

BEST PRACTICES



Please leave rubbish in the bins provided



Walk on the marked trails



Please respect private property



Please refrain from making noise



Capturing animals is not permitted



Starting fires is strictly forbidden



Release of exotic species prohibited



Plant collecting is prohibited

Emergency phone: 112



CÓRDOBA

PARQUE NATURAL
Sierra de Cardena
y Montoro

MORE INFORMATION

Venta Nueva Visitor Centre.
Link with road N-420 with the CO-510, km 79. Cardena, Córdoba.
Tel. 677 982 786.

ventanadelvisitante.



© / Editing / Coordinación: Regional Ministry of Agriculture, the Environment and Rural Development Department of Sustainability, Environment and Blue Economy / Environment and Water Agency of Andalusia
Production and photography: Environment and Water Agency of Andalusia

OTHER CONSERVATION SCHEMES



ROUTE

Linear walk

LENGTH (ONE-WAY)

5.8 km

ESTIMATED TIME (ONE-WAY)

2 hours

DIFFICULTY

Low

TYPE OF TRAIL

Trail of compacted soil footpath

LANDSCAPE / VEGETATION

Holm oak meadows on a gentle, hilly terrain, which support extensive pig, cattle and sheep farming.

SHADE

Scarce / Frequent

SPECIAL AUTHORISATION

Not required

RECOMMENDATIONS

Carry drinking water and sun protection in summer and wear suitable clothing and footwear.

PROVINCE / MUNICIPALITIES

Córdoba / Cardena

SHEETS OF MTN MAP 1:50.000

882 - Cardena

START / END COORDINATES

38°16'21.32"N 4°19'5.78"O

38°17'1.89"N 4°15'19.22"O



HOW TO GET THERE

To get to the start of the path from the town centre of Cardena, take Robledillo Street, which joins the traditional Camino de los Madereros to the east. After about 400 m and passing under the N-420 road, you will find the starting point of the trail.



PARKING

There is car park at the start of the trail and there are also places nearby to leave your vehicle. It would be advisable to leave the vehicle in the town centre itself.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

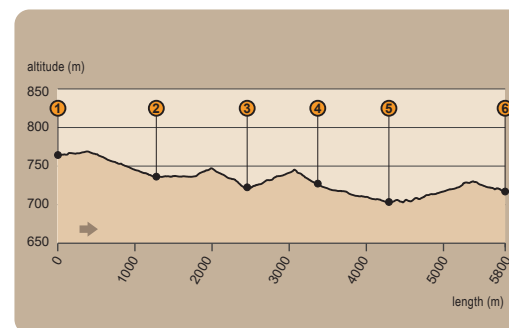
The company running regular bus routes in the area is Autocares Carrera (tel. 957 42 21 77; www.autocaresramirez.es) or Auto Transportes Ureña S.A. (tel. 957 40 44 79).



OTHER TRAILS

The natural park has many trails to discover it, among the closest to it are the Cardena - Azuel Trail, the Piedra Gorda Trail or the Cardena - Aldea del Cerezo Trail.

PROFILE OF ROUTE



MAXIMUM GRADIENT

66 m

MAXIMUM ALTITUDE

767 m

MINIMUM ALTITUDE

701 m



THE STONE WALLS

A large part of the Camino de los Madereros path is flanked on the right and left by granite walls, a characteristic feature of the whole area, which is common to many of the paths in the Cardena area and throughout the Natural Park. The traditional building technique of dry stone, which includes these walls in the region of Los Pedroches, was declared Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 2018 in a joint European candidacy, with a strong presence of the Mediterranean countries.

Granite stone, the most abundant rock in the area, has traditionally provided the raw material for building walls, ramparts, bases for huts, pens and sties and, above all, for the ubiquitous enclosure walls. Dry stone or rough-cut stone walls have been used and are used today to mark the enclosure of an estate and to diversify the internal management of the *dehesa* holdings.

The persons who had the skill of building walls and enclosures were called *paereros* professionals whose skill and ancestral wisdom allowed them to build kilometres of enclosure walls without using any cement or mortar, only knowing how to choose and place each stone, depending on its shape and size. Today, unfortunately, there are hardly any people left who still have the skill to build these walls, a skill which is also necessary for their maintenance, as some of them are up to 250 years old.

