





## The Angueira river fauna

### Protected area

Site of Community Importance and Special Protection Area of the rivers Sabor and Maças

### Location

Algosó, Vimioso

## Castelo de Algosó Trail

This trail is located in an area of mountainous relief, indented by the deep valleys of the rivers Sabor and Maças. The Angueira river, a tributary of the Maças river, is noteworthy due to its excellent state of conservation and impressive biodiversity. Its particular fauna is precisely the subject of this trail, from which four species stand out due to their particular beauty, conservation importance and abundance in the region.

The otter (*Lutra lutra*) is a mammal adapted to semiaquatic life, essentially nocturnal, that may be sporadically observed in the daytime, preferably from a distance. Its presence may be confirmed by its characteristic footprints and scats accumulated on the river banks.

The Mediterranean pond turtle (*Mauremys leprosa*) is a small to medium-sized freshwater turtle, with a brown-greenish body and carapace with light spots. It is abundant in the Angueira river where dozens can be observed basking on large rocks, particularly in Spring.

The white-throated dipper (*Cinclus cinclus*) is a small bird, stout, with brownish

plumage and white throat and chest. The compact and bulky body is adapted to dive into fast running waters to capture invertebrates.

The kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) is a small unmistakable bird, with an exuberant plumage, bright blue above and chestnut-orange below. Its long beak is adapted to capture small fish and aquatic invertebrates. It is relatively common in the Angueira river and can be observed mainly in fast, direct and low flights over water.

To spot these species two points of observation were defined: one in an open area that forms a little weir; and another one around the medieval bridge.

The recommended period for observing fauna is Spring, when species have higher activity levels. There is not much shade, so it is inadvisable to take this trail during the hottest days.



## Fauna

Although the trail highlight is the Angueira river fauna, the animal diversity along the surrounding areas is equally noteworthy.

The Algosó village, where this trail starts and finishes, is itself a place with great bird diversity. The house martin (*Delichon urbicum*) is worthy of note, with hundreds nesting in the eaves of houses every year.

The impressive slopes of the Angueira river are visible from the castle. Those slopes serve as shelter and nesting place for many bird species. The most common one is possibly the crag martin (*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*), but the bird of prey communities are the main focus. Species such as the kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*), the peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), the Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*), the griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*) as well as the very rare Bonelli's eagle (*Aquila fasciata*), are all frequent presences in these rocky massifs.

From the castle to the river the trail crosses farming fields and shrublands, habitats of countless common species. Among the most abundant are birds, like the common chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*), the European greenfinch (*Chloris chloris*) and the Dartford

warbler (*Sylvia undata*), and reptiles such as the Algerian psammmodromus (*Psammmodromus algirus*).

Close to the river, other species shelter on the riparian galleries. The beautiful Eurasian golden oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*) and the melodic cetti's warbler (*Cettia cetti*) are usually present. The common wall gecko (*Tarentola mauritanica*) appears associated with rocks, whereas amphibians, such as the Perez's frog (*Pelophylax perezi*), use the transition area between water and the banks.



On the way back to the village, small water tanks are also occupied territories. Particularly newts, such as the Iberian newt (*Lissotriton boscai*), use these water points for reproduction.

- The Bonelli's eagle is a species in danger of extinction in Portugal and of priority conservation in Europe

- The Eurasian golden oriole is a migrant species that is present in this area from late April to the beginning of September

**EURASIAN GOLDEN ORIOLE**  
(*Oriolus oriolus*)

**BONELLI'S EAGLE**  
(*Aquila fasciatus*)



# Flora and vegetation

Along this trail, that passes by the Algosgo castle and goes on downwards to the Angueira river, it is possible to observe different types of shrublands and thickets, where different bushes grow, such as the gum rockrose (*Cistus ladanifer*), the white Spanish broom (*Cytisus multiflorus*), the common broom (*Cytisus scoparius*), the floriferous greenweed (*Genista florida*) and the Spanish lavender (*Lavandula pedunculata*). Close to these shrublands you will probably observe a small endemic species from the centre of the Iberian Peninsula, the sharp leaf spurge (*Euphorbia oxyphylla*). This species has a strange and vernacular name in Portuguese ('*dick fatter*') due to its latex vasodilation properties.



Along the temporary brooks, tributaries of the Angueira river, grow ash trees (*Fraxinus angustifolia*) woodlands accompanied by Mediterranean hackberry (*Celtis australis*) and St. Lucie cherry (*Prunus mahaleb*) trees.



Close to the Angueira river woodlands and shrublands diversity is higher, with alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) woodlands, sage-leaved willow (*Salix salviifolia*) thickets and box (*Buxus sempervirens*) shrubs, growing in the banks with torrential current. Several amphibian plants colonize soils that are in the shade of willow thickets and alder woodlands.

