

## **Code of conduct**

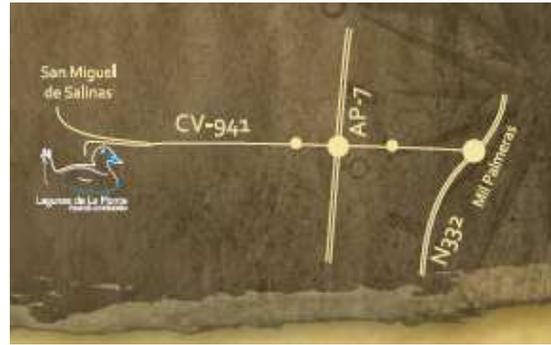
-Watch animals from the places fitted out to do so and as quietly as possible. In silence, animals will not be frightened and your observation will be more fruitful.

-Avoid all that is liable to cause a fire, not only making fire, but also leaving glass, throwing cigarettes away, etc...Even the smallest oversight can have very serious consequences.

-Respect the plants and animals you find during your visit. Do not pick up any plant or animal species. The preservation of biodiversity is very important for the conservation of the nature reserve.

-Put rubbish in the bins.

-If you take your dog do not leave it unleashed, it is forbidden



## **Access**

The Municipal Nature Reserve “Lo Monte Ponds” can be reached using the national road N-332 or from the motorway AP-7 taking the exit that leads to road CV-941 towards San Miguel de Salinas. Once on this road, a little over 2 kilometres away we have to take the exit that goes to the EDAR.