CÓRDOBA

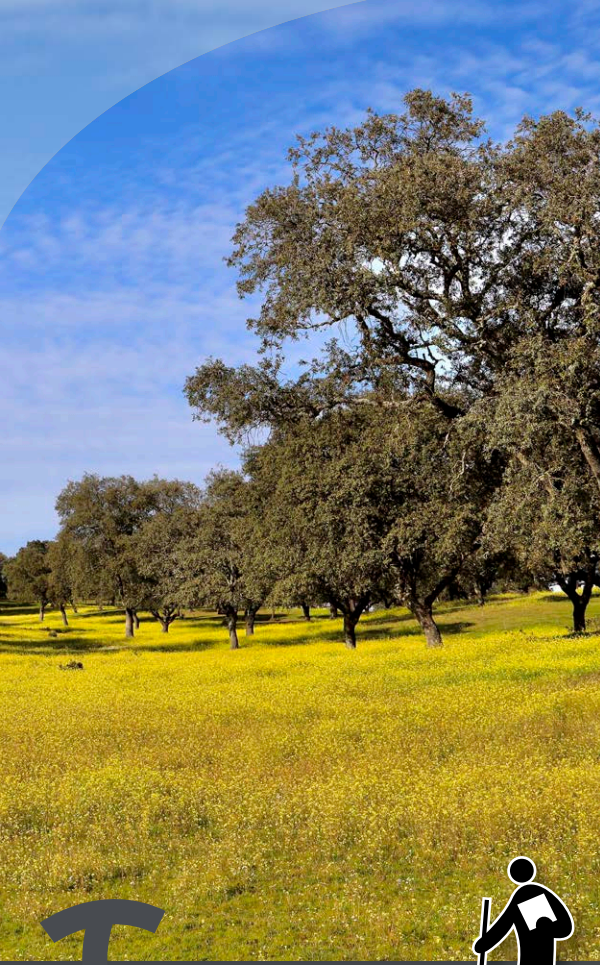
PARQUE NATURAL
Sierra de Cardena
y Montoro

Trail

Camino de los Madereros



Consejería de Sostenibilidad,
Medio Ambiente y Economía Azul



Trail

Camino de los Madereros



To get to the starting point of the trail, the easiest way is to leave from the town of Cardaña along Robledillo Street, from where the traditional Camino de los Madereros branches to the east. After about 400 m and passing under the N-420 road, you will find the starting point of the trail. If you come by road, it is easier to get there via the Cardaña-Azuel service road, which can be reached by leaving the main road at the exit at kilometre 81.

In general, this is a very comfortable linear path, which runs along a forest track with little gradient and a length (one way) of just under six kilometres. It crosses landscapes of *dehesas* dotted with holm oak flanked by dry stone walls of different types, where, from time to time, granite outcrops appear randomly or cut through the beds of small streams that drain surface runoff water during the rainy season.



You will start your route in an open meadow with young holm oaks that coexist with sheep protected by sheepdogs and extensive cattle; in spring, this meadow is full of bright colours thanks to the flowering of the herbaceous species that grow on it [1].

The cairns

If you look closely, you can see that stone piles of different sizes, covered with plant remains, can be seen on the farms around the road. These are the stones that stood on the way of ploughs or that were removed to improve pasture or crop production. Today, however, the pits have an additional function:



to serve as a protection and breeding area for rabbits in environments with little vegetation cover. Rabbits, an important link many food chains in the Iberian Peninsula, has been driven to the brink of extinction in some places by diseases such as myxomatosis and pneumonia. However, even where these diseases have taken a toll, in some places rabbit populations are even causing damage and measures are taken to control them. In general, rabbit population decline has had repercussions on predator populations to such an extent that the species that is the flagship of the Park and the pride of all Iberian fauna, the Iberian lynx, was in “critical danger of extinction”, and is still considered the most endangered feline on the planet. However, thanks to the implementation of public policies of captive breeding, habitat improvement and agreements with private farms to increase rabbit populations, it has been possible to recover their populations in just two decades, a huge achievement not very common in these times.

Dehesa creeks

If you continue along the track, after passing a strategically located farmhouse, you come across the Robledillo creek [2], with a well-marked riverbed and some large riverside trees, especially black poplars, in the vicinity growing in the abundance of water, both on the surface and, above all, in the subsoil. Remains of small hydraulic infrastructures reveal the human use of water. A little over a kilometre further on, the traditional Los Madereros Trail crosses another creek, the Risquillo [3], near which you can see the typical works of a *dehesa*, for the planting of fodder species for livestock consumption.



Within the sea of holm oaks, granite rocks appear from time to time, breaking the uniformity of the landscape, sometimes converted into hollow cairns for rabbit breeding. A little less than a kilometre from the stream, a small lagoon collects surface water runoff and serves as a veritable oasis for wildlife [4]. Partridges, pigeons, Iberian magpie, Eurasian hoopoe, wrens and other small birds of the *dehesa* use it as a watering hole, and it is a place of recreation for livestock, especially pigs.



Further on, near the end of the path, the path crosses a last watercourse: the Zas creek [5]. The path is lined with primitive stone enclosure walls, consisting of granite struts alternating with large vertical stone slabs in two or three courses at the most, which give it a much rougher but at the same time historical and even heritage aspect. After passing the entrance to the Cortijo de los Madereros, a signpost indicates the end of the route and the possibility of continuing along the Aldea del Cerezo-Azuel Trail. There is even the option of heading towards Azuel and returning to the Piedra Gorda Trail if you do not wish to return along the same route, depending on your time and energy.



Camino de los Madereros



| | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|---|---------------------|
|  | Camino de los Madereros Trail |  | Landmark (see text) |
|  | Other trails of the natural park |  | Trail |
|  | Road |  | Fountain |
|  | Footpath |  | Farmstead |
|  | Drovers' road | | |
|  | Boundary of Natural Space | | |

