

GOOD PRACTICE



Please leave rubbish in the bins provided



Walk on the marked trails



Please refrain from making noise



Your dog must always be on a leash

Emergency phone: 112



MORE INFORMATION

Regional Delegation in Malaga for Sustainability, Environment and Blue Economy. Avda. de la Aurora, 47. Multiple Services Building, 5th and 6th floors. 29071. Malaga. Tel. 951 77 70 08 / 670 94 88 94. ventanadelvisitante.es

PARAJE NATURAL
Desembocadura
del Guadalhorce

© / Editing / Coordination: 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

- Capturing animals is not permitted
- Fishing and hunting are prohibited
- Starting fires is strictly forbidden
- Camping is prohibited
- Access with motor vehicles is prohibited
- Cycling is prohibited (except for the first 220 metres)
- Flying drones is prohibited

MÁLAGA



UNIÓN EUROPEA
Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural



Junta de Andalucía
Consejería de Sostenibilidad,
Medio Ambiente y Economía Azul

PARAJE NATURAL
Desembocadura
del Guadalhorce

Trail

Laguna Grande



Junta de Andalucía
Consejería de Sostenibilidad,
Medio Ambiente y Economía Azul

• ROUTE

Linear walk

• LENGTH (ONE WAY)

1,9 km

• ESTIMATED TIME (ONE WAY)

1 hour

• DIFFICULTY

Low

• TYPE OF TRAIL

Compacted ground track

• LANDSCAPE / VEGETATION

Landscape of riverside, lake and marine ecosystems, with a great diversity of species of wild fauna and flora, especially aquatic birds and certain mammals and reptiles of interest. Panoramic views over the city of Malaga, the mountainous limestone arc that frames it and also over the coast and the sea.

• SHADE

None

• SPECIAL AUTHORISATION

Not needed to walk along the trail, but no unauthorised access to the lagoons or their surroundings is allowed.

• RECOMMENDATIONS

Bring binoculars, drinking water, sunscreen and wear suitable clothing and footwear.

• PROVINCE / MUNICIPALITIES

Málaga / Málaga

• SHEETS OF MTN MAP 1:50.000

1053

• START / END COORDINATES

36° 40' 21.17" N - 4° 27' 49.26" O

36° 40' 6.03" N - 4° 27' 12.24" O



HOW TO GET THERE

Take exit 3 (San Julián and Guadalmar) at km 4 of the MA-20 motorway. Continue towards Guadalmar and turn left at the roundabout at the entrance to the housing estate, along Calle Guadalhorce. You can park near the church and continue on foot for about 300 m along Calle Guadalhorce. Take the dirt track that climbs up to the left, next to a stone gate with a chain and walk north-west for another 260 m until you reach the starting point of the path.



PARKING

There is no car park at the trail. Parking can be found nearby.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

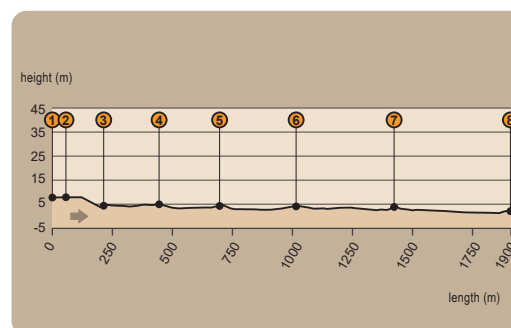
You can get the bus to the trail area. The city bus company in Malaga is the EMT (Empresa Malagueña de Transportes 952 36 72 00, www.emtmalaga.es). The number 5 bus goes to Guadalmar, you should get off at the first stop on Calle Manuel Curros Enríquez.



OTHER TRAILS

The Río Viejo trail also starts from the same point. You can opt to follow a circular route, linking both paths on a stretch of about 700 m along the beach. The resulting circular route has a total length of 4 km and is of low difficulty.

PROFILE OF ROUTE



• MAXIMUM GRADIENT

6,48 m

• MAXIMUM HEIGHT

7,74 m

• MINIMUM HEIGHT

1,26 m

THE PHOENICIANS OF CERRO DEL VILLAR

If there ever was a population of navigators who have stood out in history for their intrepidity and daring, it is the Phoenicians. Like the Vikings, they set out into uncharted waters in search of new lands and cultures. But unlike the Vikings, the Phoenicians spread throughout the Mediterranean, linking civilisations through trade, cultural and religious exchanges, and bringing together numerous artistic forms of the ancient world.

Around the 8th century B.C., those navigators from present-day Lebanon arrived at a vast marshy area at the confluence of the sea and the river Guadalhorce. An inhospitable and shifting place, it was also a strategic enclave for their trade routes. And there, on an island at the mouth of the ancient estuary, they established one of the oldest Phoenician settlements on record: that of Cerro del Villar.

The mouth of the Guadalhorce provided an exceptional means of reaching the indigenous settlements in the surrounding area and other more distant communities, such as the regions of Ronda and Antequera, the fertile plains of Granada and the Guadalquivir valley. Minerals, cereals, wine, oil and garum (a delicacy of the time extracted from salted fish) filled the amphorae and other vessels made from the clays of the Guadalhorce valley, for a trade that spread throughout the Mediterranean.

