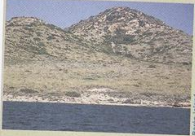


PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

ISLANDS IN THE MAR MENOR

The volcanic origin of these five islands makes them of a great ecologic value. The silk



Barriles Island

vine (a protected species), the European fan palm, caralluma, Mediterranean withania or the ramsthorn appear in the Ciervo island. The other four islands are occupied with a mixture of thickets, such as kermes oak, mastic tree and European fan palm. Sea birds such as the cormorant, the grey heron, ringed plover or the shelduck find shelter here. Some other protected species such as the Dartford warbler, the crested lark, the little owl or the kes-

trel. Amongst the reptiles, it is worthy to mention the presence of the Moorish gecko.

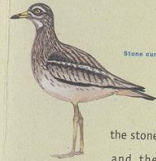
COASTAL SPACES

Playa de la Hita, Marina del Carmolí, Saladar de Lo Poyo, Salinas de Marchamalo and Playa de Amoladeras constitute a wetlands system in the Mar Menor area. La Hita Beach is formed by a group of small ponds surrounded by saltbushes and giant reeds. These habitats are catalogued of Community interest. In there,



La Hita Beach

the natterjack toad, the Spanish toothcarp and birds such as the black-winged stilt,



Stone curlew

the stone curlew and the little egret can be found. Marina de Carmolí is divided into two different sectors; a coastal sand strip and the inner area where there is an exceptional community of esparto grass where live short-toed larks. The Saladar of Lo Poyo comprises a coastal lagoon, formerly transformed in saltmines and now abandoned. Amongst its fauna it is possible to find Kentish plovers or little terns. The Salinas de

Playa de la Hita, Marina del Carmolí, Saladar de Lo Poyo, Salinas de Marchamalo and Playa de Amoladeras constitute a wetlands system in the Mar Menor area.

San Pedro is formed by wetlands, where the Spanish toothcarp lives. Some vegetation appear in the coastal sand bars and there are dunes of



Esparto

great value in Playa de las Almoladeras. A number of bird species find shelter and food in this area, such as the



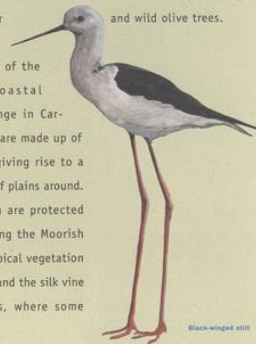
European fan palm



avocet, the little tern, the Kentish plover, grey herons and flamingos.

THE HILLS

There is a group of hills, three of them declared Site of geological Importance. San Ginés and El Sabinar appear like an extension of the nearest coastal mountain range in Cartagena. They are made up of limestones, giving rise to a wide variety of plains around. Both of them are protected habitats, being the Moorish savine the typical vegetation in El Sabinar and the silk vine in San Ginés, where some



Black-winged stilt

archaeological remains have been found. El Carmolí has a volcanic origin as well as the islands in the Mar Menor, and is quite near the lagoon, with a wide variety of thickets, such as the Mediterranean withania, European fan palms and wild olive trees.

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

- Consejería de Desarrollo Sostenible y Ordenación del Territorio (Council of Sustainable Development)
Tel.: 968 22 89 37/38 • Fax: 968 22 89 38
- Sistema de Información Geográfica y Ambiental (SIGA) (Environmental and Geographic Information System)
www.carm.es/medioambiente/
- Queries and Suggestions:
medioambiente@listas.carm.es

Región de Murcia

Consejería de Desarrollo Sostenible y Ordenación del Territorio
Dirección General del Medio Natural



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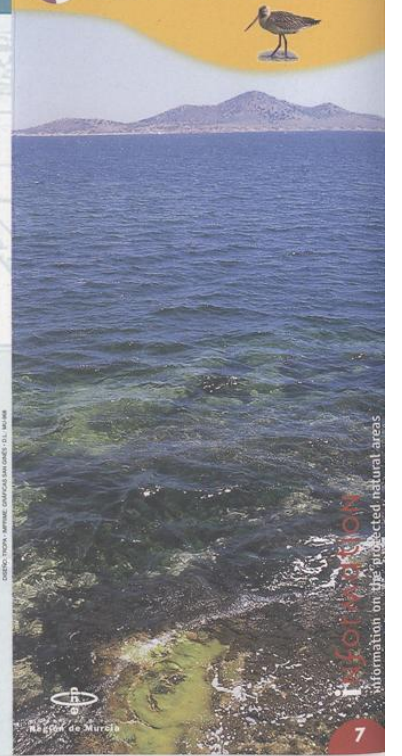


GOBIERNO DE MURCIA
DEPARTAMENTO DE
CULTURA Y TURISMO



Ramsar

Protected Landscape
Islands and Spaces in the Mar Menor



Information on the protected natural areas

Introduction

The Mar Menor with an area of 135 Km², is an extensive inland sea enclosed by the "La Manga" spit geographical formation and located in the most easterly sector in the Cartagena plain. Water from both seas communicates through Las Golas.

