

Natural Heritage of Central Portugal: A Biodiversity Sanctuary

Description

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Natural Heritage of Central Portugal: A Biodiversity Sanctuary

Discover the Ecological Wealth of Portugal's Heartland

Central Portugal boasts one of Europe's most diverse natural landscapes, where ancient forests meet pristine waterways and unique Mediterranean ecosystems. This region serves as a vital refuge for endangered species and protected habitats under the EU Natura 2000 network.

Protected Habitats

1. Freshwater Ecosystems

- 3170 Mediterranean Temporary Ponds:** Seasonal wetlands hosting rare amphibians

- **3260 Running Watercourses:** Pristine rivers with:
 - Ranunculion fluitantis vegetation
 - Callitricho-Batrachion plant communities
- **3280 Mediterranean Permanent Streams:** Featuring white poplar (*Populus alba*) and willow corridors

2. Temperate Heathlands & Forests

- **4020 Atlantic Wet Heaths:** Blanketed in *Erica ciliaris* and *Erica tetralix*
- **4030 European Dry Heaths:** Drought-resistant shrublands
- **91E0 Alluvial Forests:** Ancient floodplain woods with:
 - Black alder (*Alnus glutinosa*)
 - European ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*)

3. Mediterranean Woodlands

- **5230 Laurel Groves:** Rare stands of *Laurus nobilis*
- **9330 Cork Oak Forests:** *Quercus suber* ecosystems
- **9340 Holm Oak Woodlands:** *Quercus ilex* dominated landscapes

4. Mountain & Grassland Systems

- **6230 Siliceous Nardus Grasslands:** Flower-rich alpine meadows
 - **7110 Active Raised Bogs:** Sphagnum moss peatlands
 - **8220 Siliceous Rocky Slopes:** Cliff-dwelling plant communities
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Wildlife Sanctuary

Amphibians

- **Endemic Species:**
 - Lusitanian salamander (*Chioglossa lusitanica*)*
 - Iberian frog (*Rana iberica*)
- **Protected:**
 - Marbled newt (*Triturus marmoratus*)
 - Midwife toad (*Alytes obstetricans*)

Birds of Prey

- **Endangered:**
 - Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)*
 - Bonelli's eagle (*Hieraetus fasciatus*)
 - **Raptors:**
 - Short-toed eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*)
 - Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*)
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Mammals

- **Iconic Species:**
 - Iberian wolf (*Canis lupus signatus*)*
 - Otter (*Lutra lutra*)
- **Forest Dwellers:**
 - Roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*)
 - Wild boar (*Sus scrofa*)

Reptiles & Fish

- **Rare Herpetofauna:**
 - Schreiber's green lizard (*Lacerta schreiberi*)*
 - Lataste's viper (*Vipera latastei*)
 - **Native Fish:**
 - Iberian barbel (*Barbus bocagei*)
 - Mediterranean trout (*Salmo trutta*)
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Botanical Treasures

Forest Giants

- Portuguese oak (*Quercus faginea*)
- Pyrenean oak (*Quercus pyrenaica*)
- Sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*)

Mediterranean Flora

- Rockrose (*Cistus ladanifer*)
- Strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*)
- Portuguese laurel (*Prunus lusitanica*)

Rare & Protected

- Narrow-leaved ash (*Fraxinus angustifolia*)
 - Portuguese iris (*Iris lusitanica*)
 - Scarce fritillary butterfly host plants
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Conservation Challenges

Central Portugal faces pressing ecological threats:

- Climate change impacts on temporary ponds
 - Invasive species (eucalyptus monocultures)
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- Habitat fragmentation from development

Explore Responsibly

We promote:

- Guided eco-tours with certified naturalists
- Citizen science programs
- Habitat restoration initiatives

Join us in protecting this irreplaceable natural heritage!

*Endemic species * IUCN Red List species

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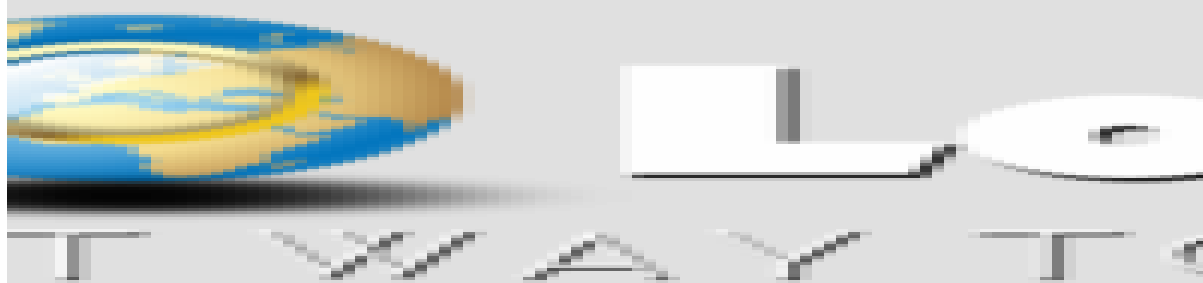
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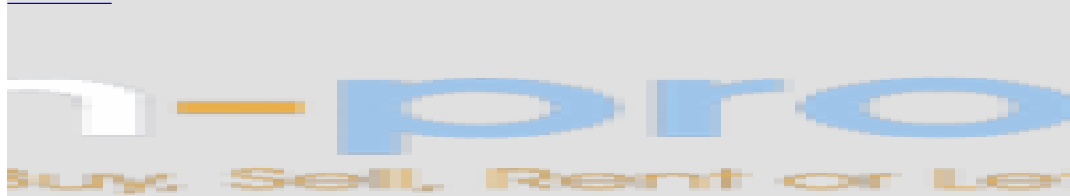


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