



One of the most important inhabitants of the reserve is the "Rocín" or Dupont's Lark (Chersophilus dupontii), a small brown bird that is in danger of extinction. It is not easy to see, like most steppe species its plumage, combined with a shy and elusive nature enable it to hide itself from predators effectively. However its distinctive melancholy song delivered from a grassy tussock or small rock tells us there is one nearby (You can listen to an example here: <http://www.seo.org/ave/alontra-rocin>).

An expert in hide and seek



The steppe areas in Aragon have been threatened by change in land use and farming practices over the past decades. Therefore, in land use and farming practices over the past decades. Therefore, to combat this, in 1992 SEO / Birdlife created the Ornithological Reserve of El Planerón through the purchase or ceding of plots of privately owned or municipal land.

Through the creation and maintenance of the reserve, SEO / Birdlife aimed to protect those areas which at that time were in their natural state as well as undertaking restoration projects in degraded areas. Because of its great environmental value and unique character, El Planerón is a SCI (Site of Community Interest) and SPAB (Special Protection Area for Birds).

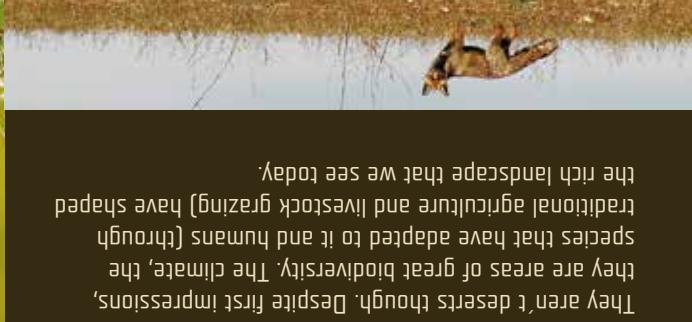
If you would like more information, visit the website of the reserve: www.elpaneron.org

A reserve for birds



Adapting strategies to survive

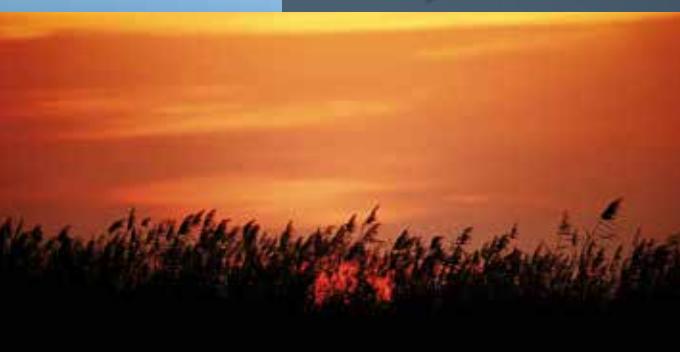
To live in this tough environment, plants have developed different survival strategies. For example, many of them are small and have a small cushion-shaped form, hugging the ground to protect themselves from the wind. In addition small leaves reduce water loss whilst at the same time long roots close to the surface help capture more rain water.



They aren't deserts though. Despite first impressions, they are areas of great biodiversity. The climate, the species that have adapted to it and humans (through traditional agriculture and livestock grazing) have shaped the rich landscape that we see today.

- High temperatures in summer
 - Low and irregular rainfall
 - Strong winds
- The Aragonese steppes are ecosystems which have adapted to a very harsh climate, with:

Steppes, not deserts



Be aware you are in a very fragile environment. Follow conservation codes, do not collect plants, insects or animals nor leave the marked paths.

Take care not to disturb nests and nesting areas. If you do come across one, leave it alone, that way you'll keep it safe from predators.

REMEMBER

Keep quiet. By avoiding disturbing the animals and birds you will find more signs of their presence.

Follow a no litter policy, keeping any rubbish to be deposited in a container later.

For your personal safety and to get the best from your visit you should take: comfortable clothes, appropriate footwear, water and protection from the sun and wind.



Reserva Ornitológica
El Planerón

How to come



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-  Pond
-  Car parking
-  Corral de Pelayo
-  Observation hide
-  Irrigation ditch/channel
-  Limit of the reserve
-  Ornithological transects
-  Roads
-  Pond vegetation
-  Paths
-  Information point panel

 Maximum recommended speed on the reserve's roads

To find out more about the reserve and the Aragonese steppes, two self-guided itineraries have been created. Both of them have marked waypoints (you can view the accompanying texts on the reserve website) and to explore each of them will take you about **an hour** at a relaxed pace.

To participate in gathering information about the reserve

If you would like to collaborate with us by gathering information about the birds of the reserve, you can do so by following the ornithologic transects that have been created through the different habitat types. In addition there are data collection sheets available for interested visitors on the reserve website and at the visitor center. To find out more about participating in this vital work, please consult our website.



Some species of the reserve

