

The badger, a new species at the Primera Laguna de Palos lake

It lives all over the Iberian Peninsula preferring areas with high diversity of uses (extensive crops/forest) avoiding highly anthropized areas or areas with large populations, and intensive crops. The Palos lake area is characterized by the latter, which is why so much importance is attached to the Badger's presence, in protecting this natural space while at the same time denoting its good state of conservation. The nearest towns are located in Doñana and on the outskirts of the Odiel Marshes.

Badgers are omnivores, and quite voracious feeders. They eat all kinds of small animals such as worms, insects and small mammals, also scrub fruits (palmito, camarina, blackberries, hawthorn) and play an important role in dispersing seeds. Its main prey in the Doñana area is the rabbit. It is known for eating honeycombs, which they attack without fearing the bees.

Although it usually hunts alone at night, it is a very social species, in fact the badgers in the colony have a high level of communication. There are a few of them in the south, but they are quite numerous in the north.

Badgers have a curious reproductive procedure, with a deferred implantation of the embryo (blastocyst), so, although the gestation period is about two months, childbirth does not occur until about 11 months (late fall) after mating (December-January).

Badgers are a valuable addition to the Primera Laguna de Palos Lake, which already hosts other medium-sized mammals such as the otter, wild boar, fox, ichneumon, genet and weasel; there are also small mammals, including the water rat (*Arvicola sapidus*), an endangered species which is very different from the common rat.

Laguna Primera de Palos Lake

The Laguna Primera de Palos Lake (a natural freshwater lagoon) is included in the Network of Protected Areas of the Regional Government of Andalusia and classified as a Nature Reserve. Since 2005 it has also had a RAMSAR classification (International Convention for the Conservation of these spaces). The Lake actually stands on land owned by Cepsa.

In 2000, the company collaborated with the Regional Government of Andalusia in the restoration of a natural area defined by the Protected Areas Act. This space, an example of commitment linked to one of Cepsa's values, sustainability, is a treasure trove of biological diversity and a focal point for the

recovery of vulnerable species. Since its restoration, Cepsa has invested around two million euros in research, maintenance and public use.

Fundación Cepsa is a general interest, non-profit entity with the goal of undertaking initiatives to serve the needs and priorities of the local communities where its founder, COMPAÑÍA ESPAÑOLA DE PETRÓLEOS S.A.U. (Cepsa), conducts its activities. The areas of action for Fundación Cepsa are social, cultural, environmental, scientific-educational, and support for amateur sports.

Fundación Cepsa

info@fundacioncepsa.com

www.fundacioncepsa.com