PARAJE NATURAL
Torcal de Antequera

EN

VISITOR CENTRE

Torcal Alto

Let's find out about it
and enjoy it!

Junta de Andalucía

Consejería de Sostenibilidad,
Medio Ambiente y
Economía Azul

Torcal de Antequera Nature Site

The Torcal de Antequera is one of the most spectacular landscapes in Europe. The area is internationally renowned for its unusual and well-preserved karst, characterised by circular depressions or sinkholes known as torcas or dolinas. These unique features give the region its name.

Its limestone composition and the severe erosion of this material have given rise to the curious and peculiar appearance of its rock formations, such as the Natural Monument El Tornillo del Torcal.

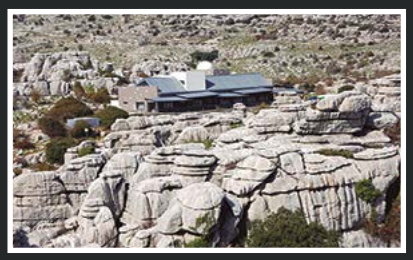
The protected area covers over 2,180 hectares and is part of the European ecological network of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) for Europe. It is home to a variety of flora and fauna, particularly birds, and has been designated as a Special Protection Area for Birds (SPA).

Tornillo del Torcal

What can I do at the Nature Site?

The Torcal de Antequera Nature Site offers a range of public facilities to help visitors explore every aspect of its stunning landscape.

Torcal Alto Visitor Centre



We are located at the Torcal Alto reception and information centre. The visitor centre offers several different areas and services to enhance visitors' educational, recreational, and overall experience at the Torcal de Antequera Nature Site. The Visitor Centre is free and includes an area showcasing the heritage resources of the Torcal de Antequera. Additionally, it offers a multi-purpose room, tour guide service, observatory, souvenir shop, cafeteria-restaurant, toilets, and a car park.

Footpath up to the Torcal Alto and access to the Tornillo del Torcal

The linear route is 3.6 kilometres long and has a medium difficulty level. This 1-hour-and-45-minute walk will enable you to observe the different landscapes of El Torcal, ranging from the valley to the karstic formations at its summit.

Along the way, you will be able to explore traditional cattle lodges, the old quarry, and remarkable folds in the terrain, such as the Cañada de Tosaires fault. Before finishing the route at the Torcal Alto Visitor Centre, next to the Agrio del Caracol, you can stop off and visit the Natural Monument 'El Tornillo del Torcal'.

Green route Footpath - Torcal Alto Footpath

Circular route 1.4 kilometres long. This route is of medium-low difficulty, making it accessible to most visitors, provided they do not have mobility issues. The trail starts next to the Visitor Centre. Although it is a short walk (45 minutes), it allows you to discover the essence of the Torcal karst landscape in a short time.

Yellow route footpath

This circular route is 2.7 kilometres long, has a medium level of difficulty and takes about 2 hours to complete. It can be seen as an extension of the "Green Route", which takes us to the Torcal Alto, and starts next to the Visitor Centre. This route will take you through curiously shaped rock formations, created by the erosion of wind, water and frost, and through karst passages created by fractures in the Torcal massif. Mountain goats and unique specimens of ivy, such as the famous "Agrasol", will certainly be easy to spot.

Las Ventanillas Viewpoint

This natural balcony overlooks the valley of the River Campanillas. It is located just a few metres from the Torcal Alto Visitor Centre. It offers a beautiful panoramic view of the surrounding countryside and the town of Villanueva de la Concepción.

Diego Monea Viewpoint

On the access road to Torcal Alto, 1.5 kilometres from the junction with the A-7075, there is a mosaic of fields, pastures, and natural vegetation. A panoramic view that starts from the Sierra de Alhama in Granada in the east to the Sierra de Huma, Llana and Abdalajís in Málaga in the west.

Manuel Grajales Viewpoint

This viewpoint is located on a small hill that is part of the “Subida al Torcal Alto” footpath. It is a good place to stop and enjoy the excellent views of Villanueva de la Concepción on the way to Torcal Alto. You can also catch a glimpse of part of the range of limestone mountains that border the Hoya de Málaga. These include Camarolos and Las Cabras to the left, and the Sierra de Mijas to the front.

Málaga province is rich in scenery, flora and fauna

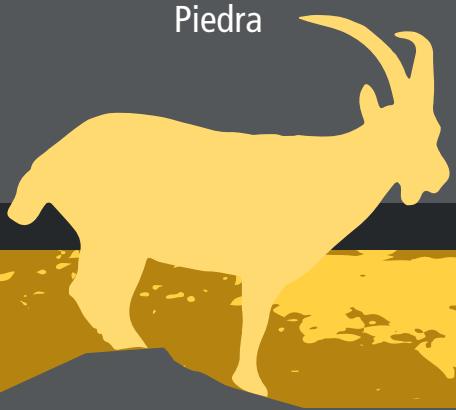
Malaga's protected natural areas are an exceptional example of Mediterranean biodiversity

From the pine forests of the Las Nieves and Bermeja mountain ranges, to the coastal cliffs and seabed of Maro Cerro Gordo, the Mediterranean forests of the Montes de Málaga, the flamingos of the Fuente de Piedra lake, and the yews and mountain goat of the Tejeda, Almijara and Alhama mountain ranges, the province of Málaga has an extensive and rich natural heritage.

Reserva Natural Laguna de Fuente de Piedra

Paraje Natural Acantilados Maro-Cerro Gordo

Parque Nacional Sierra de las Nieves



Find out more

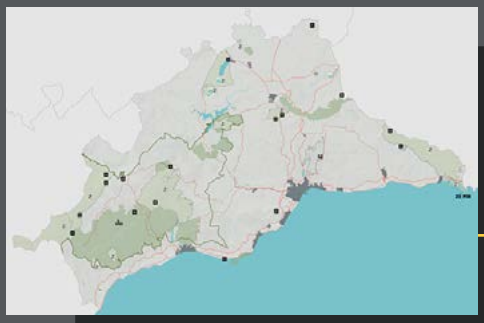
Natura 2000 Network in Malaga province

To guarantee their sustainability, the protected areas of Malaga, like the Torcal de Antequera Nature Site, are part of the Natura 2000 network, a European ecological network of protected areas for biodiversity. This network consists of the European Union's most valuable ecosystems, known as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

Andalusia also has the largest network of protected nature reserves in Europe. The conservation of the resources of all these areas contributes to the prosperity of the territories that are part of them.

