

# Reserva Natural das Lagoas de Santo André e da Sancha

## ABOUT



Located in the Alentejo, the Lagoas de Santo André and Sancha Natural Reserve occupies a 15km-wide coastal sector inland from the shoreline, in the municipalities of Sines and Santiago do Cacém. The Natural Reserve consists of the Lagoa de Santo André, the largest lagoon (500 hectares) on the Alentejo coastline, and the smaller Lagoa da Sancha (15 hectares). Its protected status recognises the high ecological value of these two wetlands and their surrounding areas which also include the ridge of dunes that separates them from the ocean and the adjacent seashore. The existence of fresh and brackish waters gives rise to a diverse set of aquatic ecosystems and riparian areas that include small marsh areas, willow plantations, rush and reed beds, bogs, heathland and wetland pastures. These natural conditions attract many birds that remain here at times when other areas are already fully or partially dried out, making the late summer/early autumn the most recommended season for observing them. In Lagoa de Santo André, one can see some species in much greater numbers than any other area in Portugal, such as the common coot, the red-crested pochard and the Eurasian reed warbler, which is the symbol of the Reserve. In Lagoa da Sancha, there is a colony of nesting red herons, and it is also chosen as a place of refuge for the red-crested pochard. The Reserve is a place of outstanding natural beauty and offers excellent conditions to practice many activities like hiking, canoeing and windsurfing, or simply strolling and relaxing in the sun on the adjacent long sandy beaches of Costa de Santo André and Fonte do Cortiço.

## Contacts

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<http://www.natural.pt/portal/en/AreaProtegida/Item/22>

**Characteristics and Services**

Park area: 5.274 ha

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