



PARQUE NATURAL Montes de Málaga



Surface: 4.995,56 ha

Number of municipalities: 3: Casabermeja, Colmenar y Málaga.

Population: 553.214 inhabitants

Región: Andalucía

Address: Delegación Provincial de la Consejería de Medio Ambiente

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The Montes de Málaga natural park traces its origins back to the hydrological-forestal pinewood forestation carried out in the Guadalmedina river basin with a view to preventing the floods Malaga had been subjected to for several centuries.

The Park is made up of a medium-height mountain range running parallel to the Mediterranean coast and being about 15 km away from it. Covering an extension of approximately 5.000 ha, it is one of the smallest natural parks in Andalusia. Nowadays, traditional activities are still being carried out inside the Park, such as the making of "mountain wine." Its vicinity to the city of Malaga, as well as its landscape interest, make the Park a highly valuable recreational area for the urban population and as an alternative to the Costa del Sol "sun and beach" tourism.

Natural Heritage

Flora:

The largest part of the area is occupied by Aleppo pine forests. However, these forestations show significant differences as regards development due to the existing different climate and soil conditions. In the northern area, Aleppo pines can be seen intermingled with holm oaks, cork oaks and gall oaks, which are Mediterranean species.

Fauna:

The interesting and well-preserved fauna is appreciated, in the first place, because of its endangered-species elements, the park being one of the few enclaves where the chameleon can be currently found. The area is also inhabited by polecats, weasels, wild cats, stone martens and wild boars. Among the birds of prey which, with their majestic flight, hover about the mountain summits, several species can be seen such as short-toed eagles, booted eagles, goshawks, common buzzards and eagle owls, the latter being the biggest nocturnal bird of prey.

Historic Heritage

The Park's situation, in the approaches to the provincial capital, and, above all, to the coast, has turned these grounds into a highly attractive spot since time immemorial, as demonstrated by the abundant remains found in the surroundings. In the spot known as Piedras de Cabrera there are cave paintings in small caverns scattered over the area.

Malaga, rocked between the sea and the mountains, gives the visitor the opportunity to know its millennia-old history. In just a few minutes it is possible to leave its Roman Theatre to visit "La Alcazaba," an Arab fortress, to admire the Renaissance majesty of its cathedral and to immerse oneself in the liveliness of its historic city centre.

Colmenar, is a white village in the district of La Axarquía, characterized by its narrow and small streets. In Casabermeja, where remains of megalithic sepulchres are found, the Arabs also left their mark in the shape of the wall and the Zambra Tower.

Main activities

The provincial capital is nowadays a dynamic and financially growing city characterized by its traditional urban and metropolitan nature, as well as by its strategic situation. The relevance gained by the tourist industry stands out above everything else, through a model based, in the main, in the sun and beach tourism and, to a lesser extent although it is a complementary and gradually increasing activity, a recreational and didactic offer embodied in the Natural Park.

Casabermeja's main activity is based on the primary sector and, within it, on agriculture, having 66% of its land devoted to farming, 26% being forestal land and 8% devoted to other uses. In Colmenar the primary sector also accounts for the main source of activity.

As regards the uses and the exploitation of the land inside the Natural Park, we can say that currently the exploitation activities carried out are of limited importance, due, also, to the fact that this area is mostly public property and to the protective function it performs. Even so, the most important activity is forestry, focused on wood, firewood and cork.

Next to the protective function, the public use is one of the basic pillars of the Montes de Málaga natural park. Due to its vicinity to the city of Malaga and as a result of the richness and uniqueness of both its natural and its cultural environment, this protected area becomes a highly interesting environment for the carrying out of leisure and recreational activities.

