of 25 March

ARCHIPIÉLAGO MARÍTIMO TERRESTRE DE CABRERA

Autonomous Community
Balearic Islands
Area
10,021 hectares
Establishment
Law 14/91 of 29 April

CABAÑEROS

Autonomous Community
Castile-La Mancha
Province
Ciudad Real and Toledo
Area
40,856 hectares
Establishment
Law 33/95 of 20 November
Enlargement
Administrative Decision of 15 November 2005

SIERRA NEVADA

Autonomous Community
Andalusia
Province
Granada and Almería
Area
85,883 hectares
Establishment
Law 3/1999 of 11 January

MARÍTIMO TERRESTRE ISLAS ATLÁNTICAS

Autonomous Community
Galicia
Province
Pontevedra and A Coruña
Area
8,480 hectares
Establishment
Law 15/2002 of 1 July
Art. 121 of Law 53/2002 of 30 December

MONFRAGÜE

Autonomous Community
Extremadura
Province
Cáceres
Area
18,396 hectares
Establishment
Law 1/2007 of 2 March

SIERRA DE GUADARRAMA

Autonomous Community
Castile-Leon and Madrid
Province
Segovia and Madrid
Area
33,960 hectares
Establishment
Law 7 of 25 June 2013

contents

national parks network

network national parks

It was declared a national park in 1995, replacing and expanding on the former Montaña de Covadonga National Park—the first park in the state network established in 1918. In olden times, the seafarers who sailed the Cantabrian Sea called these mountains the "Peñas de Europa (Crags of Europe)", as they were what they first glimpsed of the continent. Later on, this evolved to its current name of "Picos de Europa".

It is the largest formation of limestone mountains in Atlantic Europe, made up of the Eastern or Andara Massif, the Central or Urrielles Massif, where Naranjo de Bulnes is found, and the Western or Cornión Massif. Located on the northern face of the Cantabrian Mountains, with important karstic processes and glacial erosion, where many different rivers (Deva, Duje, Cares, and Dobra) and lakes (Enol and Ercina) are found.

Its proximity to the Cantabrian Sea is the reason why the green and grey of bare limestone are the predominant colours of its landscape.
This protected area of high mountains surrounding moist forests divided by permanent grasslands, is maintained thanks to man's ongoing efforts and his livestock activities.

Headquarters
C/ Arquitecto Reguera, 13
33004 - Oviedo
Tel: 985 24 14 12 - 985 273 945
picos@pnpeu.es

ecosystem

Its proximity to the Cantabrian Sea, providing sufficient moisture for the development of lush vegetation, and the enormous altitudinal gradient of the Picos de Europa, have given rise to a wide variety of habitats and ecosystems teeming with plant and animal species.
The most outstanding ecosystem is the Atlantic forest composed of European beech, oak, linden, ash, hazel, sweet chestnut, etc; in the mid-elevation areas, there are juniper, broom, and heath shrubs, and in the high mountains, herbaceous species that are adapted to extreme conditions, such as the spring gentian, are found.

flora

The European beech is the most representative forest species in the wooded areas, although the mountain grasslands are vegetation that is highly abundant in this park with intensive livestock activities.
In addition, more than 1700 plant species have been inventoried and fungi, mosses, and lichens are currently under study.

fauna

The wide variety of animal species found in the Picos de Europa, in keeping with the diversity of ecosystems, is of particular interest. Among the species present are: the brown bear, the wood grouse, the chamois, and the wolf. The brown bear is the largest predator inhabiting these mountains, but its numbers have been gradually dwindling over the past few decades, which is why it is now considered an endangered species. The wood grouse, a ground-living forest bird, is also threatened in Spain.

socioeconomic aspects

One of the traditional activities that man has engaged in since time immemorial is livestock farming, which are mainly family-owned. The area's livestock population is mainly composed of cows, sheep, goats, and horses, with cheese as one of the traditional foods with the greatest economic relevance in the area. More than twenty different varieties are produced, among which Picón, Ahumado de Aliva, Gamonedo, and Cabrales cheese stand out.

The hórreo is a characteristic feature of popular architecture in the Picos de Europa, with many of them under the protection of the authorities. They are used to store and keep the farm products that have been collected throughout the year in a cool, dry place away from rodents. The arcade of the hórreo was used to protect the carts and wagons from sun and rain.

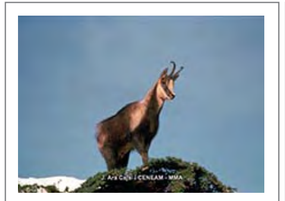
tourism

Picos de Europa attracts a great many visitors, as shown by the more than 1.7 million visits received on an annual basis. Its more than 400 kilometres of signposted trails offer numerous options for all types of hikers. Some of the most sought-after peaks by mountain climbers are found in the high mountains.

The most visited placed are the Cares Trail, the Lakes of Covadonga, and Fuente Dé, although there are other nooks aplenty brimming with impressive natural riches.

PHOTO *gallery*

By clicking on any image, the entire file will open, enabling its download.



Pedro Pidal Visitor Centre
Buferrera-Lagos de Covadonga Service Area
Lagos de Covadonga
(Contact: See information on Casa Dago)

Casa Dago Information Office
Avda. de Covadonga, 43
33550 Cangas de Onís – Asturias
Tel.: 985 849 154 – 985 848 614
administracioncangas1@pnpeu.es
administraciocangas2@pnpeu.es

Sotama Visitor Centre
Avda. Luis Cuevas s/n
39584 Tama Cillorigo de Liébana - Cantabria
Tel.: 942730555 - 942738109
ocantabria@pnepeu.es
gcantabria@pnepeu.es

Information Office
Posada de Valdeón - Leon
Tel.: 987 74 05 49
ovaldeon1@pnepeu.es
ovaldeon2@pnepeu.es
gvaldeon@pnepeu.es

The park, nestled within the central Pyrenees, is made up of a group of valleys and mountains that are the highest limestone peaks in Europe, as a result of different geological convulsions, with the three peaks of Las Tres Sorores towering high above: Monte Perdido, the highest at 3,355 metres, Cilindro, and Soum de Ramond.

The main valleys of this natural area—Ordesa, Añisclo, Escuaín, and Pineta—diverge from the Monte Perdido Massif, which are carved out by the Arazas, Bellos, Yaga, and Cinca Rivers, respectively. The four valleys that makes up the Ordesa y Monte Perdido National Park have a high-elevation climate; nevertheless, each of them has its own particular microclimate. During the thawing season, it is common to see numerous waterfalls plunging into the depths of the valleys, which only further accentuate the beauty of the landscape of this natural area.

Due to the limestone present in most of the geological materials of the national park, landscapes such as the ice cave systems of Marboré, the Grotte Casteret, and the Escuaín cave systems—considered one of the most important in Spain from a speleological standpoint—abound.

Headquarters
Pº. de las Autonomías
Pasaje Baleares, 3
22004 HUESCA
Tel.: +34 974 243 361
Fax: +34 974 242 725
ordesa@aragon.es

ecosystem

The terrain, shaped by glaciation and water erosion, is dotted with magnificent landscapes where Atlantic forests with Scots pine, fir, European beech, and mountain pine, Mediterranean forests with holm oak and Portuguese oak, and upper montane vegetation, can be found.

flora

It has a rich and varied flora due to its rugged terrain and a very diverse climate. The most spectacular forest is one made up of European beech and silver fir, found in the moistest areas. This mixed forest is particularly striking in autumn, when the ochre and reddish hues of the European beeches contrast sharply with the dark greens of the silver firs, creating a stunning patchwork of colours.
The lady's slipper orchid, one of the rarest and most beautiful orchids, grows in the moist areas. The edelweiss or snow flower, a plant with whitish flowers which is currently a protected species as a result of indiscriminate gathering in the past, can be seen on the alpine meadows. Abundant communities of the beautiful Pyrenean violet, the unmistakable long-leaved butterwort, and the eye-catching Pyrenean encrusted saxifrage, with its long stem of white flowers, blossom among the rocky crags.

fauna

The bearded vulture, the golden eagle, the griffon vulture, the Pyrenean brook salamander, and the chamois are the most representative species of this area.
The bearded vulture is an endangered species in Spain, with this park one of the few places where it can still be found. It is also easy to find mammals such as red squirrels, red foxes, wild boars, beech martens, and marmots.

aspectos socioeconómicos

Extensive livestock farming is the main industry inside the park, with transhumance playing a very important role, as the movements of livestock from the mountain to the valley and vice versa promote and maintain biodiversity. In addition, it has always been the means by which the inhabitants of the valleys inside the park maintained socioeconomic relations with those outside.

turismo

There are good hiking trails with varying levels of difficulty. Trails are self-guided, although it is advisable to engage the services of a professional mountain guide. Given the rugged terrain, it might be useful to get some information and bear in mind the weather forecasts. Although there are a dozen shelters inside the park and its environs, it is possible to bivouac or camp, as long as the tent is taken down by sunrise.

