Albufeira do Azibo

ABOUT

Photo: CM Macedo de Cavaleiros

Albufeira do Azibo

Follow the path of many migratory birds towards the Albufeira do Azibo dam in the Northeast of Portugal. Come and discover what attracts them.

Is it the tranquillity of this Protected Landscape? Or the transparency of the dam's waters, where various species of fish and amphibians co-exist? Perhaps it's the exuberance of the local vegetation, including wild orchids, of every colour.

This is an ideal spot for birdwatching, because it's possible to see a wide variety of species, that build their habitat here during part or all of the year. The highest spots are the favourite zones for dreaded eagles or friendly white storks, some of which live here all year round. The Montagu's harrier, stays here between March and September, builds its nests on the ground and is well-known for its breathtaking swoops involving acrobatic manoeuvres. Entertainment is provided by the restless sandpipers and the noisy great-crested crebes, who in the company of other birds such as mallards, herons or cormorants in the winter and little ringed plovers in the summer, crowd the banks of the lagoon.

Many mammals also choose this protected area for their habitat. It's perhaps not possible to see them all, given that otters, foxes and badgers only come out at night, but we're certain to catch a glimpse of roe deer, squirrels or hares.

Travel along the Azibo Trails - a network of signposted pedestrian footpaths and cycle lanes, including reading tables and interpretation sites to help you identify the local fauna and flora. You can also appreciate the archaeological vestiges ranging from the prehistory period to the Roman era, and admire the colourful folklore and handicrafts, whose supreme form is the "Caretos" - curious costumes used by the inhabitants of Podence during the Carnival festivities.

In order to make the most of the pleasant microclimate, why not try some rowing, windsurfing, canoeing or simply some bathing in the riverside beach in Fraga da Pegada, whose waters have been classified with the European blue flag. This is also an "accessible beach" - a term which confirms the existence of support equipment for persons of reduced mobility, thereby making the Albufeira do Azibo dam a leisure area for everyone, that is highly appreciated by all.

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