



ARXIPÈLAG  
DE CABRERA  
PARC NACIONAL  
MARITIMOTERRESTRE



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**Guide to the Museum**  
Man and nature

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*Museo de Cabrera Es Celler*  
Rubén Casas Oché.

*Cabrera Port.*  
Sebastià Torrens →





## Guide to the Museum

### Man and nature



# Presentation

*We can see Cabrera Island as a natural ecosystem in which man has generated a little cultural ecosystem. Both ecosystems together constitute the heritage that the National Park intends to protect, investigate and make known to the public.*

*Considering Es Celler's ethnographical and historical value, the exhibition shows mainly some aspects of the cultural legacy of Cabrera. The exhibition is structured in three thematic sections –history, ethnography and natural resources– corresponding to each level of the building. They are united by a common idea: the scarce resources of Cabrera have determined simple lifestyles and the formation of small communities almost unknown (subdued to by faint echo of whatever was happening in Majorca).*

*Stories and ways of living that you will find written by their creators.*



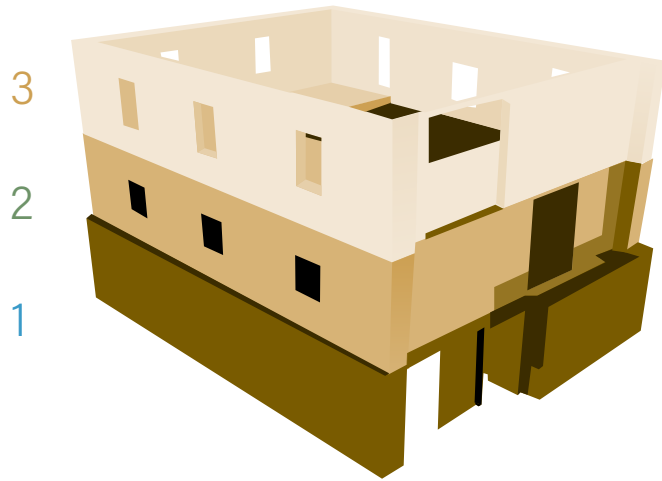
Cabrera Port.  
Guillermo Orell

Cabrera Es Celler Museum.  
Ruben Casas Oché →



# *Es Celler* Museum

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**History**



**Ethnography**

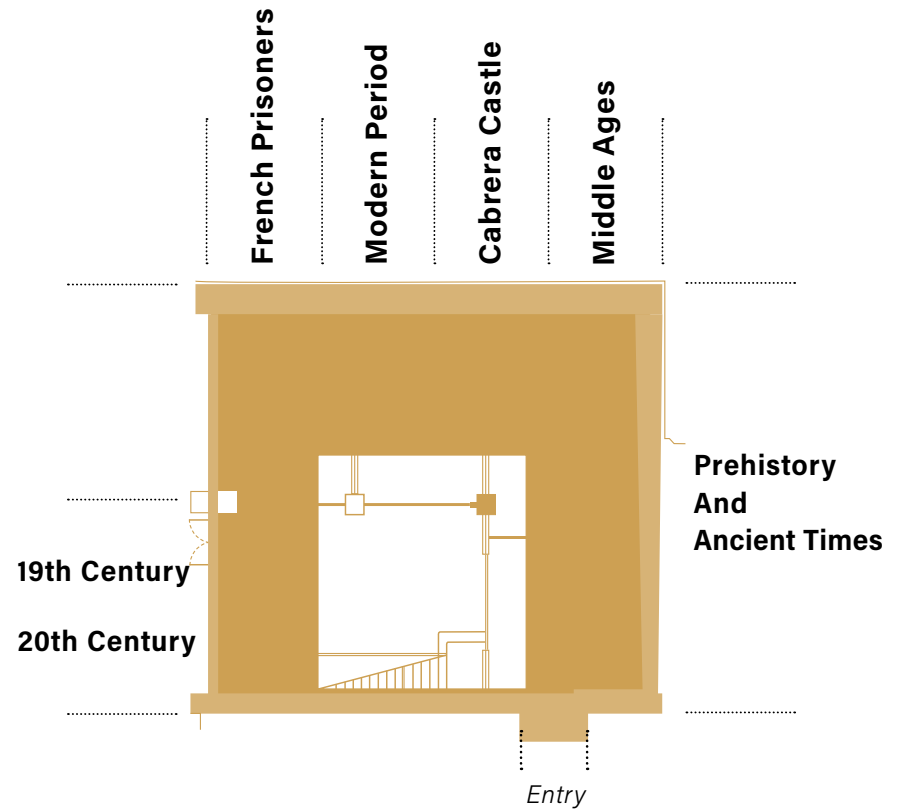


**Natural Resources**



# HISTORY

## FLOOR 3



## Introduction

In this room we suggest, as Valentí Puig does in his poem, an immersion in the past. To achieve this, maybe we only need the silhouette of the castle in the silence of any night in Cabrera. However, we have some more images here. The history of Cabrera is made of disconnected remnants: the flashes of a beacon in the haze of time. We hope it will help you to discern the historical outline of the island.

### CABRERA

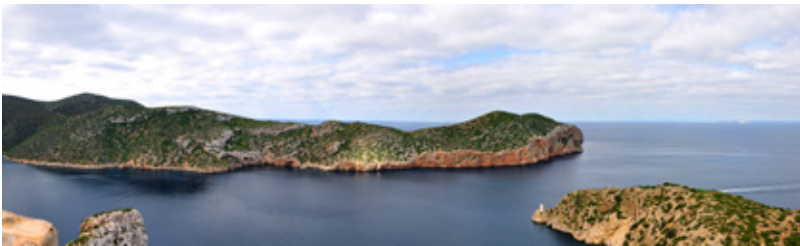
*Érem la foscor blava.  
Érem segles cruels, algues  
i el sextant del pirata naufragat  
al fons del llim, entre rocam.  
El castell desdentat torrejava  
a popa: viure i matar, aleshores,  
era l'únic deure i salvació.*

*[...]*

*Tocàvem el gruix de la gran fosca.  
Érem encara foscor blava.*

Valentí Puig

*L'estiu madur*



Cape Llebeig. Photo: Guillermo Orell

## PREHISTORY AND ANTIQUITY

*From the bigger 12 miles into the sea...  
Lieth the ile Capraria, which lieth in wait for all shipwreck.*

Pliny - *Natural History*, III (76-77)

There is little knowledge about the first arrival of man to the Cabrera Archipelago. In any case, some ceramic findings (L'Olló cave) allow us to assert that these coincided approximately with the first human settlements in Majorca, around 2000 B.C. According to our knowledge, it seems uncertain that during Prehistory there could have been any large stable dwelling in the archipelago. We are only aware of probably very sporadic or seasonal settlements in places such as caves (Es Burri cave or L'Olló cave), where most probably water was collected.

As we approach the end of the first millennium before Christ, Cabrera started to acquire prominence in the new commercial order initiated by Greeks and Phoenicians and continued by Punics and Romans. The important role of Cabrera in the commercial routes of Antiquity in the Western Mediterranean is due to two main factors. The first one is the strate-



Illustration of pottery found in the Cabrera III.  
Pep Vasco

gic situation of the Cabrera Archipelago in the main navigation routes, while the second is related to the good place it turns out to be as a port of call.

