



Un chemin pour l'avenir de la ville A road for the future of the city



FEDENATUR

FÉDÉRATION EUROPÉENNE
DES ESPACES NATURELS ET RURAUX MÉTROPOLITAINS ET PÉRIURBAINS

EUROPEAN FEDERATION
OF METROPOLITAN AND PERIURBAN NATURAL AND RURAL SPACES



Surface : 8 070 hectares
Population : 3 millions residents
Region : Catalunya

Organisme gestionnaire: Consorci del Parc de Collserola
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La Sierra de Collserola is part of the coastal cordillera, a mountainous, 300 km-long landscape along the Mediterranean Ocean. The park's northern boundary is the Besòs river and Vallès depression, and it is bordered by the Llobregat river and city of Barcelona in the south.

In 1987, a special management and environmental protection plan was established for Collserola. It is based on the principle of protecting and strengthening ecosystems. At the same time, infrastructure construction has allowed the public to use this space rationally, without endangering the park's precious natural and landscape resources.

The site, managed by the Collserola park Consortium, is a diversified spectrum of natural Mediterranean environments, where forest areas predominate. There are also a few agricultural areas.

The park's highest point is on the Tibidabo mountain (512 m). It has a typically Mediterranean climate. The average temperature is 14°C, with pluviometry of 620 mm/year, although microclimates due to diverse hilly terrain must also be considered.

Natural heritage.

The park is home to a wealth of plant and animal species characteristic of Mediterranean ecosystems. Thus, endemic Iberian Peninsula species are found among the arthropods, some of which have been observed exclusively on the Collserola site. Vertebrate family members include mammals such as the hedgehog, squirrel, rabbit, weasel, badger, genet, fox, and boar; birds such as the Eurasian kestrel, vulture, and common buzzard can be observed, as well as innumerable passerine species.

White pine, oak, and green oak are the predominant plant species. There are coastal pines as well as scrub and bush on slopes exposed to sunlight.

Most of the soil is composed of shale. Granite rock can be found on the southern side.

Main activities.

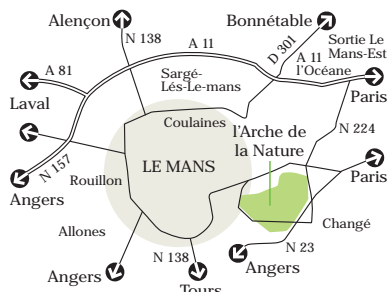
Hiking and walking are the main activities, followed by mountain biking. Hunting is authorised on half of the park's surface area. Park picnic area sites are extremely popular. The park's centre organises activities such as guided nature hikes.

Special features.

Remains of structures from the past can be found in the park, such as caves that were inhabited 6,000 years ago (tools from 100,000 years ago have even been found) as well as Romanesque hermitages and XVth to XVIIth century farms. The "modernist" movement's architectural heritage is represented by many buildings and fountains.

More recently, structures that the public associates with the park's image have been built. For example, there is an amusement park (Tibidabo), two funiculars, and the 1992 Foster telecommunications tower that provides a mirador with a 360° view.





Surface area : 450 hectares
Population : 190 000 habitants
Region : Pays-de-la-Loire

Managing entity : Communauté Urbaine du Mans
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The "Arche de la Nature" is a vast natural area located ten minutes from the heart of Le Mans and managed by the Le Mans urban Community. Visitors discover typical department landscapes along the trails. A total of 450 hectares of nature are open to the public, permanently and free of charge.

The forest, part of which is listed as a natural reserve, stretches over 350 hectares. The "Maison de l'eau" water and environment centre, a former water works building, has three aquariums with main fresh water fish species.

Many local animal breeds live in the cowshed, pigsty, sheepfold, farmyard, stables or meadows in the Prairie Farm.

The public can visit the site in vehicles drawn by Percheron horses. Classes, outings and theme festivals offered throughout the year make it possible for a wide public to learn more about "Mother Nature" (8 000 school children per year and over 80 000 visitors during festivals).

Water, meadow, and forest.

These three elements are the core of the park's identity. The "Maison de l'eau" is enhanced by the presence of the nearby Huisne river.

The grove pathways and meadows are representative department landscapes. The forest is made up of 60% coniferous trees, while many broad-leaved species provide additional varieties.

Popular festivals and school outings.

The many activities offered throughout the year provide a genuine nature discovery area. Whether they are led by Arche de la Nature activity leaders or partner organisations, events and outings are extremely popular.

Many points of interest.

The former water works, with its turn-of-the-century windows, traditional stables, and wooden footbridge are part of a remarkable constructed heritage. Many trees (chestnuts, oaks, etc.) are considered to be unique, due to their age. The ambition to preserve animal species, including endangered species, and plants, including an orchard with over 100 apple varieties, represent the "Arche de la Nature"s strong points.





Surface area : 900 hectares
Population : 2,5 millions residents
Region: Lisboa

Organisme gestionnaire: Dept. Estrutura Verde, Câmara Municipal de Lisboa
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The park is located in the Southwest part of Lisbon, occupying one of the seven Lisbon's hills, the one that gives his name to the park - Monsanto.

Here we are almost in the centre of the city, only 15 min away by bus, it is also a very important scenic feature for those who cross the Tagus river and those who work everyday in the city.

This is a very young periurban park, it has only 66 years, since the first plantations begun in 1934 in the deforested Monsanto's hills. The first thoughts began as early as 1888 with the idea of copying some similar parks around Europe and to provide providing a closer source of wood, for energy purposes, to the demanding city of Lisbon. These first ideas took importance and gave birth to dense woods, with some recreational facilities, viewpoints, tracks and restaurants.

Nowadays, the City Council through its Environment Department had defined a new document, which emphasises new concepts in planning and management that improves the awareness of the ecological importance of the park and looks forward to improve the sustainable use by the people.

A new identity.

The major problem that we had to deal with, is the global image of the park for Lisbon's citizens. This image is quite blurred due to several years of lack of interest by the administration and to its reputation of supporting marginal activities.

This has been overcome by creating a corporate image based on the presence of the introduced red squirrel.

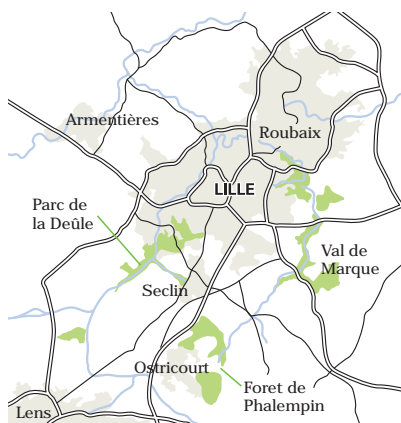
Some new tools.

Other major problems refers to the lack of information available to people. The park should support the increasing need of public use of the park in terms of outdoors recreational and educational activities.

Making nature better.

Monsanto' Forestry Park is not a natural park. There aren't any important regional or national ecological features. Nevertheless, its importance at local level, its 1 000 ha of heavily forested areas in the centre of the city, and its role as a site for the establishment of a natural "continuum" with several other Nature Reserves and Parks in the Metropolitan area of Lisbon, makes it quite important at city and regional level.

It is also an excellent laboratory for fieldwork on evolving Mediterranean ecosystems on Environmental Education schemes, at any level.



Surface area : 350 hectares
Population : 1,6 million residents
Region: Nord-Pas-de-Calais

Managing entity: Syndicat Mixte de Parc de la Deûle
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Area: 350 hectares have been landscaped; a second phase is planned to start in 2004 with another 350 hectares.

Stakeholders: In its current phase, the park spreads across six districts. It will involve six more from 2004. Since 1st October 2002, it has been run by a mixed administrative body, *Espace Naturel Métropolitain*, representing forty districts and Lille borough council. *Le conseil général du Nord*, *le Conseil Régional Nord Pas de Calais* and the State are associate members.

Population: The park is within easy reach of about 1,600,000 French and Belgian residents within a 35 kilometer radius of its centre, a fifteen minute drive from the middle of Lille. The six original districts together have about 50,000 inhabitants.



In March 1995, the landscape gardeners Jacques SIMON, from Burgandy, and Jean Noël CAPART, from Brussels, sketched an outline plan for a park joining Lille and the old mining district of Pas de Calais. It was to extend 25 kilometers along the length of the *canal de la Deûle*.

The park was to feature three aspects: rediscovered wildlife (rehabilitation of natural ecological environments), domesticated nature (promotion of small-scale agriculture) and imaginary nature (creation of themed gardens).

To date, 350 hectares have been landscaped and preliminary studies are being made of over 300 hectares more. Over the last three years, 16 million euro have been spent on laying out natural scenery with ecological corridors, rehabilitating wildernesses, building observation posts, paths, etc.

The *Parc de la Deûle* team is working with the neighbouring institutions of Pas-de-Calais to establish priority connection routes in an ecological network of paths for walkers, cyclists, horse-riders and watersports enthusiasts.

Natural heritage

The *Parc de la Deûle* is rehabilitating industrial wastelands and improving farmland through the treatment of old slag heaps, navigable waterways, woods and polluted lakes. As experimental terrain, the Park can apply principles of sustainable development and high quality environmental research to eliminate the traces of a devastating industrial past.

Historical and cultural heritage

For "Lille European Cultural Capital 2004" the *Parc de la Deûle* is organising:

- a 33 hectare theme park featuring gardens evoking the different communities making up the region of Nord-Pas-de-Calais, from Belgian to Laotian workers including the Poles, Portuguese, Algerians etc.
- A demonstration of land art, transforming over 40 hectares of countryside into living works of art.

Principal activities

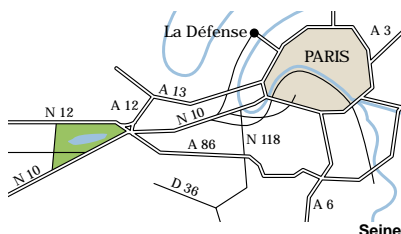
The Park arranges outings led by ecology wardens. It organises landscape insertion operations and agricultural diversification. From 2004, it will run a theme park based on gardens. In 2005, it is due to open a centre dedicated to fauna and flora and several thematic walks. In 2006, the Park will feature a food information centre.





BASE DE LOISIRS

DE ST QUENTIN EN YVELINES



Surface area : 600 hectares
Population : 150 000 residents
Region: Ile-de-France

Organisme gestionnaire: Syndicat Mixte de la Base de Loisirs de l'Étang de Saint Quentin

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Established in 1969, the Leisure Centre occupies 600 hectares in the municipality of St-Quentin-en-Yvelines, 30 Km West of Paris. This strategic location in a major suburb allows it to offer a wide range of open-air leisure activities to the inhabitants of the whole Parisian region. It is best known as the site of the largest lake in Ile de France (120 ha), a classic piece of "natural infrastructure" contributing to the health of the region and acting as a reservoir against flooding and a National Nature Reserve of 90 hectares.

Our aims are broad:

- to offer a large and accessible high quality nature zone: a strolling area, picnic and leisure areas, 8 Km of nature trails;
- to provide sporting and leisure facilities: a nautical centre, an equestrian centre, a wave pool, three golf courses, games and sporting events;
- to protect the environment from urban encroachment and to improve the quality of the lake water;
- to preserve and catalogue the ordinary and extraordinary natural heritage;
- to enable children to discover the natural environment and the rural world through a National Nature Reserve and a teaching farm;

Natural heritage

The lake of St-Quentin en Yvelines is an important landing stage for migrating birds, which is why it is a Special Protection Area. The western end of the lake is also classified as one of only 150 "National Nature Reserves" in France. More than 250 species of birds can be seen here (waders, ducks, marsh warblers, etc.). Eight species of plant are also protected and a special feature is the rare crested triton, a species protected worldwide.

A national man-made heritage

The lake of St-Quentin is the last link in a chain of lakes and streams constructed under the orders of king Louis XIV between 1675 and 1685 to collect and bring rainwater to the fountains in the park around his Château de Versailles. The system relies solely on gravity as the water is transported between artificial lakes closed off by locks, along 34 Km of aqueducts, of which 20 are underground. The majestic stand of pines at the northern end bears witness even nowadays.

