

GOOD PRACTICE



Please leave rubbish in the bins provided



Walk on the marked trails



Please respect private property



Please refrain from making noise



Capturing animals is not permitted



Starting fires is strictly forbidden



Fishing is prohibited



Please refrain from making noise

Emergency phone: 112

GRANADA



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Production and photography: Environment and Water Agency of Andalusia

MORE INFORMATION

Castril Visitors' Centre.
Ctra. A-326 a Pozo Alcón km 0,2. Castril. Granada.
Tel. 958 72 00 59
ventanadelvisitante.



A
Junta de Andalucía
Consejería de Sostenibilidad,
Medio Ambiente y Economía Azul

PARQUE NATURAL
Sierra de Castril



**Nacimiento del
Río Castril**



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Junta de Andalucía
Consejería de Sostenibilidad,
Medio Ambiente y Economía Azul

OTHER CATEGORIES OF PROTECTION



• ROUTE

Linear walk

• LENGTH (ONE-WAY)

2,2 km

• ESTIMATED TIME (ONE-WAY)

1 hour

• DIFFICULTY

Low

• TYPE OF TRAIL

Path

• LANDSCAPE / VEGETATION

Steep terrain. Limestone rock landscape.
Riverside forest. Springs Panoramic views.

• SHADE

Scarce

• SPECIAL AUTHORISATION

Not required

• RECOMMENDATIONS

Carry drinking water and wear suitable clothing and footwear. Check that the water from fountains is safe to drink.

• PROVINCE / MUNICIPALITIES

Granada / Castril

• SHEETS OF MTN MAP 1:50.000

929 - San Clemente (Huéscar)

• START / END COORDINATES

37°53'27"N, 2°45'2"W

37°54'30"N, 2°44'55"W



HOW TO GET THERE

To Castril by the A-326 (Pozo Alcón-Huéscar). From that point, take the forest path that leads to the Cortijo del Nacimiento farmstead, where the trail starts.



PARKING

There is a car park with some 8 places at the start of the trail.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

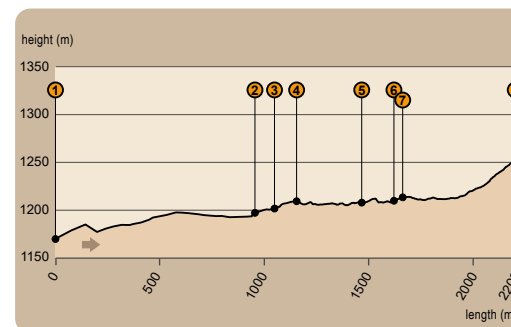
It is not possible to access the trailhead by public transport. The main companies running regular bus routes in the area is Alsa (tel. 902 42 22 42; www.alsa.es).



OTHER TRAILS

The natural park has other marked routes. Among the nearest trails to this one are: Cortijo del Nacimiento farmstead - Prados del Conde meadows, Cerro de la Empanada hillo, Barranco de la Osa ravine, Hoyos de Moreno- Barranco de Canalejas ravine and Cerrada de la Magdalena gorge.

PROFILE OF ROUTE



• MAXIMUM GRADIENT

129 m

• MAXIMUM HEIGHT

1.300 m

• MINIMUM HEIGHT

1.171 m

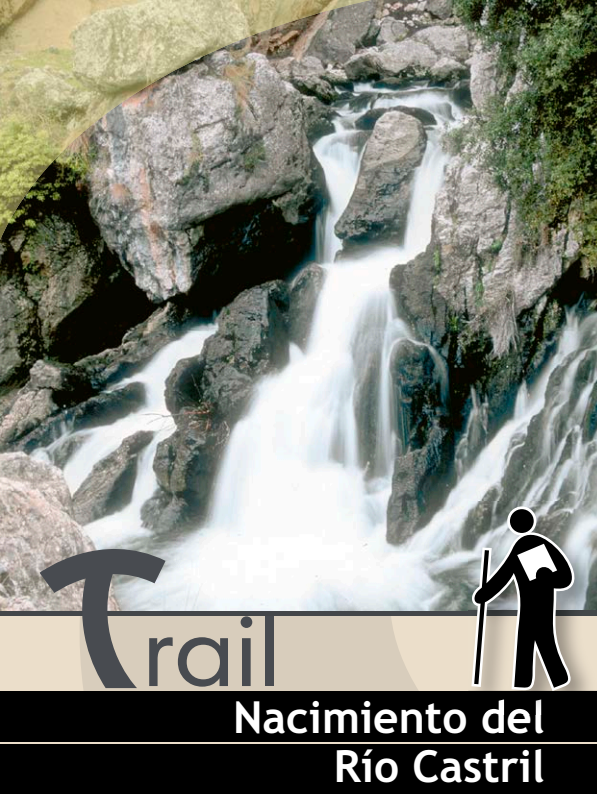
RIVERSIDE WILDLIFE AT THE CASTRIL RIVER

Castril River is unique in the sense that it is one of the most significant trout rivers in southern Spain. Its rapid, cold and crystalline waters are the ideal habitat for numerous species, among which the common trout stands out. Although it is called "common", the Castril trout is quite special. Numerous genetic analyses show that, unlike the populations of other rivers on the peninsula, the Castril trout has a high genetic purity.

