

LOS CAMPANARIOS

Oeste Iberico - Campo de Azaba
Espeja - Castilla y Leon - Spain

N° max clients each year

270 people

Opening period

All year round

Accommodation

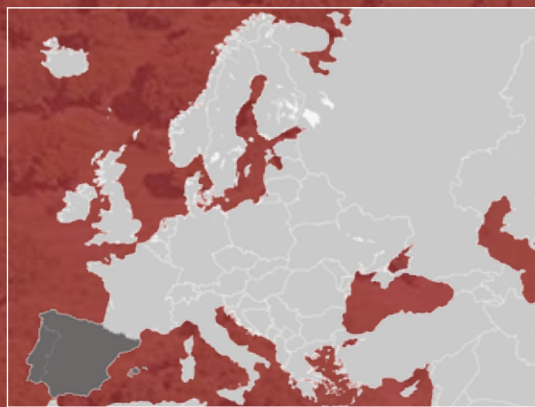
4 stars casa rural inside the reserve,
comfortable rooms with en-suite bathrooms,
patio, little library, birdgarden.

Contacts

campanarios@skuanature.com

10
Photo Hides

522
Hectares



LOS CAMPANARIOS



LIVING THE WILD DEHESA



The dehesa, like many other mediterranean environments, preserves one of the highest level of biodiversity not only in Europe; it is classified as one of the global hot-spots. It is made of open woodlands of very old Holm oak, Cork oak and Portuguese oak, a man made habitat created thanks to his activities through the centuries, with the presence of cattle, pigs and sheep. Today the property takes part in a rewilding project, and this has allowed the introduction of Retuertas horses (one of the oldest breed in Europe) and of aurochs-like cattle: these free roaming herbivores help preventing wild forest fires and maintaining open areas, and therefore guarantee an higher level of biodiversity. Another ongoing project deals with the restocking of Wild Rabbits, in order to be able to have again, in the near future, Iberian Lynx and Spanish Imperial Eagle, whose diet consists largely of rabbits. A large-scale project whose ultimate goal is to bring back the Castilla y Leon region to its original naturalness, trying to maintain unaltered, as much as possible, the features of the open woodland of the dehesa which guarantee the survival of such a varied flora and fauna.

The western border of the reserve corresponds with the border with Portugal, while a few km to the east there is the historical town of Ciudad Rodrigo. The reserve is easy to reach from Madrid airport (3 h) as well as from the airport of Porto (2,30 h).

A hilly landscape among centenary oaks, holm oaks and cork oaks, wild horses and local cattle breeds. A rural landscape entirely dedicated to nature photography.



THE RESERVE

In collaboration with:



Campanarios de Azaba Biological Reserve was created by the Naturaleza y Hombre Foundation as a part of a LIFE + Nature project. Declared as Site of Community Importance, it's also included in Natura 2000 Network. It's a hilly land with several dirt roads used to reach the photographic hides and the biological station or just to enjoy relaxing nature walks, in total exclusivity and peace.

