
Protected Areas

Alentejo

Barrancos

Parque de Natureza de Noudar

Website: <http://www.parquenoudar.com>

Contacts

Apartado 5 - 7230-909 Barrancos

Tel: +351 285 950 000 Fax: +351 285 950 001

E-mail: pnoudar@edia.pt

Characteristics and Services:

Signposted routes; Guided Tours;

Located in Barrancos, next to the border with Spain, Noudar Nature Park maintains a preserved environment in which agricultural and forestry activities are conserved in profound respect for the natural ecosystems.

With a landscape dominated by holm-oak plantations, the Park is bounded to the north by the River Ardila and to the south by the Ribeira da Múrtega stream. In the centre of this territory, the Castle of Noudar stands out as a majestic defensive bastion overlooking the plains - providing one of the finest belvederes of the region. The great wealth of vegetation, makes this space the ideal habitat for deer and wild boars and attracts various species of birds such as the black vulture, black-stork, crane, the rufous bush robin, the black wheatear and garden warbler.

The Interpretation Centre is the best place to start your visit to the Park. Located in Monte da Coitadinha it offers excellent conditions in order to receive visitors, including a restaurant and a library. The centre also provides information concerning existing trails that may be followed autonomously or with the support of digital guides or multimedia PDAs applications, with geo-referenced content. It's possible to walk along trails or use environmentally-friendly all-terrain vehicles provided by the Park, such as bicycles or "Noucars" (solar powered electrical vehicles). Visitors may also be accompanied by local guides or, if they make a prior booking, by specialists in areas such as ornithology, geology, botany, history or ethnography, in conformity with the visitors' interests.

Castro Verde

Centro de Educação Ambiental de Vale Gonçalves

E-mail: lpn.cea-castroverde@lpn.pt **Website:**

<http://www.lpn.pt>

Contacts

Herdade do Vale Gonçalves - Apartado 84

7780 Castro Verde

Tel.: +351 286 328 309 / 968 523 648 - Fax: +351 286 328 309

Characteristics and Services:

Signposted routes; Guided Tours;

The Vale Gonçalves Environmental Education Centre is the obligatory starting point for a visit to the Special Protection Zone for birds in Castro Verde, providing information on the region's natural heritage.

Known as the “Campo Branco” (White Field), this vast area of plains in Alentejo, has almost no trees, and is fully occupied by cereal production. In order to conciliate agriculture with bird conservation, the Nature Protection League has developed the “Sustainable Castro Verde” programme in an area of around 1,700 hectares where hunting is prohibited and where traditional agriculture is practised, respecting nature. This initiative has transformed the region of Castro Verde into one of the finest birdwatching zones in Portugal, where species that are protected worldwide can be seen frequently, such as the greater bustard, lesser kestrel and bittern.

In Vale Gonçalves, visitors will find a series of didactic activities and information concerning the best trails in order to observe and photograph nature in the Special Protection Zone. The Environmental Education Centre also provides equipment for rent and a tour guide service. Inside the centre, visitors can see exhibitions of regional or environmental products, a documentation centre and a support area for technical experts carrying out scientific studies in this region.

Azores

Ilha de São Miguel

Centro Ambiental do Priolo

Contacts

Apartado 14 - 9630 Vila de Nordeste
São Miguel - AçoresTelm. +351 918 536 123
E-mail: centropriolo@spea.pt

Characteristics and Services:

Signposted routes; Guided Tours;

Located in the Cancela do Cinzeiro Forestry Park within the Special Protection Zone of Pico da Vara/Ribeira do Guilherme, Priolo Environmental Centre aims to preserve this small bird and its habitat. The priolo is Europe’s second rarest bird species, and also the most endangered, that can only be seen in the municipalities of Nordeste and Povoação, in the eastern part of the island of São Miguel.