An important social role in Ile de France

Two million visitors each year enjoy the park (sports facilities, paddling pool, health course, etc.). They also come for the wave pool, the largest expanse of water in the region (with its sailing school), the three golf courses (2x18 holes + 1 compact 9-holer), the equestrian centre or to fish. Schoolchildren come to the teaching farm, to the nature reserve or to go riding. There is also an accommodation centre (84 beds) and a camping site.



COMMUNAUTÉ D'AGGLOMÉRATION
GRENOBLE-ALPES MÉTROPOLÉ

Surface: 593 ha (195 ha are under the control of "Grenoble Alpes Métropole")

Impacted inhabitants: 404 000

Region: "Rhône Alpes"

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"Grenoble Alpes Métropole" is developing, maintaining and running six open and recreational areas permanently open to public and easily accessible by public transit: Park Hubert Dubedout (70.3 ha on forested hillside), the Bois français (75 ha of natural spaces around four lakes welcoming many activities), Park of Ile d'Amour (27 ha in the floodplain of Isère river offering large open grasslands), Park Ovalie (6.4 ha of friendliness spaces around a fishing lake), the Bois des Vouillants (474 ha of forest on Vercors' slopes) and the Franges vertes of Seyssins (10 ha between city and nature nearby sport and cultural facilities).

Those spaces are occupying 593 hectares of great ecological and landscape interest. Their development is a major issue in overall objectives of the agglomeration's planning scheme. Among mainlines of "Plan Vert Métropolitain", the first point is dedicated to this desire of "offering natural and recreational areas to city dwellers."

These spaces are now preserved, managed wisely and are arranged to be suitable for sports and outdoor activities. They are also convenient for environmental education for schools and for the general public.

Natural heritage

At the crossing of three mountain ranges: "Vercors", "Chartreuse" and "Belledonne" and at the confluence of two rivers "Drac" and "Isère", "Grenoble Alpes Métropole" green infrastructures enclose a great diversity of natural environments. These natural areas are also subject to varied climates depending on altitude and sun exposure. It explains why there is so much diversity in flora and in fauna linked to the continental influences, and also to Mediterranean mountains.

Historical and cultural heritage

The "Y-Grenoblois" valley, incrustated in the alpine corridor, was partly developed by external and cross-border trade. Thoroughfares, open spaces and recreation areas have received great writers like Jean Jacques Rousseau. Today, natural and recreational areas are getting used for various cultural activities like outdoor theater, recital, musical ballads etc.

Main activities

Natural and recreational areas are very popular. They are welcoming young, families, urban public, and of all social levels.

"Grenoble Alpes Métropole" offers its users different types of services and facilities: playground, picnic areas and green rest spots (rest areas dedicated to the contemplation of the landscape), paths and trails for hiking, areas of sports: BMX, baseball, softball, skate park etc.

"Grenoble Alpes Métropole" also offer students some animated presentations run by four gardeners of the educational garden on the Island of Love (which admits about 1,000 children). This activity complements a mission of environmental education and sustainable development sponsored by the city.



PARQUE DEL ALAMILLO

Surface: 120 ha

Number of towns: 2, Seville and Santiponce

Population: 1,500,000 (metropolitan area)

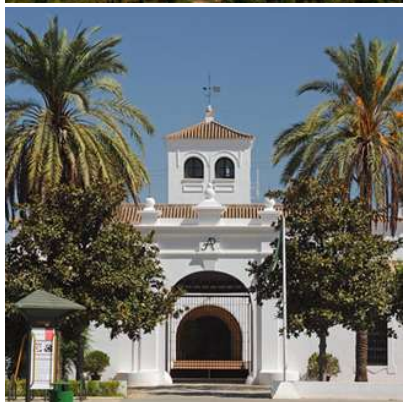
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This park belongs to the municipal districts of Seville and Santiponce. It is placed in the north area of the Isla de la Cartuja. Nowadays, it has an approximate surface of 120 ha of which 75 are opened for public use. The Park was constructed by the Andalusian Public Department through the Andalusian Public Company –EPSA– on the occasion of the Universal Exposition of Seville in 1992. It was inaugurated in October, 12th 1993.

The positive evaluation of the Park made by the citizens is based on its design, its maintenance, its safety and its activities, orientated to qualifying and strengthening the relation with the people and entities that make use of it.

The Alamillo aspires to be:

A public area of harmonious relation between people and nature, regardless races, beliefs, ideologies and classes.

A public area for creative and not consumer leisure where the citizens can participate in multiple activities. A public area that looks for the strengthening and qualification of the relation with the citizens that recognize it as of their own.

A public area for environmental education.

Natural heritage

The areas of the Park are part of the water-meadows of the Guadalquivir river. Its soils have a great fertility and abundant water. The current vegetation of the Park reproduces the typical ecosystems of the Mediterranean forest. The contact with the river, the existing agricultural and autochthonous vegetation, the isolated character of the public use of some areas and the developed management make the Park an especially valuable space from an ecological point of view, having a singular floristic and faunistic biodiversity in comparison with other similar parks.

Historical heritage:

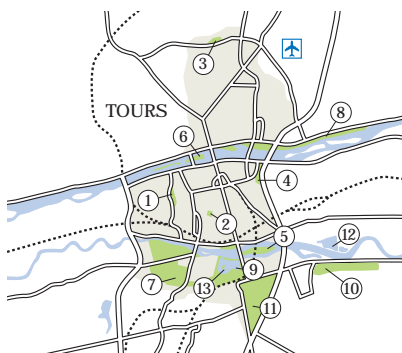
The right bank of the Guadalquivir river, to the north of the Monasterio de la Cartuja de Santa María de las Cuevas, was planted for a long time with poplars that were used as defense against the continuous overflows of the river. This place that managed to form a long avenue has been called Alamillo for five centuries. The space where the Park and the Farmhouse are placed nowadays, is located between the municipal districts of Seville and Santiponce, on the original agricultural garden of the Alamillo. It is a singular place in the history of Seville, which is surrounded with important places known by their tradition and history, as are the monasteries of La Cartuja, San Jerónimo and San Isidoro del Campo.

Activities:

One of the singular aspects of the Park is the huge variety of activities you can practice on its area. That is the reason why the management office of The Alamillo has decided to create a specific calendar of activities. The program of activities consists of an action a month, normally on Sunday morning (day that people dedicate to enjoy their free time with family or with friends). This program changes in summer, during the months of July and August. Due to the high temperatures and with the purpose of offering a quality alternative to enjoy without going out of the metropolitan area, the actions foreseen for this period take place every day at night. The most important activities in the park are the following:

Isla de la Cartuja half-marathon: Lorenzo Muñoz memorial	The "veranillos de Alamillo"
Andalusia's day	Nature's day
Integration's day	Anniversary of the park
Bicycle metropolitan's day	Children's day
Dogs' day	Royal collectors' day

It is necessary to stand out among the previous activities, the one called "Veranillos del Alamillo" which offers daily activities in the months of July and August such as: Infantile Workshops, Story-tellers, Poetical nights, Flamenco, Theatre, Cinemas, Parades.



Surface : 700 hectares
Population: 350.000 habitants

Region : Centre

Managing entity : Espaces verts – Tours

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There are numerous Natural spaces at Tours, spread all across the city: areas for rest, recreation, leisure, quiet walks, hobbies, discovering the environment, all just a few minutes from the city centre.

The ecological and landscaped restoration of these "oxygen parks", true to their origins, has allowed Nature into the city, ensuring equal access to all the districts in the city, and consolidating the vital functions of greenery in developed areas:

Embellishment: nature in the urban and suburban environment,

Health: this natural inheritance airs the city,

Psychological aspect: vegetation plays a calming role (allotment gardens for example)

Social function: space for meeting, exchanges and entertainment.

Tours and the Touraine region are known as "the garden of France" (4 flowers awarded)

5 Varieties of Natural spaces at Tours

Gardens of historical interest

1. *Le Jardin Botanique* (Botanical gardens) (5 ha) with arboretum, water features, swans, tortoises, flamingos, ducks, tropical & medicinal plant collections wide variety of mature trees, children's playground, educational activities.
2. *Le Jardin des Prébendes d'Oé* (5ha) with water feature, varied mature trees, bandstand, concerts, now inscribed on a historic monuments protection order.



"Extensive" Parks

3. *Park de la Cousinerie* (20ha): succession of lawns and woodland borders, a wetland, a grove of mature trees (over 150 years old), lake, play areas, picnic tables.
4. *Parc de Sainte-Radegonde* (15 ha) many rare varieties planted on a floodplain, with children's playground, sports grounds, an animal park (including roe deer). Educational activities and games.
5. *Park Honore de Balzac* (24 ha): located on a man-made island on a flood plain, accessible by pedestrian footbridges. The banks have a variety of different trees. Children's play-grounds, football and bicycle circuits, Animal Park with lamas, black sheep and goats. A canoe-kayak area with a passage for migrating fish is in project (on the Cher by the Island H. of Balzac).
6. *Parc de l'Île Simon* (4 ha): on a natural island in the middle of the Loire, in the heart of the city. One can reach it foot but also by a traditional boat service. Play area for children, skate-board facilities, contemporary work of art - the colourful "Pata", replica of the salmon traps of the north of Sweden. It is a nesting place for the birds of the Loire and a great educational resource.
7. *Parc de la Gloriette* (40 ha at present-120 ha in the long term): located on a high risk flood plain of the river Cher. It includes an experimental kitchen garden for organic vegetables, with irrigation by wind mills, a "wind" garden, a forestadventure circuit high in the trees (poplar plantation), children's play area focussed on the elements: water, wind, earth and sun. A meadow management scheme is in action, with mown and rough cut zones, with the maintenance of the meadows and the improvement of the existing hedgerows. Many educational resources, events and theme days, cultural activities, compact golf course. Canals and garden circuits are planned. The park house can be used for workshops and events. 30 hectares will be dedicated to organic agriculture. It is for this park that Tours decided to adhere to FEDENATUR.

Riverbank walks & promenades

8. *Promenade de la Rive Droite de la Loire*. On the right hand, northern bank of the Loire – the last natural river of France and inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list, a (8 km) walk with access via a series of original stairways along the quay. Valorisation of the natural, typical riverbank vegetation (Berteroa, annual plants) and the sandbanks and beaches. Educational resources related to the Loire: river flora, fauna, river works, alluvial deposits...
9. *Promenade du Petit Cher*, restored for its wealth of flora and fauna, a branch of the river Cher (6km). Varied vegetation along the length of this walk.

Peri-urban Forests

10. *Forest Park Larçay les Hates* (300 ha-400 in the long term) one part with dominant deciduous trees, another with conifers and trees from the Landes. Vast natural lawns, moors, many water points, meadows and ponds including one with protected species, old trees favourable for the presence of insects, rich presence of small mammals, a tribe of forest deer, arboretum.
11. *Bois de Montjoyeux, de la Bergeonnerie et de Grandmont* (50 ha) : The forest management plan of these sites, which constitute almost a park, is under revision. Interesting flora, mature trees, invite the discovery of nature.

Lakes

12. *Lacs des Peupleraies* 20,5 ha with water dominating), located near the Cher on a flood plain, they form, with the grassy areas which accompany them, a privileged site for the practice of sailing or canoeing, relaxation and fishing contests. Essentially, the educational resources here are naturally related to the presence of water.
13. *Lac de la Bergeonnerie* (36 ha including 19 ha of water): similar to the Lacs des Peupleraies except that here there are also ideal areas for jogging.





Surface area : 526 hectares
Population : 200 000 residents
Region: Catalunya

Managing entity: Consorci de l'Espai Rural de Gallecs
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Gallecs Rural Area, which covers 526 ha, belongs to the Vallès Oriental region in Barcelona. It is known as an area of land which has survived massive construction and any other actions which tend to threaten areas situated on the outskirts of big cities, in this case Barcelona's metropolitan area.

It is a rural area which lies in the middle of the Vallès Plain. The geography of the place includes slightly undulating hills, which are not very steep, and various streams, all of which flow into the Besòs River.

The area shows a combination of agricultural and forest landscape with a predominance of extensive herbaceous dry farming, such as barley, wheat or sunflowers. They also grow fodder, vegetables and a few vineyards. In addition, there are some forests and farms of high architectural value.

