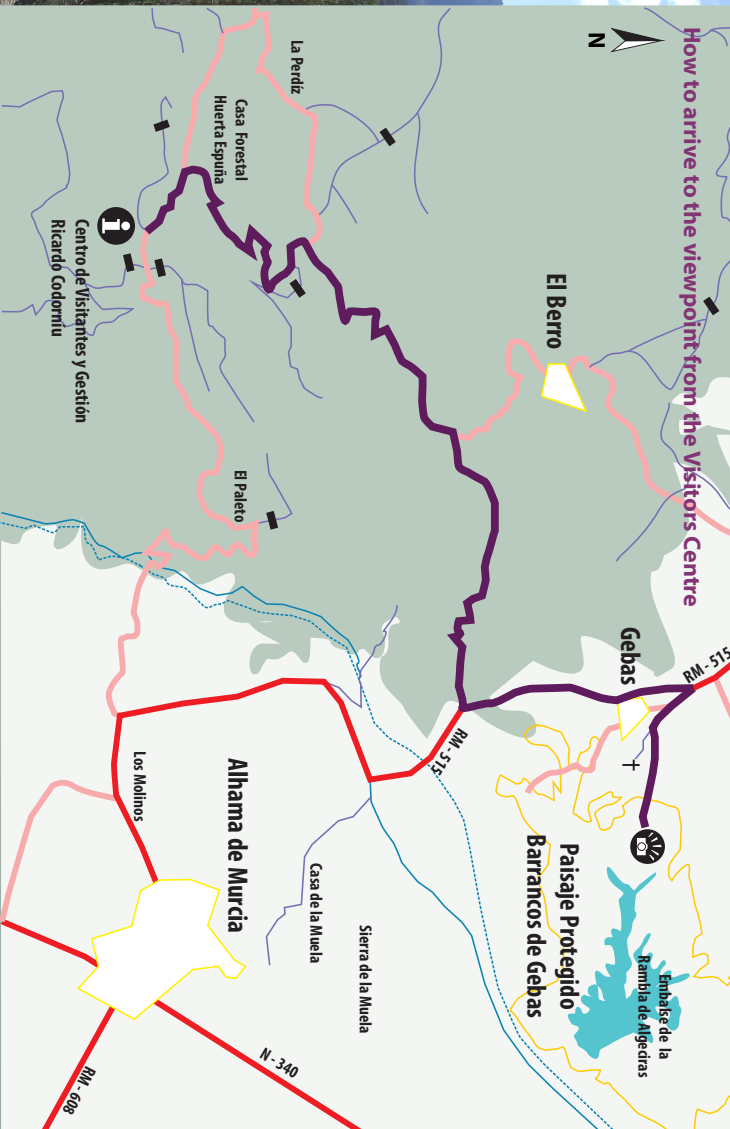




Barrancos de Gebas viewpoint



RECOMMENDATIONS:



- Remember that you are in a natural protected area.
- Always walk on authorised tracks and paths.
- Leave your vehicle in an appropriate or authorised car park.
- Your level of noise should not disturb other visitors nor the wildlife.
- Pets must be kept on a leash.
- Remember that it is important to carry plenty of water.
- Do not forget to carry rubbish to the nearest refuse bin.
- Avoid doing this walk on a very sunny day, a very rainy day or a day when it has recently rained heavily. You will enjoy it more.



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For more information:

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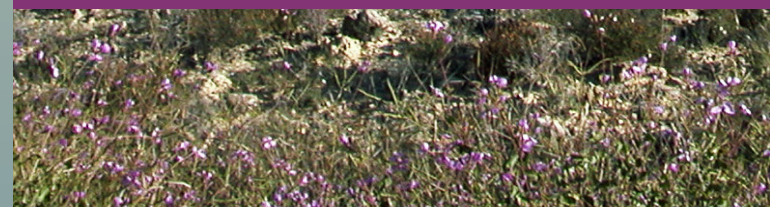
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Paisaje Protegido
Barrancos de Gebas



The surprises of... LUNAR LANDSCAPE



If we are carried along by the first impression, we may think there is no life in this landscape; but, on the contrary, if we are able to sit facing it and watch or walk, we can discover innumerable natural values which will leave us open-mouthed.

But ... has it always been like this?

More than ten million years ago, the Barrancos de Gebas were a calm seabed. When the water receded, it went on to be converted into a great plain of soft and easily eroded materials.



And... what do we see now?

Water, wind and the passing of time have produced a landscape of narrow and deep ravines (barrancos) with sparse vegetation cover, to which many call "lunar landscape" (in contrast to the nearby wooded mass of the Regional Park of Sierra Espuña).

The result is a spectacular succession of ravines (barrancos), gullies, deep furrows and canyons which make up one of the best examples of eroded landscape, characteristic of semi-arid areas, named "badlands".

This characteristic landscape is enclosed by the mountains of Espuña, la Muela and el Cura.

The materials that can be found in the ground are of a clay nature and rich in gypsum. These circumstances, allied to the impermeability of the clay, have allowed the water to flow, eroding and modelling the above-mentioned materials capriciously.



Barrancos de Gebas

What surprises lie in wait for us?

We meet steppes of clay, gypsum and marl in this sub-desert landscape, which offer us remarkable and spectacular sights.

We can discover birds like the European bee-eater (*Merops apiaster*), the woodchat shrike (*Lanius senador*), the Eurasian stone curlew (*Burhinus oedipnemos*), or the Dartford warbler (*Sylvia undata*). The Eurasian eagle-owl (*Bubo bubo*) and the little owl (*Athene noctua*) will be more difficult to find, but we will hear them in the area with nightfall.



The little owl



The Eurasian stone curlew

We will also be able to see, if we are lucky, foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*), badgers (*Meles meles*) or the baetic lizard (*Timon nevadensis*), amongst other animals. So numerous are the invertebrates that flit around the area, it is not unexpected to cross paths with a beetle, a butterfly or a European honeybee (*Apis mellifera*) looking for pollen for its honey production.



Butterflies



Badger



Fox

It is recommended that you should visit the area of the Algeciras reservoir (embalse) during the winter months to catch sight of water birds like the mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), the little grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) or the great crested grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*), as well as other species.

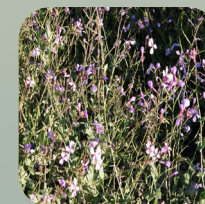


The little grebe



The great crested grebe

As for the flora, you can see esparto grass (*Macrochloa tenacissima* (L.)), albardine (*Lygeum spartum*), saltwort (*Salsola genistoides*), pale stonecrop (*Sedum sediforme*), caper bush (*Capparis spinosa*), salt cedar (*Tamarix* sp.) or the violet-cabbage (*Moricandia arvensis*), as well as numerous other species. Many of these species of flora have been used by humans since time immemorial.



The violet-cabbage



Pale stonecrop



Esparto grass

The most visible signs of recent human influence are the terraced replanting, traditional cultivation methods and the construction of the Algeciras dam and reservoir, which offers us a lunar landscape floating in crystal waters.



Reservoir of Algeciras