

GOOD PRACTICE



Please leave rubbish in the bins provided



Walk on the marked paths



Please respect private property



The capture of animals is not permitted



Starting fires is strictly forbidden



Fishing is prohibited



Plant collecting is not allowed

Emergency phone: 112

HUELVA



MORE INFORMATION

Huelva Territorial Delegation Regional Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Sustainable Development.

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OTHER CATEGORIES OF PROTECTION



• ROUTE

Linear

• LENGTH (OUTWARD)

3,5 km

• ESTIMATED TIME (OUTWARD)

45 minutes

• DIFFICULTY

Low

• TYPE OF TRAIL

Path

• LANDSCAPE / VEGETATION

Rewilded woods of adult stone pines with a an undergrowth of Sabina junipers, mastic, mock privet and several Cistaceae species.

• SHADE

Scant

• SPECIAL AUTHORISATION

Not required

• RECOMMENDATIONS

From mid-spring to mid-autumn the weather can be very hot. Please remember to wear sunscreen and a hat and carry plenty of water with you.

• PROVINCE / MUNICIPALITIES

Huelva / Punta Umbría

• SHEETS OF MTN MAP 1:50.000

999 - Huelva

• START / END COORDINATES

37° 12' 40,17" N – 7° 2' 40,3" O
37° 12' 43,32" N – 7° 2' 47,72" O



HOW TO GET THERE

From Punta Umbría take A-4103, in the direction of El Portil. After about 2.7 km turn right onto the A-4104. Continue in the direction of El Potril. The trail starts just at the entrance of the town, to the right.



PARKING

There is car park at the start of the trail and there are also places nearby to leave your vehicle.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

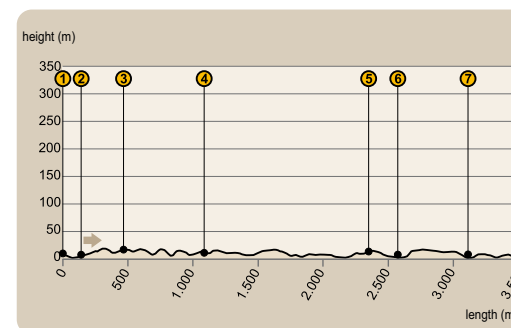
Regular buses are mainly operated by the company Damas, S.A. Telephone: 902 11 44 92 www.damas-sa.es



OTHER TRAILS

3.5 km away starts the Enebrales Trail, in the Natural Site Enebrales in Punta Umbría.

PROFILE OF ROUTE



• MAXIMUM GRADIENT

10 m

• MAXIMUM HEIGHT

15 m

• MINIMUM HEIGHT

5 m



Stone trees are still harvested for pine nuts, one of the sources of economic wealth in the area.

IN THE PINES: PINE NUTS AND CHARCOAL

Stone pines (*Pinis pinea*) cover a surface exceeding 85,000 ha and is a forest resource of great economic importance in the province of Huelva. Trees are cut down for timber, and pine cones are harvested for pine nuts. Near the seaside, and especially in the towns of Aljaraque, Cartaya and Punta Umbría, this economic activity employs a large number of people and is an important additional source of income for many families.

Pine cones are harvested by hand between November and February. Pine cone harvesters climb up the trees and use a hook to knock down pine cones to the ground (see picture) to pick up and load into bags later. It is a task for the brave and the agile. Afterwards, pine cones are dried before extracting pine nuts, which can have a high value on the market.

Another trade surrounding pine trees is charcoal. Today, few charcoal burners remain, due to the low demand of charcoal as fuel, but in the past it was a very active trade.

After pruning pine trees, branches were cut down to the appropriate sized and piled into an specific arrangement over a lit fire, and covered with sand, leaving some open orifices to allow the fire to keep burning. The charcoal burner was in charge of supervising the process by climbing a ladder supported on the charcoal pile, with the corresponding risk of falling into the fire if the pile collapsed. Being a charcoal burner was certainly hard work.



HUELVA

RESERVA NATURAL
Laguna de
El Portil

Trail
Laguna de El Portil



Junta de Andalucía
Consejería de Agricultura, Ganadería,
Pesca y Desarrollo Sostenible



Trail

Laguna de El Portil

Dunes and pines

The trails starts by the road (see [1] in the map), near the Laguna del Portil viewpoint, which is to the south-east of the lagoon, and continues right along a wood walkway, which is easier to walk on than sand.