Moreover, it has been verified that this area is a migration passage for many birds, which makes it even more valuable environmentally speaking. Therefore, it works as a biological link, both locally and on a large scale, since it is situated in the centre of Barcelona's Green Belt and very near to other areas classified as being of Natural Interest.

Natural Heritage

Among the different crop fields, in Gallecs Rural Area we can find various forests. The vegetation is typically Mediterranean. There are trees and bushes, adapted to summer droughts, with persistent leaves, small and hard, which often have prickles, and also aromatic flowers. In the forests there is a predominance of pine trees (*Pinus halepensis*), ilexes (*Quercus ilex*) and oak trees (*Quercus cerrioides*) with an undergrowth which hardly exists in some areas, but which can be very thick and impenetrable in others.

This undergrowth basically consists of white maple trees (*Crataegus mongyna*), brambles (*Rubus sp.*), furze (*Ulex parviflorus*), rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*), traveller's joy (*Clematis vitalba*), holly oak (*Quercus coccifera*) and many reappearing ilexes (*Quercus ilex*) and oak trees (*Quercus cerrioides*).

It is important to draw attention to the existence of a wet area with water plants such as the yellow iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), which is a migration passage for many birds.

Historical heritage

In Gallecs we can find a great number of architectural elements of great historical and artistic interest. Some of them date back to the 10th and 11th centuries, as for example Santa Maria de Gallecs Church, of Romanesque style, from the 11th and 12th centuries, and The Malla Tower, from the 10th century, which has two defensive towers and an interior quarter.

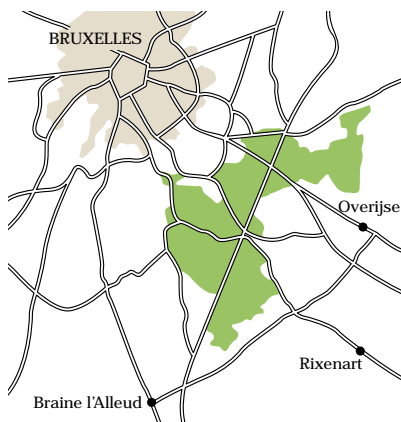
Apart from this, various farmhouses, scattered round Gallecs, are also part of its architectural heritage. For example, Can Mulà, from the 10th century, Can Jornet, a farmhouse from the 14th century, which has two bodies where the arcades in the main façade stand out, and others such as The Malla Tower Washing Place, which is an ancient building of Roman origin used for washing clothes.

Activities

The main activities in the park are basically two. On the one hand, **the consolidation of the agricultural activity**, with the creation of indigenous products having their own brand name, and the organization of training courses for farmers with the aim of making agricultural population take root on the land. On the other hand, there is **the cultural and environmental education** with educational programmes for all groups of ages, which allow people to know about the great environmental potential of the area and which also approach them to the rural and natural world through various routes, guided visits...

Other activities are based on the consolidation of the architectural heritage, the management of the environment and the execution of cultural popularising programmes in the area.





Surface area: 4.383 hectares
Population: 2 millions residents
Region: Bruxelles

Managing entity: Bruxelles Environnement
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The *Forêt de Soignes* - 4.383 hectares of woodland on the doorstep of Brussels. The location of the capital's green jewel makes it very popular, and it is much frequented by walkers, horse-riders and cyclists.

The natural aspect of the *forêt de Soignes* is a profoundly altered and transformed reflection of the primitive Brabantine wilderness. Historical records refer to a forest abounding in game, but the great *forêt de Soignes* has seen its larger fauna disappear over the centuries. Originally part of the ancient Charbonnière forest which covered a large part of Gaul, it was home to the aurochs and the elk, herbivores which no longer exist.

The current vegetation is strongly influenced by human activity; 80% of the trees are beech, inherited from the Austrian period of forest management.

A cathedral forest

The *forêt de Soignes* is well known in Belgium and abroad, by woodlands experts and tourists, for its lofty stands of beech trees, which only allow a little light through their foliage, in the same way as the stained glass windows of a cathedral. Maintenance and exploitation work – forest landscaping, pruning and felling, clearing and so on – is carried out by professionals, woodcutters and specialised workers, with machines devised specially for forest work.

Five nature reserves

The *forêt de Soignes* also contains five nature reserves. These include wetlands – located in the *vallée du Vuilbeek*, the *vallée des Enfants Noyés*, the *vallon de Trois Fontaines* and that of *Rouge-Cloître* – together with chalky slopes located in *Trois Fontaines* and *Rouge-Cloître*.

Once a forest abounding in game, the large fauna are nowadays reduced to fox and roe deer, reintroduced after being wiped out.

Amongst the smaller mammals, shrews and small rodents such as fieldmice, woodmice and rats constitute prey for small carnivores such as weasels and stoats and the birds of prey such as horned owls.

Two species of squirrel which occupy two different ecological niches and so, in principle, should not co-exist, can be admired: the native red squirrel and the Korean squirrel, an exotic species which was introduced accidentally in 1974.

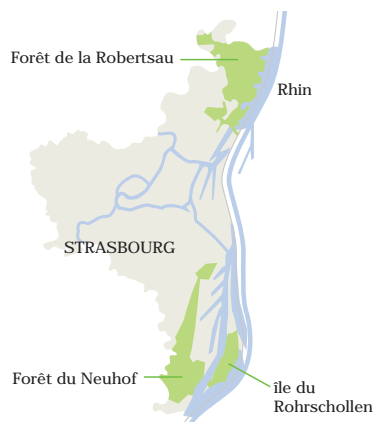
The cromlech

A circle of menhirs, the cromlech, erected in honour of 11 forest guards killed in the First World War. Another stone monument, bearing the dates 1830-1930, commemorates the hundredth anniversary of Belgian independence. Apart from these, the *forêt de Soignes* has lots of other monuments, large and small: the Sylvan fountainhead, *le canton des Patriotes*, the Etienne Bossaert cross, etc.

The Information Centre

Located in a renovated granary of the old Priory of Rouge-cloître, in Auderghem, this centre features a permanent exhibition dedicated to forests in general and the *forêt de Soignes* in particular. In addition, the centre regularly holds exhibitions on different environmental themes and also arranges guided tours by a team of biologists.





Surface area : 1.376 hectares
Population : 451.250 residents
Region: Alsace

Managing entity: Service des espaces verts,
Address : Centre administratif / 1, place de l'Etoile / B.P 1049/1050 F / 67 070 Strasbourg Cedex.
Tel. : +33 3 88 60 90 90.
Fax : +33 3 88 60 91 00.
e-mail : flonchamp@cus-strasbourg.net
web : www.mairie-strasbourg.fr



The three Strasbourg Rhine forests are remains of alluvial forests from the end of the tertiary period. They have a large hydrographic network with former arms of the Rhine, developed reservoirs, wetlands, and ground water. These "breathing" areas, located less than 10 km from the town centre, contribute to the urban area's quality of life. They have a recreational, social, biological, health, cultural, and scientific mission, as well as being a protected area.

The Strasbourg Rhine forests have three massifs :

The Robertsau forest:

located north of the city, it has a surface area of 493 hectares. Awaiting approval for listing as a natural reserve.

Neuhof forest:

located in the south of the city, it covers 600 hectares. Awaiting approval for listing as a natural reserve.

Rohrschollen island:

310 hectares, including 157 hectares of forest. Listed as a natural reserve since 1997.



An exceptional natural heritage.

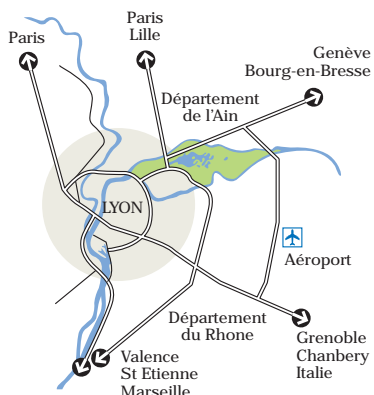
Strasbourg periurban forests, rare remains of Rhine alluvial forests, are genuine natural monuments. This "capital" of wild, exuberant nature, symbiosis of water and forest, is made up of a diversity of tree species unequalled in Europe. Pedunculate oaks grow alongside ash trees, poplars, willows, elms, and wild apple trees, bending their boughs under a luxurious growth of liana, clematis, hops, ivy, and wild vines. Nesting and wintering havens for birds and fish spawning grounds, these Rhine forests have an exceptionally diverse wildlife (242 bird species, 47 mammal species, 30 species of fish, etc.)



Main activities.

Strasbourg citizens visit these three forest massifs assiduously to escape from the hectic pace of city life. Over 30 km of marked walking trails, 14 km of bike trails, 21 km of horse riding trails, and athletic courses have been created for them. Fishermen have access to waterways as well as a spawning ground that has been created. Informational panels have been placed along five kilometres of botanical and nature discovery trails to promote environmental education.

Thanks to partnership based on long-term development between the EDF (French electric company) and Rohrschollen natural reserve, two new educational and landscape trails were inaugurated in November 2001.



Surface : 2.200 hectares
Population : 2 millions residents
Region : Rhône-Alpes

Managing entity: SEGAPAL
Address : Chemin de la Bletta / 69120 Vaulx en Velin
Tel. : +33 4 78 80 30 67
Fax : +33 4 72 04 07 95
e-mail : info@grand-parc.fr
web : <http://www.grand-parc.fr>



The Miribel-Jonage Nature Park, located northeast of the Lyon urban area, 15 minutes from the town centre in the Rhone river alluvial plain, is named for its boundaries of the Miribel canal in the north, and Jonage canal in the south.

The park is owned by the SYMALIM (joint union) and managed by SEGAPAL (local public company).

Its 4 main missions are :

- Supplying drinking water to the urban area.
- Providing protection against floods (expansion field).
- Leisure activities for the general public (3.5 million visitors per year; 14th most visited site in France).
- Preserving and developing natural heritage.



The Nature park is progressively developing within the framework of an overall programme based on hydraulic site restoration and a west-east transition, from city to nature.

The nature pole, heart of the site between the leisure activity area and protected natural areas, is the target of an ambitious restoration project based on environmental education.

An identity based on water.

The Miribel-Jonage nature Park's identity is based on water, the shared element among many of the site's most developed activities, including: drinking water catchment areas, protecting the urban area against floods, aquatic leisure activities, fishing, etc...

Remarkable natural heritage.

The park is organised, upstream to downstream, in a mosaic of small, typical contrasting natural units (former arms of the Rhine, dry meadows, alluvial forests, etc.) which are home to many rare plant and animal species.

For this reason, it was selected as a "Natura 2000" site.

Numerous visitors, a social role.

The site's many qualities make it a very popular place, particularly in summer, with a predominately young, urban, working-class public.

The Park provides these visitors with many services and structures: L'atol sport-nature area, horse riding centres, day camp, bicycle trails, restaurants, developed, guarded beaches, etc ...





Parco di Portofino

Surface area: 1.055 hectares
Population: 5 millions residents
Region: Liguria

Managing entity: Ente Parco di Portofino
Address: Viale Rainusso, 1 / 16038 Santa Margherita Ligure (Genova)
Tel.: +39 0185 289479
Fax: +39 0185 285706
e-mail: enteparco.portofino@libero.it
web: www.parks.it/parco.portofino



Presentation

The huge conglomerate block of Il Promontorio di Portofino forms the coastal protected area in the northernmost part of the Western Mediterranean. It includes cool forests, warm Mediterranean maquis, and chestnut and olive tree groves, and has a long tradition of smallholder farming and fishing.

Protected since 1935, the Park is home to one of the richest examples of flora in the Mediterranean, a notable variety of birds and invertebrates, a rich architectural heritage and some of the best known landscapes in the world. A dense network of paths criss-crosses maquis, mixed forests typical of the Apennines, rural settlements and fishing villages steeped in art and history. All of these factors, together with the area's easy accessibility, make Il Promontorio di Portofino one of the best known and most visited tourist destinations in Europe.



Natural heritage

Walking through the Park's highly distinct habitats allows the visitor to enjoy its spectacular landscapes and fascinating views in just a small area. The northern sector is dominated by deciduous forests, while the southern part is covered by dense maquis, pinewoods, ampelodesmos grass meadows and garigue shorelines. The sea cliffs are home to a unique biological system, while the agricultural landscape is dominated by olive trees, often interspersed with vegetable plots and orchards.