PHOTO *gallery*

By clicking on any image, the entire file will open, enabling its download.

ORDESA VALLEY
Torla Visitor Centre.
Torla Office and Information Point.
Avda. Ordesa s/n 22376. Torla.
Tel.: 974 48 64 72.
"La Pradera" Information Point.
Pradera de Ordesa

AÑISCLO VALLEY
Escalona Office and Information Point
Calle Mayor s/n. 22363 Escalona.
Tel.: 974 50 51 31

ESCUAÍN VALLEY
Tella Visitor Centre
Calle La Iglesia s/n. 22364 Tella.
Escuaín Information Point:
Calle Única s/n. 22362 Escuaín.

PINETA VALLEY
Bielsa Office and Information Point
"Casa Larraga"
Plaza Mayor s/n 22350 Bielsa.
Tel: 974 50 10 43
Pineta Information Point:
Access road to the Pineta Valley












Teide National park is found on the island of Tenerife, in the Canarian Archipelago. It is located right at the heart of the island, and a great portion of it sits right on top of an old giant caldera measuring 45 km in circumference, which is a large depression locally known as the Caldera de Las Cañadas. The breathtaking Teide volcano, which is the highest peak in Spain at 3,718 metres, looms above these sedimentary plains called cañadas (ravines).
This natural spot is an extraordinary geological monument wherein the volcanic landscape dotted with rivers of lava creates a magnificent collage of shapes and colours. The most remarkable landscape features of the national park are Teide Peak, which is the result of countless, successive eruptions, the above-mentioned Caldera de Las Cañadas, and Roques de García—whimsical rock formations that have been shaped by the erosive force of wind and water.

ecosystem

The areas at the bottom of the cañadas, the escarpments of vertical walls, and the summit areas are where the most relevant biological units of the national park's ecosystem are found.

flora

One of the park's botanical treasures is the Teide violet. It can be found on the Teide's highest slopes, and it is among the florae inhabiting the national park which are threatened. This fragile and delicate flower is one of the highest naturally-occurring plants in the whole of Spain, colonising areas at more than 2,800 metres above sea level.
The Teide bugloss is one of the most striking plants that you can encounter, shooting up to more than three metres with its stems full of reddish flowers.
The Teide broom, easily distinguishable during the blooming season through its white or pinkish flowers, is one of the most abundant plant species. With some luck, you may be able to find silver thistle, another threatened species, of which not many specimens are left.

fauna

The fauna, particularly the invertebrates, are another treasure found in this protected area, as many of the species inhabiting this area are endemic. The insects are the most numerous, with more than 700 species, which are found in almost all the ecosystems of this area.

The birds are the most interesting group of vertebrates, with the Tenerife blue chaffinch, the Berthelot's pipit, the canary, and the Barbary partridge of particular interest. With regard to mammals, you can find five local bat species. The only reptiles present are Gallot's lizards, West Canary skinks, and Tenerife geckos. Together with them are some animals that have been introduced by man. Examples of these are rabbits, mouflons, and house mice.

socioeconomic aspects

One of the most traditional practices that continues to the present day is the production of honey in the area of Las Cañadas. For centuries now, this has been done within the national park and the excellent honey obtained is renowned all over the world. But beyond a shadow of a doubt, it has enormous importance as a tourist destination, receiving approximately 3 million visitors per year, with repercussions on the entire island.

tourism

The park has 37 trails with different lengths and difficulty levels. The Siete Cañadas, Arenas Negras, or Roques de García trails are the most popular. Using the latter, it is possible to see different volcanic formations until reaching the plain known as Llano de Ucanca. It is also a good idea to go up by cable car to La Rambleta, almost to the very top of Teide Peak, or request a permit to go on foot to the summit or stay over at the Altavista shelter.

Headquarters
C/ Doctor Sixto Perea González, 25
Urbanización El Mayorazgo,
38300 La Orotava
Tel.: 922 922 371 Fax: 922 244 788
teide.maot@gobiernodecanarias.org

PHOTO *gallery*

By clicking on any image, the entire file will open, enabling its download.












"El Portillo" Visitor Centre
Carretera La Orotava - Granadilla, Km 32.100
38300 El Portillo, La Orotava Santa Cruz de Tenerife

"Cañada Blanca" Visitor Centre
Carretera La Orotava - Granadilla, Km 46.400
Wing in the Parador de las Cañadas del Teide
38300 La Orotava - Santa Cruz de Tenerife

"Telesforo Bravo" Visitor Centre
C/ Doctor Sixto Perea, 25
El Mayorazgo, Villa de la Orotava

"Juan Évora Ethnographic Museum"
Information Point
Boca Tauce junction (at the fork in the TF-21 and TF-38 roads), at the Park's southern entrance

Caldera de Taburiente National Park is a large horseshoe-shaped depression of steep walls which opens out to the sea on the southwest, in Barranco de las Angustias—the Caldera's only natural exit—where nearly all of the surface waters of this protected area end up. The park's two most important catchment basins, that of Arroyo Taburiente and that of Arroyo Almendro Amargo, converge at the exit of Barranco de las Angustias.

The view of the Caldera, from whichever vantage point, is simply breathtaking. At its top, vertical escarpments measuring 600 to 1,000 metres in height delineate the horizon with a rocky wall made up of different types of volcanic rocks. Throughout the day, due to the rising of hot air, a sea of clouds bringing abundant moisture may form, giving off an aura of mystery that does not dissipate until night falls.

The landscape features that best characterise the Caldera de Taburiente are the volcanic rock formations and the dense pine forests of Canary Island pine. These pine forests are the best-conserved ones in the entire archipelago. This is due to the fact that their owners realised the great ecological value of this species early on, as it acts as an effective barrier against erosion and also increases the catchment of water.

Headquarters
Ctra Gral. de Padron, 47
38750 El Paso - La Palma
Tel.: 922 92 22 80
caldera.cmayot@gobiernodecanarias.org
infcalde.cmayot@gobiernodecanarias.org

ecosystem

The most relevant ecosystems found in the national park are the pine forests of Canary Island pine, the gullies with running water and willow groves, the steep rock walls and volcanic rock formations, the high-elevation areas, and the cavities of volcanic rocks.

flora

Due to the great changes in elevation within this protected area, almost all types of vegetation endemic to the Canarian Archipelago can be found here, with Canary Island pine as the most widely distributed and characteristic plant community. In addition, the Caldera is home to a rich rupicolous flora that grows on the steep walls and volcanic rock formations, and where numerous tree houseleeks live.

The vegetation at the summit is perhaps the most interesting, as it is here where many endemic plants and plants that were considered an endangered species at some time or another are found. Examples of these are the Canary Island broom, the La Palma violet, the Teide burnet, and Echium gentianoides—considered a priority by the Habitats Directive.

fauna

Among the vertebrate fauna, it is worth mentioning the bird species endemic to Macaronesia: the white-tailed laurel pigeon, the canary, Berthelot's pipit, and the plain swift. The Canary big-eared bat is endemic to the Canary Islands. The most interesting reptiles are the La Palma lizards and Tenerife geckos.

socioeconomic aspects

Agriculture has had little relevance for the park, and the few non-irrigated crops have gradually disappeared due to economic inviability and the national park's restrictions. At present, crops are limited to small vegetable gardens and orchards on Tenerra and Taburiente.

turismo

There is a network of trails which enables us to immerse ourselves in the different landscapes of Taburiente and a series of lookout points that afford sweeping panoramic views of the Caldera. In general, the park does not offer guide services for the suggested routes, although there are private companies that do so. Exceptionally in summer, it is possible to engage the services of an official park guide, departing from the camping area.

PHOTO *gallery*

By clicking on any image, the entire file will open, enabling its download.

Information points:

El Riachuelo
La Cumbrecita
El Roque de Los Muchachos
The path from Lomo de Los Caballos to Los Brecitos
Taburiente Services Centre
(Inside the Park, beside the camping area)

The national park's territory is clearly divided into two sectors: the Aigüestortes sector, accessible from the Vall de Boí and the Sant Maurici sector, in the Vall de Espot, located in the central part of the Pyrenees.

Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici is a landscape of rugged terrain with several tall peaks, such as Besiberri Nord, Besiberri Sud, or Comaloforno. Nevertheless, the national park is mostly identified with the summits of Els Encantats, two imposing mountains that are nearly identical, which rise from the areas around one of the park's most visited destinations—the Estany de Sant Maurici lake.

Water is the element that best embodies this park. It is everywhere—as snow, in rivers, waterfalls, or the more than 200 lakes dotting its terrain and bestowing this natural area with its unique and unforgettable beauty.

The mountains in this area are mainly made of granite, limestone, and slate. As these materials have high plasticity, they react to the earth's internal forces with extreme and pronounced terrain elevations, making its landscape truly a sight to behold. The difference between the seasons is unmistakable, although the park is covered in snow for great part of the year.