When they could no longer withstand the continuous flooding and the accumulation of sediment that clogged the mouth, they moved to the bay, 7 kilometres from the first settlement. It was in the 6th century B.C. and it was here that the Phoenician Malaka, the origin of the city of Malaga, was founded. They managed to stay on the Cerro del Villar for 200 years.

Since 1998, the site of Cerro del Villar has been declared a Site of Cultural Interest (BIC), catalogued as an "Archaeological Zone" by the Junta de Andalucía.



The delta formed by the two branches of the Guadalhorce river at its mouth is a protected natural area of great ornithological value with more than 260 species of birds, as it is one of the most important stopovers and resting points for migratory birds in the region. This is due to its location on the coastline and its proximity to the Strait of Gibraltar. It is a wetland area that has, as an added value, elements typical of coastal and river ecosystems in a reduced space, where we find diverse habitats with their particular characteristics and species, coexisting in harmony and sharing transition spaces. The Laguna Grande trail shows us, safely and with little effort from the visitor, the value that this unique coastal area treasures.

The origin of the lagoons

The start of the trail [1] is located next to the pedestrian bridge that crosses the right arm of the river, with its back to the Phoenician site of Cerro del Villar and, as the gateway to Spanish ornithology for the rest of the world, just a few minutes from the airport. The trail shares the first 450 metres with the Rio Viejo trail, skirts several wetlands, including the Laguna Grande, and ends at a wild beach, formed by the waves and water from the Guadalhorce, flowing from the inland mountains. The Laguna Grande is the largest flooded area of the nature reserve; like the rest of the lagoons in this area, it has its origins in the sand and gravel extractions carried out between 1977 and 1982. Rain and infiltrated water filled the depressions left by the excavations after their abandonment and the landscape we enjoy today is the result of the restoration work carried out on those ancient wetlands.

Life on the river

The first few metres of the route run along the Guadalhorce riverbed [2]. From the bridge, you can make out the banks of the river, populated by tamarisk, eucalyptus and reed beds where the white poplars are beginning to regenerate. Depending on the time of year, you will be able to see common house martins, swallows, herons, cormorants and even birds of prey.

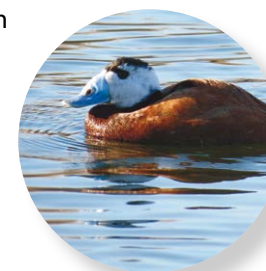
After 100 metres you will come to a fork where the path separates from the Senda Litoral de Málaga [3]. This path leads to the town by the road on the left. Enter the river mouth through the gate on the right. A corridor of reeds leads you to the next junction [4], where the Río Viejo path peels off. Following the signs, turn right. The characteristics of the path, wide, compact and practically flat, enable environmental, educational and scientific activities to be carried out in the natural area.

Life in the lagoons

Holm oaks, pomegranate trees, wild olive trees, quince trees, reeds, bearberries, stone pines and more: many interesting plants line the path to the lookouts of the lagoons. In a bend to the left, over what used to be the loading bay of the old gravel pits [5] that form part of the recent history of the Guadalhorce, there is a panoramic view of the Laguna de la Casilla, the city itself and the rocky outlines of the mountain ranges that frame the Hoya de Málaga. You will come to the Laguna Escondida lookout point [6] after a little more than 300 metres. Its waters are less salty than those of the other wetlands in the area. Among the usual birds in this lagoon, a threatened Anatidae stands out: the white-headed duck.



On the way to the next observatory, you will see the remains of old irrigation channels, half-hidden by vegetation, running parallel to the path. These are atarjeas, the old irrigation channels for the sugar cane, a remnant of the agricultural past of the natural space. You will soon come to the Laguna Grande lookout point [7], which is high up for the best view and birdwatching. In the waters of Laguna Grande, which are saltier than those of the previous wetland, you will be able to see, depending on the time of year, flamingos, black-winged stilts, avocets, egrets, northern shoveler ducks, mallards, shelducks, cormorants, black-billed gulls, sandpipers, grebes and grey and purple herons, among



many others. You may be able to see birds of prey such as the osprey, the booted eagle and the marsh harrier.

The beach

Leaving the Laguna Grande behind, the trail continues through a more open area populated by sedge, tamarisk, glasswort and reeds. Among the vegetation, the inlets and outlets of the lagoon complex can be glimpsed. The fresh sea breeze announces the nearby beach.



Where the murmur of the waves becomes a roar, there is a very vulnerable habitat of psammophilous vegetation (typical of coastal sands) in the process of regeneration. And here, among the sea lily, the sea fennel and the sea caterpillar, is the largest breeding population of the Kentish plover on the coast of Malaga.

The path ends at the beach [8], which is one of the few stretches of coastline in our province with natural features.

Trail

Laguna Grande



Laguna Grande Trail	Landmark (see text)
Other trails of the natural park	Observatory
Road	Trail
Path	Bridge
Protected Natural Area	Panoramic view
	Archaeological remains
	Coastal Path Footbridge