Sailing vessels, conditioned by winds and currents, were mainly circumscribed to certain routes. Some of those situated near the Cabrera Archipelago were most used by the ancient navigators. We are referring, firstly, to the one that runs from the strait between Sicily and Carthage, through the south of Sardinia, south of the Balearic Islands, surrounds the south of the Iberian Peninsula, arriving eventually to Gibraltar. Another important navigational route departed from the Italian Peninsula, crossed the Strait of Bonifacio and, again took the south of the Balearic Islands the south of the Iberian Peninsula up to Gibraltar. It was possible to do this last route the other way round. Therefore, when navigators passed by the south of the Balearic Islands, this group of small islands turned out to be a good point of reference for navigation. It was also possible to see the island and use its port via some routes North-South or South-North in the central Western Mediterranean. Finally, we have to remember that some of the basic routes between the northern Balearic Islands and the Pitiusas Islands (Ibiza and Formentera) had to pass next to Cabrera. As we mentioned before, Cabrera possesses



Amphorae from the Cabrera III. Rubén Casas Oché

the ideal conditions for a port of call. This is due to two main reasons: the presence of drinking water all year round, and its magnificent harbour, providing protection against winds and storms as well as the deep port draught. Moreover, it was

possible to use the firewood from the surrounding area and the alimentary resources given by the animals –mainly goats– roaming freely around the island or the abundant fish of the region.

The only adverse circumstance for those seafarers that decided to cross the Cabrera Archipelago was, as Pliny informs us, the danger of its waters. Proof of this is the large quantity of sunken ships that can be found in them, among which the *Cabrera II* and the *Cabrera VII*, dating from Punic times, and the *Cabrera III*, the *Cabrera IV*, the *Cabrera V* and the *Cabrera VIII*, dating from Roman times, stand out.

### THE CABRERA III

At the entrance of the Cabrera port there are the remains of three vessels sunken during Roman times. At some point –yet to be determined– in the 1st Century a ship loaded with oil and lead ingots coming from the Betica (present-day Andalucía)

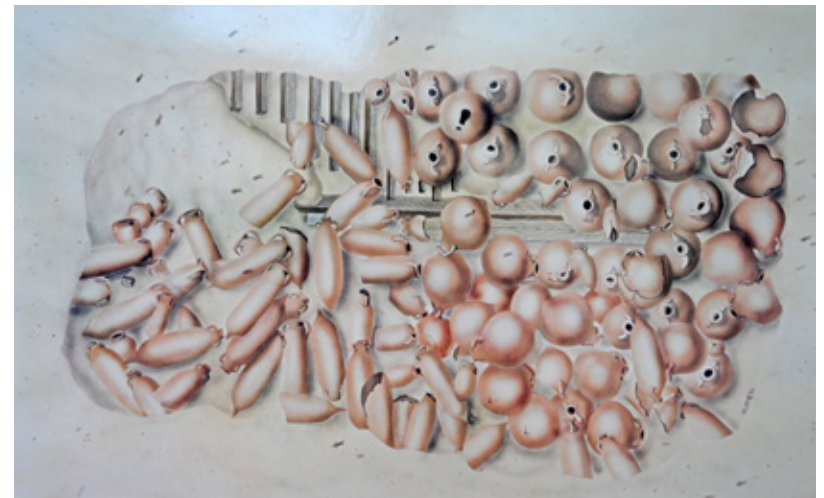


Illustration of pottery found in the Cabrera III. Pep Vasco

sank. In the mid-3rd century A.D. two more vessels sank. One of them, known as the Cabrera III, has been subjected to archaeological research. It sailed loaded with oil from the Betica; oil, olives and fish preserves (garum) from Tripolania (Libya), and fish preserves from Lusitania (Portugal). More than 900 coins found in the kitchen area have allowed the researchers to date the shipwreck between 244 and 253 AD.

### THE CABRERA VII

According to the Grup d'Arqueologia Subaquatica (GAS) this is a coastal trade vessel from Punic times, possibly made in Ibiza and used for trade between Ibiza and Majorca. The main ceramic objects that it contains are amphoras belonging to the series PE-17 and PE-24 used in the transportation of wine. A variety of ceramic objects that were made in Ibiza have also been found.

Despite the certainty of this important flow of vessels and seafarers through the port of Cabrera between the 3rd and 7th



*Recovery of an amphora during underwater excavation. Josep Mascaró Passarius*

centuries A.D. it does not seem that there was ever an important population anywhere on the island, with the exception of the time when a monastic congregation settled there, circa 600 A.D. In any case, we have a great deal of remains that, from the 1st century B.C to the 4th century A.D., prove the presence of humans on the land around the port area and near Sa Font. Most findings are ceramic fragments, but we have to highlight the discovery of two Latin inscriptions, one of them engraved on a marble altar and the other, on a tombstone inscription.

### THE CABRERA XIV

One of the last wrecks to be discovered, for now, is the Cabrera XIV. It is a Roman merchant ship about 20 m long, sunk more than 70 m deep and in an exceptional state of preservation.

The first investigations have made it possible to verify that, when it sank around the Cabrera archipelago, between the 3rd and 4th centuries, it was carrying a load in which a large quantity of large amphorae of African production (in present-day Tunisia), as well as other smaller amphorae from the south of the Iberian Peninsula, all associated with the transport of fish sauces.

## THE MONKS OF CABRERA

*Because it has reached our ears news that the monks from the Monastery found in the Island of Cabrera, next to Maiorica, which is also an island, have subjected their lives to various crimes, showing that more than serving God, they fight –and we say this crying– in favour of the old enemy..*

Saint Gregory I - Epistle XIII (Approx 603 B.C.)

A letter written by Pope Gregorious Magnum (Saint Gregory) dating from 603 B.C. offers us unmistakable evidence of the presence of a monastic congregation in the Cabrera Archipelago at the time of the Byzantine rule of the Balearic Islands. The Pope disapproved of the behaviour of the monks and sent a "counsellor" with the intention of restoring order. There are



Necropolis area of the Byzantine monastery, at the Pla de ses Figueres archaeological site. Rubén Casas Oché

numerous interpretations for this denunciation of the bad behaviour of the monks of Cabrera: piracy, heresy, homosexual practices, non-acceptance of papal authority or disobedience of papal guidelines, etc. Unfortunately, the document mentioned above is not clear enough to know the exact reason for the papal intervention, although it is clear that Gregory I tried to rule and regulate a great part of the Western Monasticism.

The settlement of these monks in the Cabrera Archipelago was conceived as a part of the ideology of the first Christian monastic ideology, which advocated a distancing from the mundane, to avoid vices and therefore, to live in a more Christian way closer to God. For this reason, the small islets were perfect settlement areas for groups of monks who inhabited small islands all around the Western Mediterranean and the Atlantic, mainly those situated near the navigation routes.

These monks intended to live humbly, far away from the turmoil of society, dedicated to work and prayer. However, they also assumed a missionary role, which kept them in touch with the local population and the sailors. It gave them the chance to exchange goods, receive gifts or donations and, above all, to promote the religious vocation that guaranteed the continuity of the congregations.

As it was possible to observe thanks to the archaeological research, in the Cabrera Archipelago there exists a series of archaeological sites that seem to be closely tied to these monastic congregations. They all show abundant ceramic artifacts dating from the 5th and 7th Centuries A.D., some of them with clear references to Christian culture.