Its more than 40,000 ha covers an area with a rich natural and cultural heritage.

Boí Park Centre and Headquarters
Ca de Simamet
C/ de les Graieres, 2 25528 Boí
Tel.: 973 69 61 89
Fax: 973 69 61 54
info@aiguestortes@oapn.es

ecosystem

The most relevant habitats to be found as you steadily climb are deciduous forests, Scots pine forests, and forests of mountain pine and silver fir. Alpine grasslands that abound with Pyrenean mountain spiny fescue and matgrass, interspersed with Alpine gentian, are found in the areas near the summits.

flora

Its flora is very diverse, given the ruggedness of the terrain and an extremely varied climate. Aside from shrubby underbrush made up of alpen rose and bilberry in the shadiest areas and juniper in the sunny areas, you can find numerous species of Alpine flora in the grasslands. The Alpine gentian, the Pyrenean buttercup, and the moss campion are worthy of mention. At greater heights, there are some plants that put down their roots in small nooks and crannies between the rocks, such as the mossy saxifrage.

fauna

The fauna of Aigüestortes is unmistakably Pyrenean, with some species of great ecological value such as the Pyrenean desman and the Pyrenean brook salamander. The latter is the most characteristic indigenous species among those inhabiting the park. This amphibian lives in the high mountain torrents and lakes. The brown trout can also be found in these aquatic ecosystems.

The Pyrenean chamois and the stoat, as well as curious bats such as the whiskered bat, are among the most representative mammals. The bird species that can be found are the bearded vulture, the golden eagle, the boreal owl, the black woodpecker, the wallcreeper, and relict species from the Ice Age such as the wood grouse and the Pyrenean rock ptarmigan.

socioeconomic aspects

Livestock farming has always been considered beneficial for the conservation of the park's ecosystems, except in certain areas where grazing is not allowed. The towns within the park's area of influence have been able to successfully preserve a rich historical and cultural heritage that is well integrated into an extraordinary landscape, with great examples of Romanesque art such as the group of Romanesque churches of the Vall de Boí, declared a World Heritage Site in 2000.

tourism

The best way to explore the park is by hiking its trails on foot, entering its forests, crossing its grasslands, and circling around its lakes. Regardless of whether you reach the summit or not, it is possible to see many plant species and—with a little luck while walking silently—numerous animals in their natural habitat. Trekking and hiking are activities that are generally accepted and there is an extensive network of trails that can be used to freely explore the park. In addition, there is a good number of shelters available, but which are best booked in advance.

By clicking on any image, the entire file will open, enabling its download.

Espot Park Centre
C/ de Sant Maurici, 5
25597 Espot
Tel./fax: 973 62 40 36

Llessui Information Centre
Shepherds of the Vall d'Àssua Ecomuseum
Escoles de Llessui, s/n
25567 Llessui (Pallars Sobirà)
Tel.: 973 621 798
Fax: 973 621 803

Senet Information Centre
La Serradora
Carrer del Port, 10
25553 Senet (Alta Ribagorça)
Tel.: 973 698 232
Fax: 973 698 229

Information Booths
1.Planell de Aigüestortes i Toirigo (Aigüestortes sector)
2.Palanca de la Molina (Aigüestortes sector)
3.Estany de Sant Maurici (Sant Maurici sector)
4.Prat de Pierró (Sant Maurici sector)

Doñana National Park is one of the most important wetland reserves in Europe. It is a bridge between the European and African continents for migratory birds that use this area as wintering, transit, and breeding grounds.

It rests on the ancient estuary of the Guadalquivir River which, with the passing of time, was gradually filled up with both marine and river sediment inputs.

The marsh system represents 50% of the park's total area, and this is the reason for its importance as a wildlife preserve. For at least six months a year, the marshland remains flooded, thanks to rainwater and the input from the Arroyo de la La Rocina, the Arroyo de Cañada Mayor, and the Guadalquivir River.

Its name dates back to the 16th century, with the construction of a palace by the seventh Duke of Medina-Sidonia for his wife, Doña Ana Gómez de Mendoza y Silva, right at the heart of the current park. The surrounding lands soon came to be known as Bosque de Doña Ana (Doña Ana Forest) or Coto de Doña Ana (Doña Ana Game Reserve), until today's shortened version was coined.

"El Acebuche" Headquarters,
Ctra. A-483 Bollullos del Condado-
Matalascañas, Km. 37.8.
21760 Matalascañas (Huelva)
Tel. 959 439 627 – 959 439 626
en.donana.cma@juntadeandalucia.es

ecosystem

The most important ecosystems are the marshland, the dunes, the cotos or stabilised sand dunes covered with vegetation, the beach, and the heath, which is the transition area between the marshland and the beach.

flora

Its flora is very diverse, with more than 900 species of vascular plants and ferns, given the different aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems found in it. In spring, there is dense vegetation on the marshland, with a predominance of bayonet grass and bulrush, which provide the primary sustenance for many birds. The broadleaf cattail and the common reed live in the deeper and less saline areas.
On the moving dunes, where vegetation is much more scarce, the European marram grass and the spiny thrift are found. The shrubland or cotos is made up of two main types of vegetation, locally known as monte blanco, where rockrose predominates, and monte negro, where heath abounds.

fauna

The Iberian lynx is the best-known feline on the Iberian Peninsula, thanks to the studies that have been conducted in this area for many decades now. Its usual spot is the shrubland, as this the preferred habitat of its favourite prey, the rabbit, which the Spanish imperial eagle also preys upon.

In spring, the marshland teems with a large number of birds, and in winter, it is a beautiful splash of colour with the flocks of American flamingos, ducks, and other aquatic birds.
In the area called "La Vera", cork oaks—widely known as aviaries—are environmentally valuable, as they serve as nesting sites for herons and egrets, Eurasian spoonbills, and white storks.

socioeconomic aspects

Fishing, hunting, and the collection of raw materials are everyday activities that have played a key role in ways of life closely interlinked with resource optimisation. At present, coaling, coquina clam gathering, apiculture, pine cone collection, and extensive livestock farming are considered compatible with conservation.

tourism

There are several self-guided trails available in the park. In addition, there are countless companies offering excursions by motor vehicle or on horseback, river tours, etc.

There are more than 30 km. of virgin beaches between Matalascañas (Huelva) and Sanlúcar de Barrameda (Cádiz). The Torre Carbonero, the remains of bunkers built in World War II, and huts currently inhabited by the few dwellers of this national park make a sharp contrast with the white sand.

doñana
PHOTO
gallery

By clicking on any image, the entire file will open, enabling its download.

"La Rocina"
Ctra. A-483 Bollullos del Condado-
Matalascañas, Km 25.8.
21750 El Rocío (Huelva)

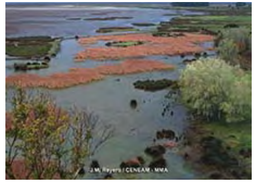
"El Acebrón", Ctra. A-483 Bollullos del
Condado-Matalascañas, Km 25.8.
21750 El Rocío (Huelva)

"José Antonio Valverde",
41849 Aznalcázar (Seville)

"Fábrica de Hielo", Bajo de Guía s/n.
11540 Sanlúcar de Barrameda (Cádiz)

"Centenales" Ctra. Hinojos-Almonte.
21740 Hinojos (Huelva)

Information point.
Town hall. Avda. Juan Carlos I, 29.
41849 Aznalcázar (Seville)



Tablas de Daimiel National Park is the last surviving example of an ecosystem called floodplain wetlands, which was formed as a result of the confluence of the overflow from the Guadiana and Gigüela Rivers in their middle courses, facilitated by the paucity of a slope gradient on the terrain. The flatness of the terrain, together with a phreatic layer very close to the surface, which at many points turned into natural springs popularly known as “ojos” ur “ojillos”, gave rise to extensive flooded areas called water tables.

Its greatest ecological value lies in the bird species that use these areas as wintering and nesting grounds, creating an integral reserve for aquatic birds.

There are two well differentiated sectors around Tablas: the northern sector characterised by a holm oak pastureland and the southern sector, which has been subjected to intense human activity, with a mainly agricultural landscape made up of vineyards, olive groves, and irrigated crops. The proliferation of the latter is draining up the vital resource to sustain life in the national park—water. This situation is further aggravated during periods of drought.

ecosystem

The natural systems that are best represented here are: freshwater ponds, reed beds, cattail and bulrush beds, and water table grasslands with temporary flooding; halophilic ponds, salt pans, and gypsum outcrops (land with rich deposits of gypsum); and unique deposits and landforms of fluvial and aeolian origin.

flora

The vegetation appears as a patchwork of plant associations that change depending on many factors such as: seasonality of waters, salinity, topography, and subsoil moisture content.

