

DA PLANICIE A RIBEIRA DE TERGES

WALKING TRAILS BEJA
ALBERNOA

PR
4
BJA

SITUATION

The parish of Albernoa is located in the extreme south-west of the municipality of Beja, bordering to the South with the municipality of Castro Verde. Its vocation is agriculture and more recently tourism (rural tourism and wine tourism). The cereal plain, punctuated by patches of 'Beja clay' (reddish brown clay), the Terges river and some areas of cork oak and holm oak characterize the landscape of this route which is part of the Castro Verde SPA (Special Protection Area) considered by experts as the most important area in Portugal for the conservation of grassland avifauna, notably the bustard and the lesser kestrel.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ROUTE

Start at the central garden, head straight on passing by an ancient olive press until you come to the beaten track. Walk through almost 5 km of wide plain, where you can see cereal fields punctuated by holm oaks and an area of traditional olive groves. You will reach Monte da Lagoa, an important urban complex where there was once a primary school, now totally in ruins, where you turn left. Pass by the survey marker and carry on through the plain until you are adjacent to Monte das Pereiras, where you turn right. Throughout these 9 km, right in the heart of the Castro Verde SPA, an important area for the conservation of grassland avifauna, you should do yourself a favour and look around you at the scenery and the birds that abound here. Next you cross an area of olive groves, to km 10.7 where you turn left, towards the Terges river that must be crossed with caution (in times of heavy rains it is hard to cross on foot). Continue with a detour to the right to visit Pego da Moira Linda, an embankment of surprising beauty which invites rest. Return to the path from where you made the detour, and continue in an area of pasture. Carry on to Monte dos Cardeais to the vicinity of IP2, via a parallel path for a kilometre. Turn left and carry on along a small stretch of tarmac (the road that served the quarry located in the immediate vicinity). You reach an area of eucalyptus trees, that precedes the entrance to the Monte das Pereiras, cross this and then head right, in the direction of the village, entering this time via the high area of the village, going on - carry on to the church where the route ends.

POINTS OF INTEREST

VILLAGE OF ALBERNOA

Also known as Nossa Senhora da Luz de Albernoa, it is a village with 758 inhabitants. According to Pinho Leal its name is of arab origin and derives from Albernaua - barrelnaua - the word 'berr' meaning field and 'naua' fruit stones which signifies 'field of fruit stones'. The traditional olive groves and the coat of arms, the green olive trees with fruits and roots of gold, may contribute to this theory. The writer and poet Manuel Ribeiro was born here. The Terges river, an important waterway, bathes the village of Albernoa. The occupation of this territory

dates back to prehistory as demonstrated by some archaeological finds.

MANUEL RIBEIRO

A poet and writer who was born in Albernoa, in 1878. He collaborated with the revolutionary newspapers of the time (Sindicalista, Batalha and Bandeira Vermelha) and held important positions in the National Library of Lisbon and at the Torre do Tombo. His major works are the three books that form his social trilogy: 'A Catedral', 'O Deserto' and 'Ressurreição'.

MONTE DA LAGOA

An ancient farmstead now in ruins, located at km 4.8 of the route, which stands out for its size and features, resembling a small village. Comprising of six dwellings, a primary school, manor house, and communal water tank and oven. The dominant building material is Taipa (compacted earth) earth and stone walls, above all in the oven and the well.

NATURAL VALUES

THE TERGES RIVER

The Terges river, around the village of Albernoa, rises in the municipality of Castro Verde and flows down to the confluence with the Cobres river, forming the Terges-e-Cobres river that flows into the Guadiana, a short distance upstream from Pulo do Lobo (geosite). It runs temporarily (usually from December to May) with occasional flash floods after heavy rain.

The river is very rich in flora and fauna and serves as a biological support for various animal species.

Barbel, Iberian nase and roach are plentiful in its waters, and also some exotic introduced fish such as the pumpkin-seed and largemouth bass. As for flora, predominantly mediterranean, it consists of bushes like oleander, myrtle, kermes oak, tamarisk and wild oleaster. The trees are predominantly cork oak and holm oak, and one or more ornamental eucalyptus.