The biggest and most substantial dig of ceramic remains is the one in Ses Figueres, located at the end of the port of

Cabrera. Because of this, we think that this place was the site of the priory, where most monks used to live in community. The objects found during the excavation, as well as the fact that the four bodies found in the graves in this area belong to adult men, makes us think that they are some of those monks from the 7th Century A.D. In this dig there were found a factory to salt fish and a purple pigment production workshop, but unfortunately we cannot yet assure the connection between the monks and such activities.

Secondary sites with artifacts from the 5th to the 7th centuries AD., like those in Clot des Guix, in Cabrera for example and perhaps Es Corrals, in Conillera, seem to be small hermit dwellings where one or several hermits practiced anchoritism.

The large quantity of remnants found from this period, together with the fact that Pope Gregory I decided to intervene in the business of the monastic congregation, are significant enough to show the great importance of the monastery of Cabrera.

On the lower floor of the museum you will find a reproduction of two of the tombs of the cemetery of the Byzantine monastery located in Pla de ses Figueres, near sa Platgeta, which have been the subject of archaeological excavation.



*Archaeological work  
in Cabrera.  
Ruben Casas Oché*

## CABRERA IN THE MIDDLE AGES: FROM MUSLIM DOMINATION TO FEUDALISM

The available historical data between the disappearance of the monasteries of the 5th and 7th centuries and the Catalan feudal conquest of Majorca in 1229, are very scarce. From the Muslim period, we have just one written reference. It is a fragment from *Liber Maiolichinus*, a poem telling of a raid of the Balearic Islands by Pisan and Catalan troupes between the years 1114 and 1116. The reference to Cabrera reads: "When, after the efforts that the sea claims, they joined them, they all came into your safe ports, Capraria, and the next day guided them to the coast of Majorca". This meager written reference backs up the insufficient archaeology, with the finding of some Islamic ceramic fragments near the fountain of Cabrera. Lately, the recuperation of earthenware ceramic rests decorated in green and manganese on white around the museum area make us think of the possibility of a relatively stable occupancy during the Islamic period in the area.

With the feudal conquest by Jaime I, rule over the island was given to the pavorde (ecclesiastical leader) of Tarragona, who transferred its use to a private individual in exchange for an annual rent. Most of these first lords –such as Bernat de Claramunt, Guillem Huguet o Renovard and Pere de Malbosc– are very well known, thanks to the existing documents. They were residents of Palma who exploited Cabrera like any other of their possessions in Majorca. The lords of Cabrera had the right to rent the pastures, the right to fish, the monopoly of transport and brewery, and they only kept for their own use the state grounds reserved for falconry. Because of this renting policy of the cultivable land there was born in Cabrera a peculiar form of livestock farming, characterized by a certain seasonal

migration of livestock by sea and the use of some of the islets as pens when breeding.

After the mid-14th century, the borderline character of the Cabreran Archipelago with respect to the Muslim territory in Northern Africa made it play an important role in the defence and protection of Majorca. Cabrera was a good hiding place for Barbary Corsairs operating out of the North African coast. At night, they would cross the strait to Majorca and attack inhabited areas. They also preyed upon merchant ships that used the eastern routes and brought wheat to Majorca from Sicily. For the same reason Cabrera was also used as an anti-pirate naval base by the Majorcan Crown. It was at this time that they built the castle at the port. The lords of Cabrera took over the maintenance and the vigilance, paid by the University of the capital and the Kingdom of Majorca.

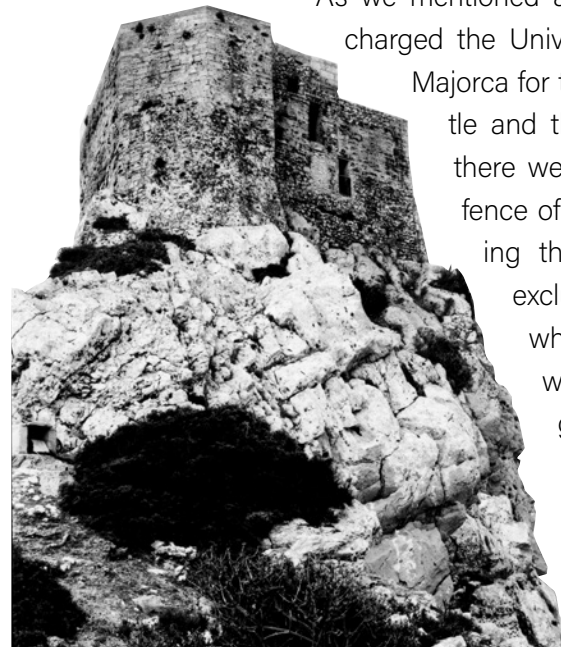
During the 15th century, the normal farming and fishing contract remained the same. Usually, the lord of Cabrera would contribute half of the flock and the tenants, the other half. The last would undertake the upkeep and give the lord half of the production and half of the profits collected by the sale of firewood, coal, ash, soap grass and urquilla (lichen collected in the coastal rocks). These last products were used in the fabrication of soap or glass and textile dyes. In fact, we still keep references to specific agreements for such exploits.

## THE CASTLE OF CABRERA

The frontier forced the authorities of Majorca to build a fort on the island. On top of a rocky hill by the entrance of the port, stands the castle of Cabrera. It was erected around the end of the 14th century, with the purpose of protecting the inhabitants and private property on the island, guarding it from the Barbary Corsairs, using it as an operational base to attack Majorca. From the castle, they could warn the eastern villages of the approaching pirates with fire and smoke signals. The first document that certifies the existence of a castle in Cabrera dates from 1407 A.D., where Guillem Saragossa claims to have built one on the island.

Its present structure, with a hexagonal design, high sandstone walls and three levels, taking advantage of the slope, is quite different from the original. It has endured numerous destructions, reconstructions and restoration works throughout its history. The last restoration took place in 1982, sponsored by the Consejo General Interinsular.

As we mentioned above, the lords of Cabrera charged the University and the Kingdom of Majorca for the maintenance of the castle and the guards. In spite of that, there were occasions when the defence of Cabrera and its castle during the Middle Ages depended exclusively on the University, which chose the governor or warden. The first documented governor was Jaume Marcé, in the year 1490. The position lasted until 1716, when

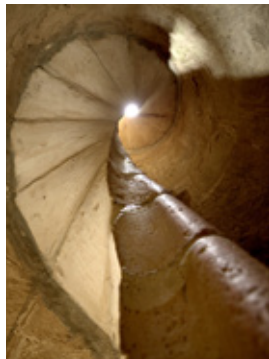
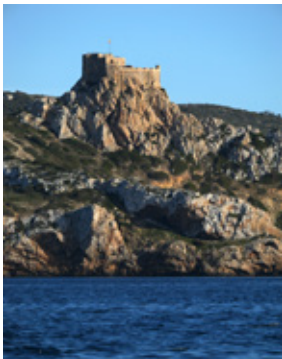


*Cabrera Castle. Miquel Frontera*

the administration of Felipe V substituted it for a military governor. It was an annual position at first, but after the 17th century, the requirements and length of the position were stipulated.