The fauna of the Park is rich in species, particularly bird life. The headland, because of its location which juts out into the sea, is a superb site for watching migratory birds, along with those species which nest on the inaccessible cliffs, including several interesting birds of prey.



Historical heritage

The most interesting villages include: Portofino Mare and San Fruttuoso, seat of an old Benedictine abbey, which has been restored by the F.A.I. and opened to the public. The Abbazia della Cervara near Santa Margherita Ligure, the Church of San Nicolò in Comune di Camogli, the convents and numerous chapels, and other rural and coastal buildings dotted throughout the area are witness to the area's fervent religious tradition.

Main activities

For many years, Portofino Park has organised activities based upon the conservation and promotion of the historical-environmental heritage of the area. The Park finances numerous projects aimed at restoring local agricultural traditions, including the abandoned olive groves and the dry-stone walls. It also maintains a network of more than 50 km of paths, runs wildlife management programmes, and provides support and help for researchers and postgraduate students.

The Park, through the Territorial Laboratory for Environmental Education, promotes activities and projects for schools, and organises guided visits for groups and a calendar of organised hikes aimed at getting to know the Park in more detail.



METROPOLITAN PARK MARISMA DE LOS TORUÑOS AND PINE FOREST DE LA ALGAIDA



Surface: 1,000 ha

Number of towns: 2, El Puerto de Santa María and Puerto Real

Population: 701,641 inhabitants (metropolitan area)

Address: Avenida del Mar 7, El Puerto de Santa María, CÁDIZ, SPAIN

Telephone: +34 956 203544

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web: www.parquedelabahia.org



The Metropolitan Park managed by the Andalusian Public Department - Consejería de Obras Públicas y Vivienda - through the Andalusian Public Company EPSA, has the strategic goal of turning the park into the basic piece of the Red de Espacios Libres de la Bahía de Cádiz (Bay of Cádiz's free spaces network). The main objective is the one of being useful for the population of the metropolitan area and also being an instrument for the development of the cultural, ethnographical, historical and environmental values of its surroundings, so that the population of the Bay of Cádiz and its visitors could enjoy it.

The most significant elements that identify the singular character of this Metropolitan Park are:

- It is environmentally protected as part of the Parque Natural Bahía de Cádiz.
- 80% of its land is located in Maritime-Terrestrial Public Domain.
- It has an important cultural, historical and ethnographic heritage.
- It is protected by international institutions as the RAMSAR agreement, it is part of the Natura 2000 Directive (Directive 92/43/CE, May 21st), since it was declared area of the European Community interest and Special Protection Area for birds.
- It is a Special Preservation Area according to the European Natura 2000 Directive.
- It includes four habitats of community interest according to the mentioned Directive.
- It has a wide range of ecosystems: wild beaches, dunes, tidal marshes, distributary channels, coastal pine groves, salt marshes, grassland.
- Plenty of autochthonous protected species worldwide: fauna and flora.
- Numerous economic secular exploitations: shellfishing, fishing, salt marshes, aquaculture, etc.

Natural heritage

The Metropolitan Park is located in a biophysical area dominated by the San Pedro river's mouth and the surrounding land as spit bars, tidal marshes, ridge of dunes and pingroves, all merged by their origin and evolution. The relation between marine and floodable spaces and terrestrial ones has left a singular structure in the territory. It is dominated by natural elements identifiable nowadays such as the following:

- Los Toruños peninsula: An almost virgin tidal marsh over a spit bar drained by numerous tidal distributary channels. Additionally, the peninsula has the Playa de Levante (Levante's beach) and a singular dune system, which confirm the virgin nature of the ecosystem. San Pedro River separates this peninsula from the Pinar de La Algaída (La Algaída pine grove).
- Pine Forest "La Algaída": It is formed by a forestry complex where there are stone pines grown over stabilized dunes.
- Fresh water lagoons: The pine forest zone presents real fresh water "islands" in hypersaline environments.
- Salt marshes: They represent the traditional and environmental secular exploitations of the Bay of Cádiz that have arrived to modern days.
- Grassland and pasture that complete this diverse maritime and terrestrial ecosystem.

Historical heritage

Its geographical situation has positioned it along the history as strategic reference during the warlike episodes lived in the Bay of Cádiz. During the 19th century, with the aim of besieging Cádiz, the Napoleonic troops established their camps in the pine forest "La Algaída".

The remaining sunken flotsams of the Roman times confirm the usage of the Río San Pedro as a navigation rout. In the past, the environment that integrates today's Parque Metropolitano has joined activities that look for the utilization of the natural resources: salt marshes, fishing, cattle raising, farming and fishery production, etc.

From the first Andalusia's ferrous line (the second one in Spain) that went through the Park we keep as industrial heritage, San Alejandro's bridge.

Activities:

The dynamization of the Park program includes campaigns, journeys and events dedicated to encouraging the population to actively take part in the Metropolitan Park utilization by organizing and developing activities for recreation, sports, festive events and commemorative activities for all the citizenship groups. Throughout the year, the park's own program of activities and some other activities from different groups take place.

- Animation and participation: Integration of the natural, cultural and ethnographical values to be shown for visitors (guided routes, water walks, outdoor activities, programs for schools, etc.).
- Associative network: Activities for groups and associations, and participation in volunteer campaigns.
- Health and sport: Outdoor sports activities for children and adults, and sports events and competitions (canoeing championships, popular races, walking races, etc.).
- Other activities: Celebration of commemorative days as Park's Day, International Bird's Day, Wetlands' Day, Environmental's Day, etc.



Surface area: 4.320,8 hectares

Commune: 18

Population: 89.443 (number of residents inside the communes of the park)

Region: Liguria

Address: Via Paci, 2-19038 Sarzana (SP) Italy

Tel. +39 187 691071

Fax. + 39 187 606738

e-mail: info@parcomagra.it

Web: www.parcomagra.it



The Park includes either the hills that separate the south-western watercourses of the Gulf of La Spezia from the plain of the Magra, a course of the river which runs in the Ligurian area and the lower, middle course of the river Vara.

From Punta Bianca the extreme point of the headland il Caprione up to the green valley of the river Vara, the Park gathers a territory of 4320,8 hectares abounding in naturalistic, historical and cultural features. The wide luxuriant area crosses the boundaries of eighteen boroughs.

The Mediterranean flora represents the naturalistic feature and the most precious characteristic of the coastal area marked by ancient mule tracks that connect the villages of Ameglia, Tellaro and Montemarcello.

Although the lower zone of the Val di Magra appears clearly exploited it includes moist areas unique in the Ligurian territory, rest areas (specific zones for resting), nesting spots of great importance for the migratory bird fauna.

Wide forests and watercourses feature the Val di Vara valley that still keeps its ancient peasants' traditions which are evaluating the typical products and the agricultural, touristic activities and moreover maintaining the environment untouched.



Natural heritage

The precious Mediterranean flora represents the most significant naturalistic characteristic of the entire coastal area where the growth of the *Cistus albidus* is particularly flourishing. The valleys of the river Magra and Vara serve as the main relevant migratory course to the bird fauna. Amongst the typical species we will mention the following: the *Alcedo atthis* and the *Remiz pendulinus*. The fish fauna appears very diversified: 39 species have been counted in a census amongst which the *Salmo trutta* typical of the middle and upper course of the river Vara.



The historic heritage

The Ligurian necropolis of Ameglia and the Roman villa in Bocca di Magra represent the most impressive ancient features of the Park. All the boroughs of the Park have got their own medieval town centre and few of them still keep in perfect conditions outstanding fortresses amongst which the fortress of Sarzanello and the Firmafede one in Sarzana, the old Castle in Cornoviglio and the one in Lerici. The Dome in Sarzana is enriched with works of art amongst which the wood cross by Mastro Guglielmo of 1138.

Main activities

Amongst the various activities promoted by the Park we would like to mention Camminaparco. It consists of a series of excursions guided by professional tourist and naturalistic guides. Starting from June to September there will be guided tours by boat along the extreme course of the river Magra and the cliffs of the Caprione as well. In Spring and Summer Parcoestate that is cultural, sportive and leisure events. From September to May the Park organizes educational courses and training classes concerning the environment. The educational programme is referred to all schools of the province.





ΦΙΛΟΔΑΣΙΚΗ  PHILODASSIKI
Ένωση Αθηνών Enossi Athinon
Αισθητικό Δάσος Ύμης Mt Hymettus Aesthetic Forest

Surface: 440 ha

Number of municipalities involved: (privat forest - Philodassiki Enossi Athinon)

Population: 400.000 habitants

Address: Mt Hymettus (near Kaissarini Monastery)

Telephone number: +30 2107231769

Fax: +30 2107231029

email: aestheticforest@philodassiki.org

web: www.philodassiki.org



Philodassiki Enossi Athinon was founded in 1899 in Athens with the purpose of reforesting derelict land, the encouragement of forest-lovers and the protection of the natural environment. The result of the reforestation efforts was the greening of the hills, in and around Athens and the protection of the historical landscape. In 1945 Philodassiki undertook the initiative for the reforestation of the area around the Byzantine Monastery of Kaissariani in the NW degraded slopes of Mt. Hymettus. These efforts resulted in the planting of more than three million trees within an area of approximately 600 ha. Old quarries were planted with trees from a nursery which was created, forest roads were opened and rest and recreation areas were organized. The whole reforested area was declared an "Aesthetic Forest" and has won several awards and honorary recognitions. In 1964 a small botanical garden was created with a collection of Greek wild plants. The forest management aims at the protection, conservation and amelioration of the forest ecosystem, at the maintenance of an attractive landscape for outdoor recreation and at the provision of environmental education opportunities.



Natural environment

The reforestation efforts resulted in the creation of a characteristic mosaic physiognomy of plant formations in which pines are dominant, in unmixed clusters mainly with cypress, judas and carob trees. In the rocky areas there are pine trees together with kermes oak and wild olive tree. This plant variety has been enriched by the existence of an olive grove, a group of eucalyptus and the presence of water loving plants next to the streams, creating a unique landscape.

Historical character of the landscape

Because of new landscaping, the surrounding area has become once more a peaceful refuge of natural beauty with the historical monuments is a perfect example of civilization and nature. In 1993, the area surrounding the monastery which comprises the olive-grove, the nurseries, the botanical garden, the squares and scattered monuments, was designated a "Historical Garden of Europe" by the EU. It is included amongst the fifty-eight Historical Gardens of Europe.



Main activities

The area of the Aesthetic Forest is ideal for leisure and recreational activities such as walking on the roads and paths of the whole area, sport activities, resting in properly developed areas, enjoying the view from various outlooks, cycling, visiting the local historical sites, educational activities regarding the natural environment and specifically the flora and fauna of Mt. Hymettus and organized guided tours at the Botanical Garden of Philodassiki.





Surface area : 600 hectares
Population : 1,5 millions residents
Region: Lombardia

Managing entity: Consorzio Parco Nord Milano
Address : Via Clerici, 150 -20099 Sesto San Giovanni (Milano)
Tel. : +39 2 24 10 16 1
Fax : + 39 2 24 10 16 220
e-mail : info@parconord.milano.it
web : www.parconord.milano.it



The Parco Nord Milano lies the town of Milan and in its outer cities, such as Sesto San Giovanni, Cinisello Balsamo, Bresso, Cormano and Cusano Milanino.

It is made up of green areas which once were industrial or uncultivated lands. Green areas cover nowadays a surface of more than 300 hectares and are rich of wide woods, meadows, hills, tree-lined roads and flowerbeds.

It is unique in Italy and similar to the best examples of European metropolitan parks. Historical and artistic complexes should be seen.

Several areas are going to be requalified: they will become green as well as equipped areas. The park is cleaned and supervised regularly.

Visitor Centers

Today a former group of farmhouses is the hub of the park, placed in the middle of the most frequented area and called **Cascina Centro Parco**. They are the spinal column of the park's organisation . The old barn has been refurbished and transformed into a depot for farm tractors and tools. Another part of the building hosts office rooms, staff rooms, designer's area , a meeting room and the **Centro di Documentazione Regionale A.R.E.A Parchi** on environmental education (www.areaparchi.it), while the characteristic arcade has been restored as an area dedicated to exhibitions, parties, and happenings.