Also functioning as a reception and welcome centre for this Special Protection Zone, the space was created by SPEA – the Portuguese Birdwatching Society – in collaboration with the Regional Directorate of Forestry Resources and the Regional Secretariat for the Environment and the Sea. The Environmental Centre is constituted by two buildings - where visitors will encounter interactive exhibitions concerning the local fauna and flora, a shop, a relaxation area, and a bar where it’s possible to have a drink or sample a regional speciality.

Outside the centre, Cinzeiro Forestry Park includes a plantation of native species and a small garden with endemic plants from the natural forest found in the Azores. Here, visitors may take part in the activities organised by the Environmental Centre or follow several pedestrian footpaths in order to identify existing species.

Centro de Portugal

Belmonte

UNESCO Global Estrela Geopark

E-mail: info@geoparkestrela.pt **Website:**

<http://www.geoparkestrela.pt/>

Contacts

Associação Geopark Estrela
Av. Dr. Francisco Sá Carneiro, 50
6300-559 Guarda
Tel.: +351 963 629 179

Characteristics and Services:

Signposted routes; Park area: 2.216 kms² ; Altitude: máx: 1993 mts; Guided Tours;

Occupying an extensive area of 2,216 km² in the centre of Portugal, the **UNESCO Global Estrela Geopark** covers all or part of the nine municipalities that are structured around the Serra da Estrela - **Belmonte, Celorico da Beira, Covilhã, Fornos de Algodres, Gouveia, Guarda, Manteigas, Oliveira do Hospital and Seia**. Here, one finds a diversified landscape, result of multiple geological transformations, climatic contrasts, as well as of the ancient human occupation, whose first records date back to the beginning of the IV millennium BC.

This geopark is a reference at international level in the context of the Southwest Europe, showing the **most important and impacting forms and glacial deposits in Portugal**. Its geological history began at the bottom of an ancient ocean and culminated with the rise of the Estrela, presenting as the main rocks the granites and metasedimentary formations with more than 650 million years.

This is a unique place, with breath-taking landscapes, which includes the **highest mountain** in mainland Portugal, which summit - **the "Torre"** (Tower) - reaches 1993 metres in altitude. Here you will find an Interpretation Centre that provides information about the geopark, suggesting several **pedestrian and cycling paths**, many of them originating from the trails walked for centuries by shepherds. This is the best option to discover the enigmatic shapes shaped by the whims of nature, the valleys once occupied by ancient **glaciers**, the plateaus carved by the most important **rivers** in Portugal or the **villages** perched on the landscape, where you can breathe the aromas of this imposing and overwhelming mountain range.

With approximately 150 000 inhabitants, the territory of the Estrela Geopark is much more than geology. This mountain range has witnessed a long cultural evolution, marked by the adaptation of **communities** to an adverse geography and where, for millennia, human beings have lived in a close relationship with the mountain and what it offers them. Economic activities and human occupation have shaped the mountain, forming a mosaic of cultural landscapes that enrich the Estrela.

Castelo Branco

Naturtejo UNESCO Global Geopark

E-mail: geral@naturtejo.com **Website:**

http://www.naturtejo.com

Contacts

Naturtejo - Empresa de Turismo, EIMAv. Nuno Álvares,
306000-083 Castelo Branco Tel.: +351 272 320 176

Characteristics and Services:

Signposted routes; Park area: 5.000 Km²; Altitude: 40 m - 1.227 m²; Accommodation facilities available; Guided Tours;

Access:

Buses; Train stations;

Located between the Tagus valley and the mountains in the centre of the country, **Geopark Naturtejo** was the first in Portugal to be integrated by UNESCO in its **global network of geoparks**, an international seal of approval which promotes the balance between Man and Nature. With a rich geological, historical, natural and cultural heritage, this territory extends over a large area of about 5,000 km² which is distributed over **seven municipalities - Castelo Branco, Idanha-a-Nova, Nisa, Oleiros, Penamacor, Proença-a-Nova, Vila Velha de Ródão.**

In this site are represented the main stages of the geological history of the last **600 million years** in more than **170 geosites**, all locations of recognised geological interest, of which **17 geomonuments** stand out, such as the ichnofossils of Penha Garcia or Portas de Ródão.