Regarding the rest of the personnel in charge of guarding the castle, only on a few occasions they numbered over five men. Most of them served many years in the island, in such a way that it became a post held for life and even hereditary handed down from father to son. After 1607, the University board requested that prisoners sentenced to galleys could serve as guards in the castle of Cabrera instead. Despite the critical geographical location on the Islamic frontier, very often the guard of the castle had no means of defence from a pirate attack. There were not enough men or weapons. This explains the continuous invasion of the island by the Muslims, mainly during the 16th century, that always ended with the kidnapping of the garrison and the destruction of the castle.

After the Independence War, the military and strategic importance of Cabrera and its castle diminished, with specific exceptions such as during the First World War or the Spanish Civil War. Nowadays, with the establishment of Cabrera as a National Park in 1991, the castle has become one of the more attractive tourist sites.



1. Cabrera Castle.  
2. Spiral staircase  
inside the castle.  
*Rubén Casas Oché*

## CABRERA IN MODERN AGE (16TH - 18TH CENTURIES)

Concerning the Modern Age, the defensive importance of the Archipelago of Cabrera increased due to the geographical location of the Balearic Islands as a border between the two main enemies of the Spanish monarchy of the Austrias: on one hand, the Turkish Ottoman Empire, that controlled Algeria since 1529, and on the other hand, France. In 1542, France and Turkey signed an alliance against the Spanish emperor Carlos V. From this point on the danger switched from pirate raids against the coastal villages of Majorca or Minorca, to warfare, with a real threat of invasion and occupation of the Balearic Islands.

Despite the human and economic efforts invested by the Majorcan authorities and the lords of Cabrera in the fortification and defence of the island, during the 16th century there were many continuous attacks against the island. The best known is the attack by Barbarossa in 1531 and Dragut in 1550. These raids always ended with the kidnapping of the garrison and the destruction of the castle, which made the reconstruction useless and costly for the treasure of the University and the Kingdom of Majorca.

To improve the security of the Balearic Islands in the 1600s, the Crown and the Kingdom of Majorca together institutionalized a "fund for fortification", in order to share the expenses of reconstruction and maintenance of the forts of the Balearic Archipelago, including the castle of Cabrera, that was almost in ruins at the time. In 1607, the Crown denied the permit to build a tower on Mount Brúixola to watch over the castle. In spite of this, during the 17th century they continued to restore the fort, mainly when the Sureda family took over the ownership of the island in 1663.

After the War of the Spanish Succession (1700-1715), the situation of Cabrera completely changed. Concerning its defence, from 1716 the responsibility went straight to the King, substituting the University, an institution abolished in 1715. The King appointed a military governor and reinforced the military presence on the island with an army garrison. The island became the property of the Font i Rius family until 1770. Then a new lord of Cabrera, Antoni Vilajoana, planned to repopulate it with one hundred people, build a hospice for sick soldiers and a prison for five hundred people. Carlos III, who had proposed to repopulate the island with the converted Jews from Majorca, the so-called xuetes, dismissed this project in 1777.

Until 1809, with the arrival of French prisoners, Cabrera remained uninhabited, as cardinal Despuig and the engineer Ramón Santander, pointed out at the end of the 18th century.



*Cabrera Castle. Miquel Frontera →*

## THE CONFINEMENT OF THE FRENCH WAR PRISONERS (1809-1814)

On 2nd May 1808, the people's insurrection in Madrid against the French occupation gave way to the the War Spanish Independence War (1808-1814). In this armed conflict, Cabrera played an important role, not on the war front –as the Balearic Islands were not occupied territory– but as a reclusion camp for more than 8,000 Napoleonic soldiers from 1809 to 1814. Some survivors in their memoirs described the hardship of the imprisonment. Those by Wagré, Gille and Ducor are the best known.

On 19th July 1808 the troupes of general Dupont were defeated in Bailén by general Castaños. In this battle, 19,000 French soldiers surrendered. The signed capitulation statements stipulated that the prisoners should be sent back to France by sea. The logistics for gathering enough ships to transport such a large human contingent proved impossible and the Junta Suprema of Seville and the British allies refused to return the rear guard of an army that would reinforce their enemy's anks.



*Cutlery set carved  
in wood  
by French prisoners  
in 1811.  
Property of the  
Feliu family.  
Miquel Frontera*

Therefore, the prisoners were put into prison boats in Cadiz and taken to the Balearic Islands. The number of prisoners that arrived on the island was approximately 5,000 and they had to be distributed among Majorca, Minorca and Ibiza. Finally, only the officers remained on the three major islands, while the soldiers were sent to Cabrera in order to avoid possible epidemic outbreaks. Between 1809 and 1814, about 9,000 prisoners stayed in Cabrera.

The provisioning for the prisoners came from Majorca and it was poor during the long confinement, because the economic expense was very high (about a thousand pounds a day) and the major island suffered a shortage of resources due to the large increase in population (during the war Majorca received nearly 40,000 refugees from mainland Spain). Apart from hunger, the situation of prisoners worsened due to the lack of resources in Cabrera: little drinking water, barren lands and harsh climate. The castle became a hospital to accommodate the large number of sick soldiers. Escape attempts were frequent because of the desperate situation; some of the soldiers deserted and joined the Spanish army; and, even there were cases of cannibalism in order to survive.

In spite of all this, the prisoners lessened the harmful effects of confinement by imposing a certain order and taking over different tasks, such as the craftsmanship of artefacts in savine or boxwood (this was the case of the famous chess board property of the Quetglas family or the wooden cutlery set owned by the Feliu family); rush baskets or metal tools; growing potatoes or broad beans and breeding animals for food (rats); construction and repair of huts; literacy teaching of the community; theatre productions for entertainment,

etc. With time, they created an internal market using broad beans as currency, and traded with Majorca, exporting part of the manufactured goods in exchange for raw materials and utensils. The archaeological dig, in 2003, of the rooms of some French prisoners in the plain of Ses Figueres, has confirmed most of these activities, perfectly described in the memoirs of the survivors. Apart from the architectural structures, there were remains of metal foundry, ceramic pots in good condition, charred broad beans, buttons and buckles.



*Barracks area for Napoleonic prisoners, at the Pla de ses Figueres archaeological site.  
Rubén Casas Oché*

The reclusion of the French soldiers finished in May 1814 –just after the abdication of Napoleon, who never accepted the capitulation in Bailén, or the prisoner of war status of those deported to Cabrera–, with the signing of the armistice by France and the allied nations.

The surviving 3,500 men were sent back to France straight from Cabrera. In 1847, the prince of Joinville, son of the French king Louis Philippe, erected a monument on the island in memoriam of the dead prisoners. It is near the Museum.

## THE 19TH CENTURY

In the 19th century, Cabrera underwent important alterations in its geography and landscape due to human intervention. The organized exploitation of the natural resources and farming became a priority for the successive owners. The construction of roads, enclosures and farming terraces, as well as the development of the city centre, are the most important events of the time.

The attempts at farming colonization of the archipelago have their roots in the last third of the 18th century. In 1770, Don Tomás de Vilajoana presented a project to populate and fortify the island. In his application, he describes the intention of taking “one hundred foreigner settlers, catholic, poor hardworking people, knowledgeable about farming and

sailing" to the island. Every one of these settlers would receive a piece of land in perpetuity, the right to build a house and the necessary tools to cultivate the land.