It belongs to the Ramsar Convention (The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance), designated as a Special Protection Bird Area and proposed as a Site of Community Importance, to be included in the European Natura 2000 Network. This Protected Landscape is formed by different riversides and seasides: Playa de la Hita, Sadar de Lo Poyo, Marina del Carmoli, Salinas del Marchamalo and Playa de las Almoraderas. Moreover, the San Ginés and El Sabinar hills can be found here, in the southern sector of this landscape, together with the El Carmoli hill and the volcanic islands emerging inside the sea. These are divided into two groups, the larger ones (Isla del Barón, Isla Perdiguera and Isla del Ciervo) and the smaller ones (Isla del Sujeto and Isla Redonda). It occupies a surface area of 1596,2 hectares and it is shared by the municipalities of Cartagena, Los Alcázares, San Javier and Torre Pacheco.



Fauna

Birdlife is well represented in this area. A number of water birds and sea birds find this zone of a vital importance, because they winter, breed or nest here. In the sand flats, salt marshes and other wetlands it appears the Kentish plover, the black-winged stilt and the redshank. The little tern and some sea gulls use these habitats to rest. It is worthy to mention Marchamalo salt marshes, a meeting point for flamingos, shelducks, little egrets, avocets and some other species of dunlins, sandpipers and godwits. The coot, the common moorhen and the little bittern find shelter in the areas where giant reeds grow. Other small birds commonly found here are the fan-tailed warblers, the penduline tits, and the reed warblers. The saline steppe called Marina del Carmoli is inhabited by

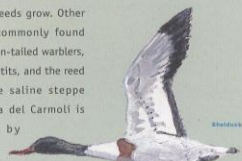


Small Tern

short-toed larks, crested larks, calandra larks, meadow pipits, stonechats and corn buntings, mammals such as rabbits, hares, hedgehogs and foxes; some other birds such as the partridge, little owls or kestrels; reptiles such as Montpellier snake, red-tailed spiny footed lizard and the Moorish gecko. The Spanish tooth carp, a fish that appear in scattered places in the southeast of the Iberian peninsula, completes the richness of this fauna.



Partridge



Shelduck

Vegetation

There are very different vegetal communities associated to the Mar Menor. On the sand lands of Lo Poyo, Las Almoraderas and El Carmoli grows the sea daffodil and the Cretan bird's foot trefoil. Both of them are well adapted to extreme weather conditions influenced by the sea water spray. Salt marshes lie on the areas temporarily or permanently filled up with salt-waters. These species are especially adapted to this high salinity condition. It appears the glasswort, the sea lavender and the salt cedar. In the Marina del



Sea Daffodil



Carmoli, Playa de la Hita, Lo Poyo and Marchamalo salt marshes it is possible to find this kind of vegetal community. Giant reeds can also be found in this area, where there is some fresh water. In the Marina del Carmoli lies a saline steppe of great interest, dominated by the esparto grass, appearing some other graminæ and salt the hills and islands there are different communities of Mediterranean thickets, adapted to the high temperatures and the shortage of rainfalls, with valuable species such as the Moorish savine, the European fan palm, the small buckthorn, the silk vine, the mastic tree and different species of cistus gum.

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Sea Daffodil



Men and Landscape

Archaeological sites such as Cueva Victoria and Cueva de San Gil show up the presence of human activity in this area influenced by the Mar Menor. In these settlements some remains dating back from more than 800,000 years have been found. Other archaeological findings have been found in the sites in Las Almoladeras and Cabo de Palos. Several cultures in the anti-



Archaeological site

quity (Iberians, Phoenicians, Greeks and Punics) have passed through these lands. During the Roman occupation a flourishing economic activity was developed. Remains of piers, saltworks, salted fish factories, amphorae and some other containers prove it.



