

Natural Park

The Bardenas Reales of Navarra

Biosphere Reserve



Comunidad de Bardenas Reales de Navarra



Reserva de la Biosfera



Reserva de la Biosfera



Geographical setting

The Bardenas Reales is an extensive, semi-desert like, unpopulated area covering 41,845 hectares in the SE of Navarra. It possesses a characteristic landscape with an abrupt relief, and is replete with mesa-shaped highs (cabezos), plains, hidden ravines... The climate is characterized by hot summers, cold winters and little rainfall (350 l/m²). In general terms the Bardenas can be divided into three large areas. **La Bardenas Blanca** is the central depression, the terrain is often whitened, bare and desert-like in appearance. **El Plano** is an almost flat, elevated alluvial plateau, whose soil originates from the Aragón river. **La Negra** is characterized by large elevated flatter areas caused by horizontal limestone strata; the slopes are covered by pines and kermes oak and the dark appearance of the terrain has no doubt given rise to its place name.



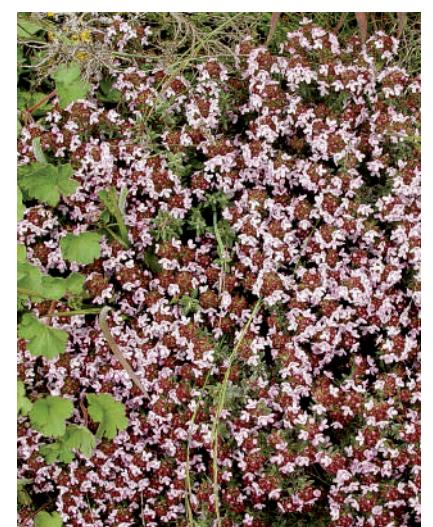
The Bardenas Reales community

These lands were historically heritage of the Kings of Navarre, but from the 9th century onwards certain local usage rights were granted. Finally, in 1705, the exclusive rights were handed over to twenty two local entities, known as "congozantes" who share the rights of common usage: Arguedas, Buñuel, Cabanillas, Cadreita, Caparroso, Carcastillo, Corella, Cortes, Falces, Funes, Fustiñana, Marcilla, Mélida, Milagro, Peralta, Santacara, Tudela, Valtierra, Villafranca, the Valleys of Roncal and Salazar and La Oliva Monastery. These entities make up the Bardenas Reales Community, the Local Organisation which governs the area.



The natural environment

The Bardenas Reales is made up of a vast and complex natural space in which different habitats and biotypes are present, some of them of exceptional value. In general terms we can differentiate between the following environmental units: pine forests (aleppo pine), matorrals (kermes oak, junipers, rosemary...), steppes (pyrenean wormwood, esparto...), salt marshes (tamarisk, caustic soda...), wet areas (ponds and ravines), cliffs, buildings and cultivated areas. Regarding the fauna, one of the most peculiar communities are the steppe-residing birds, which have adapted to living in flat and open habitats with little vegetation. They are plentiful in these areas, particularly in the depression of the Blanca. Mention can be made of short-toed larks (lesser and greater), larks (crested and thekla), wheatears (northern, black-eared, black), calandra lark, pin-tailed sandgrouse, black-bellied sandgrouse, little bustard and stone curlew. The Dupont lark stands out for its rarity, whilst the great bustard, the "giant" of the steppe, sporadically visits cereal crop areas. Other inhabitants of note are the birds of prey, some of them are very easy to see; the griffin vulture, golden eagle, egyptian vulture, eagle owl, common kestrel, etc. Finally, mammals are present in all the environments, though they are discrete and difficult to spot: rabbit, hare, fox, weasel, badger, mountain cat, roe deer or wild boar. Aquatic birds, amphibians, reptiles, fishes and invertebrates complete the fauna of the Natural Park.



Protected Natural Area

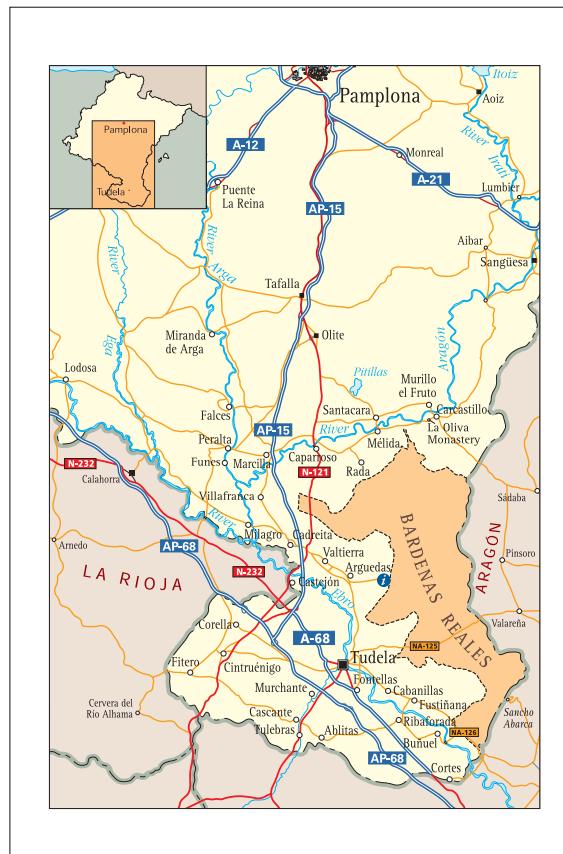
The Bardenas Reales is a privileged natural area having particularly unique values which have led to its status being recognised and protected by different legal declarations:

- **Natural Park**, declared by the Government of Navarra (1999).
- **Place of Community Interest (LIC)**, proposed to form part of the European Nature Network, 2000 by the Government of Navarre.
- **Biosphere Reserve**, granted by the United Nations Education Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO) (2000).



Rules and regulations

- Motor vehicle or cycle traffic is only authorised for routes which are signposted for such purposes.
- Maximum speed limit for all routes is 40 km/h.
- Hikers may use all tracks and paths, except for those where it is prohibited.
- Respect the wild fauna, the cattle, the vegetation and the heritage.
- Do not leave any type of waste or litter.
- Dogs must be kept on a lead to prevent any straying or interference with the cattle or fauna.
- Avoid unnecessary noise.
- Overnight camping and caravanning is not allowed.
- Follow and respect the indications given by park employees.
- Don't start any fires.
- Open: from 8 am until one hour before nightfall.



Signed routes

To help visitors, the Bardenas Reales Community has prepared various signed routes which completely cover the different eco-systems (official guide on sale). Most routes are for MTB and some are for motor vehicles. Hikers are allowed to use all tracks, except for those which are prohibited for protective purposes. Therefore, nobody must use non-authorized routes, and under no circumstances must tracks be left.

WALKING ROUTES: There are three short walks which allow walkers to visit points of interest. All of them have a start point information board and wooden signposts.

MTB: There are nine routes distributed throughout all areas of the Bardenas. They also have a start point information board and sign-posted stone blocks at all junctions.

MOTOR VEHICLES: There are several main routes which give a basic idea of the most important areas. Drivers must drive with care to prevent erosion of the routes and danger to cyclists and hikers.

The rest of the tracks are reserved for professional use. Visitors must respect these rules and regulations and in doing so contribute to the conservation of the area.



Bardenas Reales of Navarre Information Centre

Entrance from km 0.8 on the NA-8712 road
Km 6 on the "Carretera del Parque Natural"
31513 Arguedas (Navarre) • Tel.: 948 830 308

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