Tomás de Vilajoana also offered the possibility of taking prisoners sentenced to forced labour to help the settlers in public building work and farming. This proposal could contribute to solving the serious maintenance deficiencies of the prisoners in the Cartagena prison.

Vilajoana gives details of the advantages for the Crown and the Public Treasure of his project, collecting new taxes through the exploitation of formerly barren land. Besides this, he would also undertake the funding of a hospice for sick military.

The negative reply by the royal employees arrived in 1778, in an extensive report written by Ramón Santander, a member of the military forces.

In the beginning of the 19th century Cabrera became a land of exile and imprisonment. After the French soldiers' case in 1882, we have evidence of some prisoners in Cabrera condemned because of their ideology in favour of a republic.

In 1830, a prison was built on the island. With time, the construction became the residence of the military commander-in-chief.

In the mid-19th century, the intervention of the State was decisive in the alteration of the landscape on the bigger island. Emili Pou designed the lighthouse in Punta de N'ensiola in 1864. They first built the road from the quay to the top of point

N'Ensiola in order to transport the building material. Afterwards, they constructed the tower and finished the road with a new stretch that linked the beacon with the port of Cabrera. The works finished in 1868 and it was inaugurated on 15th August 1870.



*Lighthouse at Punta de l'Enciola. Designed by Emili Pou, 1864. Miquel Frontera*

Also during 1861, Pere d'Alcántara Peña carried out topographic studies to plan the fortification of the island, a project that was eventually dismissed.

The Umbert family could not exploit the island as they had wanted. The project was altered by the new law. The State impelled new projects. The declaration of public interest included the whole archipelago by 1881. This declaration found opposition from the private owners, who asked the Government to either expropriate the land or revoke the prohibition of selling the island. This process lasted until 1885.

During this period of time (1878-1885), some public projects were retaken. An edict from 23rd July 1878 ordered the construction of a prison. Beside this, the Plan for the Fortification

and Defence of the Island (1887) was definitively withdrawn two years later.

The public debate about the possible use of Cabrera Island made its way to the press. *The Noticiero Balear*, April 1891, declares the necessity to name Cabrera as a new placement for the provincial leper house.

From 1889 to 1891, the Court conducted summary proceedings. Miquel Umbert requested the application of the law approved on 3rd June 1868, about the promotion of agricultural communities. The project consisted of the sale of small plots of land to different settlers in order to develop a stable community. The delay of the proceedings and the need for financing forced the Umberts to mortgage the property. The problems deriving from the settlement of the debt drove them to bankruptcy.

The debts accrued by the Umberts, apart from the mortgage signed with the Banco de Crédito Balear, came from the testamentary succession of the Feliu family. They had been commer-



Monument to French prisoners in Cabrera, 1908. Artist unknown

cially exploiting the sea route since 1888 with the steamer *Illa de Cabrera*. For this reason, they agreed to pay off the debts with their lands in Cabrera.

The Feliu Family gained exclusive property of the island by assuming the mortgage of the Umberts in 1891, except those plots already sold or donated to the church.

The farming system organized and managed by Jacint Feliu and Ferrá de la Mola was quite different from the former projects. Jacint Feliu had considerable experience managing the possessions in Majorca and applied his knowledge by introducing commercial crops to the island (vineyards, carob trees, almond trees and fig trees), alternating them with pastures for sheep and goats. They also tried to adapt cows, introducing plants like zulla (*Hedysarum coronarium*), a fodder that the British introduced in Minorca.

The vineyard fever spread along eastern Spain after phylloxera had annihilated every French vine. The price that Majorcan wines reached in France had a definitive influence on the choice of this crop in Cabrera. The construction of houses and wineries, the birth of a city centre around the port, called Villa Cristina, Can Feliu and the chapel of Santa Petronella, date back to this period. The contract for the maritime communications lines, and the lighthouse and military garrison supplying the steamer, supplemented the profits.

When phylloxera arrived in Majorca, American vines were planted in Cabrera. In spite of this, they could not avoid the pest affecting the first vineyards planted with vines from Porredes, Felanitx and Lluçmajor.

Jacint Feliu died in 1903 and the land was leased. The first contract, dating from that same year, was signed by Juan Tous i Salom, who paid 3,125 pesetas a year, two lambs and two hundred pounds of cheese.



Former farming areas in the port of Cabrera in the 1950s. Jeroni Juan Tous

The contract for the running of the maritime communications lines in 1910 went to Isleña Marítima and the steamer Cabrera was sold to a trading company that operated in eastern Spain. In 1915, the first Guardia Civil men were sent to the island.



The steamship Cabrera at the Palma dock, 1897. Artist unknown

The beginning of the First World War in 1914, forced the Ministry of Defence to expropriate the port of Cabrera, due to the mooring of German submarines. A Royal Order from 7th July 1916, declares the whole Archipelago of Cabrera military occupied territory.

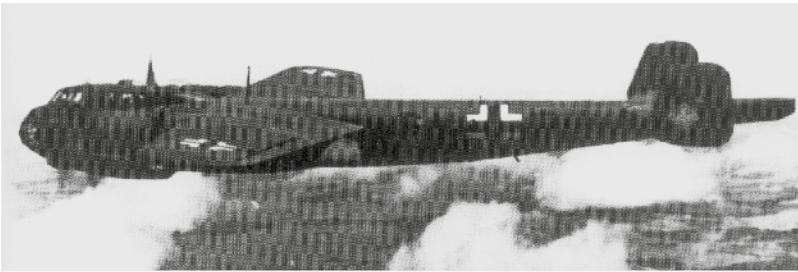
Félix Rodríguez de la Fuente, head of the Commission for the Conservation of Cabrera (1978), used to say that *Cabrera* was Ulysses' Mediterranean one hour away from Palma. From there it is not difficult to travel to the *Odyssey*:

*Now there is in Ithaca a haven of the old merman Phorcys, which lies between two points that break the line of the sea and shut the harbour in. These shelter it from the storms of wind and sea that rage outside, so that, when once within it, a ship may lie without being even moored. At the head of this harbour there is a large olive tree, and at no distance a fine overarching cavern sacred to the nymphs who are called Naiads.*

Homer - The Odyssey

## THE 20st CENTURY

The Spanish Civil War and the Second World War also left their tragic mark on Cabrera: On 30th July 1936, a failure forced a Republican Army's hydroplane to land on waters near Cabrera. The local garrison, in the hands of the insurrectionist, captured the crewmembers observing orders from Majorca. The Republicans from Minorca sent a barge and two submarines that were nearby, to rescue the men. The military men from Cabrera, the tenant of the land, Damiá Sunyer, and his two sons, Joan and Gaspar, were arrested and taken to Minorca. The last three and the officers were executed.



*German aircraft from the Second World War. Unknown author*

During the Second World War, an army aircraft crashed near Cabrera. Only one of a crew of four survived the accident. He found the corpse of one of his fellow crew and buried it in the cemetery of Cabrera. The body remained there until 1982, when it was moved to Cuacos de Yuste (the only official cemetery for German soldiers killed in Spain). A legend says that there was a mistake identifying the body (not true at all) and that the spirit of the soldier, called "el Lapa", remains wandering around Cabrera.