In this multimillennial landscape, pagan, Roman, Arab, Jewish, and Christian influences are all mixed up together. There are many testimonies of ancient history in the many **castles, churches and museums**, in the **schist villages** or in the **historical villages** such as Monsanto, once considered to be the most Portuguese village in Portugal, and Idanha-a-Velha, a location in which we can find the Visigothic cathedral of Egitânia.

This is an area with ideal conditions for **Nature Tourism** and for the practice of many activities suitable to different degrees of physical demand, such as walking and biking, boat trips and canoeing on the Tagus River and its tributaries, or climbing. Bird watching deserves special emphasis, especially in the **Tagus International Natural Park**, a protected area in which you can observe approximately over 154 species of birds such as vultures, black storks, the Iberian imperial eagles or bee-eaters.

A visit to the Naturtejo Geopark is also an opportunity to get to know the **ancient traditions**, stories, and rituals of its people. In order to appreciate both the aromas and flavours of the **regional gastronomy** where honey, cheeses, sausages, or olive oil stand out. The diverse cultural expressions of which the richness and diversity of **handicraft** is also an example of this. In fact, pieces such as the embroidery of Castelo Branco, Nisa's pottery or the adufes (a traditional Portuguese percussion instrument) of Idanha-a-Nova are worth noting.

Lisboa Region

Alcochete

Reserva Natural do Estuário do Tejo

E-mail: rnet@icnf.pt **Website:** <https://natural.pt/protected-areas/reserva-natural-estuário-tejo?locale=pt>; <https://natural.pt/protected-areas/reserva-natural-estuário-tejo?locale=en>

Contacts

Head-office: Av^a. dos Combatentes da Grande Guerra, 1 - 2890-015 Alcochete Tel.: +351 212 348 021 - Fax: +351 212 341 654

Characteristics and Services:

Signposted routes; Park area: 14.192 ha; Altitude: Máx - 11m; Profundidade máx - 10m; Guided Tours;

From its source in Spain, in the Serra de Albarracin, to its estuary mouth close to Lisbon, the River Tagus travels a distance of 1.100 kms, making it the longest river flowing across Portugal.

The vast estuary in front of Lisbon's eastern zone has earned the name of the "Mar da Palha" (the Straw Sea). The area classified as a Nature Reserve, lies to the north of Alcochete, and is the largest humid zone in Portugal and one of the ten largest zones of its kind in Europe. The Nature Reserve was created in order to protect the migratory aquatic birds that live here. During the migration season, the estuary receives over 120,000 birds, in particular the black cowbirds that concentrate in this zone, constituting over 20% of the species' population in Western Europe.

But it's the flock of pink flamingos that offers a truly spectacular sight. It always seems impossible that it is precisely these birds which concentrate in the salt pans of Alcochete, close to Lisbon, in an image that conjures up more distant locations, much further south.

The Tagus Nature Reserve extends to Vila Franca de Xira, in a zone of marshland where bulls and horses are reared for Portuguese bullfights. Other traditional activities, now in decline, have left vestiges of their presence such as the salt pans in Samouco and the seafront watermills in Seixal, that have now been transformed into eco-museums.

It is possible to visit the reserve on foot, by bicycle or car, following the proposed itineraries. If you want a different perspective, take a boat trip on one of the typical vessels that formerly crossed the river, transporting people and goods, such as the frigates and long, narrow boats.

Mafra

Centro de Recuperação do Lobo Ibérico

E-mail: crloboiberico@ciencias.ulisboa.pt **Website:**

<http://lobo.fc.ul.pt/>

Contacts

Quinta da Murta - Picão

2665-150 Gradil (Mafra) Tel.: +351 261 785 037 /917 532 312

Fax: +351 261 788 047

Timetable:

Open: Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays

Winter (October to April) - open from 2:30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m.

First tour - 3 p.m.; Second tour- 4:30 p.m.