The contrasting natures of the two rivers—the Gigüela with its seasonally flowing brackish water and the Guadiana with its permanently flowing freshwater—are the reasons why vastly different vegetation has grown in each river area.

Aquatic vegetation includes different species that live at the very bottom, with the most abundant being the branched algae formations—the main diet of many aquatic birds. With regard to emergent and marginal vegetation, the reed beds, cattail beds, and clumps of bayonet grass which inhabit swampy areas and the edges of the wetland are of particular interest. In contrast, swamp sawgrass beds are found in the deepest areas. To these, other formations can be added: bulrush meadows which flourish on moist and saline soils, and which contain a wide variety of species of rushes such as the common rush or the bulrush; the shrublands of Mediterranean saltwort; the sea-lavender meadows with several endemic species; and the tamarisk thickets—quite characteristic of saline soils, which tend to form small forests, with the tamarisk forest on Isla del Pan as the most representative.

fauna

This reserve is a highly important wintering ground for aquatic birds, with the number of them reaching 40,000 for some years, corresponding to more than 250 species. Anatids comprise the most significant family of birds, not only for the large number of specimens, but also due to their variety. Depending on the season when you visit the park, it is possible to find species such as the red-crested pochard, the mallard, the heron, the egret, the common coot, the black-crowned night heron, the common crane, the white stork, and many other types of aquatic birds.

Among the mammals, the common otter stands out. Amphibians, reptiles, fishes, and arthropods—many of which are endemic, vulnerable, or endangered species—have found the perfect refuge for survival in the park.

socioeconomic aspects

Since time immemorial, man has taken advantage of the rich resources available here, with fishing using fyke nets, nets, and creels among the most important activities. Swamp sawgrass was used as fuel for the boilers, serijos (small woven baskets) and esteras (woven mats) were made using cattail, and the common reed was used for the houses’ roofs.

tourism

There are only three walking itineraries available to visit Tablas: the Isla del Pan, the Laguna Permanente, and the Torre de Prado Ancho. They either circle around the protected area or take us through it, by means of wooden walkways.

Headquarters
Apartado de correos 3.
13250 Daimiel (Ciudad Real)
Tel.: 926 85 10 97
tdaimiel@oapn.es

Molino de Molemocho Visitor Centre
Camino de Molemocho Km. 11
Tel.: 926 69 31 18

PHOTO *gallery*

By clicking on any image, the entire file will open, enabling its download.

Timanfaya National Park is the best example of volcanism that has recently been experienced in the Canary Islands.

The topography of the national park is relatively flat. The highest points are a group of volcanoes measuring approximately 400 metres in height, with inclined slopes that have fused together with the accumulation of solidified lava and lapilli from other craters. In this way, many of the depressions and the unevenness of the terrain were gradually filled in, thereby giving rise to a gently rolling landscape in many parts of the park.
The eruptions that have occurred on Lanzarote are among the most important in the world in relatively recent times in terms of both their duration and the amount of products released. The eruptions from the 18th century covered more than 20,000 ha of terrain in lava, sand, and lapilli, dramatically changing the face of the central part of the island.

In many places in Timanfaya, the degree of conservation of the geography originating from volcanic processes is such that they still maintain the original appearance of the Canary Islands dating back to the time before erosion paved the way for plant life to appear. You can find craters, solidified lava, volcanic bombs, and ashes where vegetation and fauna are practically non-existent, all together creating an extraordinarily harsh and desolate rocky landscape with an infinity of colours that continuously change throughout the day depending on the intensity of the light.

ecosystem

Zonas de cráteres, valles cubiertos de pequeñas rocas volcánicas o lapilli, llanuras cubiertas de lavas solidificadas o malpaíses y zona costera.

flora

Lichens were the first colonisers of the lava fields in Timanfaya. They are now the foremost and most widespread examples of plant life throughout the entire national park, with approximately two hundred species of lichens inhabiting this protected area. They are the ones that are best prepared to survive under conditions of extreme drought and continuous sunlight exposure, as they easily thrive during wet periods and enter a dormant stage during periods of drought. In addition, they prepare the terrain for the arrival of other plant species such as the spiny gorse, the verode, or Forsskaolea angustifolia.

fauna

In this park, fauna is scarce, with the Atlantic lizard as the most abundant vertebrate.

Among the group of birds that nest within the national park, the most representative of all is the Egyptian vulture or pharaoh's chicken, which is characterised by the black and white plumage of the adults. It is sedentary in the Canary Islands, whereas it migrates in summer on the Peninsula. It is omnivorous, with a preference for carrion.

aspectos socioeconómicos

Traditional activities such as fishing and shellfishing remain the mainstays. Agricultural crops and fruit crops, such as fig, mulberry, and guava, are also important. These crops are cultivated on private property found within the geographical area of the national park, and they are surrounded by volcanic rock walls or zocos that protect them from the strong gusts of wind.

turismo

Timanfaya National Park is the second most visited park in the entire National Parks Network. The three itineraries available are: the Ruta de los Volcanes (12 km), the Ruta de Tremesana (3 km), and the Ruta del Litoral (9 km). On the Echadero de los Camellos, you can take a short tour while riding a dromedary.

Excursions must be booked in advance through the website, with the Mancha Blanca Visitor Centre as the meeting place. Having said that, there are many guided tours to the park which are organised by hotels and travel agencies.

Headquarters
C/ La Mareta, 9
35560 Tinajo - Lanzarote
Tel.: 928 11 80 35 - 928 11 80 49
Fax: 928 84 02 51
timanfaya.cmayot@gobiernodecanarias.org

timanfaya
PHOTO *gallery*

By clicking on any image, the entire file will open, enabling its download.












Visitor Centre.
Carretera LZ-67 La Santa - Yaiza km 9.6
35560 - Mancha Blanca - Tinajo - Lanzarote
Tel.: 928118042
Fax: 928838235
manchablanca.cmayot@gobiernodecanarias.org

"Echadero de los Camellos"
Museum-information point
Ctra. LZ-67 La Santa-Yaiza Km. 16.1
Echadero de los Camellos - Yaiza

Garajonay National Park is found in the Canarian Archipelago, on the Island of La Gomera. It encompasses more than 10% of the total area of the island and occupies the entire central meseta, as well as the headwater areas of several ravines. It is home to a unique and dense evergreen vegetation, which is one of the finest surviving examples of relict laurisilva or laurel forests from the Tertiary Period. Given that it is shrouded in mist for great part of the year, its lush foliage makes a sharp contrast to the more arid landscapes in the island's lowlands.

La Gomera is the only island in the Canarian Archipelago which has not experienced any volcanic eruptions of late. For this reason, its orography has largely been defined by constant erosion in which the main erosive agent has been water, giving rise to breathtaking escarpments and an extensive network of ravines that reach the sea. But the most impressive feature of Garajonay is the view of the roques or fortalezas—enormous ridges of rock that tower over the landscape—which are the remains of solidified magma from volcanoes that were on the island. They are one of the most awe-inspiring sights in Garajonay.

Due to its incalculable natural value, it has been included in the UNESCO's World Heritage list.

Headquarters
C/Ruiz de Padrón y Avda. 5º Centenario
Edificio "Las Creces" - Local 1- Portal 3
38800 San Sebastián de La Gomera
Tel.: 922 92 26 00
Fax: 922 87 28 33
png j.cmayot@gobiernodecanarias.org

ecosystem

The most relevant ecosystems of the national park are the laurisilva, a plant formation with different evergreen tree species akin to laurel; the fire tree and heath forest, an arboreal association in which two species dominate—the fire tree and the tree heath; and the heath forests, with two well differentiated formations: summit heath forests and tree heath forests.

flora

Awe-inspiring laurisilva forests cover most of the park's territory. At the very heart of it, different types of forests and plant communities can be found, which are distributed according to the moisture content and direction of the populated areas. Fire tree and heath forests are found at the summits and on the southern face, as well as in places where the laurisilva has been damaged by humans. There are 21 plant species considered threatened in Garajonay, which is why a recovery programme has been developed to prevent the extinction of species such as blue bugloss, Canary Island elder, or Canary spurge, among others.

fauna

As a result of being an island, the local vertebrates that inhabit the laurisilva forests are those that were able to get there by their own means, mainly birds, reptiles, and bats. Among the birds, the white-tailed laurel pigeon and the dark-tailed laurel pigeon are of particular interest. While there are only a few bird species, those that live in Garajonay are particularly keen on maintaining their endemicity (exclusivity). Although Garajonay is not the most suitable place for reptiles due to its perpetual mist, in some areas with clear skies, lizards, skinks, and geckos can be found. All of them are endemic to the island. The most abundant mammals are those that were introduced by man, such as rats, cats, and rabbits, and the island's four bat species all live in Garajonay. But, without a shadow of a doubt, the animal kingdom is best represented by the invertebrates in the Park. There are more than Hay 1,000 catalogued species, of which more than 150 are exclusive to the mountains of La Gomera.

socioeconomic aspects

The local population has historically been closely linked to the mountains, as they obtained vital resources from it for their economy. Nevertheless, despite man's activities in the past, the forest is currently in an excellent degree of conservation. Some examples of materials traditionally used in the past are remains of sacrificial altars built by the pre-Hispanic settlers, old shepherds' huts, charcoal stove pits, water barriers and irrigation canals, and even the remains of a water mill.

tourism

The park has the essential infrastructure of equipment and services that enable the visitors to properly organise and enjoy their visit. The park has a visitor centre—one of the most visited ones in the National Parks Network—an information centre, an extensive network of lookout points, as well as several recreational areas. Likewise, it has an extensive network of 18 trails which makes it possible for visitors to immerse themselves in the park's forests and enjoy their awe-inspiring beauty. In addition, the park has implemented the Action Plan for the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism, in order to work on the development of an island tourism model with all the stakeholders in a participative way and in close collaboration and cooperation.

garajonay
PHOTO
gallery

By clicking on any image, the entire file will open, enabling its download.












