



appearance of underground water, considering that the water table is practically on the surface in this area.

In these flooded areas, diverse characteristic vegetal formations can be found in bands, colonising both the banks and the interior water, in addition to some channels connecting the lagoons with each other. The flora, highly conditioned by the level of flooding level and, consequently, with a marked seasonal condition, includes species such as the round-headed club rush (*Scirpus holoschoenus*), the common club rush (*Scirpus lacustris*), bulrush (*Typha latifolia*), the pond-water crowfoot (*Ranunculus peltatus*), the torpedo grass (*Panicum repens*) or the cogon grass (*Imperata cylindrica*).

The whole path runs through the reserve. A system containing thick bushes of a heterogeneous composition in which small forests of stone pines (*Pinus pinea*) stand out with disperse cuttings of prickly junipers (*Juniperus phoenicia* subsp. *turbinata*).

The reserves evidence differences in their vegetal composition depending on their proximity to the water table.

Monte Negro covers the areas with very humid soils, where the water table is almost superficial, and, therefore,

it surrounds the flooded areas. It is a dense dark thicket in which the dominant species is the besom heath (*Erica scoparia*) usually found along with heathers (*Calluna vulgaris*) and gorse-heats (*Ulex asutralis*).

Monte Blanco is located in the dryer and more elevated areas. The dominant vegetation is composed by thickets of halimium (*Halimium halimifolium*), along with rock rose (*Cistus libanotis*), wooly-podded broom (*Cytisus grandiflorus* subsp. *cabezudo*) and sage-leaved rock-rose (*Cistus salvifolius*), among other.

Other Mediterranean species show up in the most exposed areas, such as French lavender (*Lavandula stoechas*), rosemary (*Rosmarinum officinalis*) and mastic thyme (*Thymus mastichina* subsp. *donyanae*).

The reserves are an ideal habitat for small and big mammals. Although they are quite easily frightened, it will not be too difficult for you to find traces of elks (*Cervus elaphus*), wild boars (*Sus scrofa*), Egypcian mongeese (*Herpestes ichneumon*), red foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*), Eurasian badgers (*Meles meles*)... or, perhaps, spot them within the thickness of the bushes.

The small pine tree forests do also offer ideal nesting areas for different species, such as the red kite (*Milvus milvus*), the booted eagle (*Hieraaetus pennatus*), the common kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) or the azure-winged magpie (*Cyanopica cyanus*).



We remind you that the following actions are forbidden:



Abandoning the path



Driving bicycles



Disturbing the environment



Entering pets



Throwing rubbish



Making disturbing noise

The conservation of this singular sites depends on all of us Thank you for your co-operation



For further information, please visit the Centre for Visitors:

- Acebuche: 959439629
- Palacio del Acebrón: 671593138
- Rocina: 959439569
- José Antonio Valverde: 671564145
- Fábrica de Hielo: 956386577
- Centenales: 959439620
- Bajo de Guía: 956380922
- Dehesa Boyal: 670947837
- Casa Grande Information Bureau: 955750209

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DOÑANA
PARQUE NACIONAL
PARQUE NATURAL

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I. The Acebuche Paths

CONSEJERÍA DE MEDIO AMBIENTE



You are invited to discover the reserves, an apparently stable landscape where textures, colours, aromas and shapes make up for a permanently diverse and surprising scenario.

The Acebuche Centre for Visitors is located within this environment; additionally, this is an area characterised by containing a large lagoon complex where the bird fauna is concentrated.

The premises for the guests are located in a building that reminds of the traditional Andalusian country houses. Its various rooms contain an exhibition and visual aids that allow to have a view of the most representative natural and cultural values in this singular protected site. The building does also contain information and reception services, a cafeteria, a shop and the information bureau dealing with information and reservations for the Acebuche-La Plancha-Acebuche itinerary covering the may ecosystems in the National Park.

The patio of the Centre is the starting point of the network of paths leading to this area, which includes two different and supplementary walking journeys.

1. The Acebuche Lagoon Path

This is the first path to which you will have access and is approximately 1.5 km long. Its layout is parallel to the lagoon after which it is named and allows visitors to reach seven observatories from which they will be able to discover the water fauna that is frequent in these humid areas.

The importance of Doñana in the international arena is due, among other issues, to the wealth of its bird fauna. The Doñana National Park was declared as an Area of Special Protection for Birds (ZEPA, in its Spanish acronym) in 1988; this was not only due to the number of species present but also for their conservation status and the number of specimens in their population.

The Acebuche lagoon is one of the best enclaves for the observation of birds. It is a permanent marsh formation that, after suffering a drainage during the 1950 decade, was recovered and reconditioned to represent diverse water and land environments. During the periods in which the marshes and other humid areas dry up, the Acebuche lagoon gives refuge to the birds that remain in these latitudes, constituting a fresh shelter in the dryness of the territory.

The fauna observed is free and, therefore, one might need to focus one's full attention in order to spot it.



Three different species can be distinguished depending on the season. One of the most peculiar ones, observed throughout the year, is the purple gallinule (*Porphyrio porphyrio*), a bird with an intense blue plumage and long red legs that has adopted Acebuche as one of its usual nesting areas.

In the Springtime, other resident or summer birds can be found, perhaps with their chicks, which do also breed in the lake: mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), pochard (*Aythya ferina*), little grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*), great crested grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*) or night heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*), among other. During the autumn and winter months, some hibernating species can be observed, which arrive from the north searching for more benign climates: gadwall (*Anas strepera*), wigeon (*Anas penelope*), red-crested pochard (*Netta rufina*)...

We recommend to keep watch and remain silent. Discovering the bird fauna in the lake will require paying attention to movements in the vegetation, to sounds and songs, to changes in shape and colour...

Along the path, you will find diverse elements that have to do with the traditional use partly already vanished that the local inhabitants made of the resources offered by this territory. Also, you must pay attention to the type of building structures used as observatories; in days gone by, huts similar to these, built with marsh vegetation, were the usual dwellings of a good number of workers and their families.

As from a botanical point of view, you will be walking along the white poplars (*Populus alba*) surrounding the lake, the Italian stone pine (*Pinus pinea*) and the typical vegetation of the reserve; a landscape that you will be able to discover if you follow the route of the next path.

2. The path of the Huerto and Las Pajas Lagoons

It starts next to the last observatory on the left of the above-described Acebuche Lagoon path. Its layout, covering about 3 km, is organised in the form of consecutive circuits in which the channels are crossed by means of footbridges. Several linear branches lead to the observatories from where the fauna can be contemplated. The Huerto and Las Pajas lagoons, along with other small temporary lagoons, are part of a complex that does also include the Acebuche lagoon, all of them originating in the



Total length: 4,5 km
Low Difficulty
Estimated time: 1,5 h