Summer (May to September) - open from 3:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

First tour - 4.00 p.m.; Second tour - 6.00 p.m.

(Each tour lasts for about one-and-a-half hours)

PLEASE NOTE: Observation of the animals is more difficult on hot days.;

Characteristics and Services:

Guided Tours; Outdoor parking; Toilets;

The Iberian Wolf Recovery Centre (IWRC) was created in 1987 by Grupo Lobo - an independent, non-profit association -, which has as main objectives to provide the best captive conditions for wolves that cannot live in the wild: victims of trapping, abuse and illegal captivity or those coming from other zoos or parks.

The IWRC occupies an area of 17 acres, in Picão (Mafra), about 30 km north from the Portuguese capital. Its spacious enclosures allow the wolves to have the best natural conditions possible, in large areas containing a wide variety of vegetation and landscape features.

The Centre has already welcomed more than 100,000 visitors from around the world. Here, an ongoing volunteer program gives those, over the age of 18, an opportunity to do something about wildlife conservation. It also has an adoption program that enables people to adopt one or more wolves, helping to keep them in suitable conditions that mimic their environment in the wild.

For more information please contact our website

<http://lobo.fc.ul.pt/UK> or crloboiberico@ciencias.ulisboa.pt

Setúbal

Parque Natural da Arrábida

E-mail: pnarr@icnf.pt **Website:** <https://natural.pt/protected-areas/parque-natural-da-arrabida?locale=pt>; <https://natural.pt/protected-areas/parque-natural-da-arrabida?locale=en>

Contacts

Head-office: Praça da República - 2900-587 SETÚBAL

Tel.: +351 265 541 140

Branch-office: Museu Oceanográfico

Fortaleza de St^ª. Maria da Arrábida - Portinho da Arrábida -

2900-012 Setúbal

Tel.: +351 265 009 982

Characteristics and Services:

Signposted routes; Park area: 10 821 ha.; Altitude: Máx - 499m; min - 0m (até 100m profundidade mar); Guided Tours;

Located next to the sea, between Setúbal and the fishing town of Sesimbra, Arrábida Natural Park has incomparable natural beauty, where the blue of the sea alternates with the white tones of the chalk cliffs and the depths of the green vegetation that covers the mountain range.

One of the main attractions of the Park is the wealth of its indigenous vegetation. One of the rare examples of Mediterranean maquis in Portugal can be found here, and its preservation was one of the reasons which led the Arrábida zone to be considered as a genuine international scientific relic. In order to preserve these vegetation species, it is only possible to visit certain areas when accompanied by an official guide indicated by the Park's services. There are also various accredited companies that organise radical activities, such as speleology, diving and mountain climbing.

If you want to learn more about the animal and plant life, visit the Oceanographic Museum, installed in the Fort of Nossa Senhora da Arrábida, next to Portinho beach. Almost directly in front, it's possible to see the Pedra da Anixa, a small island that constitutes a zoological reserve, due to its underwater vegetation.

In addition to the Serra da Arrábida, the Park also includes other mountain ranges such as the Serra do Risco, which contains the highest peak along the Portuguese mainland coast -- it is a magnificent cliff measuring 380 m high, that overlooks the sea, from which it is possible to appreciate an unforgettable panoramic view over the Atlantic.

The action of the sea against the mountains has originated a line of beaches characterised by fine sand and transparent waters, that we might otherwise believe could only be found in the Mediterranean, such as Figueirinha, Galapos and the Portinho da Arrábida.

The zone was appreciated by Franciscan friars between the 16th and 19th centuries, who inhabited the convent that still exists in the zone and meditated in the isolated chapels dispersed throughout the mountains. Arrábida has excellent conditions for farming activities and pasture, and has thus originated high-quality products. Examples include the wines that can be discovered by following the Costa Azul wine route, which leads visitors to the friendly town of Azeitão where they can sample some delicious cheeses.