The surrounding fauna is immense.

Mammals: wild boar, genet, Egyptian mongoose, fox, badger and hedgehog, as well as rabbit and hare.

Amphibians: ribbed newt, spade-foot toad, common frog, pigmy newt, Iberian midwife toad, Iberian painted frog.

Reptiles: ladder snake, horseshoe snake, large psammomachus, ocellated lizard; viperine snake.

The avifauna is of immense value and is part of the framework of the Castro Verde SPA.

CASTRO VERDE SPA

The Castro Verde SPA integrates a nucleus area called 'white field', a region of peneplain dedicated to extensive agriculture and livestock, with predominantly vast areas of farm land. Here there are pastures of holm oak, heathlands dominated by cistus and traditional olive groves. It is the most important area, in Portugal, for the conservation of grassland birds, notably the great bustard and the lesser kestrel. Other birds which are found here in relatively large numbers are the European roller, the little bustard, black-bellied sandgrouse, lark, the stone curlew and Montagu's harrier.

Especially found in this area are the golden plover,

lapwing, meadow pipit, red kite, hen harrier and merlin. Regular visitors are black vulture, griffon vulture, golden eagle, the Iberian imperial eagle and Bonelli's eagle.

GEOLOGY

The route develops in the Portuguese South Zone (ZSP), between the volcanic and sedimentary rock of the Faixa Piritosa (Quartz Phyllite and Complex volcanic-sedimentary Group). Of these lithologies the most easily identifiable is the schist (an example is red wine lees schist for its red colouring) or jasper (impure often reddish silica). But, without a doubt the most spectacular geology is the resistance of the silicon rocks against the wear and tear of the waters of the Terges river.

ACCOMMODATION / WINE TOURISM IN THE VICINITY

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USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Tourist Office: 284 311 913 / turismo@cm-beja.pt
www.cm-beja.pt

Parish Council: 284 328 898

Medical emergency and in case of Fires: 112

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FACTSHEET

NAME: DA PLANÍCIE À RIBEIRA DE TERGES

PARISH: UNIÃO DE FREGUESIAS DE ALBERNOA E TRINDADE - ALBERNOA

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION: Albernoa, Beja

From Beja to Albernoa go along the IP2 towards the Algarve, about 20 km on the right you will come across the village. Go along the main street straight on as far as the central garden, where the route starts.

TYPE OF ROUTE: Circular

DISTANCE: 20 km

APPROXIMATE DURATION: 5 to 6h

TYPE OF SURFACE: Nature trails and rural tracks

UNEVENNESS: Some gentle inclines and descents

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: Somewhat difficult

GROUND: Beaten track

STARTING AND FINISHING POINT: Albernoa

GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATES: 37°51'34.5"N 7°57'32.9"W

ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP: N°s 530,531, 539 e 540

WHERE TO PARK: There is parking at the location

REGULATIONS: Castro Verde SPA/ Natura 2000 network (ninety eight percent of the route is within the Castro Verde SPA.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Stock up on food and water in one of the cafés or grocery stores in the village;
- Follow the indicated tracks;
- Respect private property, always close gates;
- Respect nature;
- Avoid noises and attitudes that disturb the tranquillity of the area;
- Don't leave litter or vestiges of your passage. Tracks without toilet, take a bag and leave the track clean;
- Be very careful with the cattle, because although docile they usually react with aggressiveness when strangers approach their offspring;
- Do not light fires;
- Use comfortable clothes and shoes and take a hat and sunscreen;
- Calculate the time of the route in order to finish before dark;
- In periods of intense rain crossing the Terges could be subject to conditions;
- In the summer avoid the hottest parts of the day;
- Be careful in hunting season between August 15 and February 28;
- Take binoculars as it is an important area for bird watching;
- Be friendly with the locals, elucidate them about the signage of the route and ongoing activities.

MAP