Paraje Natural Desfiladero de los Gaitanes

Paraje Natural Desembocadura del Guadalhorce



REGIONAL AND NATIONAL PROTECTION SCHEMES

National Park
Natural areas that have been little affected by human activity and that have exceptional and unique natural and cultural values are representative of Spain's natural heritage. Their conservation is of general national interest.

Natural Park
They represent the greatest exponent of the diversity of the flora and fauna and of the rational use of the natural heritage of Andalusia.

Nature Reserve
They support rare or fragile communities or biological elements in great need of protection.

Natural Site
Areas where traditional activities and uses are being developed and which have exceptional ecological value.

Periurban park
Natural areas that are close to human settlements and are intended for recreational purposes.

Natural Monument
Specific physical and natural elements in a concrete location which are recognised by society.

OTHER INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION SCHEMES

Biosphere Reserve Network

They are part of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) programme. Andalusia is home to nine of Spain's thirty-seven biosphere reserves. One of them is intercontinental: Mediterranean Biosphere Reserve (Andalusia, Spain), which is shared with Morocco.

Ramsar Wetlands

Wetlands have received special treatment internationally because of their fragility and special values. As a result, Malaga, with its Fuente de Piedra, Campillos and Archidona lakes, makes Spain one of 123 countries that have signed the Ramsar Convention.

SPAMI

Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Interest. These include marine and coastal areas of particular importance for conserving the biological values and resources of the Mediterranean Sea.

Andalusia also has the largest network of protected natural areas in Europe. Conserving the resources of all these areas contributes to the prosperity of the territories that comprise them.

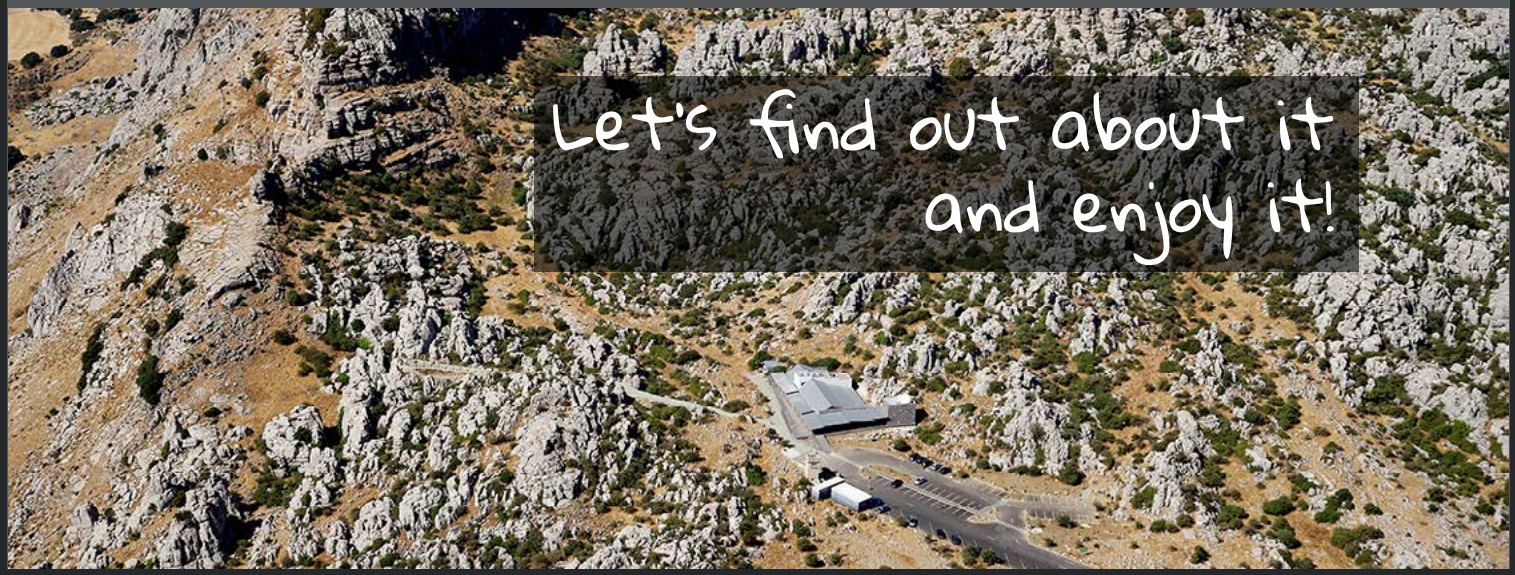
More information

EXHIBITION

El Torcal de Antequera: a landscape full of surprises

You are just a step away from discovering one of the icons of our country's geology. A stone labyrinth that will amaze you.

But to enjoy the Torcal de Antequera in all its glory, you need to visit this exhibition, which will reveal some of the secrets of its landscape, a mountain range that, although it appears uninhabitable, has been home to us for hundreds of generations and is also home to numerous and strange forms of life.

