

physical environment

It is a very interesting mountain from a geomorphologic point of view. It is very characteristic the presence of a salt diapir known as Cabezo de la Rosa, it is a salt dome of reddish tones due to the outcrop of salts and gypsum through the cracks after the last tectonic

In the central zone of the Park it is located the highest mountain of the range, the peak of El Carche of 1372 metres over the sea level

motions. The materials were formed two hundred million years ago in a place which was periodically flooded by the sea and in the receding periods the sea left behind large areas covered by salted water where the carbonates and evaporites (salts and gypsums) were deposited.

is located the highest mountain of the range, the peak of El Carche of 1372 metres over the sea level, it stretches to the northeast till the mountain range known as Sierra de las Pansas where it is possible to find cliffs, precipices, faults and deep ravines like San Cristobal's, La Guarafia and La Yedra, some of them showing beautiful waterfalls when the rain comes, as it happens in the place known as El Saltador.

The rocks in the area are limestone, dolomite and marl.



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



UNIÓN EUROPEA
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DESARROLLO REGIONAL



Regional Park
Sierra del Carche



DISEÑO: TROPIC - IMPRESIÓN: GRÁFICAS SAN DÍAS - 01-11-2008

introduction

"El Carche" mountain range is located in the northeastern part of the Region of Murcia, shared by the municipalities of Jumilla and Yecla. The current boundaries and park management rules are defined by an Environmental Management Plan and it covers an area of 5942 hectares. It is one of the places considered as a Site of Community Importance and it is part of the European Nature 2000 Network.

There are several villages surrounding the park: El Carche, La Rosa, Raspay, Casas del Puerto and La Alberquilla. There are also scattered farmhouses, most of them in ruins, like the house of La Yedra, the houses of El Cantal and Pisana, which are reminiscent of former inhabitants.

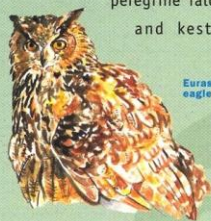


information on the protected natural areas

fauna

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The birds of prey are the best represented group amongst all the animals in the area, with some pairs of golden eagle, eagle owl, peregrine falcon and kestrel

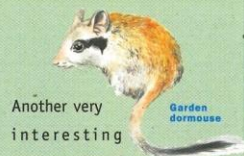


Eurasian eagle owl

which make use of the projections and cavities in the rock for nesting. The booted eagle, the short-toed eagle, the goshawk, the sparrow-hawk, the common buzzard and the tawny owl are examples of birds of prey that live in the forest where they hunt reptiles, small rodents and a wide number of small birds like chaffinches, grey and blue tits, long-tailed tits and the Eurasian jay among others.



Sardinian warbler



Garden dormouse

Another very interesting species is the red-billed croucher, which can be seen forming thick flocks. The bushes and the abandoned farming lands are the redoubt of some birds like the southern grey shrike, the red-legged partridge and different species of warbler. Amongst the small mammals it is possible to find the Algerian mouse, the shrew



Wild boar

and the garden dormouse and amongst the carnivores, the fox, the badger, the wild cat. The only ungulate in the range is the wild boar.

Vegetation

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Kermes oak

The typical forest and thickets in the area are those of a Mediterranean type and which have been modelled by both the climate and the action of the man. The Aleppo pine is the dominant tree in these mountains. The shady places and those of high altitude are dominated by forest, and some groves worth noticing are those of "La Omblanquilla" and "Cerro Quemado". There is a rare black pine (Austrian pine) forest in the shady place of "La Madama" growing together with plants such as the hedgehog broom, the lavender and the bearberry. This is a type of vegetation that withstands rough weather conditions like very cold temperatures and strong winds. Between the remains of pine forests and evergreen oaks there usually are the typical species of the low forest: the juniper, the kermes oak, the mastic, the strawberry tree or the laurustinus. The



Juniper

sunny mountainsides, because of the high levels of sun received and low humidity, are covered by open pine groves and low bushes, such as the esparto grass, the rosemary and different species of thyme, lavender and the false brome, the last one forms a very thick and short pasture. The most interesting plants in terms of botanical importance are the populations of thyme on gypsum soils in the place known as "Cerro de la Rosa". They are plants which are able to grow on soils with a high content of different types of salts. They are communities of great scientific and conservation interest because of their rareness and small area of distribution.

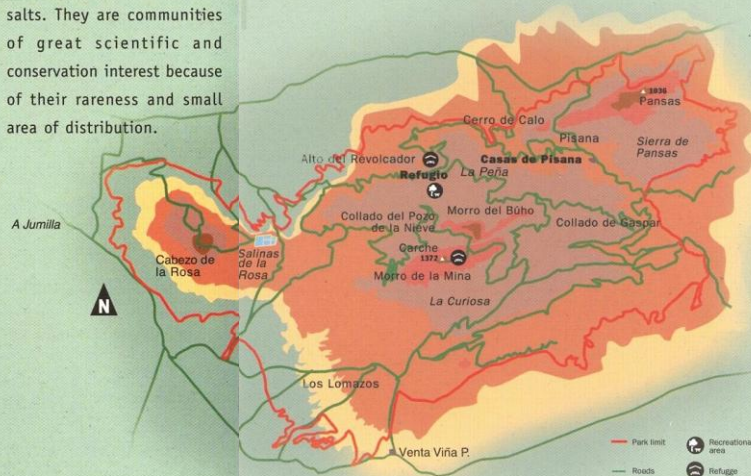
Men and Landscape

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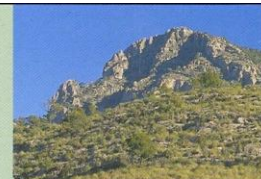
There are evidences of human settlements in the territories now belonging to the Regional Park since long time ago. Several archaeological settlements have been marked and dated. It is known that some belong to the Bronze Age and some are ancient Iberian settlements whose good condition of preservation allows to study the urbanism in that period. The places known as Cueva del Castellar, Castillicos del Salero and La Romanía are worth mentioning. To the North and



East of the Park, it is possible to find Roman settlements, known as villae, and also an aqueduct in La Romanía. In Cabezo de la Rosa some fragments of medieval ceramic vases and big earthenware jars have been found. Traditional agriculture fields have been substituted in the space with some traditional constructions



like pavestones. Within the limits of the park there are some dry agriculture fields where the olives, vineyards and cereals are grown. The small amount of sheep is limited to certain pastures, so the impact on the vegetation of the Park is very small. A very interesting place to visit in the Park is the seventeenth century Pozo de la Nieve (Snow Well). It is situated in the shady spot of La Madama and it is a quiet witness of an activity that used to be very important between the fifteenth and nineteenth century. In the side of Cabezo de la Rosa it is possible to find the most important inland saltmines of the whole Region of Murcia. These deposits, which are still being exploited, were formed during the Triassic period.



The Park Suggestions

Mountain-bikers and trekkers can take advantage of the several possibilities that the Park offers. The ascent to the La Madama summit from the refuge of La Peña is a suggestion which is full of nature charms. It goes along the ravine of La Guarafia, passing through the pass of Gaspar and then through the Hoya de las Grajas, followed by the pass of Pozo de la Nieve till getting to the base of the mountain. From there and going through La Omblanquilla it does not take long till arriving to the summit. Remember to bring water and the proper clothes to be protected against the scorching days during the hot months of the year. Try to visit the park in small groups. Do not forget to bring a photo camera and binoculars to fully enjoy the Park fauna.