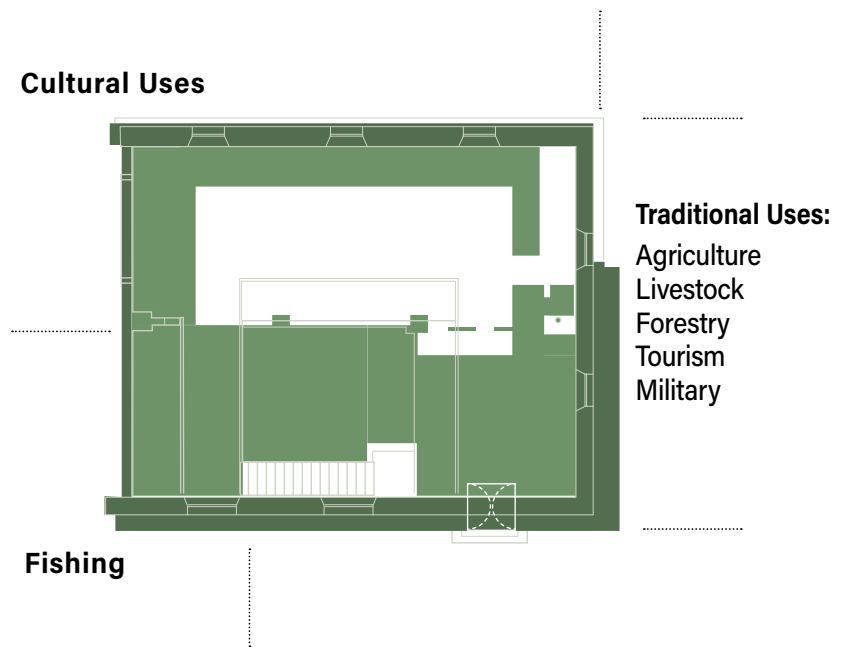


*Port of Cabrera, 1933. Unknown author*

The survivor Hans Kieffer, wrote a testimony of the story: a letter notifying Böckler's parents of his death and one to the Volksbund Kriegsgräberfürsorge (German association for the maintenance of soldiers graves) narrating the details of the accident.

# ETHNOGRAPHY

## FLOOR 2



## AGRICULTURE

As we walk along Cabrera's paths, it is difficult to imagine it covered by vegetation different to what we see today, pine trees and carrascal (maquis, area covered by small holm oaks). The only trace that remains of the old crops is half a dozen exhausted fig trees by the path that leads to the museum, as well as the farming terraces in front of the building. Looking at the shapes and quality of the ground, makes us think that the valley running from the small beach to the centre of the island, could have been farming land. If we look at the aerial photographs taken in the 50s, we can observe that the land in the valley is still rather fragmented or invaded by a light coloured carrascal trying to recover the previously lost domain. The rest of the island was probably not cultivated, except some valley –like the L'Olla–, at the times of larger population.

There are not many occasions in which agriculture is mentioned when describing the island. It was certainly not the crops that travellers and intellectuals were concerned about. It is the same with photographs. The port and the castle insistently capture the attention of photographers. However, concerning pictures, we find two outstanding exceptions: two views of the port of Cabrera taken from the monument to the Frenchmen. The first and oldest one, recently found in the archives of the Feliu family, is an unusual image of Cabrera: an engraving from 1892, made from a lost photograph for the paper (*La Ilustración Española y Americana*). It shows a close-up of a young vine, and behind, the port's inlet; the rows of vines, perfectly ordered, end where the waves start: vines and the sea together, the Mediterranean ideal. Unfortunately, this landscape did not last. It was gradually eroded first by the phylloxera and later by the

death of the architect of the idea, Jacint Feliu, in 1903. In the second image, from 1908, the same fields are sown with tender wheat and fodder. The photograph was taken on 2nd May, during an excursion organized by professor Odón de Buen.



Engraving of vineyard cultivation, 1892. Unknown author

The area behind the beach, called "sementer de sa platgeta" (something like the seedling bed of the little beach), is, together with the orchard, the most fertile of Cabrera. It is probably the only area that was cultivated in such a systematic way. The first important known settlement in the island was around these fields, the monks' congregation that inhabited Cabrera in the 5th and 7th centuries. They surely spent some time cultivating the fields.

The scarce historical references of Cabrera talk little about agriculture. On one hand, it seems that the pastures and the fisheries were more profitable than the land that produced just



*Threshing in Cabrera in the 1960s.  
Francisca Sunyer*

enough to support the few inhabitants. On the other hand, the lack of safety of the island did not favour the settlement of peasants. Some leases from the end of the 15th century and beginning of the

16th century threw some light onto the subject.

The contract was formalized between the owners of the land (the Berard family, in this case) and one or several partners who would lease all or a part of the island's resources normally for a period of five years. In this case, the tenant also had the obligation to guard the island and the castle, day and night. The important part of the contract concerns the pastures. Sometimes the land and the pastures were leased to different people. The tenant had to promise to grow wheat and barley, sell the harvest, pay a part of the total (a twentieth), keep the seedling beds clean and fenced and keep his draught animals (donkeys and mules) away from the pastures. The tenant and the owner shared the profits. They hired four farm labourers to do the work and shared their salary.

During the 16th and 17th centuries most references are about the castle and the frequent attacks to the island. The lords found it more difficult to rent the farming land of Cabrera. In any case they seemed to continue to lease the pastures and the fishing rights. We can find some references to the gradual depopulation of the island through the 18th century. In 1808 Alexandre de Laborde comments that the land is "almost barren" and a little after, when the French soldiers arrive, in 1809, they find a small field of wheat. We have to assume then, that during almost three centuries, the amount of cultivated land is smaller than in previous times, and smaller than in the 19th century, when agriculture experienced a renewal. However, this period will remain full of uncertainties until the archives of the families related to Cabrera can be studied.



*Moll des Pagès in the 1930s. Antoni Vidal Mas*

An Archduke left us a good report from the second half of the 19th century. He explains that there are two tenants from Santanyí, who live in Cabrera with their families and five farm labourers from Lluçmajor. They cultivate different areas of the bigger island, near the port: the orchard of Cala Ganduf, S'Espalmador and the valley of Ses Figueres and La Miranda (or Sa Platgeta) and the one in the valley of Mal Nom. He also mentions two fields in the old path leading to the north of the island: Sa Rota d'en Pere and a place near Clot del Guix. As we can see, the cultivated fields are situated near the central valley, but not only in Sa Platgeta, as we often think.

The main crops were wheat, barley, oats and some legumes, mainly broad beans, grass peas and green peas. In the orchard, apart from vegetables, there were cane, fruit trees –apples, apricots, cherries–, and grapevines. The Indian and the Mediterranean fig trees were planted in different places (the valley of Ses Figueres is separated from the valley of Sa Font by the sierra Enmig, where we find the obelisk to the Frenchmen). Later on, the Feliu family will also grow carob, almonds, vines and fodder (zulla).

The names of the places seem to be related to the traditional agricultural practices. Ses Rotes, Sa Rota d'en Pere, the canal of Ses Figueres, Sa Vinya and Es Cellar mark the development of the crops. Ses Rotes, for instance, probably refers to the crop rotation of poor land that took place during the 18th or 19th centuries.

