



CENTRO DE RECUPERAÇÃO E INVESTIGAÇÃO DE ANIMAIS SELVAGENS
RIA FORMOSA - OLHÃO



Instituto da Conservação
da Natureza e das Florestas

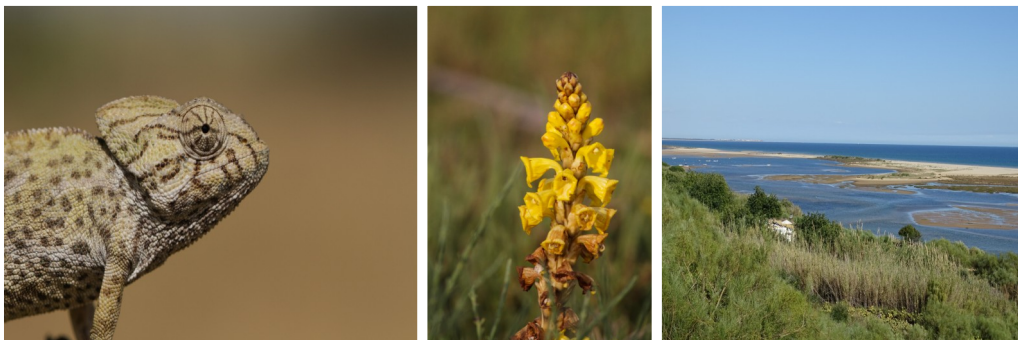


ROBINSON'S
CLUB QUINTA DA RIA

NATURAL PARK RIA FORMOSA
INFORMATION FLYER

The Ria Formosa Natural Park (PNRF) is located in the eastern half of the Algarve and extends for 60 km along the coast, distributed in the counties of Faro, Loulé, Olhão, Tavira and Vila Real de Santo António. This protected area was created on December the 9th, 1987.

It is characterized by the presence of a coastal sand dune that protects a partially submerged lagoon area. This protected area includes a wide variety of habitats, including barrier islands, marshes, dunes, salt marshes, freshwater and brackish ponds, agricultural areas and forests.



Due to the unique characteristics and geographic location, this area is considered an area of great importance for birds and is classified as an International Wetland and a place of Interest by the Ramsar Convention, Special Protection Area for Birds and Site of Community Interest.

The diversity of habitats in the PNRF provides an enormous wealth of species of flora and fauna, sometimes quite distinct and particular for each habitat. Around 700 species of plants have been recorded so far, almost 290 mollusks, more than 70 fish and approximately 200 species of birds are observed annually.

Advise of conduct in a natural park:

- Do not throw trash on the floor
- Avoid fires and be careful when smoking
- Keep distance from animals and avoid disturbing them by touching them or making too much noise
- Do not collect plants
- Avoid leaving the existing rails

The Robinson Club Quinta da Ria is included in this protected area and its surrounding area covers a very important diversity of emblematic habitats of this natural park. Consequently, these habitats allow the existence of several characteristic flora and fauna species.

The predominant vegetation in the park are marshland species. Some examples are: Small Cordgrass (*Spartina maritima*), Glaucous Glasswort (*Arthrocnemum macrostachyum*), Sea Purslane (*Halimione portulacoides*), Desert Hyacinth (*Cistanche phelypaea*) and the Algarve endemic Sea Lavender (*Limonium algarvense*).

Inside the Natural Park you can still find the traditional fruit tree orchards like Fig Tree, Almond Tree, Carob Tree and Olive Tree. For many centuries, this type of agriculture represents an important environmental and socio-economic value for the Algarve region.

Ria Formosa Natural Park is an important spawning area of species such as Sea Bream (*Sparus aurata*) or White Seabream (*Diplodus sargus*) and also hosts other species such as Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) and one of the most important communities of Sea Horses (*Hippocampus hippocampus*) in the world.

This area is also an important mollusk production site with a considerable area of nurseries, accounting for about 80% of the country's exports in this specialty.



This protected area holds several Mammal species like Otter (*Lutra lutra*), Egyptian Mongoose (*Herpestes ichneumon*), Badger (*Meles meles*) and Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*).

Two species of reptiles have important populations in the Natural Park: European Pond Turtle (*Emys orbicularis*), a very threatened species of fresh-water turtle in Europe, and Common Chameleon (*Chamaeleo chamaeleon*), one of the most emblematic species of the Ria Formosa. Finally, the Ria Formosa ecosystem is fundamental for a great diversity of species of birds, mainly aquatic. The different existing habitats provide relevant wintering areas to many species and nesting areas to others, some of which have a worrying conservation status such as Audouin Gull (*Ichthyetus audouinii*), Little Tern (*Sternula albifrons*), Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) and the PNRF symbol, Purple Swamphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*).

However, the PNRF does not only host aquatic bird species. The vast diversity of ecosystems covered by the entire protected area allows the existence of an important wealth of bird species such as Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*), Iberian Magpie (*Cyanopica cooki*), Spotless Starling (*Sturnus unicolor*), Little Owl (*Athene noctua*) or the Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*).