



Photo: S. Torrens

# TORRENT DE PAREIS NATURAL MONUMENT



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To notify the authorities of or request authorisation for any of these activities, please contact the Nature Area Management Office,  
C/ del Rector Joan Mir, s/n (Football field facilities)  
Valldemossa  
Telephone 971 61 28 76  
Fax. 971 61 24 93

- All activities and uses that are incompatible with the conservation of the area are prohibited, and particularly those listed below:
- The extraction and collection of dry or any other geological matter
  - Opening new trails, routes or paths
  - Big and small game hunting in the streambeds, in the mouth of the stream and in the paths and trails for public use
  - Any activity that might alter the aquatic systems
  - Camping outside of expressly authorised sites
  - The installation of signs, posters, billboards or similar items other than those envisaged by the competent management body
- The following activities require prior notification:
- Conducting research projects
  - Sports and recreational activities when the number of participants is greater than 20 and less than 40
  - Sports and recreational activities when the number of participants is equal to or greater than 40
  - The installation of new climbing anchors in the stream areas where rappelling is practiced
  - The establishment of new climbing routes
  - Big and small game hunting
  - The controlled burning of foliage and sections of land
- The following activities require authorisation:
- Sports and recreational activities when the number of participants is greater than 40
  - Sports and recreational activities when the number of participants is equal to or greater than 40
  - The installation of new climbing anchors in the stream areas where rappelling is practiced
  - The establishment of new climbing routes
  - Big and small game hunting
  - The controlled burning of foliage and sections of land

## RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES REQUIRING PRIOR NOTIFICATION OR AUTHORISATION, AND PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

## THE TORRENT DE PAREIS, TORRENT DES GORG BLAU AND TORRENT DE LLUC



Photo: M. A. Ballester

The stream's topography and landscape are the products of the abrasive action of the stream water on calcareous stone and the dissolution of rock due to contact with rainwater. These processes have given rise to karst formations and created caves, chasms, fields of lapies, dolines, etc. In the case of the Torrent de Pareis, they have also led to a large tectonic fracture, with visually spectacular results.

The Torrent des Gorg Blau originates at Tossals Verds. Its course was altered in 1972 with the construction of the Gorg Blau reservoir. With a basin measuring 14 square kilometres and an altitude difference of

627 meters, the gorge becomes more pronounced in its final section, where the canyon's towering walls and narrow breadth block the entry of natural light. These features, together with the high level of humidity, make for an extraordinary and unique ecosystem locally known by the descriptive name of *Sa Fosca*, or, "the dark spot".

The Torrent de Lluc runs through the valley of the same name and continues into the Clot d'Albarca valley. The basin of this stream covers a surface area of approximately 28 km<sup>2</sup>, with an altitude difference of 500 m.

## EXCURSION THROUGH THE TORRENT DE PAREIS



Photo: M. A. Ballester

The Torrent de Pareis is unquestionably one of Mallorca's natural wonders, and possibly its most spectacular. Born at an altitude of 150 metres, out of the confluence of two streams, the Torrent des Gorg Blau and the Torrent de Lluc, in an area known as S'Entreforc, the Torrent de Pareis meanders down to the sea along its 3.3-km course amid canyon walls that tower as high as 200 metres. The descent, which moves SE-NW, has an average gradient of 5.14% until it reaches the sea at Sa Calobra.

The Torrent de Pareis received its protected status through Balearic Islands Government Decree 53/2003, of 16 May, which declared the three streams, Torrent de Pareis, Torrent des Gorg Blau and Torrent de Lluc a Natural Monument (BOIB No. 79, of 5 June 2003).

Some years later, the entire area of the monument was included within the Serra de Tramuntana Nature Area, through the Balearic Islands Government resolution of 16 March 2007 (BOIB No. 54 Ext., of 11 June 2007). The stream is also a Natural Area of Special Interest (ANEI) by virtue of Law 1/1991, of 30 January, on Natural Areas and the Urban Planning Schemes for Special Protected Areas of the Balearic Islands, with further protection by virtue of its inclusion in the Natura 2000 Network as both a Site of Community Importance (SCI) and a Special Protection Area for Birds (SPA).

This is an extremely difficult trek, particularly at certain points along the course of the stream. Each year, there are rescues of visitors who venture out on this excursion without the necessary preparation or expertise. Unfortunately, these careless outings usually end with complicated rescues, and occasionally human lives are lost.

To ensure a safe excursion and avoid accidents, it is important to be in good physical condition and to go along with an experienced hiker who knows the stream well. Never set out on this trek alone.

If you know the stream and you are physically prepared for this hike, please remember that the high temperatures in the summer make it advisable to begin the trek as early in the day as possible and to bring along plenty of water, given the risk of

sunstroke. In the winter, the excursion is more difficult, as the accumulation of water in streambed pools makes it a very dangerous route that requires the use of technical equipment (neoprene suits, the appropriate footwear, etc.).

The trek begins at the houses of Escorca, at kilometre 25.2 of the Andratx – Pollença highway (Ma-10). From here, you will go down a trail to the stream, until you come to S'Entreforc. Next, follow the streambed, always seeking the easiest spots for passage, to avoid slips and falls, until you reach the sea, at Sa Calobra. This should take approximately 5 hours.

It is not advisable to follow this excursion upstream through the canyon from Sa Calobra if you do not know the stream extremely well, as there are places where it is very easy to get lost.

## FLORA AND FAUNA



*Alytes muletensis*  
Photo: Sebastià Torrens

Still surviving in particularly inaccessible areas of the stream is a small population of the Mallorcan midwife toad (*Alytes muletensis*), an endangered amphibian exclusive to Mallorca that is protected by law. There are also a number of small endemic invertebrates, such as the snail species *Iberellus balearicus* and the leaf beetle (*Timarcha balearica*).

As to the birds, the stream boasts abundant populations of the rock dove (*Columba livia*), the blue rock thrush (*Monticola solitarius*) and the crag martin (*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*). The most noteworthy mammals in the area include those of the weasel family, the wood mouse (*Apodemus sylvaticus*) and the domestic goat (*Capra hircus*), as well as a number of different bat species.



*Vitex agnus castus*  
Photo: Sebastià Torrens

The Torrent de Pareis is home to more than 300 plant species, 10% of which are endemic to the Balearic Islands.

The endemic species found here include the Balearic foxglove (*Digitalis minor*), the *Pastinaca lucida*, the *Viola jaubertiana*, *Delphinium pictum* and the *Pimpinella bicknellii*. Abounding at the mouth of the stream is the chaste tree (*Vitex agnus castus*).

Mention must also be made of a number of plants with very limited distribution in Mallorca, which have found an ideal habitat in the streambed. Such is the case of the English holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), the bay laurel (*Laurus nobilis*) and the maple species *Acer opalus subsp. granatense*. Another noteworthy aspect of the flora in the area is the presence of nearly all of the island's known fern species.



**TORRENT DE PAREIS  
NATURAL MONUMENT**

-  Natural Monument
-  Torrent de Pareis itinerary
-  Parking area
-  Temporary information point
-  Beach



 Limits of the Nature Area

Puig Major de Son Torreia