## **Useful telephones**

Environment Department: 96 535 22 25 Ext. 280-281

Mobile phone: 608 00 90 42

Town Hall: 96 535 22 25

Emergencies: 112

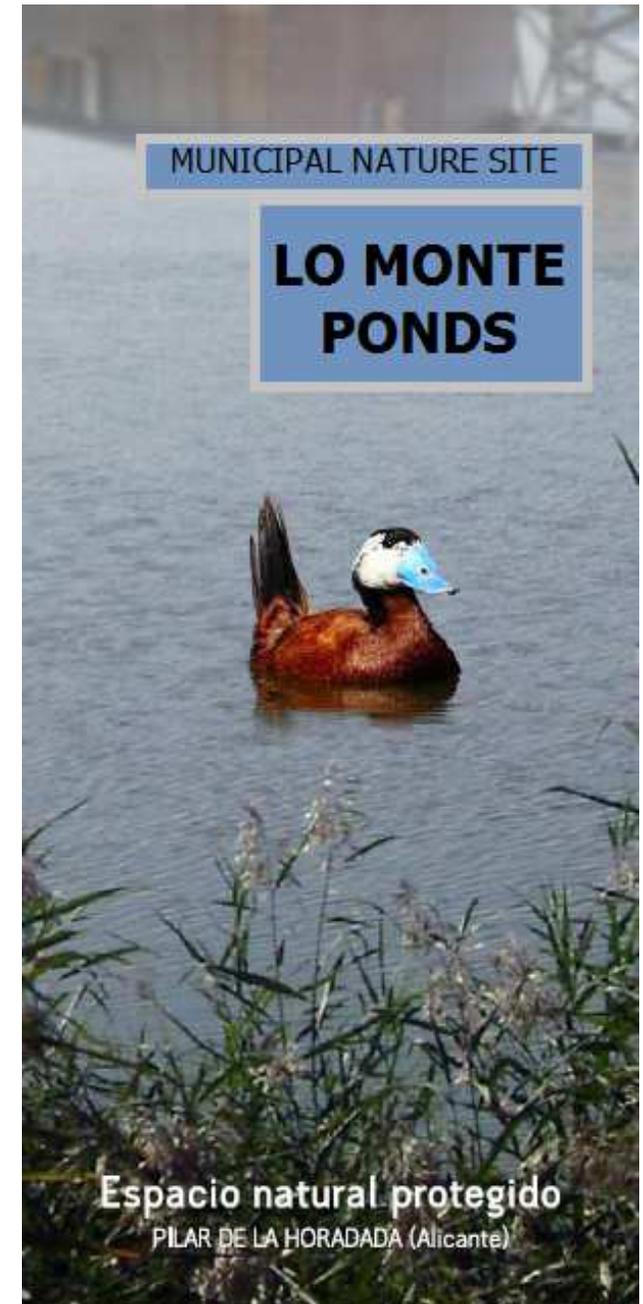
Local Police: 96 535 23 34–696 962 343

E-mail: [medioambiente@pilardelahoradada.org](mailto:medioambiente@pilardelahoradada.org)

Tourist Info: 96 676 70 68

[www.pilardelahoradada.org](http://www.pilardelahoradada.org)

[www.cth.gva.es](http://www.cth.gva.es)



The Municipal Nature Site is located north of Pilar de la Horadada's town centre, part of the Vega Baja region on the south of the Alicante province. The Nature Site is 10,3 hectares including two ponds of nearly 80,000 square metres of water surface located at the Lo Monte Site near Dehesa de Campoamor. The ponds were built in 1989 as part of a waste water filtration system. Today the ponds maintain their water levels due to the flow from the Wastewater Water Treatment Plant (EDAR) that uses a tertiary treatment, so the ponds accumulate water for its use in agriculture and watering in public gardens.

### **Flora**

The area that surrounds the ponds is a slope with bushy vegetation and Aleppo pines (Mediterranean scrubland with pines on limestone crust over red loam); thyme, rosemary, European fan palm, mastic, kermes oak and generally shrubs associated with *Rosmarinus officinalis et Globularia alypum* (Rigual 1972) are predominant.

Near the ponds and along the perimeter dirt roads there are canes, tamarisks (*Tamarix canariensis*), rushes and some true grasses alternating with other species.

### **Fauna**

The fauna that is found in the surroundings of the Municipal Nature Site and within the site itself is made up of different associations between the pine forest and the Mediterranean scrubland and lacustrine area.

The ponds are very important due to the nesting of the **White-headed duck** (*Oxyura leucocephala*), which is an endangered species (under Decree

32/2004), and it has found here an outstanding breeding place, as proven by the new couples that chose this place in 2010 for egg-laying and to get their offspring ahead. Coots, with over twenty couples, Common shelducks with ten, and Pied-billed grebes with twenty couples are the aquatic species best represented. Two hundred specimens of Northern shoveler have been counted.

In total, 36 water birds species from 11 different families have been watched, predominantly Anatidae, specially White-headed ducks (*Oxyura leucocephala*), Common shelducks (*Tadorna tadorna*) followed by Herons, of which Grey herons and Cattle egrets are more abundant; the Purple heron, Squacco heron and Little bittern are usual visitors.

Regarding nesting birds, the reproduction of 13 species was verified during the monitoring period like Purple swamphens (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) or Common shelducks (*Tadorna tadorna*) but the White-headed duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*) is the most important, making the Lo Monte Ponds Nature Site

their second reproductive place in the Valencian Community, playing an important role for the maintenance as nesting birds of this endangered Anatidae in our region.

Another group of interest are Broad-billed sandpipers and Sterns. It is also interesting the presence of groups of Gull-billed terns (*Sterna nilotica*), a species of which 40 specimens have been registered.

Lastly regarding birds, species like Cormorants, Sea hawks, Flamingos, Western marsh-harriers, Little owls, Barn owls, Common kestrels, Bee-eaters, Reed warblers, Stone-curlews can be watched.

Regarding reptiles, there are Spanish pond turtles, snakes, toads, frogs, ocellated lizards, Iberian wall lizards, etc...

Regarding mammals, in the pine forests near the ponds we can easily see rabbits, squirrels, hedgehogs and also foxes, genets, weasels, wildcats and European badgers.