

physical environment

This park comprises a great geological diversity. Several geomorphologic models can be observed in this area. In the top lands a karstic relief dominates the landscape. In the middle heights cliffs and deep valleys occur. Different types of rocks, such as limestone, gypsum, etc., come up to the surface.

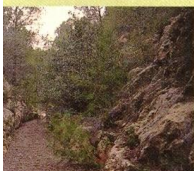


The central and northern zones are formed by the lands comprising the Guadalentin river basin, crossing this area from the west to the east.

There are also deep precipices such as "King-Kong Walls", "El Relojero" or "La Panocha", where climbing is practised. The southern slopes face the Mar Menor basin.

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The eastern sector is without a doubt, a valuable environment. One of the singularities is the bad-lands area, resembling a desert, where the soft soils and rocks are deeply eroded by the torrential rainfall.



suggestions for visitors

- You are in a protected area of beautiful landscape and great natural value, which we attempt to preserve for the future generations. So during your visit try not to forget...
- Use authorised roads and footpaths.
- Domestic animals must be held.
- Camping and/or caravanning are not permitted in the area.
- Respect private propriety.
- Do not disturb neither harm animals and plants.
- Do not light fire unless authorised to do so.
- Please, use the garbage bins.
- For emergency, call number 112.

More information

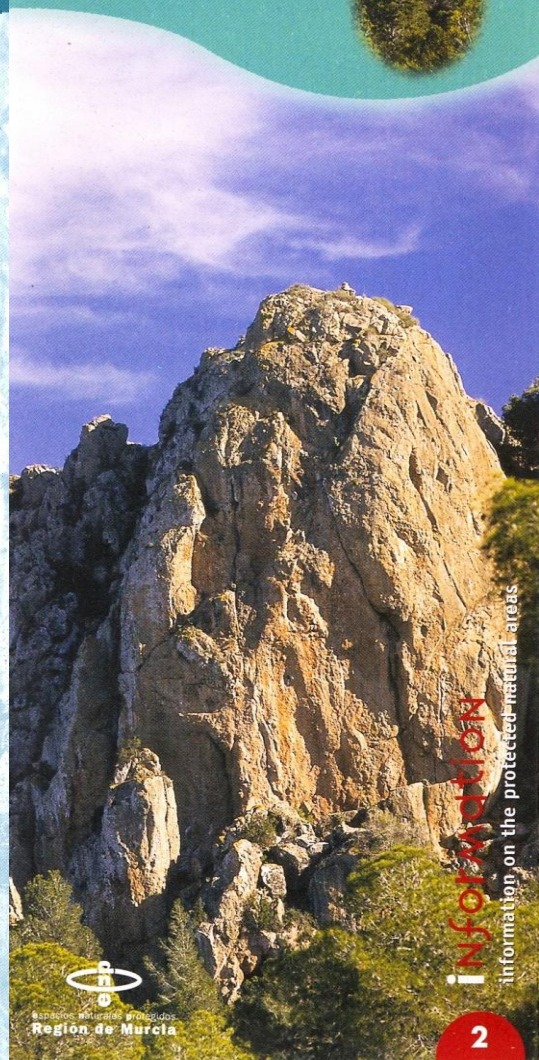
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Tel.: 968 22 89 37/38 • Fax: 968 22 89 38
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(Environmental and Geographic Information System)
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- Queries and Suggestions:
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Región de Murcia
Consejería de Desarrollo Sostenible y Ordenación del Territorio
Dirección General del Medio Natural



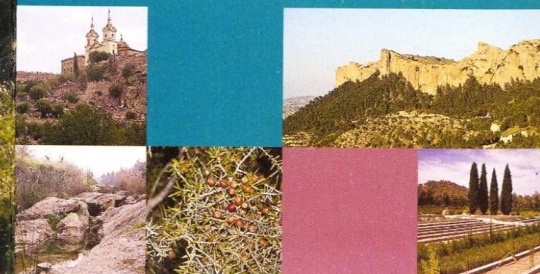
Regional Park
El Valle y Carrascoy



information on the protected natural areas

introduction

This Regional Park is located in the most easterly sector of the Betic mountain range, inside de Segura River Basin with an east-west direction lay-out. It presents a very rough relief, ranging from 200 to 1.000 metres in height. This makes possible the existence of great rocking escarpments, precipices and secondary valleys towards north and south. The conservation of the natural values in this area dates back from 1.917, when it was included into the National Catalogue of Natural Areas. Later, in 1.931 it was declared Natural Site of National Interest. In 1.992 it is declared Regional Park. It occupies an extension of almost 11.000 hectares. Its environmental singularity has made this area to be included in the European Natura 2000 network. In 2.001 it was declared as Special Protection Bird Area, because of the important population of Eurasian eagle owl. Later, this area has been proposed as a Site of Community Importance.