•For the surrounding area of this trail are described 8 types of habitat of community importance and about 153 taxa of vascular flora

• Common box is a species classified as Endangered in the Portuguese Red List of Vascular Plants. Shrublands of this species correspond to the habitat 5110, protected by the Habitats Directive

COMMON BOX  
(*Buxus sempervirens*)

SHARP LEAF SPURGE  
(*Euphorbia oxyphylla*)

# Geology

Geomorphology is an important natural element to register along the Castelo de Algosgo trail, which manifests itself by ridges and steep valleys.

The Algosgo castle is built upon quartz ridges surrounded by very cracked schist rocks. Here you can observe pelitic schists, green schists and exceptionally '*borra-de-vinho*' schists (with purplish shades).



Rocks cracking, besides having a great influence on the landscape, constitute a good hydrogeological indicator.



The main watercourse of the region, the Angueira river, stretches itself along a tectonic valley. In some of its banks stand out accumulations of pebbles, particularly in the confluence with one of its tributaries, the Prado stream. In this place, fluvial erosion cavities (river giant potholes) are also visible.

Along this trail it is worth noting the presence of a bridge, dated from the Roman Period, which is built in four types of rocks: quartzite, quartzphyllite, schist and granite.

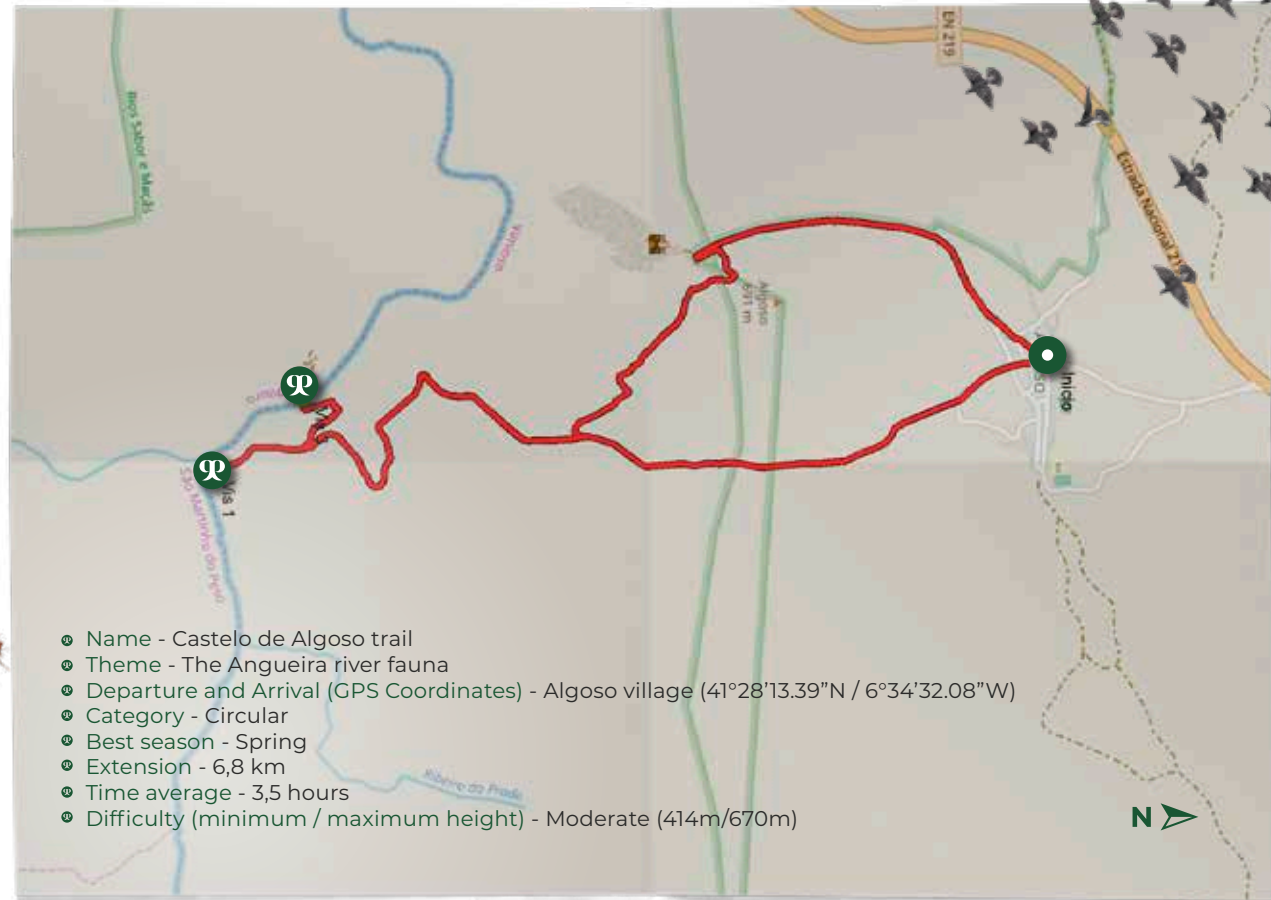
• The relief contrasts are a dominant note along the trail, where quartz ridges stand out