Francisca Sunyer described the peasant life of Cabrera in the beginning of the 20th century like this:

*Damiá got installed in the payés house and, with the help of some farming labourers, started to cultivate more than a hundred quarteradas (measure of about 7,500 m2), looked after a flock of three hundred sheep and helped nine or ten pigs to breed [...]. The orchards were ploughed with a metal plow [...]. The warmest days of summer, a row of people, sickle in hand, reaped the fields of ripe ears, forming bundles...[...]. A mule turned the threshing stone peeling the shells off the wheat grain [...]. A mule grinded the wheat [...]. Every week my father kneaded. The bread was brown, dark.*



Threshing in Cabrera in the 1960s. Francisca Sunyer

## CATTLE FARMING

Cattle farming is among the oldest, most constant and more profitable activities of the Archipelago of Cabrera. It makes the most of the impoverished land of the carrascal and the islets, and costs less than agriculture. The name Cabrera is eloquent enough: known from Roman times, it has remained unchanged ever since. The cattle farming in the island has changed little.

The historical testimonies about cattle farming in Cabrera are more numerous than those about agricultural usage. Here is a selection from different periods:



*Transportation of lambs from Cabrera. Miquel Frontera*

*On 13th August 1285 Joan Bennásson [...] filed a reclamation to the Genovese Government because some armed galleys from that city had burst onto Cabrera [...] and killed and eaten 87 of the 107 pigs that Bennásson owned.*

**Soto**

*In the 17th century some landowners went through a severe economic crisis and were forced to herd flocks that migrated seasonally and belonged to other people. They would take some flocks to Cabrera.*

**P. de Montaner**

*They take the male goats that have been castrated –about 20– to Els Conills Island; to L'Imperial, 12 lambs, and several old goats and 4 sheep to L'Estell.*

**Archiduque Luis Salvador**

*After the sunny days of January, we used to take the lambs out [...]. The cheese-making season was starting. Every day, in turns, the port barges had the right to a plate of cottage cheese or a pot of cheese milk [...]. At Easter, we used to sacrifice two big lambs and prepare many pies.*

**Francisca Sunyer**

The lease contracts made by the Berard family, at the end of the 15th century, tell us about some interesting characteristics of cattle farming in Cabrera during the Middle Ages:

On the island of the castle, half of the cattle belonged to the landlord, and the other half to the tenant, and they shared the profit. Moreover, the tenant could have eighty rams of his own and to his own profit in the island of Es Conills. He could also fish

and collect urquilla. In exchange, the tenant had to look after the livestock, his own and the landlords; while guarding the islands and the castle and supporting the needy people of Cabrera.

These contracts do not show the number of heads of cattle in Cabrera, but we can calculate it from other contracts and descriptions. In this way, we see that the island of Es Conills could support a hundred heads, and for the total of islands, it could be 400 goats and 200 sheep. In the contract from the 15th and 18th centuries, the number of sheep was three times that of goats. In the 20th century, the archduke quotes 400 goats and 200 sheep. These differences were due to the price and use of wool and surely, they also affected the management of the pastures. The contracts from the 15th century talk about "scorching" the island to be able to keep more sheep. On the other hand, goats, paradoxically, would not have harmed the vegetation so much because of their ability to make the most of the woody parts of the plants. There would have been no necessity to scorch the carrascal.

The sowing of pastures or the importation of straw from Majorca is also recorded, and they were probably a necessary supplement for sheep. Needless to say, shepherds needed a *laud* (a small vessel typical of the Mediterranean), to transport food, wool or the livestock to or from Majorca to be sold or taken to the islets. The image of the lambs tied inside the boat sums up the peculiarity of cattle farming in Cabrera.



*Transportation of straw bales during the 1970s. Josep Mascaró Passarius*

Apart from pigs, sheep and goats, there were draught animals such as donkeys, mules, horses, mares, bulls and cows, and the farmyard animals like hens, etc. In a contract of the Suredas from the 17th century, they mention six oxen, one bull, one calf, and some chicken and some hens.

After the Archduke, there are few travellers who do not comment on the negative impact of goats in the island: Estelrich, in 1906; Armand Pin, in 1913, or Marcos, in 1933, are the most important testimonies. In 1952, Bernat Vidal Tomás wrote in the journal *L'Almudaina* about the extermination of goats. Josep Pla was impressed by the tales about this kind of hunting, often carried out from the sea. He talks about it in his book *Mediterranean Islands, From the Medas to the Balearic*: "to watch one of these animals fall off one of the sharp cliffs of the shore had to be a sinister spectacle".

The farmyard facilities in the archipelago are very simple. They usually used caves as day shelters. If there were none, as in Es Conills, they would build pens. However, it was not common, as the sea worked as a natural enclosure for cattle.

In 1991, there were still two hundred sheep in Major Cabrera. We also have evidence of the breeding of pigs. In Cabrera, up to the 1960s, they would let the pigs run loose around the islets (Na Redona, Es Cinills), where they could eat anything from tubers to seagulls' eggs.

We find some interesting names are related to cattle farming: Es Corrals and Ses Païsses, the cave of Ses Cabres or Es Xots, that describe the adaptation of cattle farming to the special conditions of the archipelago, like the use of caves or the islets as natural pens.

## THE USE OF FOREST

Almost since the conquest of Majorca, we have evidence of the exploitation of forests in Cabrera. The use of firewood was, sometimes, a privilege of the landlord, and other times it was included in the lease of the pastures, the orchards or the fields. In 1301, the proprietors of Cabrera, the Malbosch family, rented the pastures and the rights to hunt the game, with the exception of the fields for the falcons and specifying the prohibition of collecting firewood for sale. In 1481, the Berard family rented the pastures and the production of firewood, coal and ashes. In 1510, the tenant was a glassmaker who rented the land in order to grow wheat and barley and collect firewood.

The continuous raids by pirates during the 16th century made the inhabitants think of abandoning the land and burning down the vegetation. Tomás de Vilajoana, proprietor of the island in 1772, mentioned this when he talked about repopulating the island, seeing as the raids by Barbary corsairs were becoming less frequent: "We don't have to talk about Barbary corsairs in this sea any longer, an evil we can end by placing two cannons in strategic places suitable for anchoring" (Font i Obrador, 1990).

Despite deforestation during this period, the surface of the island covered by pine trees was apparently not so large. In 1778, Román Santander described the landscape with these words: "The weather is sweet and the land rises up in several hills that join together to form a range. It is covered by stipa, lentiscus, strawberry trees, some box and saltwort [*Salsola Kali*], maybe used to make glass in Cabrera, a few pine trees and some wild olive trees". And he adds: "For construction, we can only find in Cabrera and Conejera, tile soil and ashlar stone, masonry and lime; it is difficult to find any wood". A traveller in the beginning of the 19th century, Alexandre Laborde, tells us that, although the island might have been inhabited, they carried out periodical tree felling in the pine forest in order to sell the wood in Majorca. Some time later, the imprisonment of the French soldiers in Cabrera certainly contributed to deforestation. The small remaining forest was used as timber for construction and as firewood.