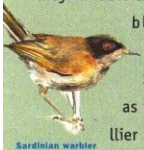
fauna

Animal life is of a great variety in the park. Amongst insects we can find several species of butterflies that usually live in the mountain mass. Amphibious such as the natterjack toad or the



Wildcat

Iberian painted frog live next to the scarce watercourses of the park. Reptiles are more abundant than amphibious; they inhabit the dry scrublands and rocky areas. Species such as the Montpellier snake or the ocellated lizard are two of the typical reptiles of the park.



Sardinian warbler

Birds of the park are, without a doubt, the wider and best known group of vertebrates. Great tits, Long-tailed tits and Crossbills take shelter in the pi-



Golden eagle



Red Squirrel

newoods, together with some other birds of prey such as Goshawks and Sparrow hawks. At night owls become silent hunters. The biggest species is the Eurasian eagle owl, which breeds in rocky cliffs, but there are other smaller owls such as the Tawny owl or the Barn owl.

The scrublands and borders of the pinewoods are the favourite habitats for partridges, buntings, finches, warblers and thrushes. In these areas it is possible to observe the hunting acrobatics of Golden Eagles, Booted Eagle or Short-toed Snake Eagle.

Amongst the mammals we can find species such as Red Squirrels, Common Genets and Wild Cats. The biggest mammal of the park is the Wild Boar.

Bats are important for the biodiversity of the park; they play an important role predated on many insects which could become a pest.



Eurasian Eagle Owl

Vegetation

More than 600 species of plants live in this Regional Park. Some of them, such as the esparto grass, are abundant and well known, but there are some botanic treasures which inhabit scarce places hidden in rocky cliffs.

The most extensive woodlands are those of Aleppo pine. Many of these forests were reforested at the beginning of the 20th century. This pine is well adapted to the dry Mediterranean climate, predominant in Murcia.

Other interesting tree in the park is the evergreen oak, much more abundant in the past times.

The scrublands is a type of vegetation compound by different species of bushes, such as kermes oak, mastic tree, rosemary, thyme or strawberry tree, and a big grass: the esparto grass, which covers many hectares.

The watercourses are scarce in the park, but very in-



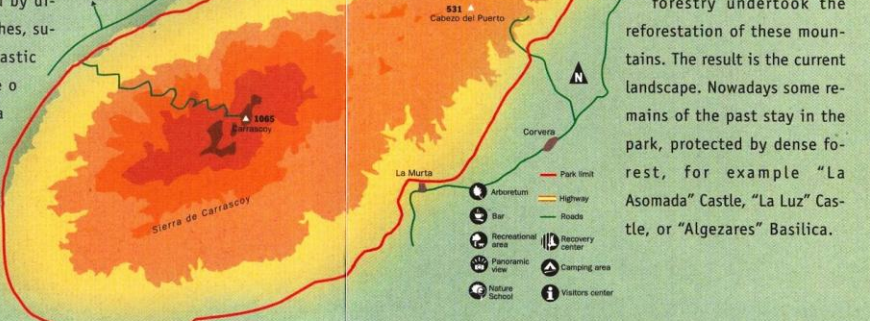
Pine

teresting. The plants and trees next to the water are different from the pinewoods and scrublands. Poplars, oleanders, tamarisks and blackberries are some of the species.



Laurus nobilis

A Librilla



Men and Landscape

This mountains, emerged from the fertile plains of the Guadalentín River, became an important point of reference for the first inhabitants of this area. The woodlands and mountains offered resources such as timber, medicinal plants, animals for hunting, grasses for sheep and goats, etc. The fertile valleys

were occupied by different crops. A gradual increase in the number of settlements in this area increased the accessibility to this mountain. Shepherding and tree felling turned this area into a desert zone, with no trees.

At the end of the 19th century and during the 20th century several engineers in forestry undertook the reforestation of these mountains. The result is the current landscape. Nowadays some remains of the past stay in the park, protected by dense forest, for example "La Asomada" Castle, "La Luz" Castle, or "Algezares" Basilica.

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The Park suggests

In the Visitors Centre El Valle, visitors can find brochures and leaflets with general information. The exhibition makes easier to understand the geography and biodiversity of the park. This centre is located next to the municipality of La Albuera. Trekking-lovers can enjoy of a wide network of paths and tracks closed to vehicles. The tracks, along beautiful landscapes, are designed to facilitate the understanding of the park, its flora, fauna, geology and conservation works. There is a great number of interesting spots in this park, among them: The Visitors Centre "El Valle"; The Recreational Area "El Valle"; The Wild Fauna Recovery Centre; The Nature School, where children can learn about nature and its conservation; "La Fuensanta" Sanctuary, where an important pilgrimage is celebrated in September; "Las Navetas" and "Relojero" Viewing points, where we can enjoy magnificent panoramic views.

