

ANIMAL GUIDE



Breed in the park



Resident birds



Winter birds



Summer birds

GREATER FLAMINGO

Phoenicopterus roseus

The Flamingo's curved beak and muscular tongue are perfectly designed to filter small invertebrates from the water. Adults are pink whilst the juveniles are a delicate grey. Although they do not breed in the Park they are present throughout the year with largest populations in the summer.



LITTLE EGRET

Egretta garzetta

One of three kinds of Egret found in the Park, the Little Egret is medium sized, completely white with long black legs and contrasting yellow feet as if it were wearing socks! Its long, narrow, black beak is perfectly designed to spear fish and amphibians.



BLACK-HEADED GULL

Chroicocephalus ridibundus



For most of the year this gull has a white head with a black spot by the eye, only developing the black head in the summer. Both the Latin and Spanish names refer to its 'laughing' call. It feeds on insects, fish, seeds and even visits landfill sites in the winter.



BLACK-WINGED STILT

Himantopus himantopus



A medium-sized bird, like a small stork, unmistakable with its long red legs. The long, narrow black beak is used to capture aquatic insects and worms in the mud. The nest is a scrape in the soil near to water, sparsely adorned with twigs. If the water rises, we have seen the parents roll the eggs to safety.



SHELDUCK

Tadorna tadorna



This sturdy-looking duck has a white body with dark and chestnut patches and a dark head and neck. In the breeding season the male has a distinctive red bill with a knob at the base. Their food consists of small creatures and plant material within the water. In the Park they breed in rabbit burrows and other hollows in the earth within the 'Motas' or earth barriers between the salt pans.



SLENDER-BILLED GULL

Larus genei



A little larger than the Black-headed Gull, but with a slender, long, dark red bill and with a rosy chest in the summer. This gull feeds on insects, crustaceans and small fish and the Park supports large breeding colonies. The nests are simple depressions in the soil and are placed close to each other.



AVOCET

Recurvirostra avosetta



With distinctive black and white plumage, blue legs and a long fine beak curving upwards. It captures insects, worms and crustaceans within the water by moving its beak from one side to another as if it were 'mowing' the water.



KENTISH PLOVER

Charadrius alexandrinus



A small bird commonly seen on the dunes and sandy beaches where it searches for insects, crustaceans, worms and molluscs amongst the marine debris. It is threatened by disturbance and by the clearing of the brown remains of Neptune grass from the beaches during the summer when it breeds.



AUDOUIN'S GULL

Ichthyaeus audouinii



The largest of the three gull species, it has a red beak with a black point and its black tail has white circles. Often seen on beaches catching small fish from the surface. This gull is endemic to the Mediterranean and its numbers are declining due to the reduction in fish stocks as a result of pollution, development and overfishing.



EUROPEAN GREEN WOODPECKER

Picus viridis



A largely green woodpecker with a red head, it is often first spotted because of its laughing 'yaffling' call and its bouncy undulating flight. It feeds on ants which it extracts from the ground and from trees with its long, sticky tongue.



SANDERLING

Calidris alba

A small white and brown wading bird, it feeds by rushing after waves on the shore looking for invertebrates and worms in the shallows. In the Park, it is often seen with other waders including Little Stint, Red Knot, Curlew Sandpiper and Dunlin.



SPANISH TOOTHCARP

Aphanius iberus

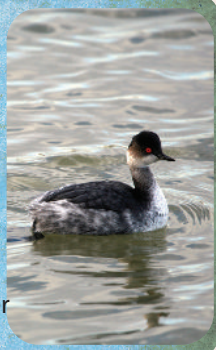
A small fish, less than 5 cm. long which lives in the shallows of both fresh and brackish waters. It feeds on algae and small aquatic invertebrates including mosquito larvae. It is endemic to the Iberian Peninsula and is in danger of extinction due to habitat destruction and displacement by the introduced mosquito fish.



BLACK-NECKED GREBE

Podiceps nigricollis

This grebe looks a little like a small grey and black duck in the winter but in the breeding season it sports yellow ear tufts and a black head and neck. An accomplished diver, it can chase and catch fish and aquatic invertebrates under the water.



LITTLE TERN

Sternula albifrons



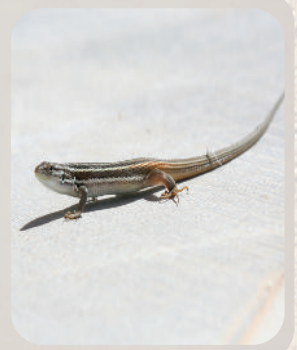
The smallest of the terns and the only one with a black-tipped yellow beak, it is often first spotted because of its chattering call. It feeds on small fish and crustaceans by darting into the water from the air like an arrow. Other terns that use the Reserve are Gull-billed, Common and Sandwich Terns.



LARGE PSAMMODROMUS

Psammodromus algirus

A large brown lizard reaching 20 cm. in length, with two thirds comprising the tail. It feeds on mosquitos, flies, spiders and other invertebrates. In the Park you may also see other lizard species, snakes (non-venomous!), and the elusive Bedriaga's Skink which is endemic to the Iberian Peninsula and gives birth to live young.



CORMORANT

Phalacrocorax carbo

With long necks and dark body, cormorants swim low on the water. They are excellent fishers, diving from the surface and using their wings as well as their feet to propel them. The feathers are not impermeable so after a fishing session they are often seen with their wings spread out to dry.



BRINE SHRIMP

Artemia salina

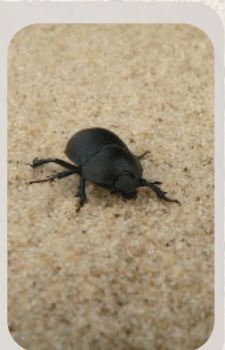
This primitive crustacean is like a living fossil, having been around for over 200 million years. It is less than 2 cm. long but can easily be spotted because of its orange colour. Capable of living in extreme environments like the salt lagoons, it plays an important role within the habitat, feeding on micro-organisms and serving as food for flamingos and the endangered fish; the Spanish Toothcarp.



DUNE BEETLE

Pimelia sp.

A rounded black beetle with long legs giving it some protection from the hot sand although it prefers to spend the hottest part of the day underground. It helps to recycle organic material in the dunes by feeding on detritus in the sand.



HOW TO ENJOY OBSERVING THE ANIMALS WHILST RESPECTING THEIR HABITAT

- * The animals are best appreciated from the pathways and hides. The wooden boardwalks over the dunes help to conserve these fragile habitats.
- * Watch with patience and silence – you will see more wildlife. In the breeding season (from April to September), be especially careful.
- * A photograph or drawing is the best memory of your visit. Collection of animals, eggs or nests is prohibited.
- * Please help to keep the Regional Park free of litter. Use reusable containers and bottles
- * If you come across an injured animal please contact the emergency telephone number: 112.

