

**The Intertidal Complex Umia-O Grove**, classified as a Wetland of International Importance, is located in the coastal region of O Salnés. The Umia River and the Ría de Arousa are the base of this unique ecosystem, chosen by a large number of birds as the place to winter or as a stopover during their migration.

From the viewpoint A Siradella, from A Bodeira Lagoon or from A Lanzada Beach you can enjoy one of the most beautiful landscapes in As Rías Baixas, while watching herons, gulls, dunlins, common ringed plovers or curlews, among others. There, O Vao Cove (one of the most important wetlands in Galicia), the archaeological site Adro Vello, the Salazón Interpretation Centre or the isthmus of A Lanzada are must visits.

The **salt marsh of Alba**, also known as Xunqueira do Lérez (Natura 2000), is a natural park located in an urban environment in the Ría de Pontevedra. In these wetlands there are important colonies of water birds as the common kingfisher, the European shag, the grey heron or the common sandpiper. This area of 48 hectares in Pontevedra is the perfect setting for hiking, and there, you can also discover the park Illa das Esculturas or enjoy a relaxing moment surrounded by nature.

**O Galiñeiro Hills** are also a good option for bird watching or enjoying nature. The Aloia Hill, classified as Natural Park since 1978, is part of this mountain range. In its rocky mountains, an area full of legends, dating from the Celts to the time of the Moors, you can watch birds as grey partridges, common buzzards, cuckoos, common kestrels or tawny owls.

In the Aloia Hill you can walk along the well-preserved botanic trails, and also visit the San Xulián Chapel, dating from 1713, or discover its amazing viewpoints to admire two international bridges, the cathedral of Tui or the Portuguese villages of Valença and Caminha.

# Natural HERITAGE

## IN THE PROVINCE OF PONTEVEDRA





The province of Pontevedra has several unique natural spaces of special relevance for the study of birds, both inland and on the coast, where you can live unforgettable experiences. The estuary of the largest river in Galicia, an island national park, some mountain ranges and wetlands of international importance make up an exceptional setting for the observation of unique birds throughout the four seasons.

The **estuary of the Miño River** is a large wetland (1,668 hectares), located on the border between Spain (the towns of A Guarda and O Rosal) and Portugal, which has a high ecological value. It is included in the network Natura 2000 and has been classified as a Special Protection Area (SPA). Up to 200 bird species, as northern lapwings, whimbrels or common sandpipers have been seen in this exceptional environment.

One of the best ways to explore the estuary is through its ornithological routes, where, apart from watching birds and enjoying the landscape, one can discover the way of life of the inhabitants of the region of O Baixo Miño through ovens for ceramics, salt mines or the watermills placed along the course of the river.



The **Cíes Islands** are the heart of the National Park of the Atlantic Islands, and they aspire to be declared a World Heritage Site. These islands, having a geostrategic location as they are at the bottom of the inlet known as Ría de Vigo, have been inhabited since the Iron Age. In fact, they were the base of operations of the famous pirate Francis Drake to attack the city of Vigo and its region.

The archipelago is well known for its amazing beaches, as the Rodas Beach; the seabeds, perfect for scuba diving; and its wildlife, including important colonies of yellow-legged gulls, European shags, northern gannets, common wood pigeons or doves, among others.



In the inland part of the province, those who love nature and birding can visit the hills known as **Serra do Candán**, an area included in the network Natura 2000 which has been protected for its rich ecosystem, including one-hundred-year-old woods, the banks of the rivers Deza and Lérez and shrublands which are specially made up of indigenous species. O Candán is also known for being the habitat of some endangered species as the Eurasian eagle owl or the golden eagle, and some more common ones as the northern goshawk.

All throughout the five hills of this range, there are elements of the valuable ethnographic heritage of the region, as mills; bridges; the Neveras de Fixó (in Forcarei), the stone structures where the monks of the Aciveiro Monastery used to produce and store ice, or the Brañas de Xestoso, a natural space of 1,077 hectares having areas of bog where birds as the hen harrier, the montagu's harrier or the short-toed eagle can be seen.

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