Juego de Bolas Visitor Centre
La Palmita, s/n
38830 Agulo - La Gomera
Santa Cruz De Tenerife
Tel.: 922 80 09 93 - 922 80 12 29
Fax: 922 80 12 29
cvgarajonay@oapn.es

Laguna Grande Information Centre
38840 Vallehermoso La Gomera
Santa Cruz De Tenerife

This national park includes Cabrera Archipelago and its marine environment. The archipelago is made up of 18 islands and islets, among which the island of Cabrera gran is worthy of note due to its great size. It is also where the Park's highest point—the Puig de Na Picamosques— is found. Illa dels Conills, which takes its name from the large number of rabbits that populated it in the past, is likewise of particular interest.

40,000 years ago, the Cabrera Archipelago did not exist. The lands that constitute the national park at present were connected to the southernmost point of Mallorca. The latter, together with Minorca and Cabrera, was part of a huge island measuring more than 8,000 Km², called the Gran Balear or the Gran Gimnesia.

Cabrera Castle, built in the 14th century as a defence against pirates, perfectly blends into the landscape. It is the first thing that visitors to the island catch sight of when they arrive to the port. The port of Cabrera is an excellent natural refuge that has unmistakably played a key role in the history of the Archipelago. It has always provided shelter to the island's settlers and many of the seafarers that sailed the Mediterranean sea.

Headquarters
Espais de Natura Balear
Gremi Corredors 10
Polígon de Son Rossinyol
07009 Palma
Tel.: 971177641 - 971176613
Fax: 971176617
espaisdenaturabalear@espaisnb.caib.es

ecosystem

The most important ecosystems of the national park are the Mediterranean maquis or shrubland, the rocky crags, and the seabed. The park's crystal-clear waters have made the development of important marine communities at great depths possible. The seabed is extremely varied: huge expanses of sand, stony beds, rocky beds, cliffs and caves that provide numerous habitats for marine flora and fauna.

flora

The flora is composed of 516 species of vascular plants, 22 species of mosses, 21 species of lichens, and 162 species of marine algae. Twenty of them are endemic to the Balearic Islands and the madder exclusively found on Cabrera deserves a mention. Some of the most interesting species are the Balearic buckthorn and the Balearic St. John's wort.

fauna

The large seabird colonies of Balearic shearwater, European storm petrel, and Audouin's gull stand out among the fauna on Cabrera.

Among the reptiles, Lilford's wall lizard a very interesting species for the study of evolutionary phenomena, as genetically different populations are found on each island or islet.

The loggerhead turtle is one of the marine reptiles that you can find here. The seabed is home to amazing biodiversity, where fishes and marine mammals are the most significant species. You can find dusky groupers, Mediterranean morays, bottlenose dolphins, and long-finned pilot whales.

socioeconomic aspects

Professional fishing activity in the waters of Cabrera rose considerably during the first half of this century as a consequence, in part, of the development of fishing ports near the Archipelago, prompted by the advances in fishing techniques. The Use and Management Master Plan (PRUG) for the Cabrera Archipelago Marine-Terrestrial National Park establishes a series of mandatory rules for traditional artisanal fishing on a professional basis—the only extractive activity allowed.

tourism

The park may be visited, with no paperwork necessary, by simply getting on the boats that depart from the ports of Colònia de Sant Jordi and Porto Petro, although it is advisable to book in advance. If you wish to visit the park using your own vessel, it is necessary to have a permit issued by the park administration. The park allows group visits for up to 60 people, and offers interpretation services and support for environmental education free of charge. There is a wide range of itineraries available on the island of Cabrera: Subida al Castillo, Playa de s'Espalmador, Monumento a los Franceses y Celler, Faro de n'Ensiola, La Miranda, Sa Cova Blava, Serra de Ses Figueres, Picamosques, and Ses Sitges.

By clicking on any image, the entire file will open, enabling its download.












Ses Salines Visitor Centre
C/ de Gabriel Roca, s/n,
cantó plaça des Dolç.
07638 Colònia de Sant Jordi.
Tel.: 971 65 62 82

Information Office at the port
Tel.: 630 982 363

This area is one of the most extensive and best examples of the Mediterranean forest on the Peninsula.
The park takes its name from the huts traditionally used by shepherds and charcoal burners as temporary shelter from their work in the fields. These conical huts were roofed using vegetation from the surroundings and they were used by the settlers of Montes de Toledo.
Its landscape is made up of extensive rañas or grasslands with rich seasonal pastures that provided a large number of animals with food. But although the raña is the most well-known landscape, it is the Mediterranean mountain with its maze of trees and shrubs which is actually the most representative. Another remarkable aspect of the park and perhaps little known, is the existence within it of certain places wherein the higher moisture levels are more conducive to an Atlantic or Northern tendency.
The park's terrain is quite rugged and mainly composed of quartzite, which is an acid rock of great harness and antiquity.
The park's geology is extremely striking, due to its marine origins, with fossils from the sea's inhabitants from 450 million years ago. One of the places where these specimens are more visible is Boquerón del Estena, where the river runs among the rocks that reveal a great many secrets.

Headquarters
Ctra. De Torrijos s/n
13194 Pueblo Nuevo del Bullaque
Ciudad Real
Tel.: 926 78 32 97 - 926 78 34 56
icabaneros@oapn.es

ecosystem

This is one of the best examples of the Mediterranean forest, and also with the most extensive territory. The raña stands out, with a nearly flat area of more than 7,000 hectares, flanked by mountain ranges covered with vegetation characteristic of the Mediterranean mountain. From the highlands, watercourses with riparian forests flow downhill, which in areas with a shallow incline, come to form peat bogs or trampales.

flora

Holm oaks, cork oaks, Portuguese oaks, maples, and rebollo oaks together make up a mixed forest wherein one or another species dominates, depending on the direction, the soil, and the presence of water. Rockrose, heath, and strawberry trees are found on the shrubland covering the slopes and mountains. In shady areas, it is possible to find common holly, common yew, or silver birch.

In the peat bogs, you can find remarkable plants such as the cross-leaved heath and the sundew. In the sections of the Bullaque River with calm and deep waters, the yellow water-lily, together with riparian vegetation made up of willows, alders, and ashes, is commonly found.

fauna

This park's fauna is extremely rich, with endemic species as well as many threatened species. There are close to 200 bird species living here: large birds of prey, such as black vultures and Spanish imperial eagles, and steppe birds such as little bustards and thekla larks. It is also home to many large mammals: red deers, wild boars, and roe deers.

socioeconomic aspects

Sheep farming, non-irrigated agriculture, and charcoal production were the main activities carried out in the surroundings of Cabañeros.

At present, livestock farming, apiculture, and cork extraction are the normal activities. The honey and cheese produced here are highly appreciated for their excellent quality.

tourism

This area abides by the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism. It is possible take many different excursions, including some off-road tours, with departures from Alcoba de los Montes, Horcajo de los Montes, and Retuerta del Bullaque; others are on foot: Sierra de Castellar de los Bueyes, Fuente del Caño, Boquerón del Estena y Gargantilla, Plaza de los Moros, Colada de Navalrincón, etc. Student activities, as well as exhibitions held at the Casa Palillos Visitor Centre, are also possible.

The surrounding towns offer a wide range of culinary offerings, accommodation, and activities, which perfectly suit the values that Cabañeros National Park stands for.

cabañeros
PHOTO *gallery*

By clicking on any image, the entire file will open, enabling its download.