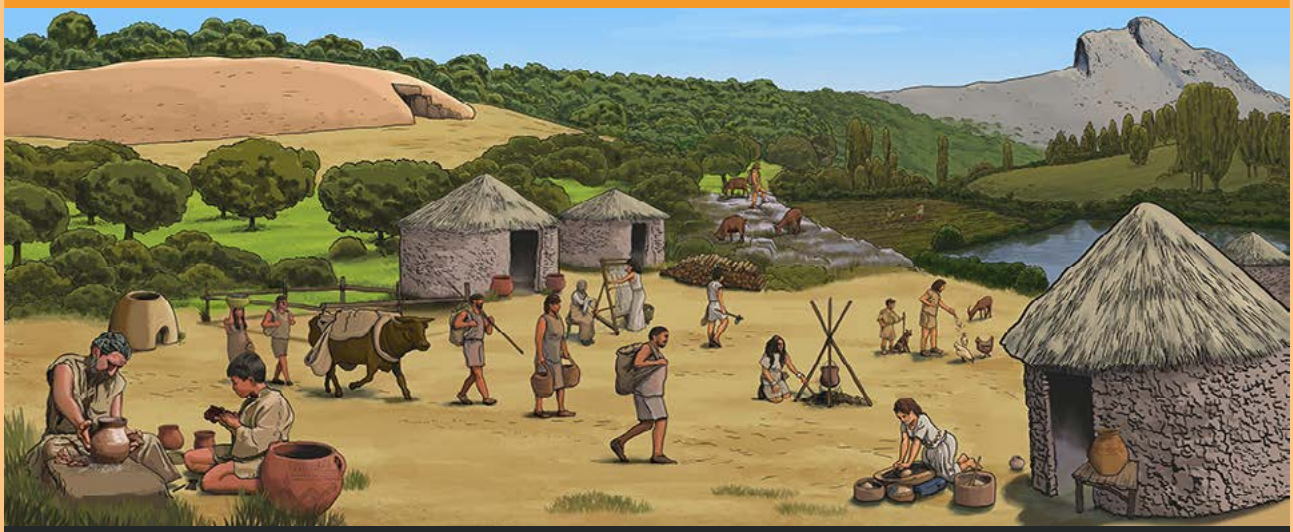


Tierras de Antequera, a place of passage and settlement since prehistoric times

“Tierras de Antequera” is defined by archaeologists as an area that was of significance in prehistoric times Its main axis is river Guadalhorce and in the middle of it lies the depression of Antequera, an almost flat plain surrounded by mountains, including the Torcal de Antequera massif.

The region is located on the shortest land route between the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. It is a remarkable passage, travelled by many peoples and cultures throughout the ages. Some of them have been here since prehistoric times, founding towns, and using the land to grow crops and raise livestock.

The importance of El Torcal was highlighted by its first inhabitants



The first settlers were cattle breeders and farmers who found fertile plains in Tierras de Antequera. El Torcal, a mountain that remains wet and wooded, is a reservoir of water, pasture, firewood, game... It has played a fundamental role in the life of the inhabitants of the region. Caves have been inhabited occasionally or permanently from the earliest communities to the present.

Caves such as the Matacabras cave in Peña de los Enamorados, Marinaleda, Hoyo de la Burra or Sima del Hoyo del Tambor are evidence of human presence. A dense network of caves, open-air settlements, necropolises, etc. has been left behind by its inhabitants.

The Cueva del Toro, in El Torcal, is an important site. Archaeological research tells us that it was the home of the first cattle breeders in the Tierras de Antequera region and was inhabited for hundreds of years. A skull transformed into a cup and other human bones that were ritually consumed are among the remains studied. They are evidence of the cave dwellers' beliefs, connecting them to their ancestors.

The "Venus del Torcal" is a combination of two powerful ideas: femininity and the landscape that surrounds it. Discovered during excavations at Cueva del Toro, this is a small anthropomorphic female figurine. Its nine overlapping layers recall the Tornillo de El Torcal at first glance. In the seventh layer the female vulva is represented.

Water: foundation of life

La Villa River rises from El Torcal mountain and its flow enables the cultivation of crops, which the first farmers of the Antequera floodplain used to their advantage The spiritual relationship of these peoples with water can also be seen in the dolmens that are located at the foot of the watercourses of the Antequera floodplain, or are even part of them, as is the case of the well found inside the Dolmen of Menga.

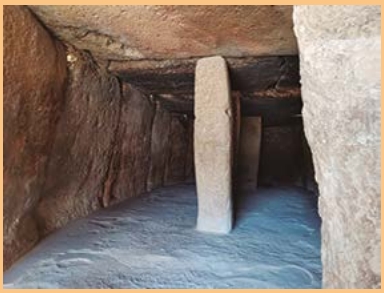
The landscape of Tierras de Antequera is linked to the dolmens

When UNESCO declared the Dolmens of Antequera a World Heritage Site in 2016, the declaration included the Peña de los Enamorados and the Torcal de Antequera. The indications that these monuments were spiritually important to those who built them are clear; the Dolmens of Menga and Viera face towards the Peña de los Enamorados and the Tholos de El Romeral towards El Torcal. Perhaps they considered them sacred mountains.

The Dolmens of Antequera are the most significant work of engineering and architecture in European prehistory. These temples were meeting places for these communities, and building them required the efforts of much larger populations than those in the surrounding area.

Tholos de El Romeral

Dolmen de Viera



Dolmen de Menga

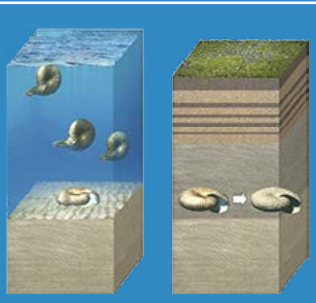
El Torcal de Antequera, the mountain that emerged from the sea

How can this stone labyrinth have anything to do with the sea? Yes, as it happens, the Torcal de Antequera is known worldwide as an exceptional karst, that is, a landscape that nature has sculpted out of limestone rock. Specifically, the history of this limestone that we are going to discover now, begins 150 million years ago at the bottom of a primitive sea.

The El Torcal massif is an exceptional karst because of its spectacular nature and good conservation. Its scientific and educational value is very high, which is why it is recognised as a Site of Geological Interest.

The rocks we now see were once sea creatures

The environment we are travelling through was millions of years ago, in the Jurassic, a sea, called the Tethys Sea. It was shallow, warm and rich in marine life. It was densely populated by seaweed, fish, aquatic reptiles and numerous large invertebrate species.



When the organisms died, they decomposed on the seabed. But their shells and skeletons, made of limestone, were not destroyed but compacted into layers, eventually fossilising and turning to stone. This process of creating limestone soils from the mineral parts of marine life lasted hundreds, thousands, millions of years.

