

FAUNA

Due to the variety of environmental conditions, the Valleys contain a great wealth in species of fauna, some of which are endemic species of the Pyrenees. It is worth highlighting, within this great diversity, the group of the invertebrates, of great importance in ecosystems, essential in their functioning and helping to maintain their stability.

Standing out among the amphibians and reptiles are the endemic Pyrenean brook salamander, Pyrenean frog and the Pyrenean rock lizard.

This is an exceptional location for birds. Due to its importance it has been declared an Area of Special Protection for Birds (SPA), with notable presence of the bearded vulture (a species in danger of extinction), white-backed woodpecker, black woodpecker or red kite, among others.

Among the mammals, the king of the high peaks is the chamois. Also present are the wild boar or *chabalín*, the fox or *rabosa*, the wildcat, the badger or *taxón*, several types of martens or *fuinas*, as well as bats. But without a doubt the most emblematic species is the brown bear or *onso*, catalogued as a species in danger of extinction.



Zygena Moth



Pyrenean Frog



Wildcat footprints



Brown Bear

DATOS DE INTERÉS

Before starting a visit, it is best to go to the Centre of Interpretation, where you will be informed of the opportunities offered to you in the natural area according to your interests and needs.

ANSÓ CENTRE OF INTERPRETATION
 >> **LOCATION:** In the old cinema of the town of Ansó.
 >> **CALENDAR AND OPENING HOURS:**
 Pueden consultarse en www.rednaturaldearagon.com en el apartado Centros de Interpretación.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In order to observe the diverse fauna, the use of binoculars is recommended. Camping is not allowed in any modality. There is restricted access for motor vehicles to certain trails; follow the signage. Do not leave the market trails. Unrestrained animals are not allowed. Existen infraestructuras adaptadas y zonas reservadas para el uso de discapacitados funcionales. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remaining silent will allow you to observe the fauna; remember to carry binoculars in order to appreciate their full beauty. After your visit, remember to collect the rubbish you have produced and take it to an appropriate place, in a container. Lighting fire is forbidden. If you see smoke or any anomaly, call 112 (SOS Aragón); the call is free of charge and any emergency will be attended to. Observe the flora without damaging it or pulling it up; so that we can all continue to enjoy it in the same way. You already know how important water is; do not dump rubbish or use soap or detergents in fountains, rivers and water courses. |
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ADDRESSES OF INTEREST



Servicio Provincial de Agricultura, Ganadería y Medio Ambiente de Huesca
Natural Protected Areas
 Ricardo del Arco, 6 - 22003 Huesca - Tlf.: 974 29 33 96
espaciosnaturales@aragon.es
 Office of Socioeconomic Development of the District of Jacetania
desarrollojacetania@sodemasa.com - Tlf.: 974 37 54 23
 Booking of visits to the Centres of Interpretation: Sarga - 976 40 50 41



Western Valleys Natural Park



Gentians and Mallo de las Ferreras in the background

Government of Aragón



A PARK IN THE PYRENEES

The Western Valleys Natural Park is located at the northwest end of the Aragonese Pyrenees, bordering to the north with France and to the west with Navarre. It stretches through the headwaters of the Veral, Aragón Subordán, Osia, Estarrún and Lubierre Rivers.



Reddish Sandstones of the Castillo d'Acher



Los Alamos from Tachera

Its relief has been modeled by the action of glaciers, which sculpted slender peaks while they dug cirques and U-shaped valleys, as well as depressions that brought about today's *ibons* (mountain lakes). These, due to the dragging of materials by the rivers, tend to fill up, causing small plains or *plans* where the water "zig-zags", causing meanders such as in Agua Tuerta. Due to the characteristics of the terrain, the water flows very easily under ground, creating numerous underground labyrinths (a phenomenon known as karstic model).