"Casa Palillos" Visitor Centre
Ctra. Santa Quiteria
13194 Pueblo Nuevo del Bullaque - Ciudad Real

Torre de Abrahán Recreational Area
Ctra. De Torrijos s/n
13194 Pueblo Nuevo del Bullaque - Ciudad Real

Zoorama-Fauna Museum
Ctra. De Navas de Estena, 5
13194 Retuerta del Bullaque - Ciudad Real

Ethnographic Museum-Information
C/ Real s/n
13110 Horcajo de los Montes - Ciudad Real

Ethnographic Museum-Information
Ctra. De Horcajo s/n
13116 Alcoba de los Montes - Ciudad Real
Tel.: 926 77 02 16

Information Office
Avda. Montes de Toledo, 32
13194 Navas de Estena - Ciudad Real
Tel.: 669 87 35 22

This area, located within the Penibaetic System, makes an impression for being an extensive mountain massif with a compact terrain, and for having the highest peak on the Iberian Peninsula—the Mulhacén rising to 3,479 metres.

It is extraordinarily interesting from a geological standpoint, due to the complexity of its rock formations and its diverse mineralogical richness. It is remarkable for the awe-inspiring beauty of many of its landscapes, which have their own particular appeal, as they are completely different from the rest of the mountain ranges in Europe.

What's more, it is the southernmost point of the continent where it is possible to observe and study the spectacular evidence left by the most recent Quaternary glaciations. At present, signs of the erosive force of ice remain in some U-shaped valleys, such as the headwaters of the Lanjarón River or cirque glaciers where lakes are now present.

ecosystem

The entire natural area is an unprecedented case in Spain's geography, as five of the six ecosystems or vegetation compositions found in the Mediterranean region are represented here. Some are unique in Spain, such as the Mediterranean montane and upper montane.

flora

Aside from holm oaks, sweet chestnuts, and pines, there is great plant diversity. Common houseleeks, foxgloves, Royal chamomile, Sierra Nevada violets, and white woolly plantains are just some of the examples of the more than 2,000 plant species found here. 80 are endemic to the Sierra Nevada while 123 have been classified as threatened.

fauna

Amphibians, reptiles, mammals, birds, and a large number of insects (more than one hundred are endemic), which are particularly associated with high-elevation habitats, comprise the fauna of Sierra Nevada. The Spanish ibex, which is commonly found in the high summits, is the most characteristic species of the national park.

socioeconomic aspects

Economic activity is mainly based on agriculture, which is carried out on the southern face up to an elevation of more than 2,000 m. Non-irrigated crops such as almond, olive, fig, grape, wheat, barley, and rye predominate. In valleys and high plains, irrigated crops such as vegetables, potato, corn, and fruit crops take precedence, although the rural exodus has left large tracts of uncultivated land.

Livestock farming—mainly beef cattle, sheep, and goat—also plays an important role, although the population has decreased in recent years, when the surplus of animals provoked pasture degradation.

tourism

The height of the summits of Sierra Nevada and easy access to them are the main reasons behind the popularity of this massif for mountain climbing and winter sports. The charming towns of La Alpujarra have always been an attractive destination for rural tourism in this area.

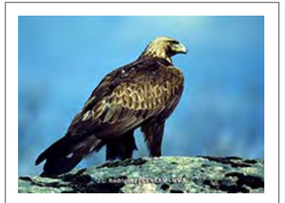
There are two types of trails: some are meant to be done on foot, with varying levels of difficulty, and others are to be done by car or bicycle—the Rutas Verdes (Green Trails). More information on them is available at the different information centres and points and the National Parks' website. The Postero Alto and Poqueira shelters are available for the visitors who request to use them.

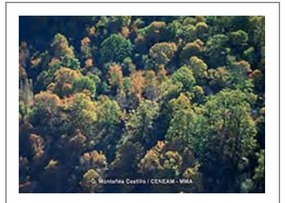
Headquarters
Ctra. Antigua de Sierra Nevada, Km 7
18191 Pinos Genil - Granada
Tel.: 958 026 300
pn.snevada.cma@juntadeandalucia.es

sierra nevada

PHOTO *gallery*

By clicking on any image, the entire file will open, enabling its download.





Regional Office of Huéneja.
Tel.: 958 699 725

Regional Office of Canjáyar.
Tel.: 950 515 539

El Dornajo Visitor Centre.
Tel.: 958 340 625

Laujar de Andarax Visitor Centre.
Tel.: 950 513 548

Pampaneira Information Point.
Tel.: 958 763 127

La Ragua Information Point.

Ermita Vieja Nature Learning Centre.
Tel.: 958 340 472

El Aguadero Nature Learning Centre.
Tel.: 958 489 759

Paredes Nature Learning Centre.
Tel.: 950 521 069

La Cortijuela Botanical Garden.
Tel.: 958 026 300

Hoya de Pedraza Botanical Garden.
Tel.: 958 026 300

It is the second marine-terrestrial national park within the network. It is located in the Rías Baixas of Galicia and includes the Cíes, Ons, Sálvora, and Cortegada archipelagos.

It represents the natural systems associated with coastal areas and the continental shelf of the Eurosiberian region. The cliffs, dunes, shrublands, and beaches, as well as the different types of seabed—rocky, sandy, or made of shells—create a patchwork of ecosystems on these islands and in the waters surrounding them.

It is a remarkable area on the coast of Galicia, as it preserves the features that are characteristic of Atlantic coastal habitats and serves as a sanctuary for some of the most important seabird populations on the entire Iberian Peninsula.

In the terrestrial environment, you can find beaches, dunes, cliffs, and rock formations. The marine environment is characterised by an abundance of algae species and for being an excellent spawning site for all types of fish and shellfish. There are also many fine specimens of dolphins and harbour porpoises.

Headquarters
C/Oliva 3 2º Edificio Cambón
36202 Vigo
Tel.: 886 21 80 90
Fax 886 21 80 94
iatlanticas@xunta.es

ecosystem

Marine ecosystems, cliffs, beaches and dune systems, Atlantic and sub-Mediterranean coastal shrublands.

flora

You can find a large number of species that have surprisingly adapted to living in the sand dunes such as the Portuguese crowberry, or in the narrow crevices of the cliffs such as the common foxglove. In addition, there are laurel forests, gorse clumps, and more than 300 types of algae, among which the faunae take refuge.

fauna

It is worth mentioning the largest breeding colony of the common shag in Spain, which is one of the most important seabirds on the entire Iberian Peninsula. Fire salamanders, Caspian gulls, Scopoli's shearwaters, and dolphins can also be seen. Scores of fishes, molluscs, corals, and anemones spawn on its seabeds.

socioeconomic aspects

In the park, economic activities are restricted to sustainable use of its resources, in such a way that the main activities—fishing and tourism—are strictly regulated by legislation and resource management plans.

tourism

It is possible to access the park by sea from the towns of Vigo, Baiona, Cangas, Ribeira, Vilagarcía, Bueu, and Pontevedra.

Regular, private, or group transport may be used depending on the time of year. From the access points to the islands, you can discover the secrets they hold by using any of the different trails available. There are lighthouses that are still in use, ancient villages, magnificent natural landscapes, majestic cliffs, forests, and pristine beaches. Diving is also possible inside the entire park.

By clicking on any image, the entire file will open, enabling its download.

National Park Visitor Centre
C/Palma 4 Edificio Cambón
36202 Vigo (Pontevedra)
Tel.: 886 21 80 82

Cíes Islands Visitor Centre
S. Estevo Monastery ruins

Ons Island Visitor Centre
Ons Archipelago-Curro

Cíes Islands Information Point
Tel.: 986 68 75 02

Ons Island Information Point
Tel.: 986 68 76 96

The landscape of Monfragüe is characterised by large areas of dehesa pasturelands shaped by the Tagus River. This natural spot is home to one of the best preserved Mediterranean montane wetlands in the world.

The dense, nearly impenetrable shrubland on its slopes and the presence of endangered species of fauna make it one of the greatest natural treasures in Europe.

This national park gives us a glimpse of how a large part of the Iberian Peninsula looked like hundreds or thousands of years ago. A visit to it is an opportunity to discover a place from times past, where nature was at its wildest and most beautiful.

ecosystem

The value of Monfragüe lies in the variety of its ecosystems; rocky areas, Mediterranean montane and shrubland, riverbanks, and dehesa pasturelands comprise the park and its surroundings. This, together with its good state of conservation, makes biodiversity its main distinguishing feature.

flora

Aside from holm oak forests, cork oak forests, strawberry tree forests, rockrose forests, and heath forests, there are also other areas with deciduous species such as Portuguese oak, maple on the shaded slopes, or narrow-leaved ash and alder in the copses of the arroyos.

fauna

Species such as the black vulture, the Spanish imperial eagle, and the black stork—all of them threatened worldwide—currently breed in its forests, where they are able to find one of their last remaining refuges. Aside from birds, there are also mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fishes, and numerous species of invertebrates that, with a little patience, can easily be seen.

socioeconomic aspects

The services sector is the activity that is gradually growing in relevance in this area's economy, thanks to the large number of visits to the park.

tourism

Monfragüe abides by the European Charter of Sustainable Tourism. To better explore its many natural riches, it is advisable to start the visit from the town of Villarreal de San Carlos. There, you can find a Visitor Service Centre, a Water Interpretation Centre, a Nature Interpretation Centre, a Research and Documentation Centre, and a few traditional huts intended for environmental education.