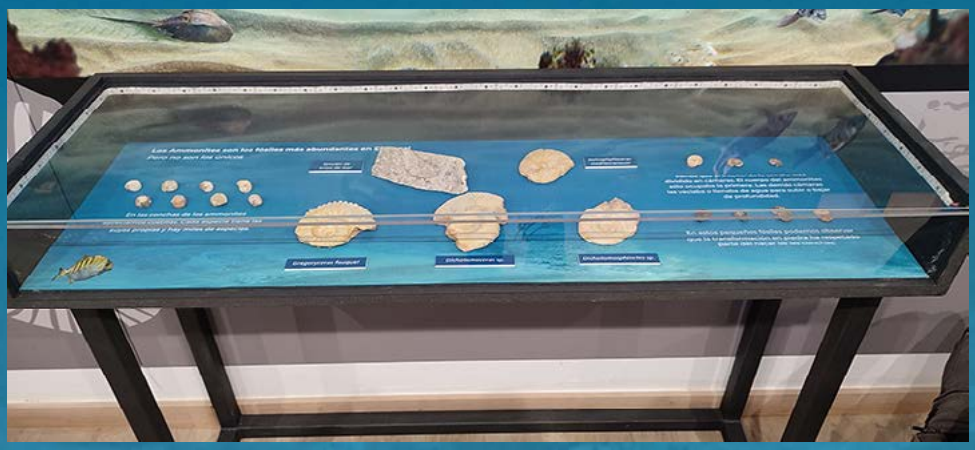
Ammonites are the most abundant fossils in El Torcal

But they are not the only ones

In the shells of ammonites you can see ribs. Each species has its own, and there are thousands of species.

You can see that the inside of the shell is divided into chambers. The body of the ammonite occupied only the first one. The other chambers were emptied or filled with water to go up or down in depth.

In these small fossils you can see that the transformation into stone has conserved part of the mother-of-pearl of the shells.



Let's walk along El Torcal through the petrified seabed. The ancient sediments are arranged in superimposed layers of limestone rocks. Geologists call these layers strata, some of which are centimetres thick while others are metres thick.

Here is representation of the strata of El Torcal. We call it a "stratigraphic column". In it you can distinguish how each stratum is formed. The oldest ones are at the bottom.

Marly limestone
These layers of marly limestone and marl limestone are not very visible in the landscape of El Torcal and form the most recent sediments. They are located on the highest peaks of the Torcal, normally in the form of more or less isolated blocks.

Clastic limestone
The stratum is at least 30 metres thick and consists of large rock fragments (called clasts).

Tablets of nodular, micrite and oolite limestones
It is a large, 45-metre-thick mass that forms the characteristic table-like appearance of El Torcal. Layers of a few centimetres to 3-4 metres in length alternate with each other. As one is more granular and porous than the other, erosion acts in a different way, giving rise to the Torcal's characteristic table-like shapes and piles of boulders.

Oolite limestone
This is the oldest and thickest stratum, with a minimum thickness of 100 metres. Limestone rock consists of oolites, i.e. millimetre-sized, rounded carbonate grains that formed in agitated, shallow seabeds.

When the seabed rose, the El Torcal massif emerged

The Earth's crust is divided into fragments, like pieces of a puzzle, which move and collide with each other. These are the so-called "plate tectonics". The push of these plates in the opposite direction raised the bottom of the Tethys Sea. In Antequera it reached 1,000 metres.

The movement of the earth's crust, known as the "Alpine Orogeny", lasted thousands of years. As a result, the Alps, the Pyrenees and, of course, the Betic mountain range and the El Torcal massif were formed.

The uplift of the seabed folded the sedimentary rocks into a peculiar shape called a "mushroom". The central part of the El Torcal massif consists of a plateau surrounded by steep vertical reliefs.

Subsequent movements of the earth's crust also fracture the El Torcal plateau. Faults (the rock breaks and its pieces separate) and joints (cracks in the rock) are formed. These breaks facilitate erosion and the forms of the current landscape.

Water is the artist that sculpts the rocks of El Torcal

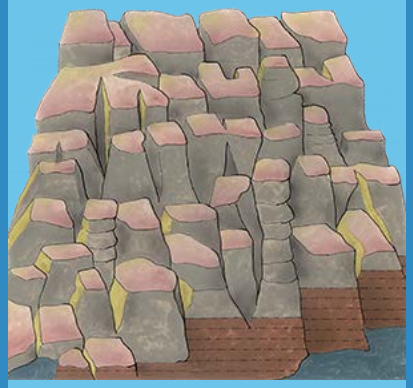
The young massif that forms El Torcal is subject to intense natural modelling. Water is responsible for eroding and sculpting the forms we call the karst landscape. It does this in two ways: it dissolves the limestone rock and chops it up like a chisel when the rain that absorbs the rock freezes from the cold.

1 PHASE ONE

MODELLING OF THE MASSIF BEGINS

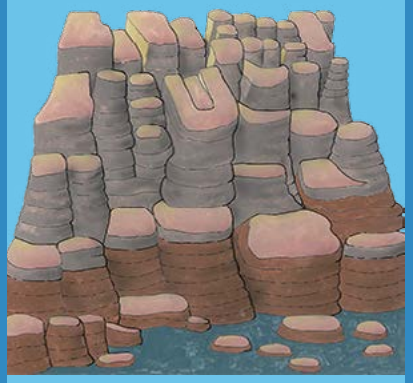
2 PHASE TWO

EROSION CONTINUES



3 PHASE THREE

EL TORCAL, A MAGNIFICENT KARST



A chemical reaction occurs before our eyes, wearing away the rock of El Torcal, but only with time will we see it.