Porto and the North

Arouca

Arouca Geopark

E-mail: geral@aroucageopark.pt **Website:**

<http://aroucageopark.pt>

Contacts

AGA – Associação Geoparque Arouca
Rua Alfredo Vaz Pinto - 4540-118 Arouca
Tel.: +351 256 940 254

Characteristics and Services:

Signposted routes; Park area: 328 km²; Accommodation facilities available; Guided Tours; Outdoor parking; Toilets; Restaurant;

The Arouca Geopark is a classified area by the European and Global Geoparks Networks, under the auspices of UNESCO since 2009, with 328km². It is located in northern Portugal about 50 km far away from Oporto and Aveiro cities.

This is an unique geotouristic destination renowned due to its exceptional geological heritage of international relevance, with 41 geosites (the Giant Trilobites of Canelas and the Castanheira's "stones that give birth" are the most emblematic ones), and its national archaeological, historical, cultural and mining relevant legacy, offering singular experiences for visitors.

This mountainous region is famous for activities of nature tourism, especially for adventure sports such as rafting, canoeing, canyoning, rock climbing and the network of walking trails. It allows visitors to discover the majority of the geosites, to enjoy breathtaking landscapes, to meet people and to experience local traditions. Visitors can also taste the famous local gastronomy, based on the indigenous cattle breed and the conventual sweets with traditions, dating back to the foundation of the Arouca Monastery in the 10th century.

Braga

Parque Nacional da Peneda-Gerês

Website: <https://natural.pt/protected-areas/parque-nacional-peneda-geres?locale=pt>; <https://natural.pt/protected-areas/parque-nacional-peneda-geres?locale=en>

Contacts

Head-Office: Av. António Macedo - 4704-538 BRAGA
Tel.: +351 253 203 480
E-mail: pnp@icnf.pt Reservations Centre: Largo da Misericórdia,
10 - 4980-613 PONTE DA BARCA
Tel: +351 258 452 250
E-mail: geral@adere-pg.pt; reservas@adere-pg.pt

Other informations:

PAN Park

The Peneda Gerês National Park has been officially certified as a PAN Park. This distinction has been awarded to only 11 European parks covering an area of no less than 20,000 hectares, and in which the "wilderness area" amounts to no less than 10,000 hectares, so that the fauna and flora can develop freely.

The parks awarded this certificate must promote a strategy of sustainable development, through the implementation of measures for the conservation of nature and the local biodiversity, a policy for the management of visitors and the certification of tour operators.

Characteristics and Services:

Signposted routes; Park area: 70.290 ha; Altitude: Máx: 1.545m; min - 140m; Accommodation facilities available; Guided Tours;

In the extreme north-east of Portugal, between the Alto Minho and Trás-os-Montes, the Serra da Peneda and Serra do Gerês constitute the only Portuguese protected area that has been classified as a National Park. It is a world apart, where human activity is integrated in a harmonious manner with nature, preserving ancient values and traditions that can be seen in the community villages of Pitões das Júnias and Tourém.

The exuberant vegetation covering the mountains, exhibit every shade of green, include a holly bush wood - unique at a national level - and endemic species such as the Gerês lily, whose blue-violet colours grace the fields. The rugged mountainous terrain is cut across by rapidly flowing rivers and streams, including many waterfalls, which finally slow down their pace in dams such as those of Caniçada, Vilarinho das Furnas or Portela do Homem. The landscapes are quite stunning.

Keep your eyes peeled, because you may be able to spot a roe deer (symbol of the Park) or its predator, the Iberian wolf. It is more common to come across garrano ponies -which are small wild horses that run freely across the hills. You're also likely to find Barrosã cattle and dark haired Castro Laboreiro dogs, that look after the flocks of goats and sheep which move between the "brandas" and "inverneiras" in the different seasons.

If you want to expend some energy there are plenty of opportunities, since you'll find ideal conditions for practising activities such as canyoning or canoeing. If you just want to go for a walk, follow the winding and well conserved path of the Roman road or "geira" and admire the milestones that are almost 2000 years old. Other itineraries will enable you to see dolmens and cromlechs, mediaeval castles or monasteries and sanctuaries, that are perfectly integrated in the landscape.