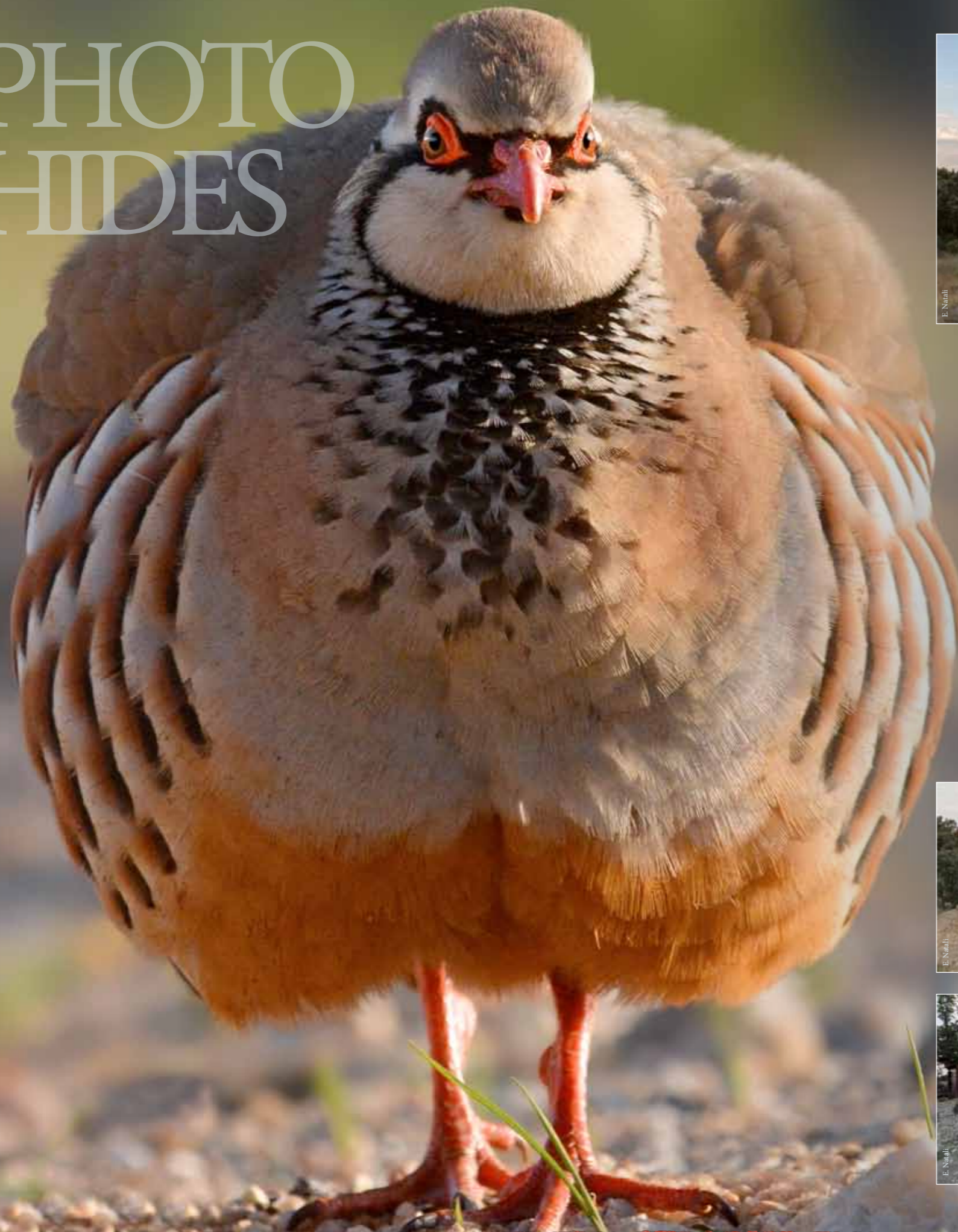
Thanks to the presence of different kinds of habitats, the Reserve represents now an important refuge area for fauna and flora, including not only birds and mammals but also reptiles, amphibians and insects. Immersed in the Mediterranean woods of the Reserve, the "Monte Mediterraneo" Biological Station is an important centre of monitoring and nature conservation projects and here professional courses dedicated to several naturalistic topics are held. The building is made of wood and it's perfectly integrated with the surrounding landscape, fed by solar energy. Thanks to the incomes of nature tourism, it will be possible to run significant conservation actions and field researches aiming to contribute to the protection of this environment of extreme ecological importance.



Within the Reserve, on the top of a hill from where you can enjoy a magnificent view over the boundless dehesa, there is a small and comfortable 4 stars rural house, preciously enriched with details that recall the natural world, an old fireplace perfectly working and a well-stocked corner-library. In spring and summer, meals are normally served outside, in the patio, under the porch surrounding the building, to fully enjoy the wonderful panorama and the animals that frequent the little birdgarden. The rural house has 8 suites with bathroom and 2 living rooms with large windows that allow a complete immersion in the spanish landscape, giving the chance to see some curious red foxes approaching during meals, as well as Azure-winged Magpie and Red-legged Partridge that come to the feeders. This eco-lodge follows the criterion of minimum environmental impact.



PHOTO HIDES



Inside the property some new generation hides have been built: in some cases structures already existing have been utilized, well integrated in the territory, like troughs and low buildings originally built by shepherds, while in other cases new facilities have been designed and built from the beginning, in order to attract birds. In addition to the hides designed for vultures, there are now many different kinds of drinking-points, from the pool in a lavender field, where beautiful backdrops for passerines are guaranteed, to an innovative arboreal hide able to attract the most elusive tree dwellers like various woodpeckers and Golden Orioles, to hides in the surroundings of the lodge, focused on the species more related to agropastoral habitats.