The origin of the lagoon is the evolution of the coastal dune

This path connects with the cycle lane from La Bota to El Portil. The trails is in the midst of the coastal dunes that in the past blocked the outlet of the streams that now feed the lagoon [2]. As of today, dunes are very stable due to the developments and the road built in the area. In this section, plants characteristics of this ecosystem, such as broom and carnations are dotted among the prevalent pine trees. This landscape is also the home of a famous character which deserves respect and protection: chameleon.

If you are lucky enough to spot one, you can watch it move with its characteristic deliberate gait while their eyes scan its surroundings in search of a potential prey.



At the end of the walkway the ground become firmer and stabler, and is characterised by abundant shrubs and grassland [3]. The trail runs to the right the perimeter fence that circle the reserved area. A Mediterranean forest surrounds us, and tall Sabina junipers grown next



to *Phlomis purpurea*, whose fuzzy leaves were used by shepherds to clean their teeth, and in the shadow of the pines,

mastic, appreciated for its medicinal uses, grows. In spring time, rockroses show the magnificent colours, and the air is filled with aromas of wild lavender and pennyroyal.



The only species of European palm in this environment

As the trail continues away from the lagoon, a wooden bridge [4] crosses one of the streams that feeds the lagoon and the trail once again runs closer to the shore. At this point, we can observe how pine woods, scrubland and marsh vegetation coexist in a narrow space. The trail continues along the lagoon basin, while some forest birds fly over it, such as Iberian magpies and Eurasian hoopoes. This area also has some specimens of Mediterranean dwarf palm (*Chamaerops humilis*), the only European-native palm tree, whose harvesting is regulated by forest laws and regulations.

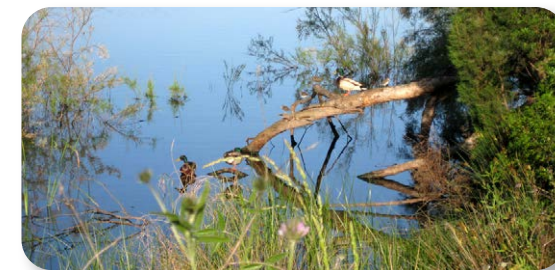
The La Zahurda stream and the lagoon

The trail now nears an area with a prickly pear tree [5] which used to mark the boundaries of an old vegetable garden and that today is the home of an important rabbit population. Egyptian mongooses marauder the area with the intention of helping themselves to a rabbit dinner.



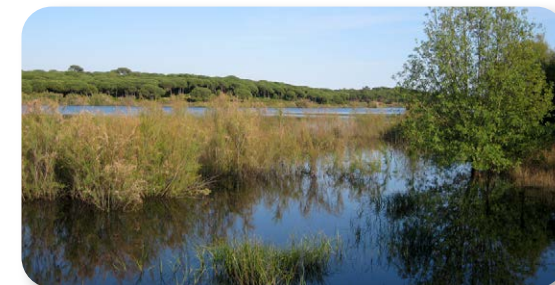
The trail becomes closer to the La Zahurda stream [6], the main watercourse discharging

into the lagoon, and which can be crossed by a wooden bridge. The trail goes up a low hill and from this vantage point some marsh birds can be spotted between reeds and cattails, such as common moorhen, western swamphen and wild ducks. Other worthy sights are little grebes diving for food or great crested grebe going through their elaborate courtship rituals.



The lagoon is the home of large bird populations

To the right, and rather close, stand the urban development built in the area, and which are an important source of stress for this habitat. A wooden bridge [7] crosses another lagoon branch, where tamarisk, saltmarsh bushes and reeds grow, and which offers a different view of the water sheet of the lagoon. The trail almost comes to its end, as evidenced by the end of the trail panel, next to a fence by the road. However, a visit would not be complete without admiring the view from the viewpoint [8] built next to the road and very close to the starting point. This view allows to appreciate the large quantity of birds that live in the lagoon, such as common pochards, northern shovelers, gadwalls, seagulls or cormorants. It is, without a doubt, a paradise for birdwatchers.