Dolmen of Agua Tuerta

AN HISTORIC PAST

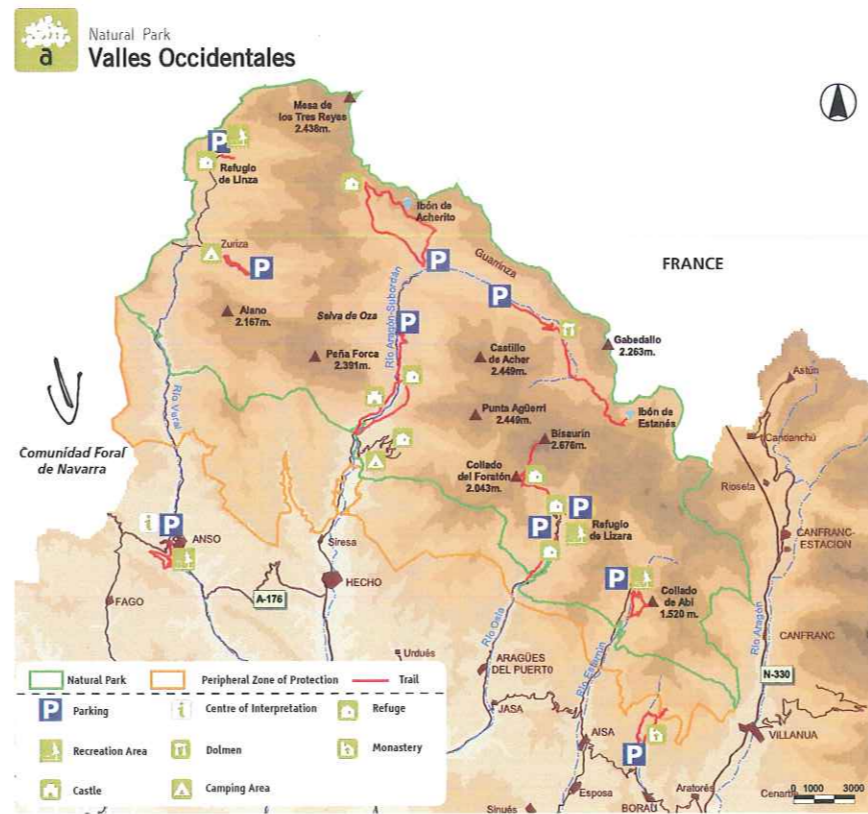
The Western Valleys form a territory that has been populated since ancient times, as accredited by numerous megalithic (5000-3000 years b.c.) found at the head of the valleys. The territory has witnessed the presence of the Romans, whose marks are shown in numerous bridges and roads, among them the primitive Caesaraugusta-Beneamum Roman way, origin of the primitive Road to Santiago, which entered Aragón through the Port of Palo. It was in these surroundings where Alfonso I the Battler spent part of his childhood – the first King of a territory – Aragón in whose development the Monastery of San Pedro de Siresa played an important role.



Popular architecture.

CULTURAL VALUES

Traditional agricultural activities have contributed to modeling a beautiful landscape that conjugates natural elements with the hand of man. Moreover, in these valleys interesting examples of popular architecture have been maintained, with harmonious and well-kept town centres. The signs of identity include the traditional costume, the folklore or the language.



Gentiana



Lily or Martagon

FLORA AND VEGETATION

The relief of the Natural Park, the diverse types of soil, the associated differences in orientation and altitude, together with its location, is reflected in tremendously rich flora. With some 1200 species, 7 of them stand out as exclusively of the place, typical of steep and rocky zones.

The pastures located below the high rocky peaks cause what are known as *tascas* and *estibas*, which form pastoral landscapes that have sustained large numbers of livestock from ancient times. These pastures are covered with snow for much of the year, producing explosive flowering at the beginning of the summer.



Sheep on the Blancas

FOREST MASSES

Traditionally subjected to forest utilization, the woods have comprised one of the main natural resources of this territory. The influence of the atlantic air masses loaded with moisture allows the development of *fabares* or beech groves and spruce groves, which occupy the most shaded zones. On the sunny faces, the *pino royo* or scots pine and the *caxico* or oak, while the black pine occupies the steepest and highest zones.



Spruce in Hax



Beech and Spruce in Gamota