Not only work place, but also for leisure, especially on Saturdays and on Spring Sundays.

Facilities and services

Besides the making of the park, the aim of Parco Nord Milano is to offer leisure facilities to citizens. There are 14 bowling greens, placed at different points of the park. Near the Cascina Centro Parco are found the two open-air chessboards and 2 equipped children areas.

Another place where to relax and socialise is the pic-nic area, which is fitted with plenty of tables and benches.

There are about 350 elderly people which tend the gardens with a few tools. This presence, which is organised and regulated by a special set of rules, functions as a "post" against the illegal activities and the squalor which might degrade the park.

The history and particular location of Parco Nord Milano within an urban context has committed the Consorzio to form a watch service, carried out by some professional foresters and a special Corp of over 90 voluntary environmental guards.

Festivals and popular events

The relation of Parco Nord Milano with schools is 14 years long; in fact, during the 1989/90, the park started promoting environmental education activities by sending the schools a visiting program. (over 300 every year, corresponding to over 7000 pupils). See

On top of that a new structure called Aula Verde has been recently restored to receive schools groups and families during week-end

Many activities such as music festivals and popular events are carried out throughout springtime which provide a genuine nature discovery area: among them we should mention the Kites Festival, a Jazz Music Festival, the Park Feast and the Environmental and Ecology Book Day.

Points of Interest

Though of recent foundation, Parco Nord features two historical villas of remarkable architectural and artistic value. Villa Torretta, built in 1500 and abundant in frescoes of the XVIII c. is now refurbished into a prestigious Congress Hall and Hotel (see). Villa Manzoni is placed on the north side along the omonymous road at Brusuglio di Cormano.





Surface area : 47.000 hectares
Population : 3 millions residents
Region: Lombardia

Managing entity: Provincia di Milano
Address : Via Vivaio, 1-20122 Milano
Tel. : +39 2 77 40 32 64
Fax : +39 2 77 40 32 72
e-mail : parcosud@provincia.milano.it
web : www.provincia.milano.it/parcosud/



The park is shaped in a half-circle, and surrounds the southern Milan urban area. Its vast dimensions make it an important "greening" along this belt. It has the Milan plain's characteristic features: irrigated areas and intense cereal growing activity.

The Province of Milan manages this park.

Its main objectives are protecting and enhancing the landscape and environment between city and country, creating ecological balance in the metropolitan area, and promoting activities for the city's residents.

The fundamental, central element uniting these aims lies in the preservation and promotion of agricultural activities.



Large natural reserves are included within the park's agricultural areas. Programmes and projects in favour of sustainable development are currently being organised and applied in all of these areas.

A land with an identity based on agriculture.

The park's fundamental nature is made up of agricultural areas, which also include vast natural landscapes. These have significant interest for the environment and landscape.

Natural heritage.

This concerns a group of small zones scattered throughout the park's territory. The largest areas concern typical milanese ancient wood species, wetlands, and "marcite" (irrigation fields).

Many natural reserves have already been designated as "areas of community interest" in the Natura 2000 programme's framework.

A park touched by history.

Historical and cultural buildings can be found throughout the park. Abbeys, châteaux, farms, and buildings now listed as "industrial architecture" make up this heritage. The routes linking these remains pass through agricultural and metropolitan areas.





parc
agrari
sabadell

Surface : 587 hectares

Population: 220.000 habitants

Region : Catalunya

Managing entity : Ajuntament de Sabadell

Address : Plaça de Sant Roc, 1 - 08201 Sabadell

City: Sabadell

Tel. : +34 93 745 31 82

Fax : +34 93 745 31 93

e-mail : parcagrisabadell@ajsabadell.cat

web : www.sabadell.cat



Sabadell Agricultural Park forms a green horseshoe around the city of Sabadell's urban soil. A journey round the area will show you the spaces devoted to cereal crops and the presence of trees scattered in the agricultural areas. The landscape is characteristic of El Vallès Occidental region, where the permanent waving of the land makes for views rarely enjoyed in metropolitan areas.

The management of this space pursues the basic aim of producing quality agriculture and making the project financially viable in accordance with environmental sustainability criteria. This space is characteristic of the development of periurban agriculture.

Natural Heritage

Preserving the environmental quality of the landscape is one of the pillars of this park. It forms a key green lung which brings nature and the country closer to the urban area and where environment-related activities are carried out. The botanical wealth of the Mediterranean forests, with pines and holm oaks, is also worth noting. This space is key to the biological corridor between Sant Llorenç del Munt Natural Park (Xarxa de Parcs de la Diputació de Barcelona) and Collserola, both of which belong to the FEDENATUR network.

Historic Heritage

The landscape of the agricultural park is the result of the interaction between human action and the natural environment. The historic, cultural, social and architectural heritage comprising the Agricultural Park territory focuses mostly around the farmhouses. The 17th century church Sant Julià d'Alta in Can Deu forest, with its rectangular layout and gothic elements, is particularly worth mentioning. The Can Deu manor house, built in the 17th century and currently housing a museum, as well as the 14th century Ca- n'Ustrell and Ca n'Argelaguet manor houses, are also worth highlighting.

Main activities

In addition to the important dry farming work carried out in the park, native plant varieties such as the "mongeta del ganxet" bean are promoted in the irrigated part. In addition, bread cereals and vegetables are produced and organic crops are encouraged. Other activities carried out in the park include cattle raising and environmental education activities for school children.



Surface : $\vec{r} = R\hat{r}$

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web : www.4mat.com

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Natural heritage.

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Surface : 4 697 hectares
Population : 2 millions d'habitants
Region : Catalunya

Managing entity : Consorci del Parc Serralada Litoral
Address : Avenida Onze de Setembre, 53, 1r 08349 – Cabrera de Mar
Tel. + 34 93 754 00 24
Fax. + 34 93 754 00 22
e-mail. p.slitoral@diba.es
web. www.diba.es/parcs/cellecs.htm



The Serralada Coastal Park is located in the central sector of the Catalan cordillera, northeast of Barcelona. Its natural boundaries are the Besós and Argentona rivers. The two largest nearby communes are Mataró and Granollers.

The fact that this park is located next to the Barcelona metropolitan area, which is densely populated, makes it very popular with visitors. Pine and oak forests cover most of its territory.

The Serralada Coastal Park "Consortium" manages this park. It is made up of 14 municipalities, Maresme and Eastern Vallès councils, and the Council of Barcelona.

We have the following goals: preserving natural and cultural heritage, favouring the rural and agricultural sector, which is still present; encouraging environmental education, and controlling public use. But our main challenge is making the public's growing demand for leisure activities compatible with preserving natural species.

Natural heritage.

The park has typically Mediterranean flora and fauna. Man's centuries-old presence has created a landscape with a mosaic of communities found amongst forests, damp vegetation in the shadier valleys, cultivations, dry meadows, and thickets.

However, two landscape entities correspond to the massif's sides: better preserved oak groves, in the inner part, and pine forests on the sunnier Mediterranean side.

The diverse habitats are home to a variety of fauna, including many birds (mostly migratory), mammals (squirrels, boars), reptiles such as the eyed lizard, and amphibians including the common toad.

Particular features.

The park's landscape is characterised by its granite subsoil.

Since prehistoric times, man has been present on this territory, which has a wealth of archaeological ruins. Dolmens, numerous caves, Iberian villages, Romanesque hermitages, medieval châteaux, and seigniorial homes form a unique heritage for visitors.

Main activities.

The majority of the park's activities are related to leisure: hiking, bicycle trails, horse riding, rock climbing, camping. They are organised by associations or individuals.

The park is in charge of environmental education projects. A travelling exhibition passes among the park's municipalities. Many popular festivals are organised each year. The park carries out specific educational activities, with guided tours and outings organised for the general public.





Surface: ha 3800
Number of municipalities: 16
Population: 300.000

Address: Via Polveriera, 2 – 2020 Solaro (Milano)
Region: Lombardy
Phone: +39 029698141
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Web: <http://www.parcogroane.it>



A green corridor between Milano and the upper plain

Parco delle Groane covers the most important and semi-natural area of the upper plain lying in Lombardy, precisely in the north-west of Milan. It is of particular interest in terms of geomorphology, pedagogy and vegetation. The origin of the Park dates back to the Quaternary period and the chemical and physical features of the soil have significantly influenced the type of vegetation that we can find today.

Forests and moorlands, dry areas and wetlands, pine and oak trees, poor and poorly fertile soils - in other times just good for making bricks, for military exercises and any other uncomfortable activity to be settled elsewhere such as powder and chemical industries - has however, not prevented the building of villas and rural villages, giving life to a difficult agriculture, but essential to territorial balance: in short, a mixture of modernity, culture, art, traditions, nature and innovation.



Parco delle Groane, today managed by a public authority, was established in 1976 by the Lombardy Region to protect a partly intact, partly highly industrialized territory. Its aim is to gradually buy the areas located within the perimeter of the park to equip some of them and make them available to citizens.

Natural assets: Forests, pinewoods and moorlands

The European Union has recognized two sites of Community interest within the park, as there are some identified habitats, plant and animals species for which the EU gives priority to its conservation and protection. In 1996, the Management Consortium enjoyed an extraordinary contribution of over 1 million Euros from the EU LIFE-Nature program that wanted to reward projects whose activities were in favor of fauna and flora study and research and had a commitment to the biodiversity conservation of those areas.



Historical and architectural heritage: villas and furnaces

Parco delle Groane, also because of its rich history and complex environmental and economic vicissitudes, is one of the Italian regions which more boasts a rich historical and architectural heritage represented by villas, palaces, ancient villages, furnaces.

Objectives and projects

Over the years, many projects have been developed; from environmental requalification and restoration to the improvement of walking trails, cycling paths and parking areas; from encouraging a compatible agriculture to the organization of training and refreshing courses and school study visits.

All initiatives, projects and proposals of the park authority tend to one goal: to make the park a live environment, in dialogue with the territory at a daily commitment and patience in order to create a sustainable and responsible society.





Surface area : 6.011 hectares
Population : 196.832 residents
Region: Marche

Managing entity : Consorzio Parco Naturale Regionale del Conero
Address : Via Peschiera n. 30 / 60020 Sirolo (AN) - Italia
Tel. : +39 071 9331161
Fax : +39 071 9330376
e-mail : parco.conero@regione.marche.
web : www.parcoconero.it



The regional park "Parco del Conero" was founded by the public entity Regione Marche on April 23rd 1987. A consortium of the town communities of Ancona, Camerano, Sirolo, Numana, and the province of Ancona administers this protected area. The territory of the park covers the coast of the Marche region between the town Ancona and the estuary of the river Musone, with a coastline of approximately 25 km. The heart of the park is the Monte Conero, where interesting natural environments can be found; of particular interest are the slopes on the east side of the mountain, which are formed by impressive limestone cliffs that plunge into the sea, as well as the woods on the northern and the southern slopes.

Set between the low valleys of the rivers Esino and Musone, the Conero is the only mountainous area along the Adriatic coast between Gargano and the Karst.

The park is situated right next to the town Ancona, the capital of the region, and is therefore affected by the anthropic pressure that is inherent to a high urban concentration.

The park is a popular destination for tourists, hikers and naturalists from all over Italy and from other countries of the European Union, but has also a function as urban green for leisure and outdoor sports activities of the inhabitants of the region's capital.

Cultural heritage

The territory of the Parco del Conero represents an original mix of elements with a naturalistic, historical and architectonic value. Particularly interesting are the following places of historical-architectonical importance:

- The antique Benedictine monastery of S. Pietro, built in the XI century, on top of the Monte Conero.
- The old centre of Sirolo, which offers its visitors important testimonies from the past, such as the parish church from 1765, the Cortesi Theatre and the old surrounding wall.
- The old church of S. Maria di Portonovo built in 1034, an authentic jewel of Romanic architecture.
- The Antiquarium of Numana, with its rich collection of pottery, which displays beautiful archaeological objects that were found in the necropolises in the zone, and offers a complete panorama of the Piceni civilization from the VII century to the Roman age.

