

Cantalejo Wetlands

Weekend Route

Segovia Province

INTERESTING SIGHTSEEING

- Añe Ash Tree Grove
- Wetlands: Navas de Oro Lagoons, Sanchoñuño, Cantalejo
- Tierra de Pinares

REPRESENTATIVE BIRDS

Steppe birds, river birds, cliff nesting birds and water birds

SCHEDULE

The next route runs along Segovia, a land combining vast farmland surfaces and large pine grove areas, as well as a number of interesting wetlands. The schedule suggested below intends to allow the visitor to spend a little time in each habitat. There are a lot of alternatives, making it extremely difficult to get to know the entire location. Visitors are advised to choose the options that best suit their interests.

Day 1

The trip begins 20 km (12.4 miles) from Segovia, a historical city whose cathedral provides shelter to a large number of storks and red-billed choughs. The town of Añe lies close to the mouth of the Moros River in Eresma. Its fertile lands create an interesting ash tree grove comprised by numerous trees, some of which are hundreds of years old and are up to 9 meters in diameter. These trees are home to a large variety of forest birds. The suggested ornithological trip is an interesting option.

The route continues on to Navas de Oro. This county holds two lagoons which are very close to each other and are home to numerous species of water birds. During migration periods the population of birds in the wetland layer increases and includes certain types of birds such as green-winged teals, northern shovellers, etc. An ornithological trip that runs along the wetland begins in this location.

On the way to Cuellar the characteristic landscape is made up by vast pine groves: A new ecosystem appears. The proximity to the river area helps bird diversity combine a number of forest bird species and river bird species. The origin of Tierra de Pinares dates back to the

Pleistocene period; its landscape is arranged by peculiar dune formations due to the erosion and latter removal of sediments. These maritime pine groves have been modified by man during resin extraction, making them single species forests.

In the middle of this route you'll find the town of Sanchonuño, which has an interesting lagoon where you can see information panels and various water bird species. Before arriving at Cuellar, you take exit 57 on highway A-601 to access the Cega River. This is where the fishermen trail begins. This trail runs along a 16 km (10 miles) distance through somber slopes, combining one of the largest maritime pine forests in the Peninsula with the leafy vegetation native to the riparian forest found next to the river.

Upon leaving this county, another ornithological route option begins in the Cuellar grasslands and continues on to Torreón Santa María y Torrentillana. This location provides the best view of all pine groves and you'll be able to observe a number of vultures flying towards Duratón canyon.

Day 2

The succeeding paragraphs provide a number of alternatives according to visitors' ornithological interest.

One of the options involves making a stopover in Lastras de Cuellar in order to start a trip through the wetlands in the area. This area has three reed covered lagoons. One of these lagoons remains filled with water all year long, making it easy to observe various birds, such as bitterns, grebes and moorhens, which are overflowed by marsh-harriers. Highway CL-112 and another trail will lead you to the Cantalejo lagoons, which comprise one of the largest wetlands in the province. This ornithological route will take you along 24 lagoons, which are duly signposted. The most common species found here include grey herons, northern shovellers and garganeys. There is also a number of redshanks, grebes, etc.

The second option involves observing the bird species native to the rocky areas. As you go along the Duratón river canyon towards Vencías dam, you will notice how the river has carved and eroded the rock formations over the course of millennia. You'll be able to see various species typical to this area and nesting in cliffs, such as griffon vultures, Egyptian vultures, red-billed choughs and crag martins. San Miguel de Bermuy is the starting point for an ornithological route along a wetland. The nearby Roman ruins lying on both sides of the river are also ideal locations to watch vultures.

There is a last option completing the list of habitats as you come down from Cantalejo to Turégano. At a 3 km (1.8 miles) distance from town, on the entrance to the pine grove, you will find the Museo Forestal del Ingeniero. This museum shows how the pine grove was managed and how resin used to be extracted. An ornithological hiking route begins here. The first few kilometers along this route run along a farmland area, where more than likely you'll be able to observe a number of species native to this environment, such as goldfinches, wheatears and stonechats. Numerous birds roam the cereal plains, such as woodlarks, mockingbirds and larks, whose chants make the trip quite pleasant. In the section of this route that runs along the pine grove you'll be able to see black storks in addition to the forest bird species that dwell in this area, such as magpies and jays.

Local Action Group: AIDESCOM, HONORSE