CALENDAR **S** **O** **N** **D** **J** **F** **M** **A** **M** **J** **J** **A**

INFO skuanature.com - campanarios@skuanature.com



T. D'Arcangelo

PHOTOGRAPHY



Developed as "Ultimate Reserve", the reserve has more than 522 hectares, equipped with many latest generation photographic hides: from the drinking hide at the height of the trees canopy to partially buried hides for vultures, from nocturnal hides to the tower hide for birds in flight; in Campanarios photographers can have a wide choice and the results are amazing! Furthermore photographic expeditions to strategic locations in surrounding areas will allow to increase the range with other interesting species of the Oeste Iberico, such as Spanish Ibex. Specially trained guides will be at the disposal of photographers. Campanarios represents a different concept if compared to a simple photographic trip to places often enjoyed by a multitude of other people, families and tourists. The Reserve offers an exclusive service in order to supply to the needs of the most demanding nature lovers. The photographable species from the hides are various: from the drinking hides, they vary from Great and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker; to numerous typically mediterranean passerines, like Cirl Bunting and Dartford Warbler; to species more related to woodlands, such as Nuthatch and Short-toed Treecreeper; or to open areas such as Iberian Azure-winged Magpie, Spotless Starling and Rock Sparrow. The undisputed star here is Red-legged Partridge, especially when it leans over the edge of a pool to drink, but occasionally also Brambling, Golden Oriole and Rock Bunting show up. Among the target species are Black Vulture, Black Stork, Booted Eagle, Red Kite, Egyptian Vulture and many more.



*A little pearl of biodiversity
in the wild dehesa*



VULTURE LAND



LOW PERSPECTIVE HIDE

The first pecks to open a way through the hard skin of the dead herbivore, their heads covered in blood, their harsh calls in the air, the charges and attacks to defend their own vital space... but also the overall view of the whole group feeding, the conflicts between Cinereous and Griffon vultures, the dead trees covered with the dark shapes of the resting vultures: our biggest vulture hide offers all this and much more, at ground level, with the best perspective guaranteed.



At the break of dawn, when the skies are crossed by light clouds in their warm colours, the silhouettes of vultures and kites stands out against the sapphire sky on top of the old oaks. When the first lights hit them, they spread their wings to dry off the dew drops, take a look around and...they realize they're hungry! A banquet has been prepared for them, but they are suspicious: will it be entirely safe? The first kites start to circle in the air, getting closer and closer, always a bit lower, and then suddenly descend to collect small meat scraps. Eventually the first braves to actually reach the banquet are always the Cinereous Vultures, followed by Griffon Vultures: when the sun is high in the sky, the meal has started.



TOWER HIDE

Anyone can easily take pictures of flying vultures against the sky in Spain, being pretty widespread species, and therefore we have chosen to try and offer something different to our clients. Trying to follow the flight of a skydiving vulture against the dark green background of tree canopies can make the autofocus go crazy, but when talent and luck work together, then the resulting photos can really be masterpieces. How many photographers want to take up our challenge?



CLOSE-UP PICTURES HIDE

Seeing a raptor in action is an unmatched experience, but being able to see it so close to actually feel like being part of the group of the feeding vultures, is an unimaginable emotion. You will be amazed by the vivid colours of the bare skin of a Cinereous Vulture, you will be able to take pictures, at a distance of only a few metres, of the messy white feathers on the neck of a Griffon Vultures under the rain, in a raindrops frenzy, and remain speechless in front of the beauty of the pure white plumage of an adult Egyptian Vulture.

M. Bassoli

BIRDS

The Los Campanarios de Azaba property is a real treasure of ornithological jewels. Not only vultures, but also Red Kites, Black Kites, Booted Eagles and Short-toed Eagles regularly fly over the oak tree tops looking for preys, while by the pools rich in amphibians herons and Black Storks take advantage of the croaking banquet. Some of the most colourful european birds are common here, from Bee-eaters to Azure-winged Magpies, from Hoopoes to Golden Orioles, small granivores passerines like Serins, Goldfinches and Cirl Bunting gather in the more open and grassy areas, while the lichen covered trunks attract a multitude of tits, Short-toed Treecreeper and Nuthatch. The more experienced birdwatchers will have the chance to test themselves in the identification of difficult species such as Crested and Thekla Larks, or with the multitude of juveniles and female warblers in the Brooms and Junipers during the summer; with interesting species like Dartford, Subalpine and Sardinian Warbler.