Natural heritage

The Mediterranean undergrowth forms the most important part of the vegetation of the park; on the northern and eastern slope grow also evergreen oak, laurel, hornbeam, downy oak, phyllirea, terebinth, Italian maples, and, a rare plant, holly. On the southern slope, in the bush wood, in the undergrowth and on the sides more exposed to the sun, along with the evergreen oak can be found ash, arbutus, phyllirea, mastic trees, Italian buckthorn, honeysuckle, together with Mediterranean climbing plants such as smilax, wild madder and clematis.

The western slopes of the Conero are covered with woods planted by man, including pines, cypresses and cedars, which have in various degrees integrated with spontaneous growth such as evergreen oak, ash, downy oak and hornbeam.

On the limestone cliffs along the coast grow some of the most precious vegetal species of the park, such as the red juniper, tree spurge and Dalmatian spurge. At Portonovo can be found some of the brackish ponds behind the dunes that exist in the Marche region.

The Parco del Conero has a very varying territory, with quite diverging environments: coastal cliffs, woods, torrents, brackish lakes, agricultural area's, hills and beaches. A characteristic that allows the presence of several animal species and, in particular, birds. Birds represent the major part of the animals living in the Park: in the last ten years more than 200 species have been registered between permanent, wintering and migrating birds. The founding of the park has made it possible to preserve the population of the peregrine falcon, also due to an increase of other species of birds that form part of its diet. Mention must also be made of the pallid swift and the alpine swift, species that have found on the Conero their most southern nesting place along the Adriatic coast. The promontory of the Conero is, moreover, an important reference point for migrating birds (for example, osprey's, eagles, storks, etc.).

In the ponds of Portonovo a small, extremely rare fresh water crustacean can be found.





Parco fluviale Gesso e Stura

Surface: 4500 ha

Number of municipalities involved: 1 (Comune di Cuneo)

Population: 90.000 habitants

Address: piazza Torino 1- 12100 Cuneo

Telephone number: +39 0171.444518

Fax: +39 0171.602669

email: fluviale@comune.cuneo.it

web: www.parcofluvialegessostura.it



The Gesso and Stura River Park was founded by the Piedmont Region headquarters in February 2007. The town of Cuneo had already started working on the redevelopment of the area in 2003 and since 2005 has held several promotional activities.

The original idea of the River Park, however, has to be attributed to the citizens of Cuneo, which urged since 1979, with letters and petitions, the municipal authorities to exploit the river area.

With the approval by the Regional Council of Piedmont of the Regional Law No. 16 of 3rd August 2011, the Park has grown, including some regions in the municipalities of Borgo San Dalmazzo, Vignolo, Cervasca, Castelletto Stura, Centallo, Roccavione, Roccasparvera, Montanera and Sant'Albano. From January 2012, the Park has now 10 municipalities, covering an area of 4500 ha, 60 km of river and a population of over 90,000 inhabitants, representing more and more a hinge connecting the highlands and lowlands.

The main purpose of the Park is combining environmental conservation and protection of biodiversity, with the development of the region, exploiting the potential of the area. Its touristic value, the widespread availability and the different opportunities of fruition are the strengths of our Park.

Natural heritage

From the forestry perspective the area is characterized by a low degree of naturalness due to high anthropogenic pressure. Formations of main interest are oaks and dill of black alder. Regarding the fauna, the group of most interest is avifauna, consisting of 156 species, 97 present during migratory movements in spring and autumn or winter, and 59 nesting. In the park reproduce two species considered SPEC 2 (species with unfavorable conservation status and more than 50% of the population concentrated in Europe): the green woodpecker and the redstart, and six SPEC 3 (species with unfavorable conservation status, but not concentrated in Europe): the wild dove, the kingfisher, the stiff neck, the swallow, the flycatcher, and the red-backed shrike.

Historical heritage

The Gesso and Stura River Park preserves also many examples of historical-cultural interest, particularly relating to rural culture and society. Just think about the clever irrigation fabric or canal network of silk for the tanneries, the hydraulic sawmills to paper mills, forges, textile laboratory for hemp. Of note the presence of farms of great historical, environmental, architectural and testimonial interest: Bombonina farm, Fantina farm, St. Anselm farm, often embellished with towers, chapels and dovecotes. Finally, remember that the first slogan of the park was "The Park with the city in": the city of Cuneo, with its history and its artistic and architectural heritage, therefore, remains the highest point of interest from the point of view of history and culture.

Main activities

The Park offers a lot of areas for sports, education, and leisure: municipal and private sports facilities for swimming, tennis, football, beach volley, roller, climbing, riding, cross-country and cycling. Among others an artificial track for cross country skiing all year round, for training and competitions, and a pole for canoe on the Stura River. There are also spaces for teaching such a didactic garden, two orchards and an area devoted to butterflies, as well as an Environmental Education Center under construction. Finally, picnic areas, one with adjoining beach, biking and walking trails, ideal for hiking, mountain biking, nordic walking and jogging. Over the past two years the tourism potential of the Park have risen significantly with the establishment of accommodation facilities that offer possibility of refreshment and spend the night in the Park.



Parco Fluviale del Po Torinese

Surface area : 14.035 hectares
Population : 1,5 millions residents
Region : Piemonte

Managing entity : Ente di gestione del Sistema delle aree protette
della Fascia Fluviale del Po tratto torinese

Address : Cascina Le Vallere, Corso Trieste 98, 10024 Moncalieri (TO)

Tel. : + 39 011 642831

Fax : + 39 011 643218

e-mail : parcopoto@inrete.it

web : www.parks.it/parco.po.to



The Fluvial Park of the Po in Torino, born in 1990, it includes shares of Sangone, Stura of Lanzo and Dora Baltea; it extends itself more of 14.000 hectares, through 3 Provinces, Cuneo, Torino and Vercelli and 35 Municipalities.

The protected areas included into its borders are 12.

The territory of a river that crossing big urban centre, Moncalieri, Torino, San Mauro, Chivasso it's really far from stereotyped of Natural Park, big woods, white summits, crowds of wild animals. But its institution in protected area has the goal to improve an environment afflicted from the human pression, so, from the urbanization, from the strong cementification of the banks, from the water pollution, from the difficulties created by the big drawing of sand and gravel, etc., problems that coexist on the all fluvial course.

The instruments to drive this action are constituted from the address dictated from the planning of the area, from the control operated by the Vigilance Service, from the actions of cultural and educational sensitisation that the Local Office suggests yearly through the organization of festivals, meetings and visits' guided.

Natural patrimony

Its necklace of protected areas defend the Dora Baltea and the confluences of the Po's affluents and it presents a rich variety of animals and spontaneous vegetation. Its Special Natural Reserves are eight: confluence of Maira, Lanca of San Michele, Lanca of Santa Marta and confluence of Banna, Meisino and Isolone of Bertolla, confluence of Orco and Malone, confluence of Dora Baltea (or Baraccone), Isolotto of Ritano and Old Mill. Its supplied areas are 4: Oasis of Po Morto, Molinello, Le Vallere, Arrivore and Colletta.

Great naturalistic importance are the reserve of Lanca of San Michele where it's possible to find a wood rinaturalized from the Town Hall of Carmagnola, the Reserve of Meisino, even it's situated in the centre of the city of Torino, it gives hospitality to a considerable heronry of Ardea cinerea and the Baraccone rich of water birds.

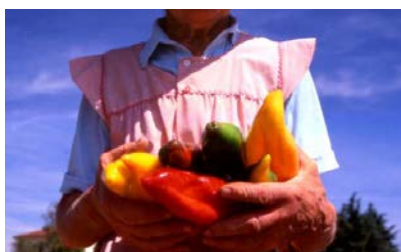
Historical patrimony

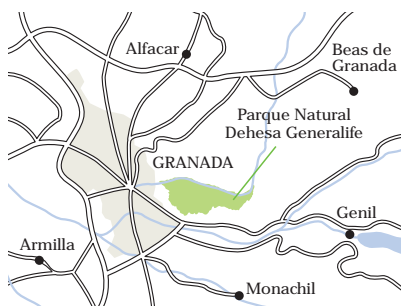
The territory of the park is constituted from a big plot of history and culture, first of all with the crown of Savoy's residences that surround it.

Even the big water manufacts present in the sector at valley of Torino offer suggestions of great interest that they permit to read in new way the texture of canals which irrigate the rice-fields of Vercelli and the plan, and they make its richness. And still ancient villages, little churches and votive aedicules diffused into the hill, romantic rests and the City of Torino, a big museum outdoor.

Main activities of the park

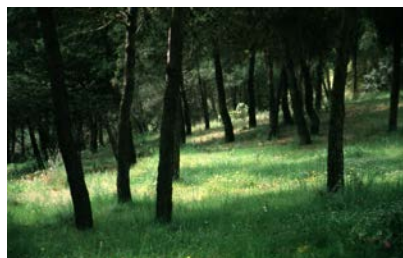
The opportunities of enjoying are numerous during all the year, with run by bicycle and an horseback on the big net of public runs and equestrian, competitions of cross-country, didactic activities either outdoor or in class, visits' guided in the most beautiful protected areas. The more important events are in June, with the National Regatta of the Fluvial Parks and in September with The Time of the River, manifestation which includes inside of it tasting's moments of the typical products of the Po's lands and walks where it's possible to discover the corners more interesting of the Park.





Surface: 458 ha
Number of municipalities: 1. Granada
Population: 237.663 inhabitants
Region: Andalucía

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The grounds of the El Generalife meadow consist of the area known as El Generalife Meadow Woodland, with an extension of 207,70 ha, belonging to the La Alhambra Trust; the Lancha de Cenes woodland, covering 119,30 ha, being the property of the State, and the Jesús del Valle and other woodlands with an area of 131 ha, which are private property, adding up to a total of 458 ha which create a natural spot, encompassed by the same boundary, lying South of the River Darro and East of the city of Granada, practically next to the built-up area. The arboreal stratum is basically made up of holm oaks, isolated gall oaks and forestation pine-trees. It is a natural area which partially meets the recreational needs of the city of Granada, fulfilling the objective requirements which characterize the concept of Periurban Park as established in Act 2/1989 on the Inventory of Andalusian Natural Protected Areas.



Natural Heritage

It is a refuge for Iberian fauna where vegetation formations belonging to the Meso-Mediterranean and Supra-Mediterranean series grow, holm oaks, gall oaks and willows being their outstanding components.

Historic Heritage

Approaching Granada from the Periurban Park is an experience made up of an overwhelming combination of history, art and literature, bringing together elements such as Lorca, Falla, Irving, the Sacromonte and the Albaicín; the historical monuments of La Alhambra and the Generalife Gardens, the San Nicolás Viewpoint, the Paseo de los Tristes, the River Darro, the Cathedral or the Plaza Bibrambla.

Main activities

Among the public use facilities in the park, the outstanding features are the recreational areas of El Aljibe de la Lluvia and El Llano de la Perdiz, long two traditional spots used by the population of Granada for recreational purposes. It also has the Silla del Moro viewpoint, the Acequia de la Real signposted tourist bicycle-lane and the signposted paths of El Quejigal del Darro, El Barranco de la Silla del Moro and the Llanos de la Perdiz sports circuit, whence the visitor can admire magnificent views of the historical monuments of La Alhambra and the Sierra Nevada and Sierra de Huétor natural parks.

The majority of activities carried out in the Dehesa del Generalife Periurban Park fit the purpose of the declaration of natural protected areas. Such a protection concept, established in Act 2/1989 on the Inventory of Andalusian Natural Protected Areas, defines the Periurban Parks as "those natural areas located in the vicinity of a built-up area, be they created by man or not, having been declared such for the purposes of adapting their use to the recreational needs of the population for which such declaration is intended."





Surface: 84 ha
Number of municipalities: 1. Sevilla
Population: 709.975 inhabitants
Region: Andalucía

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web: www.cma.junta-andalucia.es



The property known as "La Corchuela," which covers an 84-hectare area and is owned by the Seville City Council, is located in the municipal area of Dos Hermanas, about 8 kilometres away from the said locality in the general direction of Los Palacios and Villafranca, at a distance of 12 kilometres from the city of Seville.