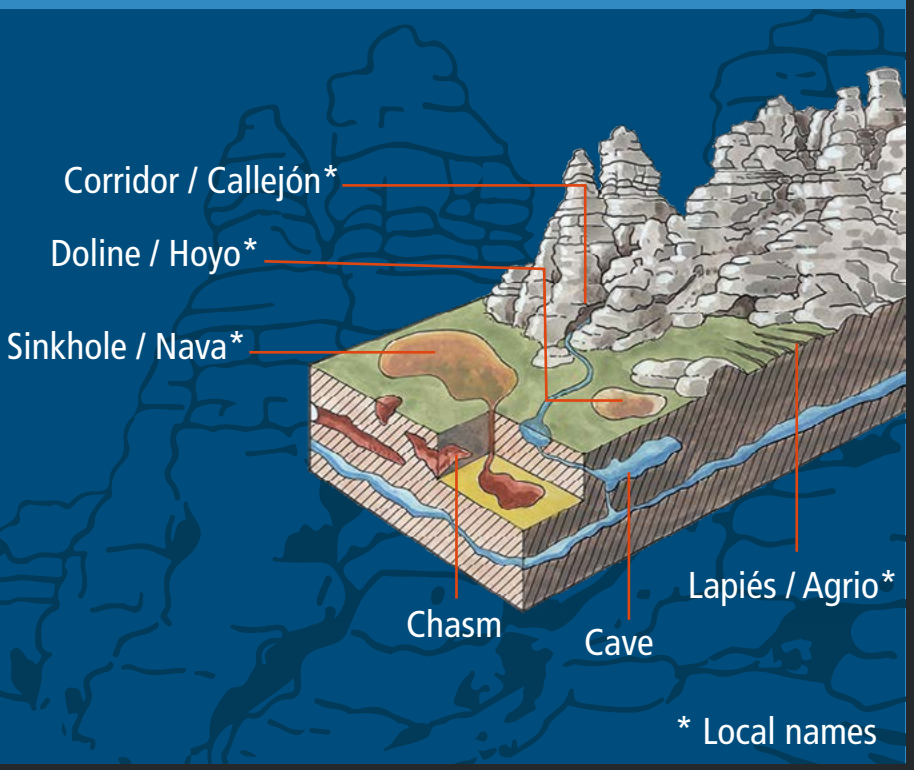
Rainwater, when combined with air, forms carbonic acid (H_2CO_3). It transforms the limestone rock of the fossil karst, as we geologists call it, into calcium bicarbonate $(HCO_3)_2Ca$, which dissolves in the rain and is washed away by it.

The evolution of the karst landscape continues. Today, its hollows and corridors are filled with materials washed down by rainfall, on which vegetation settles and gradually covers it.

The common and the uncommon features of the karst landscape of El Torcal

Its very name tells us so: Torcal is a traditional word for dolines. A doline is a circular dip in the ground, a sinkhole, and is a typical shape in all karst landscapes around the world. The extraordinary thing about El Torcal is the great range of karst forms it displays and how well preserved they are, making it a geological jewel.

In El Torcal a wide range of karst formations can be observed.

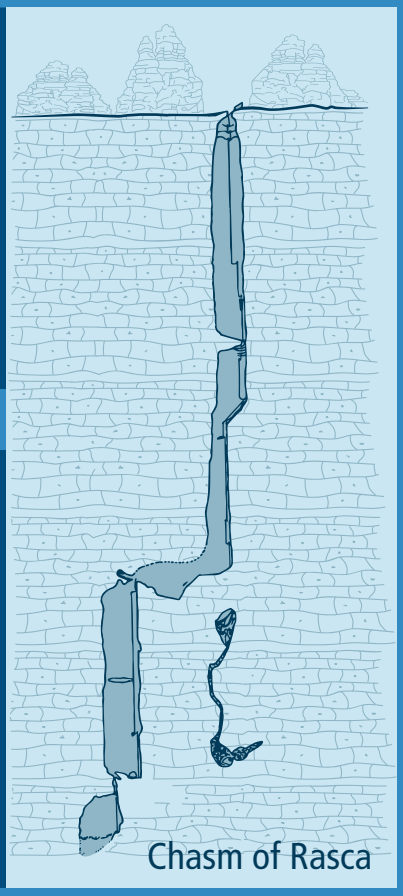


Water flows in the depths of El Torcal de Antequera

We can't see it because it is underground, but the rain, below the surface, also shapes El Torcal. Over millions of years, water has seeped through faults and cracks, dissolving the limestone rock and widening underground cavities. The Torcal de Antequera massif has many chasms and caves that conduct water and store it in an aquifer from which it comes to the surface in the form of springs and fountains.

The water, drop by drop, patiently moulds the interior landscape of the mountain. Calcium carbonate dissolved in water is deposited in caves in the form of stalactites and stalagmites.

In the list of caves in El Torcal we highlight the Navazo Verde, the Sima Azul and the Mujer caves for their special geological interest. The chasms of La Unión and Rasca stand out for the depth of their galleries and shafts.

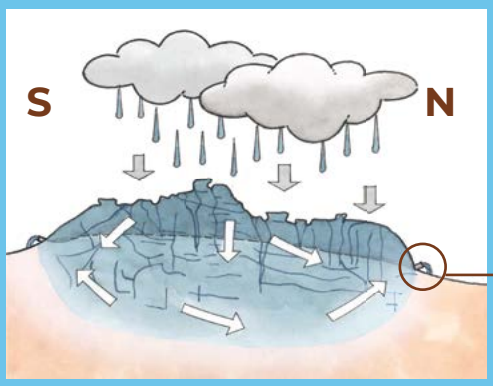


Chasm of Rasca

The underground system works like a sponge. It swells with rainfall, which enters through galleries and hollows and is stored in the aquifer. Little by little, the water gushes outwards to form springs.

The El Torcal aquifer is enormous; its size is about three times the size of the Natural Park and it can store 15.5 billion litres of rainwater, the average consumption of the households of Antequera and Villanueva de la Concepción for seven years.

The Manantial de la Villa springs to the north of El Torcal. It is the most abundant in the aquifer and is essential for supplying water to the region.