Macedo de Cavaleiros

Geopark Terras de Cavaleiros

E-mail: geral@geoparkterrasdecavaleiros.com **Website:**
<https://www.geoparkterrasdecavaleiros.com>

Contacts

Head-office:

Rua Eng.Moura Pegado; R/C Centro Cultural
5340-302 Macedo de Cavaleiros
Tel.: +351 278 428 101/ 917 859 608

Characteristics and Services:

Signposted routes; Park area: 700 km²; Guided Tours;

The Geopark Global Terras de Cavaleiros (GGTC) encompasses the entire area of the municipality of Macedo de Cavaleiros, covering an area of around 700 km² in the very heart of the Nordeste Transmontano region.

Most of this territory is included in the Natura 2000 Network and 42 scientifically-noteworthy geosites have been identified here. They bear witness to a history that dates back over 400 million years. In addition to its significant geological heritage, this is a region with tremendous biodiversity including unique species of fauna and flora. Its architectural heritage is extensive too, and you will find churches, chapels, sanctuaries, bridges, pillories, crosses, museums and manor houses.

Visitors wishing to explore the Geopark have a choice of 24 marked foot trails that are considered Pequenas Rotas (PR - short routes). Altogether the trails cover a distance of around 180 km, giving you the opportunity to discover the culture and traditions of the region and sites of great natural beauty such as

the Protected Landscape of the Albufeira do Azibo. Situated between the uplands of the Serra da Nogueira and the Serra de Bornes, it offers excellent conditions for birdwatching and other activities such as mountain biking, canoeing, kayaking or catamaraning. This is also where the Ribeira River Beach is located. In 2012 it was voted one of the Seven Natural Wonders of Portugal (in the Beaches category).

The region's cultural identity is clearly visible in the preservation of its traditions, legends, folk music, rich gastronomy and regional products, as well as in the memories of the people who live here and their cultural events. Icons such as the Caretos de Podence and the Pauliteiros de Salselas, or events such as the Festival Gastronómico do Grelo (turnip-green festival), the Rota Gastronómica do Javali (wild boar gastronomic showcase) and the Entrudo Chocalheiro (traditional Carnival festivities) demonstrate the quaint nature of the activities that take place in the region and showcase the best that it has to offer.

Vila do Conde

Paisagem Protegida Regional do Litoral de Vila do Conde e ROM

E-mail: geral.naturconde@cm-viladoconde.pt **Website:**

<https://www.naturconde.pt/>

Contacts

Sede:

Câmara Municipal de Vila do Conde, Praça Vasco da Gama,

4480-454 Vila do Conde

Tel.: +351 252 248 400

Centro de Receção:

Estrada Velha, 4480 Vila do Conde

Loja Interativa de Turismo:

Rua Cais das Lavadeiras, 4480-789 Vila do Conde

Tel.: +351 252 248 445

Characteristics and Services:

Signposted routes; Park area: 380 ha; Altitude: 0 - 23 m (Marco

geodésico do Castro de São Paio); Accommodation facilities

available; Guided Tours; Outdoor parking; Toilets; Bar;

Restaurant;

Access:

Buses; Train stations;

The Vila do Conde Coastal Regional Protected Landscape and Mindelo Ornithological Reserve

– which adopted the brand Naturconde and is inserted in the National Network of Protected Areas – boasts a very rich biodiversity. 145 species of birds, 14 of the 17 amphibian species existing in the country, over 300 species of invertebrates and 39 species of moss make their home here, as well three lusitanian endemic angiosperm plants (two species and one subspecies) – meaning they are unique in the world.

In order to observe all this life, we offer **various paths**, which will allow you to completely immerse yourself in nature. Along each of them you will find interpretative panels, as well as support and recreational facilities, which will provide relevant information and assist you along your hike.

Enjoy your visit!