• Schists and quartz alternations are a characteristic of the trail and mark important scenery variations

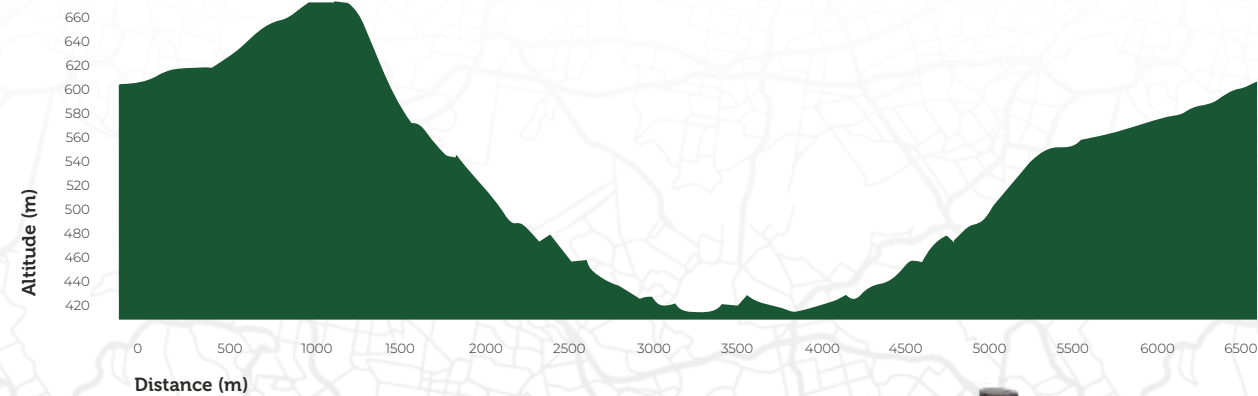
THE ALGOSGO CASTLE, PICTURESQUE ERECTION IN QUARTZITE

BRIDGE ERECTED WITH FOUR TYPES OF ROCKS





• Start • Observation point



#### Useful contact numbers

- Town council (+351) 273 518 120
- Tourist office (+351) 273 518 120
- Fire brigade (+351) 273 512 145
- GNR (National Republican Guard) (+351) 273 512 216
- Forest protection (+351) 117
- SOS (+351) 112

#### Attention

- Follow only the marked routes
- Avoid noise and attitudes that disturb local peace
- Do not disturb animals, observe them from a distance
- Do not collect plants, animals, rocks or artifacts
- Do not light a fire
- Do not litter; please use the containers provided



In the Portuguese and European contexts, *Terras de Trás-os-Montes* (Lands of Trás-os-Montes) present a unique natural value, with extraordinary ecological and ecotourist potential, still unknown. It is a region with countless protected areas, rare species and incredible natural events.

The *Nove Passos* (nine steps) project aims to unveil this incredible natural heritage; while promoting the conservation of the region's main natural values, through the dissemination of 9 trails.

We thus suggest a complete adventure, carried out in 9 steps, one per municipality, all within the most important protected areas for Nature Conservation in Portugal.

In each step, we suggest a carefully selected trail to explore specific natural themes, which, in one way or another, represent the natural areas where they are inserted.

The Castelo de Algosos trail is one of the suggested natural steps. Come and meet them all and stamp your natural passport.



Visit these 9 themes of biodiversity, geology and landscape and become an expert in the *Lands of Trás-os-Montes*.

#### 9 Castelo de Algosos trail

The Angueira river fauna - Vimioso

Next steps

#### 9 Sabor trail

Sabor lakes - Alfândega da fé

#### 9 Carvalho trail

Red deer - Bragança

#### 9 Quercus trail

Birds at the Azibo reservoir - Macedo de Cavaleiros

#### 9 São João das Arribas trail

Vultures - Miranda do Douro

#### 9 Vale de Lobo trail

Cork oak and prickly juniper woodlands - Mirandela

#### 9 Cascata da Faia da Água Alta trail

Cascata da Faia da Água Alta - Mogadouro

#### 9 Vilarinho das Azenhas to Ribeirinha trail

River Tua riparian gallery - Vila Flor

#### Biospots (Alto da Círdelha) trail

Butterflies and other invertebrates - Vinhais





9passos.cim-ttm.pt

TERRAS DE **TTM**  
**TRÁS-OS-MONTES**

CIM-TTM  
Comunidade Intermunicipal  
das Terras de Trás-os-Montes

Rua Visconde da Bouça, AP 238  
5300-318 Bragança - PORTUGAL  
T. +351 273 327 680

www.cim-ttm.pt  
facebook.com/terrasdeTrasosMontes  
instagram.com/terrasdetrasosmontes

**NORTE2020**  
PROGRAMA OPERACIONAL REGIONAL DO NORTE

**PORTUGAL**  
**2020**



UNIÃO EUROPEIA  
Fundo Europeu  
de Desenvolvimento Regional



**Terras de**  
**Trás-os-Montes**  
Comunidade Intermunicipal