The Torcal has always been well used by the inhabitants of the area

Geological heritage has always had a very close relationship with mankind. This is the case of the Torcal de Antequera. It has been a home, refuge and sanctuary, and since ancient times it has provided raw materials for activities such as construction or, with its underground water reserves, the essential resources for the development of industry and agriculture in the region.

The first home

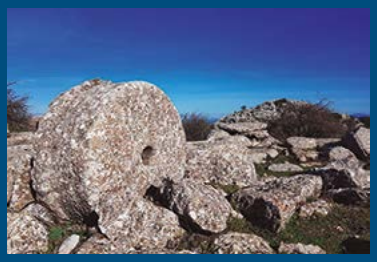
The first human communities that settled in the Antequera Lands did so in El Torcal. The Cueva del Toro is perhaps the best witness to the dedication to domestic animal husbandry and its rites, evident in the paintings of the Cueva de los Chivos.

Settlements

The evidence of the settlements of the different populations that made use of the surrounding area take us back to Roman and Nasrid times, or to the vestiges of a watchtower. The remains of the last settlement in El Torcal, called Las Sepulturas, seem to be related to quarrying during the century of the industrial bourgeoisie.

Shelter and refuge

The landscape of El Torcal, intricate and full of caves and natural shelters, has always sheltered shepherds and their flocks, and has provided refuge for bandits and, after the Spanish Civil War, for the Maquis.



Quarrying

Limestone quarries were worked until the last century. It was only recently that archaeologists have recognised, among the building materials of the Roman villas around Antequera, limestone from El Torcal as “Blanco Andalucía” and “Rojo Torcal”.

The use of rivers

The large aquifer continues to supply the people of Antequera with water, both for drinking and for irrigating their vegetable gardens. The most abundant of its springs starts the Rio de La Villa. On its banks, using water as a driving force, the famous Antequera textile industry flourished at the end of the 15th century.

Archaeological reproduction of tools from the first livestock farming communities settled in El Torcal.

Hand mill	Arrow	Ceramics	Slingshot

Stonemason's tools

Mallet	Carved stone	Nails	Wedge

El Torcal is a landscape of life

The continental Mediterranean climate and poor soils are responsible for shaping life in El Torcal. In the landscape of the massif, instead of the holm oak groves typical of the Mediterranean scrubland, plants adapted to the rocky and sloping soils prevail.

More ingredients for the landscape of El Torcal

The continental Mediterranean climate means very hot summers with temperatures above 40°C and cold winters, although in El Torcal they are not dry. Here rainfall is much higher than in the rest of the area. The clouds it receives from the sea are trapped on the peaks of the massif, where they discharge their precious contents in the form of rain or snow.

"La Montera" is the name given to the fog that usually covers El Torcal in autumn and winter when the winds from the south collide with those of the Vega de Antequera.

You can imagine the other factor that shapes the landscape of El Torcal. The last bear was hunted 500 years ago. It is human action. The use of the Torcal for grazing, firewood and charcoal production has modified the original vegetation and fauna.

The Mediterranean forest was populated by lynx, wolves and bears. These large mammals gradually disappeared as the forest of El Torcal was colonised and transformed.

Every corner of El Torcal is populated and colonised

The holm oak and Portuguese oak grove

Where there are better soils, holm oaks grow alongside other trees such as Portuguese oak, maple and rowan. Although small in size, its branches are home to the dormouse and the little owl. All around it, among the mastic trees and barberry trees, the wheatears search for insects and the wildcat lurks.

The fruit of wild plum trees and heart of palm is available for those with a sweet tooth, such as foxes.

The holm oak and Portuguese oak grove community is also a rich larder that attracts many animals. The fruits of its trees and bushes feed a great variety of birds and mammals that can be seen in El Torcal.

The hawthorn and the bramble bush

Most of the surface of El Torcal is covered with scrubland that colonises the rocks and poor soils. The hawthorn is a typical shrub of this habitat along with barberry, elderberry and wild rose bushes. Brambles and honeysuckles are entangled among them, and underneath them the peonies, fennel and rosemary fill the landscape with aromas.

The hawthorn and maple are home to very particular neighbours. Mosses and ferns settle at the base of their trunks while lichens populate the branches.

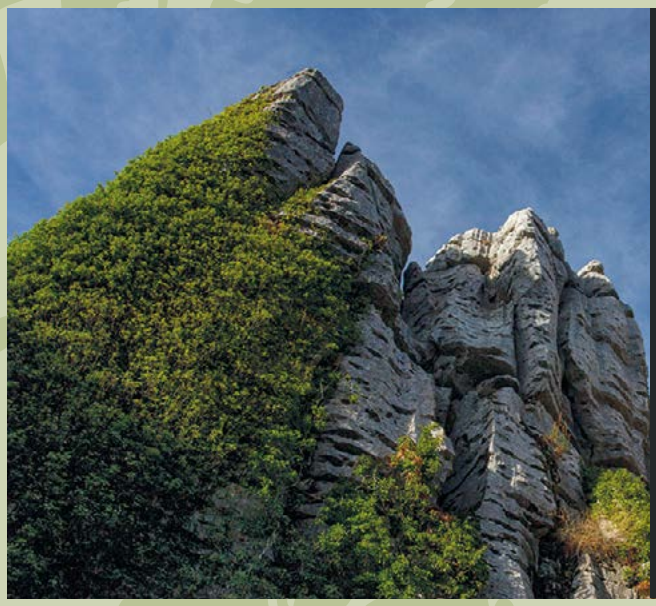
These thickets protect numerous species of birds and small mammals, such as voles, with their sharp thorns. The brambles and hawthorns are also a refuge for a motley population of wildlife, from spiders to toads, lizards and snakes.

The grassland

This type of landscape appears in the typical pits or sinkholes. Its soils are ideal for herbaceous plants such as buttercup, hairy knapweed or Antequera catnip (*Nepeta amethystina*). It forms the pasture for sheep and cows, which is why these pastures, known in El Torcal as “encerraderos”, are very popular with livestock.

If you look at the grasslands, you will find small mounds of earth removed by voles looking for bulbs, roots, earthworms, etc., to feed on.