One of the main natural predators of the trout is another of the park's emblematic species: the otter, a graceful river mammal, difficult to spot due to its crepuscular behaviour, but whose typical droppings can be found on the pebbles the river bank along the path.

But the otter is not the only animal that feeds on trout. Other trout predators are the grey heron and the common kingfisher, which can be spotted among the branches of the riverside vegetation. And it will not be difficult to see, or at least hear, European robins, wagtails, typical warblers, greenfinches and many other birds, such as northern wrens and white-throated dipper. The number of mammals that come down to the river to quench their thirst and the myriad of insects and invertebrates that find food and shelter in the waters of the Castril deserve special mention.





Upriver

The trail starts [1] at the Cortijo del Nacimiento farmstead, next to a steel pipe that brings water to a hydroelectric power station. This power station supplies energy to the village of Castril and is linked to the irrigation channels found along the path, sometimes underground and sometimes over the ground. The trail ascends a gentle slope accompanied by the murmur of water and the chirping of European robins and Cetti's warblers. On the limestone walls of the opposite slope, a huge gap tears through the rock face, the Cerrada de Túnez gorge. This gap was created by the effect of the stream which dissolved the rock, reached the valley and poured into the Castril River.



You'll reach a wooden footbridge [2] along which the Cerro de la Empanada path runs. The first section of this trail is shared with another two routes, and the Cerro de la Empanada trail is the first to drift off to take follow its own path. 100 metres from the footbridge, to the right of the trail, you'll find the Chinar de Túnez Viewpoint [3], where a panel interprets the geological evolution of the surrounding landscape.



After walking another 100 metres, a signpost marks the separation from the path that leads to the Prados del Conde [4], mountain meadows where most of Castril's livestock spend the spring and summer grazing. Then, you'll take the path to the left that runs parallel to the riverside.

Riverside forests

Where the path approaches the riverbed, it also brings us closer to the riverside forest. Willows, ash trees and shrubs such as common hawthorn and wild rose contribute to water quality, stabilise the banks and are shelter for many birds. Their songs compete with the joyful roar of the crystalline waters that run between the rocks.

After a while, the path runs along a section of an irrigation channel [5], through which water runs rapidly. After 150 metres, a small dam on the riverbed [6] slows the flow of the river. This weir diverts part of the flow



of the Castril to the irrigation channel. After being use to generate electric power, water is returned to the river through a drainage channel located in the hydroelectric power station itself.

Very close to the weir stands the Mirador Los Hiniestares viewpoint [7]. From there you can see the proud limestone cliffs that tower over, forming a circular structure reminiscent of high mountain glacial cirques. A panel explains the formation of the karstic modelling, caused by the action of water on the carbonate rocks over the centuries, which is the prevailing landscape in the natural park.

The source

The path runs once more by the river waters. On the sands of the shore it is possible to distinguish the tracks of ibex, wild boar and other mammals, as well as otter droppings with its peculiar fishy smell. As the trail progresses, pebbles gradually turn into stones. These stretches of the mountain rivers of the Prebaetic System, boxed in and with numerous loose rocks, are one of the rare habitats of the Spanish algyroides: a small, shy reptile included in the Spanish Catalogue of Endangered Species, characterised by its golden hue and the dark stripes on its sides.



The trail then climbs up the rocky area and continues along a well-defined path, which goes up and down parallel to the riverbed, to reach the viewpoint over the source of the Castril River [8]. Our trail ends here. The walk can be continued along the Barranco de la Osa trail; the start of this trail is marked by a signpost to the right. And at the top of the viewpoint, a new panel reveals how the abundant river water surge from a stone cut. Depending on the time of year, the flow of the spring, which gushes forth just below, can vary between 1,000 and 9,000 litres per second.



The Castril River is the architect of the landscape of this natural park and is also its main environmental value. The river flows from the springs at the foot of a limestone outcrop, in the heart of the mountains, and runs southbound through the park as far as the Portillo reservoir. The erosive action of the water has created the gorges, ravines and spectacular waterfalls that characterise the karstic massif. In this extreme environment of deep ravines and steep rocky walls, this path takes us back to the source of the Castril through the river valley, through the riverside woods that line the riverside. A tremendously interesting trail, full of life and beauty, where you can see, among others, otters, common trout, common kingfishers or white-throated dippers.



Trail

Nacimiento del Río Castril

- 1 Landmark (see text)
- Georesources
- Source
- Farmstead
- Interpretive panel
- Bridge
- Viewpoint
- Spring
- Ditch
- Weir

— Nacimiento del Río Castril Trail
— Other trails of the natural park
— Path