It is possible to organise dedicate expeditions in order to find and photograph particular bird species, inside or in the immediate surroundings of the property, including dedicated night sessions looking for owls and Red-necked Nightjar as well as setting up temporary hides to maximise photo opportunities. Find out how to do it!

CALENDAR **S** **O** **N** **D** **J** **F** **M** **A** **M** **J** **J** **A**



M. Meridi



I. Zuccolo



M. Meridi



M. Meridi



P. Jacz



M. Meridi



M. Meridi



C. Gouffier



Aech. FSVYH

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES



The Los Campanarios de Azaba property is a very interesting hotspot for amphibians, with at least 11 species recorded, whose importance has grown over the years thanks to the closure, with fences, of some of the richest pools, in order to protect their herpetofauna. The coming and going of large animals like cows, domestic and wild pigs had caused the water to become murky and a reduction of the riparian vegetation, which is vital for larvae and adults of Iberian Ribbed Newt, Marbled Newt, Iberian Midwife Toad, Western Spadefoot, Natterjack Toad and Tree Frog. Fire Salamander and Bosca's Newt are present in the more shady streams inside the property.



D. Culliani

Reptiles are harder to find, but by no means less interesting: so far 10 species have been recorded, with the biggest being Montpellier Snake, with some individuals reaching a length of over two metres. In more wet areas we can find Viperine Water Snake, one of the worst enemies of the amphibians. A typical inhabitant of the ditches, and therefore hard to see, is the Iberian Worm Lizard: it spends most of his life digging tunnels in the soft ground, and you can sometimes find it under stones and logs. Various species of lizards are present, including Iberian Wall Lizard, Spiny-footed Lizard, Large Psammmodromus, Western three-toed Skink and, above all, Ocellated Lizard, the biggest lizard in Europe, with individuals reaching a length of over 80 centimetres.

It is possible to organize special expeditions for finding and photographing amphibians and reptiles, with dedicated boatrides and jeep rides, night sessions, and it is also possible to set up temporary terrariums and aquariums to maximise photo opportunities. Find out how to do it!

CALENDAR **S O N D J F M A M J J A**



M. Blasod

PLANTS

The dehesa is mainly made of Holm Oak, Cork Oak, Portuguese Oak and Narrow-leaved Ash. The shrub layer has been largely removed and replaced by open grazing areas, but where it's still present, especially in steep and wet slopes, is made of Common Gum Cistus, Broteri Peony, White Spanish Broom and French Lavander, with a few rare Common Hawthorn and False Olive. A multitude of wild flowers are present, including Winter Narcissus, Andalusian Dutchman's Pipe, Onionweed, Flax-leaved Daphne, Autumn Squill and many more.

CALENDAR **S O N D J F M A M J J A**



MAMMALS

In addition to the species introduced thanks to the Rewilding Europe project, that are Retuertas horses, from Doñana, and aurochs-like cattle, there are many mammals inside the property: Wild Boar; Roe Deer and Red Fox can be observed also during the day, while Granada Hare becomes more visible at night. Strictly nocturnal carnivores like Weasel, Beech Marten, Polecat, Badger and, above all, Egyptian Mongoose, Common Genet and Wild Cat are definitely harder to spot. Smaller mammals are rather poorly known, though Garden Dormouse and Leisler's Bat have been recorded.

CALENDAR **S O N D J F M A M J J A**



INSECTS



A. Barranti



A. Verdugo / A. Barranti



T. Naranjo / A. Barranti



F. Mico / A. Barranti

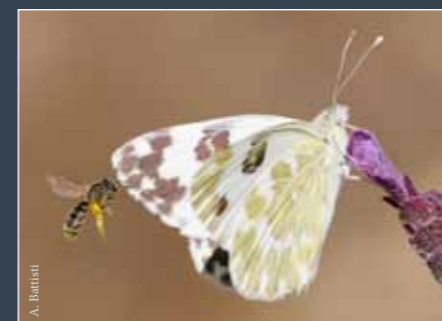


A. Barranti

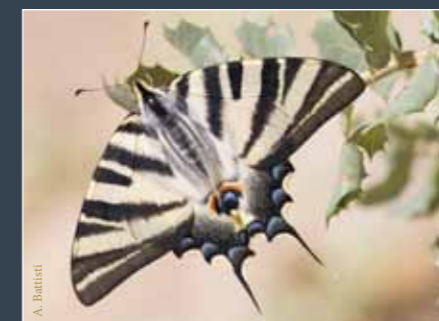
Campanarios was declared First Entomological Reserve of Spain by the Spanish Association of Entomology.