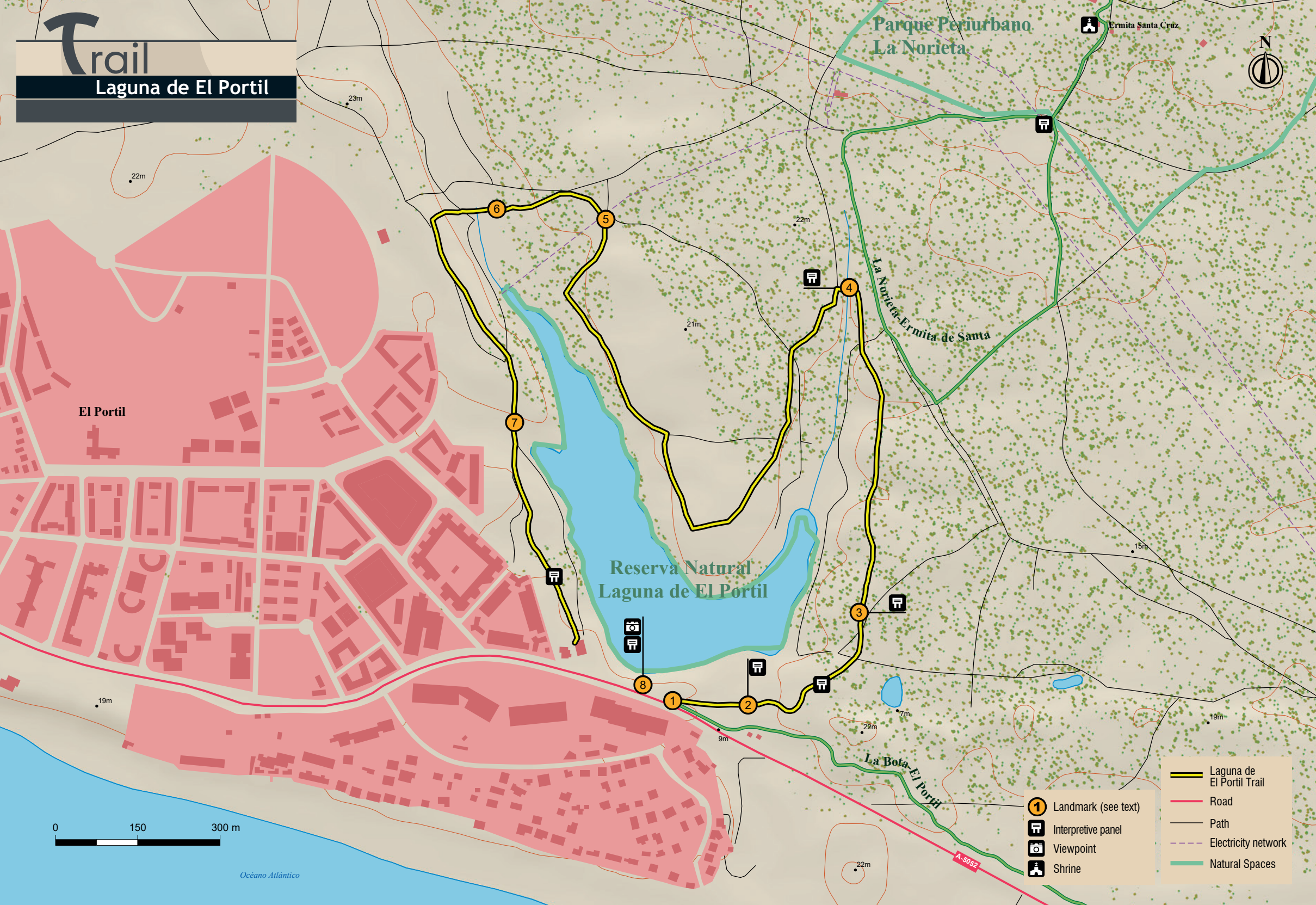
Despite being under pressure due to the urban development in its southern and eastern areas, this wetland maintains a good degree of conservation and keeps its paramount biological and environmental significance intact.

It was formed when the dunes that were formed at the estuary of water courses blocked the outlet of such watercourses into the sea. Its level fluctuates greatly, since contributions from the aquifer are low and the fact that it is a large sheet of water favours evaporation.

A walk in the woods that surround it allows to appreciate the diverse wild life that has grown around it.

Trail

Laguna de El Portil



El Portil

Reserva Natural
Laguna de El Portil

Parque Periurbano
La Norieta

La Norieta-Ermita de Santa

La Bota-El Portil

Ermita Santa Cruz

- 1 Landmark (see text)
- Interpretive panel
- Viewpoint
- Shrine

- Laguna de El Portil Trail
- Road
- Path
- Electricity network
- Natural Spaces

0 150 300 m

Océano Atlántico

A-5052