The abundance of prey, such as voles and grassland rabbits, attracts skilful hunters such as snakes and weasels to this habitat.



Ivy

To reach a height of three or four storeys, as achieved by this spectacular ivy, some rock plants (adapted to living in the rock) anchor their roots in the crevices of the rock.

In rock, life finds a way

Rock is a hard place to live in. You are exposed to the sun, wind and wide temperature variations. You have to adapt to the lack of soil and the steep slopes. This is why, in the rock, very different species develop similar resources to survive.

Athamanta vayredana

Saxifraga biternata

Sedum mucizonia

On the rock or in the crevices grow very different species such as mosses and liverworts, ferns or seed plants such as navelwort, which are adapted to living with hardly any soil.

Navelwort

Fern

Moss

The first to conquer the rocks of El Torcal are the lichens. In El Torcal, 12 species have been found. They are responsible for generating the substrate on which the rest of the plants grow.

Some animals also adopt different forms to adapt to life on the rock. The strikingly flat spiral of the *Iberus gualtieranus* morfo *gualtieroloxanus* snail, endemic to El Torcal and Benaoján, allows it to squeeze into rock crevices to obtain water and protect itself from the heat. If you come across them, leave them in peace to enjoy the Torcal freely, as their populations are already being irresponsibly destroyed by humans.

Endangered species alert!

El Torcal is home to species that are very sensitive to changes in their environment, which is why they need greater protection. An example of this is the local flora, although it is not the only thing to look out for; some of the birds that represent the wealth of El Torcal's fauna, such as the golden eagle, Bonelli's eagle or the griffon vulture itself, are in a fragile state of conservation.

These birds seek out the cliffs of El Torcal to build nests and raise their chicks.

El Torcal is also the breeding home of more birds in a fragile state of conservation, such as the eagle owl or the red-billed chough. But there are other species of interest, such as the black wheatear, the red rock thrush and the Alpine swift, which find the Natural Park an ideal place to breed. El Torcal is so important for the future of these species that the European Union has declared it a Special Protection Area.

On your visit to El Torcal, you may see some balls similar to this one. These are bones and hair of hunted animals that nocturnal raptors cannot digest and vomit up. Biologists call them: "Griffin Vulture pellets".

Do you know how big their wingspan is?

The ibex, despite being an emblematic animal of the Andalusian mountain ranges, is a species in decline. However, in the Torcal de Antequera Natural Park it maintains a reasonable population level.

Unique species are conserved in El Torcal

The unique nature of El Torcal, such as the small size of some of its habitats or its isolation, allows the life of unique species.

El Torcal is also a refuge for another very vulnerable mammal: the bat. The cave bat and the big horseshoe bat, which are protected species, maintain their colonies in its caves and chasms.

Greater horseshoe bat colony

Schreiber's bent-wing bat

Local species live here

In El Torcal we can find plant and animal species native to Andalusia. Some of them are exclusive or endemic to the territory are of great value.

Our attention is drawn to the flora as an example of this exclusive nature: There are more than 17 endemic plant species in El Torcal.

Scrophularia viciosoi

Viola demetria

Linaria anticaria

El Torcal is home to unique species

The rare and scarce species that inhabit El Torcal give it great value, but even more value is given by the endemic species of the territory. If the spaces in which they live are changed, they disappear.

Habitats of Community interest:

	VERY RARE HABITATS	RARE AND PRIORITY HABITAT	RARE AND NON-PRIORITY	
	Mediterranean tall-grass wet meadows of the Molinion-Holoschoenion. The most typical of El Torcal	Pseudo-steppe with grasses and annuals of the *Thero-Brachypodietea*. **The most abundant in El Torcal**	Thermo-Mediterranean and pre-desert scrub	

Most representative of El Torcal
Calcareous rocky slopes support chasmophytic vegetation.

Quercus ilex and *Quercus rotundifolia* forests

The importance of conserving this natural area is internationally recognised.

Black wheatear

Life in El Torcal is rich and diverse

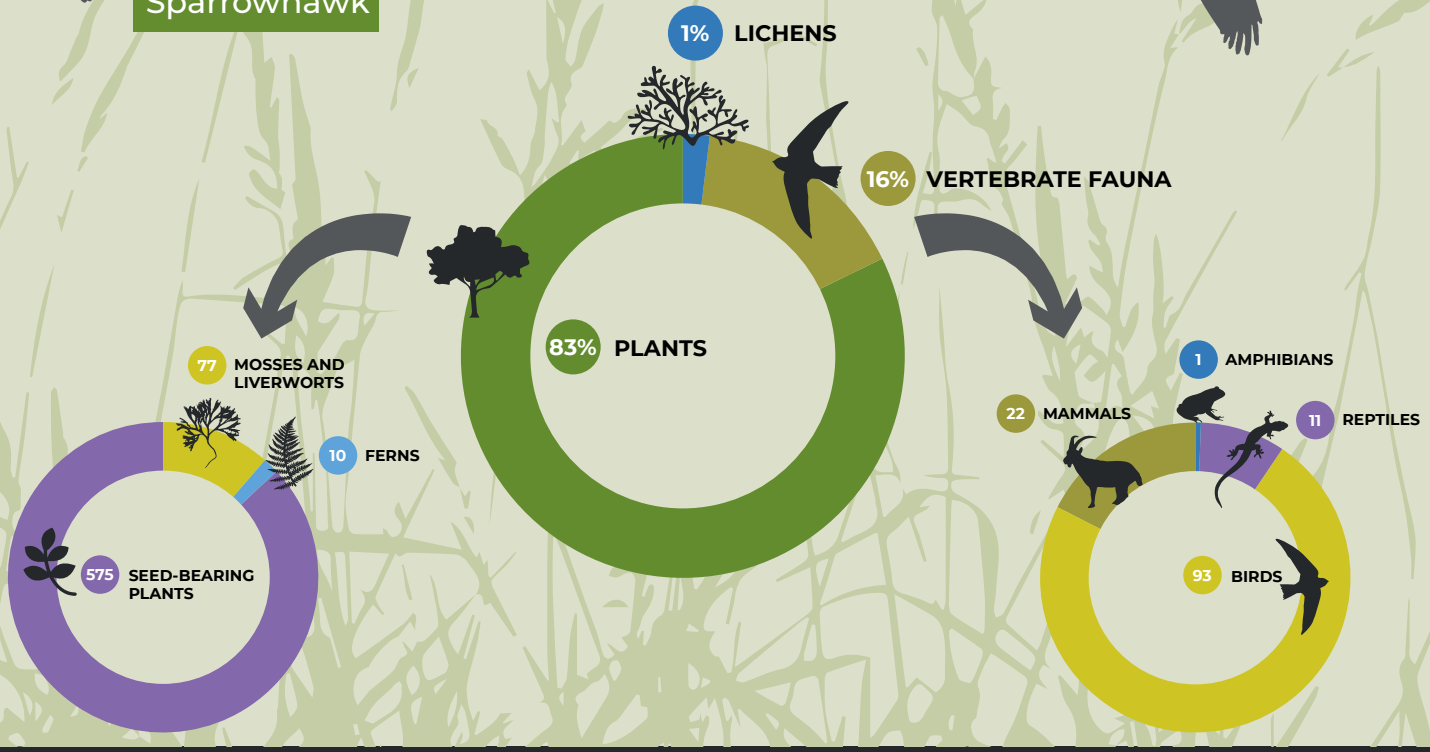
The range of environments found in El Torcal allows many different species to live there. When we look at the graph on this panel, there is a surprising number of plant and animal species catalogued in El Torcal, and all this without taking into account the numerous invertebrates that exist in this mountain range.