This property, classified as a "Woodland Area of Recreational Interest" according to the provisions of the Special Plan for the Protection of the Physical Environment of the Seville Province, includes some natural elements of the highest ecological value and its conditions give it the capability to accommodate large numbers of users; both features provide the property with the necessary values making it possible for it to be declared a Periurban Park.

The different environmental units being represented in the Park must be highlighted, for each one of them has its own flora and fauna elements and certain peculiar features which provide the Park with a natural diversity making the use of this area a highly attractive proposition. Among the units being represented, the following can be brought to the fore:

- Meadowing oak grove, a formation being typical of farmland with well-developed units of *Quercus rotundifolia*. Wild-olive grove, with old units of *Olea europaea* var. *sylvestris*.
- Noble thicket, located at the boundary of the woodland formation and made up of wild species being typical of the Mediterranean region, providing the associated fauna with a large variety of resources.
- Canopy pine forest, a mass of umbrella pines of enormous size which, due to its location and characteristics, is one of the environmental units with the greatest capability to admit users.

Likewise, the streams running through the Periurban Park deserve mention, as does the vegetation associated with them, which are highly attractive to visitors.

We are, then, before an area whose environmental conditions and location make it ideally suitable to play an important role as a recreational area, in addition to having some highly valuable natural characteristics.

Natural Heritage

In "La Corchuela" Periurban Park we find constituent elements of natural vegetation, such as thickets and scrubland with interspersed holm oak, which components are naturalized under human influence with the holm-oak meadow and the riverside forests; components of immense ecological importance such as the *Olea europaea* var. *sylvestris* hedgerows which provide shelter for fauna and flora species, and the old components subjected to human action having an obvious ecological and landscape-related interest, such as the *Pinus pinea* communities. The rest of vegetation communities is made up of pioneering farming species, ruderal pasturelands, isolated trees and limy thicket enclaves. The fauna in "La Corchuela" can be deemed to be a partial sample of that existing in different habitats in the Lower Guadalquivir region. The fact that it is a relatively well-preserved spot within a generalized agrarian system, makes it to play the role of a biogeographical island for the fauna. There, species belonging to Mediterranean ecosystems do coexist with others having a steppe nature, introduced as a result of the abundance of farmland in the surrounding area. Some species such as the common toad, the ocellated lizard, the red kite, the greylag goose, the lapwing, the cattle egret, the turtle dove, the rabbit, the field mouse or the barn owl can be found in the park.

Historic Heritage

It is a very old settlement, where some Roman vestiges have been unearthed. The "La Corchuela" meadow was a rough and wooded area where the Sevillian nobility, as well as the odd King, used to hunt. Within the Periurban Park there exist the remains of an old bullring currently being the subject of a restoration project with a view to a potential future use which would be included in the list of possible leisure activities that could be carried out in this natural protected area. Close to this park, within the Dos Hermanas municipal area, lie the ruins of Orippe, an old settlement dating back to the times of the Tartessus civilization where remains have been found from the Fifth and the Sixth Centuries B.C., and on which a Roman settlement was established. Together with it, the remains are kept of the "Torre de los Hebreos" military bastion. From the time of the Arab rule there still exist numerous farmhouses, which had previously been Roman villas and, as time went by, would become haciendas, yet another attraction that can be admired in the surroundings of Dos Hermanas, and among which the Haciendas de Doña María, Bujalmoro and Quinto deserve special mention.

Main activities

The "La Corchuela" park, with its wide diversity of habitats, is a spot of great interest for the observation of Nature. Such an activity can be conceived as a bit of enjoyment to which the spare time can be devoted, or as a study activity. This enclave performs a multiple function, which can materialize in education, recreation, conservation and research. The observation and the enjoyment of Nature can be organized through the establishment of natural itineraries. These are pre-established routes by means of paths or ways where ecosystems can be observed and studied. The "La Corchuela" Periurban Park is ideally suited to the design of natural itineraries, for it includes, within a reduced area, different types of ecosystems characteristics of the Guadalquivir River Valley. Its vicinity to urban areas and the easy access to it are also important in order to assess its adequacy to the aforementioned uses: recreation, education and study.



Surface: 60 ha

Number of municipalities: 1. Córdoba.

Population: 318.628 inhabitants

Region: Andalucía

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The woodland area known as "Los Villares Bajos," in the province of Córdoba, owned by the State and declared a public-utility property, was transferred to the Andalusian Regional Government in 1984. It covers nowadays an extension of 60 ha intended for recreational use and it has the necessary facilities to cater for the, approximately, 500.000 visitors it receives each year: parking space for 2.500 vehicles, outdoor stoves, tables, benches, fountains, kitchen sinks, toilets, children's playgrounds, sports fields, gymnastics circuit, camping area, bar and cafeteria, etc.

It is, therefore, a natural area located in the vicinity of the city of Córdoba, which meets a part of its population's recreational needs, fulfilling the objective requirements which characterize the concept of periurban park as established in Act 2/1989 on the Inventory of Andalusian Natural Protected Areas.





Surface: 2.720 ha
Number of municipalities: 1. Jaén
Population: 115.638 inhabitants
Region: Andalucía

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Tel: +34 953012400
Fax: +34 953012508
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web: www.cma.junta-andalucia.es

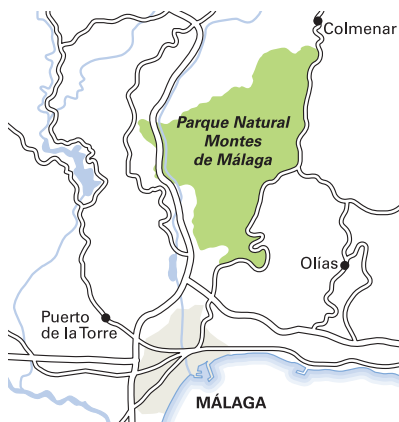
Lying South of the provincial capital of Jaén, about 12 km away from the city and having a direct access through the Otíñar road, the Monte de la Sierra Periurban Park, which was so declared in 1991, covers an extension of 2.720 ha and there are two converging obstacles running through it: the river Quiebrajano (where the Centre for the Recovery of Protected Species is located) and the Las Hazadillas ravine, adapted to recreational use, it being outfitted with stoves, tables, benches, recreational furniture, fountains, kiosk, etc., besides other facilities. These features, along with its vicinity to the city of Jaén, have turned this park into the traditional leisure-activity area for the Jaenans.

Natural Heritage

The Sierra of Jaén is an ecological paradise with a continuously changing landscape consisting of an abrupt and rugged orography of hillock-shaped and smooth contours made up of limestone and dolomites, where it is easy to find rocky shelters with cave paintings, fossils and immense, vertical-walled gorges where climbing is practiced, as well as widely varied vegetation. From the Otíñar gorge to the Quiebraquijano reservoir there rises an abrupt topography of continuous and rugged slopes overlaid with vegetation typical of the Mediterranean woodland (holm oaks, gall oaks, thyme fields, wild olives, etc.), alternating with patches of forestation pine-woods (Aleppo pine and black pine). The park's characteristic fauna include species such as ibex, wild boar, squirrel, partridge, hedgehog, civet cat, sparrowhawk, Bonelli's eagle and goshawk.

Main activities

Within the Monte de la Sierra Periurban Park lies the Cañada de las Hazadillas recreational area, outfitted with water fountains, benches, tables, litter bins, kiosk, barbecues, children's playground, etc. It also includes a Nature Classroom admitting about sixty people which organizes guided visits to nearby natural enclaves.



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

C/ Mauricio Moro Pareto, 2. 3ª-4ª Planta. / Ed. EUROCOM, Bloque Sur - 29071 Málaga

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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.



Surface: 70,44 ha

Number of municipalities: 1. El Puerto de Santa María (Cádiz)

Population: 80.600 inhabitants

Region: Andalucía

Location: Next to La Puntilla beach, adjacent to the built-up area of El Puerto de Santa María

Address: RDE- DESD El Puerto de Santa María Town Hall.

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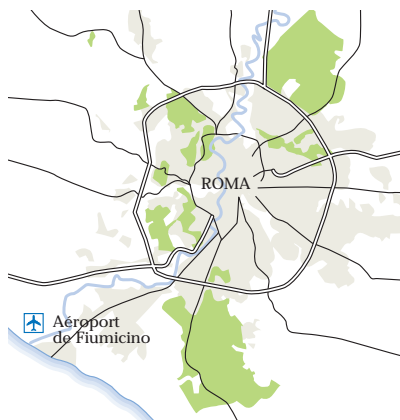
web: www.juntadeandalucia.es



The Dunas de San Antón Periurban Park, covers a 70,44-ha extension belonging to the Dunas de San Antón woodland, which is the property of the Andalusian Regional Government. It is nowadays equipped with public use facilities consisting in tables, benches, barbecues and perimeter enclosure, an improvement project currently being in the implementation stage which envisages the replacement of the furniture, children's playground, perimeter enclosure and bar-kiosk. It must be mentioned that the park is totally incorporated into the built-up area.

Natural Heritage

The Dunas de San Antón woodland is a forestal area located on top of dunes while the latter, in turn, are on top of naked cliffs made up of highly fragile plio-quaternary materials such as sands, malms and clays in which appear strong horizons of Pliocene calcarenite stone. On these sands, undulating-profile pseudogley soils have been formed lacking a superficial drainage network. The vegetation consists of one umbrella pine (*Pinus pinea*) forest growing on the littoral dune system characterized by a coastal broom undergrowth with which valuable populations of common chameleon (*Chamaeleo chamaeleon*) are associated. From the fauna standpoint, it also deserves mention for being an important spot in the route of migratory birds.



Surface area : 14.000 hectares
Population : 2,5 millions residents
Region: Lazio

Managing entity: Ente Regionale Gestione Aree Naturali Protette Comune di Roma
Address : Via Gomenizza 81 - 00195 Roma
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Fax : + 39 6 35 49 15 19
e-mail : posta@romanatura.roma.it
web : www.romanatura.roma.it



Rome possesses a unique territorial heritage that is still remarkably free from urban development. Further to the adoption of the "Piano delle Certezze" ("Plan of Certainties") in May 1997, 64% of the common land (equalling 80,000 on a total of 129,000 hectares) are now subject to very strict regulations for the protection of the environment.

RomaNatura, founded in 1997, is a Regional Authority for the management of a system of 14 (forteen) Protected Natural Areas within the municipal district of Rome. Most of them are rural areas belonging to the "Agro Romano", a typical cultural landscape of the Region. The *RomaNatura* system is strictly connected to other inside and outside green areas, forming an ecological net whit the 69 protected areas of Latium Region.

RomaNatura has been put in charge of 14,000 hectares, which is more or less the area covered by the entire city of Bologna. The Royal Parks Constabulary of London manages little more than 2,500 hectares of land.

Natural heritage

The Protected Natural Areas managed by *RomaNatura* can offer a treasure composed of a number of ecological havens providing a natural habitat for over 1.000 different species of plants, 5.000 species of insects and a further 150 species of mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles.

A park touched by history

Archaeological stately homes, historical monuments, villas, medieval towers and castles are only a part of the unique heritage of this protected territory, still free from urban development. Between the most attractive sites, there is the ghost medieval town of Galeria Antica whose ruins are covered with a thick vegetation.

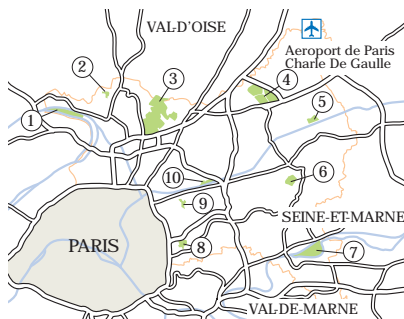
Main activities

The main activities of *RomaNatura* are: the compilation of the reorganization plans and of regulations; the promotion of cultural activities involving science, education and tourism and any other compatible production activities; the issuing of critical reports and permits authorising interventions to be carried out; the carrying out of environmental surveillance activities; the management of services provided in protected areas.