M. Basoli



A. Barranti



A. Barranti



A. Barranti

In 2013 the Reserve was declared First Entomological Reserve of Spain by the Spanish Association of Entomology. Campanarios de Azaba hosts indeed a considerable amount of Arthropods and populations of Insects included in the EU Habitat Directive, as *Euphydryas aurinia*, *Limoniscus violaceus* and *Cerambyx cerdo mirbeckii*, sign of a healthy environment. In addition to these, 20 species of beetles included in the European IUCN list have been identified, 6 of which are considered most threatened. Being "Entomological Reserve" it means it represents an important site for the conservation of entomological species, but also a place where important studies, surveys and measures to protect wildlife are carried out as well as specific training programs, held by the Biological Station located inside the reserve. Campanarios de Azaba is a perfect place where to enjoy macro-photography sessions, alone or with the support of our local guide.

CALENDAR **S O N D J F M A M J J A**

INFO skuanature.com - campanarios@skuanature.com



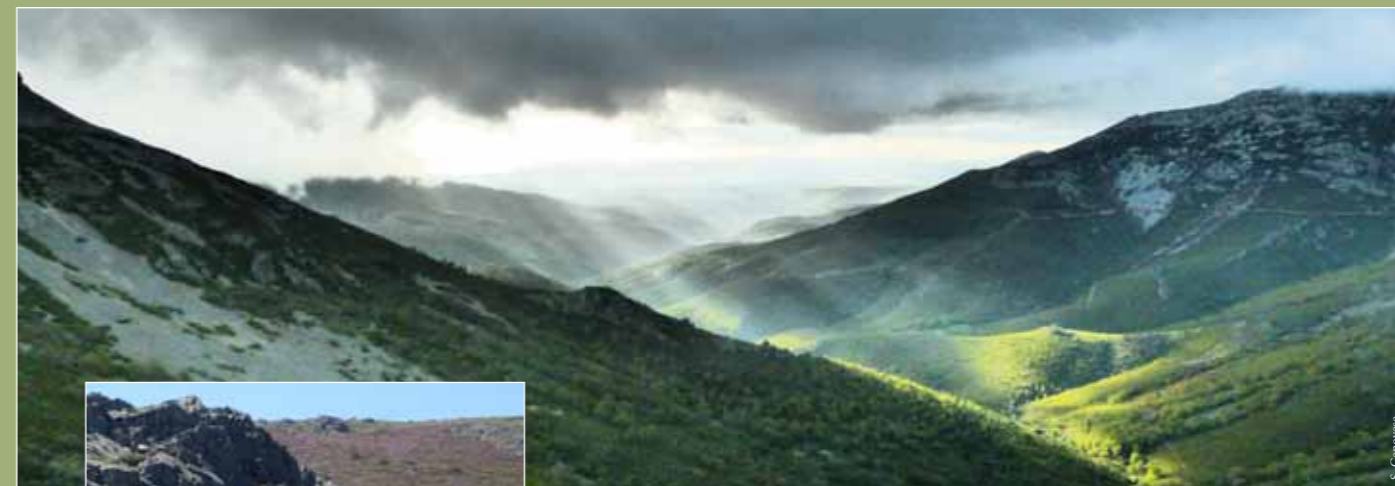
M. Basoli

THE WILD "OESTE IBERICO"



The Mediterranean ecosystem hosts one of the most high levels of biodiversity in the world. For this reason it was catalogued as hotspot of biodiversity. Campanarios de Azaba is located within an area called "Oeste Iberico" (West Iberian), which includes territories of Extremadura, of a part of Castilla y Leon and Portugal. The wildlife is a key element in the territory due to the impressive list of threatened species that inhabit here, as Spanish Ibex, Iberian Lynx, Black Vulture, Egyptian Vulture, Spanish Imperial Eagle, Black Stork, Bonelli's Eagle and Peña de Francia Rock Lizard. In addition there are other interesting species as European Roller, Black-winged Kite, Eagle Owl, Great spotted Cuckoo, Great Bustard, Little Bustard, Lesser Kestrel that contribute to enrich the precious natural heritage of the Oeste Iberico.

M. Bastold



T. D'Avanzolo