Griffon vulture

Alpine Swift

Red-billed chough

Sparrowhawk



The conservation of the Torcal de Antequera is in our hands

It is easy to feel involved in the conservation of the Torcal when we review the value of its unique landscape and surprising geology, or the valuable diversity and remarkable richness of its fauna and flora.

The management of the protected natural areas of El Torcal ensures the conservation of its heritage

If we break the fragile natural balance of El Torcal it is very difficult to recover it. Sustainable management of these sites therefore aims to protect their unique and exceptional values and prevent their deterioration.

Environmental threats

Trampling and picking plants, especially their flowers and fruits

Littering or dumping

Climbing rocks, digging up fossils, or breaking and fragmenting rocks

Leaving public footpaths and eroding their borders, construction of new accesses and infrastructures

Arson

Activities which may disturb animals, especially during the breeding season

Overgrazing by livestock

Many hands collaborate in the conservation of Torcal de Antequera

Many hands make light work. We conserve the protected natural areas of this territory through regulations, the creation of habitat restoration programmes, the study of the fauna and flora, and by managing public use. We also conserve El Torcal when we enjoy its beauty, and when those of us who live there take advantage of the possibilities it offers. We are all actors in its conservation.

To enjoy and conserve the natural heritage in El Torcal

The natural heritage of El Torcal is an asset for the citizens to discover and enjoy. “Public use management” aims to strike a balance between the ecological conservation of the site, especially its most fragile environments and species, and visitors.

Management of public use ensures that recreational, sporting, educational and cultural activities respect the environment and cause no damage. With this same aim in mind, it creates facilities for the visitor’s optimal enjoyment and also promotes services and activities so that the public becomes aware of the value of El Torcal and becomes its best defender.

The visitor's footprint

So that our presence leaves no trace

Don't drop plastic waste and take your rubbish with you to the bins. Reduce, reuse, recycle.

Avoid dropping cigarette butts or lighting fires. This helps to prevent fires.

Keep quiet to hear the sounds of the Torcal. You will enjoy the music of nature.

You are in the home to many animals. Respect their home and don't take anything with you.

Walk only on the marked paths. This helps to preserve the local flora.

Respect goods and property and try not to disturb other people. Encourage a good relationship between locals and visitors.

Take care of the facilities to keep them running. You will be able to enjoy them on your next visit.

Use local produce It's a win-win situation.

Use environmentally friendly forms of transport. The Torcal will thank you.

Do not offer food to animals. You can disrupt their natural behaviour.

Make sure your visit is responsible and respectful towards the environment

REMEMBER:
There are activities that cannot be carried out in the Torcal de Antequera Natural Park:

Pets must be kept on a lead and must not roam free

Camping

Overnight stays in caravans and similar vehicles

Flying drones

Lighting fires

Trapping

Collecting plants

Collecting minerals or fossils

Climbing outside permitted areas

Driving motorised vehicles or cycling off paved roads

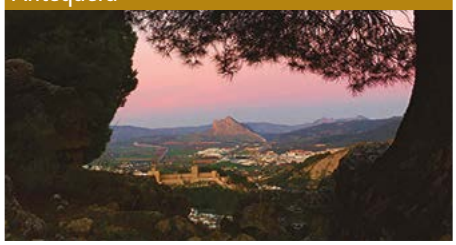
Are you leaving already?

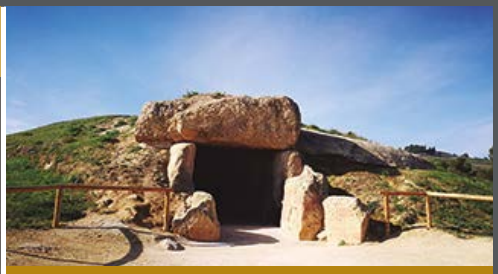
There are many places still to be discovered and experiences to be enjoyed

Before leaving, remember that you are in an area with an extraordinary cultural and natural heritage, where you can enjoy a wide range of experiences that will make your visit unforgettable.

Visitor Centre José Antonio Valverde, Fuente de Piedra

Parque Periurbano Pinar del Hacho, Antequera





Antequera Dolmen Site

Sierras de Abdalajís y La Encantada Sur, Antequera, Valle de Abdalajís, Ardales y Campillos

Footpath Caminito del Rey, Ardales, Antequera y Álora

Historic centre of Antequera

Traditional gastronomy

Verdiales Festival, Villanueva de la Concepción