**Seine-Saint-Denis
Conseil Général**



*Surface : 790 hectares
Population : 1,4 millions
Region : Ile-de-France
Managing entity : Conseil général de la Seine-Saint-Denis*

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Fax : +33 1.43.93.98.50.
e-mail : sderoo@cg93.fr
web : www.parcs93.info.fr*



When the Seine-Saint-Denis county, located near Paris was created, there was only a few green spaces. 40 years later, parks and green spaces cover superficies around 1520 hectares, giving more than 11m² per habitant of recreation area.

Ten parks were created, sometimes starting from scratch, by famous landscape architectures in some cases such as Michel Courajoud and Alain Provost, on unused agricultural or industrial areas :

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| - 1. L'Ile-Saint-Denis (23 h) | - 6. La Fosse Maussoin (8 h) |
| - 2. Villetaneuse (12 h) | - 7. La Haute-Ile (65 h) |
| - 3. La Courneuve (400 h) | - 8. Jean Moulin Les Guilands (26 h) |
| - 4. Le Sausset (200 h) | - 9. Romainville (8 h) |
| - 5. Le bois de la Tussion (25 h) | - 10. La Bergère (23 h) |

Each park was created to carry out various functions for satisfying everybody and therefore they have their own characteristic: some huge parks such as Courneuve and Sausset born from an innovative concept where a "wild" nature plays an important role, to small ones with urban characteristics more pronounced. Every year, green spaces count more than 4 millions visitors.

Creation and development of natural heritage

The first purpose was to increase the green spaces number, but quickly people realized that county parks could hide an important biodiversity, with rare species (king fisher...), encouraging the county elected representative to adapt their management methodologies (or procedures).

A concept of harmonious management was created after a long thought period associating county elected representative, scientific community and many different partners. It's an innovating process for managing and maintaining green spaces which is concerned to obtain an equilibrium between human activities in the parks and ecosystem respect. This thought process is possible thank to the urban biodiversity department, used as a tool for the knowledge and the inventory of the living species.

This important work, taking into account the urban biodiversity, would be shortly recognized through the classifying of several county parks in Natura 2000, according to bird instruction.

A place with various activities (learning, sports, recreation)

Even if the parks have a large variety of activities (training pathways, child games, rest area...), many initiatives to educate and increase public awareness at the environmental problems are suggested to various public by community workers and the parks partners: such as workshops, "natural" activities, exhibition...

Other activities are proposed by our community's association with various topics such as viticulture, beekeeping...

At least, a lot of cultural and sport events are present in the parks and contribute to the social life of the habitants, who celebrate every year in June the parks party.

Consultation as a standard principle of the county

The consultation is largely used in Seine-Saint-Denis county and also this acting way is taking out in many parks. Residents, community's association are associated thank to meetings to the decisions about the life of the park for their management and arrangement.

The more highlight example is the future Haute-Ile's park which results of the work of county and cities elected representative, inhabitants and future park users.

Union for the Protection and Development of Hymettus Mountain (SPAY)



Surface: 8.100 ha

Numer of municipalities: 12 member Municipalities: Agia Paraskevi, Papagou-Cholargos, Zografou, Kaisariani, Vyronas, Ilioupoli, Elliniko-Argiroupoli, Glyfada, Vari-Voula-Vouliagmeni, Paiania, Koropi and Dafni-Hymettos.

Population: 1,2 millions of inhabitants

Address: L. Kareia Ave 27, Vyronas

Telephone number: +030 2107650413

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email: tech@spay.gr, press@spay.gr

web: www.spay.gr



The Union for the Protection and Development of Hymettus Mountain (SPAY) was founded in 1992, with the aim to protect the forest of Hymettus from both natural and human threats. Hymettus is the closest mountain and suburban forest to the city of Athens.

Due to the value of forest habitats, Mount Hymettus is subject to a protection regime pursuant to European Directive 92/43/EEC "On the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora" and its respective amendments, and has been incorporated to the NATURA 2000 network under the title "OROS YMITTOS" (GR 3000015), Law 3937/31-03-2011.

SPAY is a Public Entity, governed by the laws for Local Authorities. SPAY is administered by an Executive Committee (5 members) and a Board of Directors (33 members). All are elected Municipal Councillors or Mayors. The President of SPAY serves a two-year tenure. Nikos Hardalias, Mayor of Vyronas, is President of the Union since 2003.

Natural heritage

More than 600 species and sub-species of plants can be found on Hymettus, a very high number compared to the surface of the mountain. Among them, 54 are endemic to Greece, while 59 are protected by Greek and international legislation or are listed as endangered species.

Among the flowers there are 44 species of wild orchids which, combined to the surface of the mountain, is considered to be the highest density in Europe.

Hymettus also hosts some of the most important mammals and plenty of reptiles, amphibians and insects. Moreover, Hymettus is full of caves. The most famous is "Koutouki", Peania's cave. The Lake of Vouliagmeni is another interesting geological phenomenon at the boundaries of the mountain.

Historical heritage

Human presence on Mount Hymettus dates from prehistoric times.

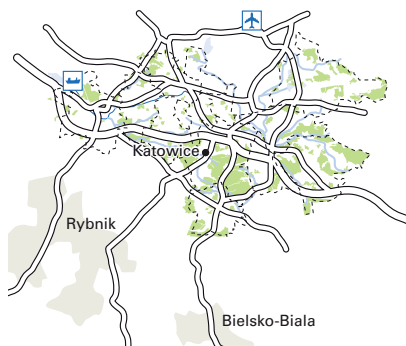
Its most famous monuments are the ancient temple of Apollo Zoster, in Vouliagmeni at the southern end of the mountain, the medieval tower of Koula at the boundaries of Papagou-Holargos and Kaisariani municipalities, as well as its monasteries from the Byzantine Period, such as the Monastery Agiou Ioannou Kareia, the Monastery of Kaisariani and the Monastery Taxiarchon – Asteriou.

Main activities

SPAY realises studies and puts in place projects of reforestation, pruning & stump grinding, weeds cleaning, flood protection and rubbish removal.

The Union buys and supplies forest protection equipment -such as water tanks and hydraulic systems- to the municipalities. Moreover, it supports municipal voluntary forest fire protection groups, providing those with cars, other equipment and a camera monitoring system of the forest.

SPAY also tries to increase citizens' awareness on environmental issues, emphasising on younger ages. The Union participates in European environmental research projects such as LIFE08/NAT/GR/000539 AMIBIO project, www.amibio-project.eu/en (2010-2013), and «New Skills for New Jobs in the Forest Sector (DRYMOS)», a Lifelong Learning Program - Leonardo da Vinci - Transfer of Innovation project (2012-2014).



Surface: 121.800 ha (1.218 km²) – forests: 28.650 ha (286,5 km²) and parks 3.965 ha (39,65 km²)
Numer of municipalities: 14 member Municipalities: Bytom, Chorzów, Dąbrowa Górnicza, Jaworzno, Gliwice, Katowice, Mysłowice, Piekary Śl., Ruda Śl., Siemianowice Śl., Sosnowiec, Świętochłowice, Tychy, Zabrze
Population: 1,9 millions of inhabitants

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 Barbary Street 21 a, 40-053 Katowice, Poland

Telephone number: +48 (32) 253 04 25

Fax: +48 (32) 253 04 35

email: biuro@gzm.org.pl

web: <http://www.silesiametropolia.eu>; <http://www.gzm.org.pl>



Metropolitan Association of Upper Silesia is a self-government unit, established in 2007. It gathers 14 municipalities, forming the area called "Silesia" Metropolis. It is the most urbanized part of Silesian region, located in the south of Poland.

The main goal of the Association is to support the member cities in development of the metropolitan area by implementing or coordinating common activities and projects. It is also focused on promotion of the economic and natural assets of "Silesia" Metropolis.

The Association doesn't own nor manage any natural spaces but it cooperates with its member local self-governments, which are responsible for the maintenance and management of public green spaces.

The governing structure of Metropolitan Association Upper Silesia is elected every four years and consists of: the Assembly (legislative body), the Board (executive body) and the office (ca. 12 employees) with the sections of: strategy and development, promotion, EU funds and public procurements.

Natural heritage

Despite of the industrial past of "Silesia" Metropolis natural spaces constitute over ¼ of its territory: woodlands cover ca. 23% and city parks make ca. 2 %. In terms of natural areas of special value there are two Nature 2000 areas and several other places under different levels of legal protection, such as: natural sanctuaries, protected landscape areas, nature-landscape complexes, ecological areas. There is also a number of artificial water bodies – of postindustrial origin, often used for recreational purposes.

Historical heritage

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Main activities

The Association initiates or implements tasks which are common for all or the majority of member cities. Its activities are focused on two fields: strategy & development and promotion. Natural periurban spaces are an integral part of both of them. It's important to popularize this natural potential, contributing to the change of still existing "post-industrial" stereotype of "Silesia" Metropolis.



**Xarxa de
Parcs Naturals**
Diputació de Barcelona

Surface area : 100.625 hectares
Population : 4 millions residents
Region: Catalunya

Managing entity: Diputació de Barcelona - Àrea d'Espais Naturals
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Fax : +34 934 022 439
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web : www.diba.es/parcs



In Catalonia, the first instrument of protection of a natural area dated back to 1928, when the Association of Catalonia promoted a legal decree that constituted the Board of Trustees of La Muntanya del Montseny. However, it was not until the second half of the 20th century when, from Diputació de Barcelona (Barcelona Provincial Council), a public policy of protecting natural areas was promoted, mainly based on shared management between the municipal areas and with the participation of the inhabitants and users of the areas.

The way to protection

The General Plan of the Province of Barcelona, in 1963, drawn up by Diputació de Barcelona, approved the Catalogue of Natural Parks, which proposed the possibility of declaring fourteen natural areas in the territory of the Barcelona regions. However, it was not until 24th July 1972 - the year in which the special plan to protect the Natural Park of Sant Llorenç de Munt i L'Obac was approved, based on the legislation on urban development in existence at the time - that the policy to protect natural areas was set up effectively.



The creation, in 1974, of the Natural Park Service of Diputació de Barcelona, guaranteed the technical application of this policy of planning and managing natural areas in the province of Barcelona. The arrival of the Llei del Sòl (Law governing Land Use) in 1975, allowed Diputació de Barcelona and the Town Councils involved to look more deeply into the instrument of the special urban plan as an instrument for protecting natural areas. In a short time, this process was translated into the creation, and in this case, the extension of six parks.



In the mid-1990s, Diputació de Barcelona took another step ahead with the territorial project for the metropolitan region of Barcelona. This project, called the Green Ring, proposed a system of natural areas based on the connection of forest masses, agricultural areas and natural areas, and led to the creation of both new parks and the interconnection between the new ones and those that already existed, with the aim of increasing the level of the environmental and landscape quality of the entire territory. As a result of this pioneering project, Diputació de Barcelona and several Town Councils constituted six consortia, that are today the managers of the six parks.

The Natural Park Network of Diputació de Barcelona is made up of twelve natural areas that are managed directly or in collaboration with the town councils, through consortia. Both Diputació de Barcelona and the Town Councils have decidedly opted for a management in agreement with civil society. This is why all the areas have their corresponding consultant councils, made up of representatives of the diverse areas that have some kind of relationship with the parks. These twelve parks are of first-class strategic importance to guarantee a suitable territorial and environmental balance within the geographical area of Barcelona. Together, they cover a total protected surface area of 100,625 Ha divided between 99 municipalities. Two thirds of the population of Catalonia live in their territory or area of influence.



The main objective of the Natural Park Network is to guarantee, in each of the areas, the preservation of natural and landscape values, sustainable socio-economic development and an organised public use. Coinciding with the first of these three objectives, the Natural Park Network promotes the territorial connection of the parks it manages with the surrounding areas. To guarantee the biodiversity of the territory. In addition, it develops other related functions, such as the preservation of the natural and architectural heritage, carrying out research, designing geographical information systems, preventing fires, maintaining paths, creating pedagogical programmes and many others.

As far as the socio-economic development of the areas is concerned, the Natural Park Network supports and offers technical guidance to activities in agriculture, stockbreeding, forestry or sustainable tourism, that guarantee the preservation and maintenance of the reality of the existing landscape, architecture and culture, which in addition influences the improvement of the quality of life of the population linked to the parks for residential or professional reasons.