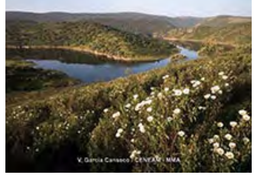
The park has accessible trails for people with functional diversity and there are others that can be done by car or bicycle or on horseback. The most emblematic spots are the Salto del Gitano, with its imposing precipice where innumerable bird species nest, and the Castle, which offers magnificent views. The Fuente del Francés, the Tajadilla del Tiétar, the Higuerilla lookout point, and the Portilla del Tiétar lookout point are also definitely worth a visit. These areas are accessible using the roads that run through the park.

Cáceres Headquarters
Department of Environment and Rural Affairs,
Agricultural and Territorial Policies
Directorate-General for the Environment
C/ Arroyo Valhondo, 2 - 1ª planta
10071 Cáceres
Tel.: 927 00 61 60

monfragüe

PHOTO *gallery*

By clicking on any image, the entire file will open, enabling its download.



Public Use Office of the National Park
10695 Villarreal de San Carlos (Cáceres)
Tel.: 927 19 95 03
pnmonfrague@gobex.es

Villarreal Visitor Reception and Information Centre
10695 Villarreal de San Carlos (Cáceres)
Tel.: 927 19 91 34
info.monfrague@gobex.es

Los Chozos Nature Learning Centre
10695 Villarreal de San Carlos (Cáceres)
Tel.: 927199473
ea.monfrague@gobex.es

Villarreal de San Carlos Nature Interpretation Centre

Villarreal de San Carlos Multipurpose Centre

Villarreal de San Carlos Research and Documentation Centre
Tel.: 927199467
doc.monfrague@gobex.es

Located in the western part of the Central System, it includes the summits of the Sierra de Guadarrama, between Madrid and Segovia, with Peñalara rising to 2,428 m. as the highest peak. Other mountain ranges and summits of particular interest are Siete Picos—extending between Puerto de Navacerrada and Puerto de La Fuenfría—Sierra de los Porrones, Sierra de la Morcuera, La Pedriza, Peña del Oso, and Montón de Trigo.

ecosystem

Most of its area is covered by summits, where rocky outcroppings abound, and montane grasslands and shrublands. For the National Parks Network, this area is a prime example of different natural systems: highlands with siliceous rocks shaped by the erosive force of ice millions of years ago; granite rock formations that give rise to an extraordinary landscape such as La Pedriza; high-elevation grasslands and supra-forest shrublands (creeping juniper thickets and Pyrenean broom clumps); and lastly, Scots pine forests with a high environmental value and in an excellent state of conservation.

flora

High plant diversity, as a result of different factors mainly related to its geographical location, is found in the Sierra de Guadarrama. This enables it to have characteristics found in both the Mediterranean and Eurosiberian regions, thereby turning it into a refuge for species from colder climates, which were more widely distributed in the past but which are currently no longer found in the adjoining territories.
In addition, the sharp differences in elevation of these mountains—which give rise to diverse weather conditions—and in the types of soil over a relatively small area, make it possible for a large number of habitats to exist. Its isolation, as a great cordillera right at the heart of the Castilian meseta, has played a key role in the appearance of numerous endemic species. Despite the absence of definitive studies that would determine the exact number of vascular plants, it is believed that there are approximately 1,300 species. Some of the most noteworthy species are: the great yellow gentian, the bilberry, the Paular geranium, the juniper-leaved thrift, and the Guadarrama broom.

fauna

Inside the national park and in its peripheral protection zone, there are 133 catalogued bird species that can be commonly found at certain times of the year. The most important of these are: the Spanish imperial eagle, the black vulture, the Alpine accentor, and the bluethroat. You can also find 58 mammal species, of which 6 are endemic to the Iberian Peninsula: the Iberian hare, the Lusitanian pine vole, the Iberian shrew, the Iberian mole, the Iberian desman, and Cabrera's vole.

Among the amphibians and reptiles, the most representative species are: the Iberian frog, Cyren's rock lizard, and the Iberian emerald lizard.
In terms of fishes, the roach, the loach, the Iberian barbel are noteworthy. While invertebrates are the most numerous group, the great beauty of its butterflies, such as the Spanish moon moth and the apollo butterfly, is worthy of mention.

socioeconomic aspects

Livestock farming and tree harvesting from the pine forests of the Sierra de Guadarrama are the most relevant traditional activities. Nevertheless, for many years now, most of the woodlands found inside the national park have played a vital role in biodiversity and landscape conservation, soil conservation, hydrological control, and for recreation, although tree harvesting continues in the peripheral protection zone. One of the foremost examples of sustainable use and nature conservation is the Pinar de Valsaín.

tourism

Within the national park's area of socioeconomic influence, there is a great many accommodation, dining and outdoor leisure options on offer.
All this information is available in the Sierra de Guadarrama National Park Service Guide, which makes visiting it much easier. In some of its towns, there is a wide range of museums: painting collections, ethnographic, archaeological, tapestries, glass, etc.

Environmental Territorial Service of Segovia.
Castile-Leon Regional Government
Pza. Reina. Dña. Juana, 5 40071 Segovia
Telephone 921 417 239

Department of Environment, Local Administration and Territorial Regulation. Community of Madrid
C/ Alcalá, 16
28014 Madrid
Telephone 91 438 22 78

Valle de la Fuenfría Visitor Centre
Telephone 918 522 213
Cercedilla, Madrid

La Pedriza Visitor Centre
Telephone 918 539 978
Manzanares El Real, Madrid

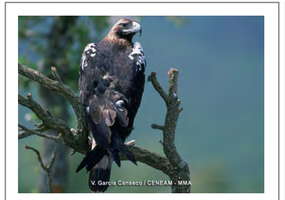
Valle de El Paular Visitor Centre
Telephone 918 691 757
Rascafría, Madrid

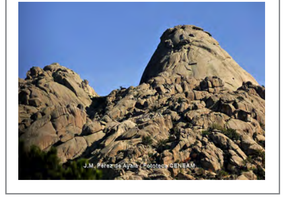
Valle de Valsaín Visitor Centre (Boca del Asno)
Telephone 921 120 013
Valsaín, Segovia

sierra de guadarrama

PHOTO *gallery*

By clicking on any image, the entire file will open, enabling its download.





list of species referred to

network national parks

list of species referred to

PICOS DE EUROPA

Flora

Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)
Heath (*Erica sp.*)
Sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*)
Juniper (*Juniperus sp.*)
Ash (*Fraxinus sp.*)
Broom (*Genista sp.*)
Spring gentian (*Gentiana verna*)
European beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)
Oak (*Quercus robur* and *Q. petrea*)
Large-leaved linden (*Tilia platyphyllos*)

Fauna

Wolf (*Canis lupus*)
Brown bear (*Ursus arctos*)
Pyrenean chamois (*Rupicapra pirenaica*)
Wood grouse (*Tetrao urogallus*)

ORDESA

Flora

Silver fir (*Abies alba*)
Pyrenean encrusted saxifrage (*Saxifraga longifolia*)
Edelweiss or snow flower (*Leontopodium alpinum*)
Holm oak (*Quercus ilex*)
Long-leaved butterwort (*Pinguicula longifolia*)
European beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)
Pyrenean violet (*Ramonda myconi*)
Mountain pine (*Pinus uncinata*)
Scots pine (*Pinus silvestris*)
Portuguese oak (*Quercus faginea*)
Lady's slipper orchid (*Cypripedium calceolus*)

Fauna

Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)
Red squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*)
Griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*)
Beech marten (*Martes foina*)
Wild boar (*Sus scrofa*)
Marmot (*Marmota marmota*)
Bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus*)
Chamois (Rupicapra rupicapra)
Pyrenean brook salamander (*Euproctus asper*)
Red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)

TEIDE

Flora

Silver thistle (*Stemmacantha cynaroides*)
Teide broom (*Spartocytisus supranubius*)
Teide bugloss (*Echium wildpretii*)
Teide violet (*Viola cheiranthifolia*)

Fauna

Berthelot's pipit (*Anthus berthelotii*)
Canary (*Serinus canaria*)
Rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*)
Gallot's lizard (*Gallotia galloti*)
West Canary skink (*Chalcides viridanus ssp. viridanus*)
Mouflon (*Ovis musimon*)
Barbary partridge (*Alectoris barbara*)
Tenerife gecko (*Tarentola delalandii*)
Tenerife blue chaffinch (*Fringilla teydea ssp. teydea*)
House mouse (*Mus musculus*)

CALDERA DE TABURIENTE

Flora

Tree houseleek (*Aeonium* and *Greenovia* genus)
Canary Island pine (*Pinus canariensis*)
Canary Island broom (*Genista benehoavensis*)
La Palma violet (*Viola palmensis*)
Teide burnet (*Bencomia exstipulata*)
Tajinaste palmero de cumbre (*Echium gentianoides*)

Fauna

Berthelot's pipit (*Anthus berthelotii*)
Canary (*Serinus canarius*)
La Palma lizard (*Gallotia galloti palmae*)
Canary big-eared bat (*Plecotus teneriffae*)
White-tailed laurel pigeon (*Columba junoniae*)
Tenerife gecko (*Tarentola delalandii*)
Plain swift (*Apus unicolor*)

AIGÜESTORTES

Flora

Silver fir (*Abies alba*)
Pyrenean mountain spiny fescue (*Festuka eskia*)
Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*)
Mossy saxifrage (*Saxifraga bryoides*)
Matgrass (*Nardus stri cta*)
Juniper (*Juniperus sp.*)
Alpine gentian (*Gentiana alpina*)
Moss campion (*Silene acaulis*)
Mountain pine (*Pinus uncinata*)
Scots pine (*Pinus silvestris*)
Pyrenean buttercup (*Ranunculus pyrenaeus*)
Alpen rose (*Rhododendron ferrugineum*)

Fauna

Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)
Stoat (*Mustela erminea*)
Pyrenean desman (*Galemys pyrenaicus*)
Boreal owl (*Aegolius funereus*)
Whiskered bat (*Myotis mystacinus*)
Pyrenean rock ptarmigan (*Lagopus muta sp. pyrenaica*)
Black woodpecker (*Dryocopus martius*)
Bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus*)
Chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra*)
Wallcreeper (*Tichodroma muraria*)
Pyrenean brook salamander (*Euproctus asper*)
Brown trout (*Salmo trutta fario*)
Wood grouse (*Tetrao urogallus*)

DOÑANA

Flora

European marram grass (*Ammophila arenaria*)
Bullrush (*Scirpus littoralis*)
Heath (*Erica sp.*)
Common reed (*Phragmites communis*)
Bayonet grass (*Scirpus maritimus*)
Spiny thrift (*Armeria pungens*)
Broadleaf cattail (*Typha latifolia*)
Rockrose (*Halimium halimifolium*)

Fauna

Spanish imperial eagle (*Aquila adalberti*)
White stork (*Ciconia ciconia*)
Rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*)
Eurasian spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*)
American flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*)
Heron and egret (genuses *Ardea* and *Bubulcus*)
Iberian lynx (*Lynx pardinus*)

list of species referred to

TABLAS DE DAIMIEL

Flora

Mediterranean saltwort (*Salsola vermiculata*)
Common reed (*Phragmites communis*)
Bayonet grass (*Scirpus maritimus*)
Holm oak (*Quercus ilex*)
Broadleaf cattail and southern cattail (*Typha latifolia* and *T. dominguensis*)
Rush (*Juncus sp.*)
Sea-lavender (*Limonium sp.*)
Swamp sawgrass (*Cladium mariscus*)
Branched algae (*Chara sp.*)
Tamarisk (*Tamarix sp.*)

Fauna

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
White stork (*Ciconia ciconia*)
Common coot (*Fulica atra*)
Common crane (*Grus grus*)
Black-crowned night heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)
Heron and egret (genuses *Ardea* and *Bubulcus*)
Common otter (*Lutra lutra*)
Red-crested pochard (*Netta rufina*)

TIMANFAYA

Flora

Spiny gorse (*Launaea arborescens*)
Lichen (*Ramalina bourgeana*)
Lichen (*Stereocaulon vesuvianum*)
Ratonera (*Forsskaolea angustifolia*)
Verode (*Senecio kleinia*)

Fauna
Egyptian vulture or pharaoh's chicken (*Neophron percnopterus*)
Atlantic lizard (*Gallotia atlántica*)

GARAJONAY

Flora

Tree heath (*Erica arborea*)
Fire tree (*Morella faya*)
Canary Island elder (*Sambucus nigra ssp. palmensis*)
Canary spurge (*Euphorbia longifolia*)
Blue bugloss (*Echium acanthocarpum*)
Canarian besom heath (*Erica platycodon*)

Fauna
Skink (*Chalcides sp.*)
White-tailed laurel pigeon (*Columba junoniae*)
Dark-tailed laurel pigeon (*Columba bollii*)
La Gomera gecko (*Tarentola gomerensis*)

CABRERA ARCHIPELAGO

Flora

Balearic buckthorn (*Rhamnus ludovici-salvatoris*)
Balearic St. John's wort (*Hypericum balearicum*)

Fauna

Long-finned pilot whale (*Globicephala melaena*)
Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*)
Audouin's gull (*Larus audouinii*)
Lilford's wall lizard (*Podarcis lilfordi*)
Dusky grouper (*Epinephelus marginatus*)
Mediterranean moray (*Muraena helena*)
European storm petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus*)
Balearic shearwater (*Puffinus mauretanicus*)
Loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*)

CABAÑEROS

Flora

Silver birch (*Betula pendula*)
Common holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)
Cork oak (*Quercus suber*)
Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*)
Maple (*Acer sp.*)
Sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*)
Heath (genuses *Erica* and *Calluna*)
Cross-leaved heath (*Erica tetralix*)
French lavender (*Lavandula stoechas*)
Holm oak (*Quercus ilex*)
White-leaved rockrose (*Cistus albidus*)
Narrow-leaved ash (*Fraxinus angustifolia*)
Royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*)
Rockrose (genuses *Cistus* and *Halimium*)
Portugal laurel (*Prunus lusitanica*)
Strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*)
Yellow water-lily (*Nuphar lutea*)
Portuguese oak (*Quercus faginea*)
Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)
Willow (*Salix sp.*)
Common yew (*Taxus baccata*)

Fauna

Spanish imperial eagle (*Aquila adalberti*)
Black vulture (*Aegypius monachus*)
Red deer (*Cervus elaphus*)
Thekla lark (*Galerida theklae*)
Roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*)
Wild boar (*Sus scrofa*)
Little bustard (*Tetrax tetrax*)

SIERRA NEVADA

Flora

Sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*)
Foxglove (*Digitalis sp.*)
Holm oak (*Quercus ilex*)
White woolly plantain (*Plantago nivalis*)
Royal chamomile (*Artemisia granatensis*)
Pine (*Pinus sp.*)
Common houseleek (*Sempervivum sp.*)
Sierra Nevada violet (*Viola crassiuscula*)

Fauna

Spanish ibex (*Capra pirenaica*)

ATLANTIC ISLANDS

Flora

Portuguese crowberry (*Corema album*)
Common foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*)
Laurel (*Laurus nobilis*)
Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*)

Fauna

Common shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*)
Dolphins (genuses *Tursiops* and *Delphinus*)
Caspian gull (*Larus cachinnans*)
Harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*)
Scopoli's shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea*)
Fire salamander (*Salamandra salamandra*)

MONFRAGÜE

Flora

Cork oak (*Quercus suber*)
Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*)
Maple (*Acer sp.*)
Narrow-leaved ash (*Fraxinus angustifolia*)
Heath (*Erica sp.*)
Holm oak (*Quercus ilex*)
Rockrose (*Cistus sp.*)
Strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*)
Portuguese oak (*Quercus faginea*)

Fauna

Spanish imperial eagle (*Aquila adalberti*)
Black vulture (*Aegypius monachus*)
Black stork (*Ciconia nigra*)

list of species referred to

SIERRA DE GUADARRAMA

Flora

Scots pine (*Pinus silvestris*)
Pyrenean broom (*Cytisus oromediterraneus*)
Creeping juniper (*Juniperus communis subsp. nana*)
Great yellow gentian (*Gentiana lutea*)
Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*)
Paular geranium (*Erodium paularense*)
Guadarrama broom (*Adenocarpus hispanicus*)

Fauna

Spanish imperial eagle (*Aquila adalberti*)
Black vulture (*Aegypius monachus*)
Alpine accentor (*Prunella collaris*)
Bluethroat (*Luscinia svecica*)
Iberian hare (*Lepus granatensis*)
Lusitanian pine vole (*Microtus lusitanicus*)
Iberian shrew (*Sorex granarius*)
Iberian mole (*Talpa occidentalis*)
Iberian desman (*Galemys pyrenaicus*)
Cabrera's vole (*Microtus cabrerae*)
Iberian frog (*Rana iberica*)

Midwife toad (*Alytes obstetricans*)
Cyren's rock lizard (*Iberolacerta cyreni*)
Iberian emerald lizard (*Lacerta schreiberi*)
Roach (*Achondrostoma calderoni*)
Iberian barbel (*Barbus comiza*)

Spanish moon moth (*Graellsia isabelae*)
Apollo butterfly (*Parnassius apollo*)

Transformations

Kate Knowles