During the 19th century, farming land and cattle farming experienced a revival. The forest, however, hardly recovered. In 1847, Joaquim Maria Bover wrote, "There are some small farming areas on the top of hills and the more rocky spots, and high up in Cocons [hoyo d'En Gelat], la Olla and Corró [collado

Roig] we can see some pine trees". The map drawn in 1879 by the engineer Luis Vasconi, shows two spots of pine forest, one in the north (Cocons d'En Gelat and L'Olla) and one in the southeast (Collado Roig). They could represent, respectively, around ten and two hectares, composed of young trees. The Archduke Luis Salvador also talked about them in the same period. Another map drawn by José Gómez Imat in 1893, places the coalman shacks near the fountain, testimony to the fact that this activity was performed in Cabrera during the 19th century. They used wood to make the coal, so the coalmen worked mainly in the carrascal.

We can still see coal sheds, shacks and lime furnaces in several spots on the island. The coal sheds, called *sitges*, are situated inside the new pine forest. There is also a lime furnace in this place and we can find another two in the port and Cala Santa María, from where they would ship it towards Majorca.



Lime kiln. Rubén Casas Oché.



Coal pit. Miquel Frontera

From the beginning of the century, since the expropriation in 1916 to be exact, we find some data that give us a more accurate idea of forest development. In 1916, there were only seven hectares of pine forest, which do not suffer great changes up to the 1950's. From the early 1940s, we have news of a fire in the Es Burri area that burned around a hundred cuarteradas. From the 1950s onwards, the gradual abandoning of farming caused an important expansion of the forest. In 1957, there were twenty-seven hectares of pine forest. Its amazing expansion continues up to the present days. In 1984 they covered 231 hectares of pine forest.



day trips hired the steamer for tourist excursions. As a curiosity, we show the menu of July 20, 1909:

*Aperitifs. Purée a la Reina. Paella. Fish (denton)  
Tartar. Cake. Pisto a la Cabrerense. English Roast Beef.  
Salad. Bomba Nesselrode. Sweets. Desserts. Rioja rosé. Sherry.  
Cognac Tres Coronas. Anisette Santa María.*

After 1910, and until 1983 –except during war time– there was a regular line making the crossing between Palma and Cabrera. The boats were the *Ciutat de Palma* (1910-1931); the *Ciutat d'Alcudia* (1931-1958), the *Ciutat d'Algeciras* (1958-1975), the *Santa María* series (1975-1981) and the *Isla de Minorca* (1981-1983). Depending on the time of the year, they made the crossing once or twice a week. They carried the mail, soldiers, and mainly the catch of the island's fishermen.



Steamer *Ciudad de Alcudia*, 1942. Unknown author

A different way to make the crossing to Cabrera, the one used by the people from the south of Majorca and the ones who preferred a shorter journey, was to get one of the fishing vessels from the Colony. The fishermen, soldiers or the chaplain who celebrated mass every Sunday in the little church of Santa Petronella de Cabrera became occasional guides for tourists who wanted to know the island. After the 1960s, military transport was commissioned from the fishermen. *El Colom*, a vessel 10.20 m. long, was among the first to do this service. It also carried the occasional tourist. Shortly afterwards, four people bought a golondrina (type of vessel) to carry foreign tourists. In the 1960s, the company that currently runs the tourist passages from Colonia Sant Jordi bought *El Colom*.



Port of Cabrera in the 1970s. Josep Mascaró Passarius.

However, Cabrera never had tourist resorts thanks to the military use of the island and the popular demand to preserve it in its natural state. During the 20th century there were some development projects. Marsans presented the most ambitious one in the 1950s. It received the approval of the Ministry of Information and Tourism, Finance and Defence. They intended to build 3,000 rooms, roads, a nautical club, a shopping mall and sport facilities.



*Map of the Marsans tourism project carried out during the 1950s.  
Unknown author*

## MILITARY USE

The property rights of the Archipelago of Cabrera are as follows: the islands are part of the State public domain and concern the Ministry of Defence; the Port Authority owns the lighthouse; we also have to be aware of the existence of the maritime-terrestrial public domain and a little plot with a chapel that belongs to the Church.

The military use of the island has been continuous through history, but the proprietors of the islands maintained their rights over it. It was in 1916 when they were expropriated for reasons concerning national security. From then on, the Ministry of Defence took charge of managing the islands, which they did, initially by leasing the land, and later, by hiring workers of their own. The management after the declaration of the National Park went to the Ministry of Environment, and later, to the Council for the Environment of the Balearic Island. For the time being, the Ministry of Defence continues to be the proprietor.



*Arrival of the Infantry Battalion and the Artillery Group at the port of Cabrera, 1943. Antoni Vila*

In the 1980s the military perspective was summed up as follows:

*Presently the value of the Island of Cabrera, due to the long range of modern weapons and the development of technology, cannot be considered on its own, but as part of the group of islands that form the archipelago in the Western Mediterranean. They have an extraordinary strategic value because they are situated at the flank of the most important maritime routes of the Mediterranean, and can be used as an excellent naval or air base for military actions against ships using this route.*

Regimiento de Infantería de Palma 47  
Cabrera Island, 1986



Recovery of Cabrera during the Civil War, 1936. Unknown author

## FISHING

The oldest testimonies we have about fishing in Cabrera come to us through the archaeological remains studied by M. J. Hernández, M. A. Cau and M. Orfila in the port, near Sa Platgeta. They are rectangular receptacles cut in the rock next to the water, identified as a salting fish plant. These factories are related to other points in the Mediterranean coast that Romans used as almadrabas (this word can refer to: an elaborate and age-old Arabic technique of setting nets in a maze that leads from deep waters to progressively smaller offshore pools; Trap nets; Shoals of tuna fish). In this same area other researchers have found objects related to fishing, like the weights from the net. All the remains seem to be from the 6th or 7th century.

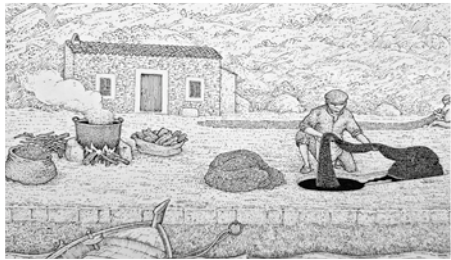
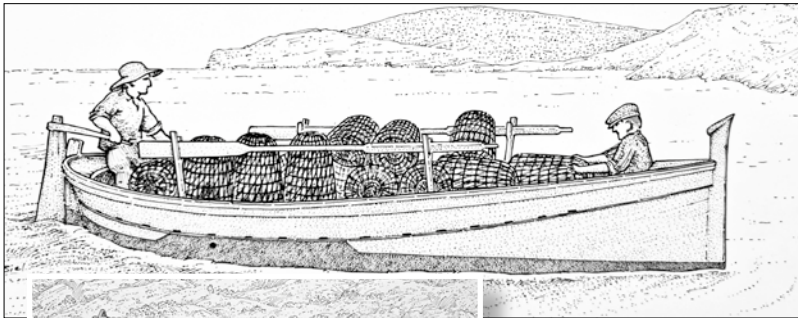
From the times of the catalan conquest, we have historical references about the presence of fishermen in Cabrera: leases on the fishing grounds, kidnapping of fishermen by pirates and even, agreements between fishermen about fishing practices. From them we gather that one of the oldest documented



Salting factory. Rubén Casas Oché

fishing techniques in Cabrera is the use of boliches (a small net thrown into the sea from the land). A dozen men would throw a net from the beach and stretch it out with long ropes. The fishermen would arrive first thing in the morning to pull in the net, and the fish belonged to the first one to arrive.

All the beaches of Cabrera were good for fishing, including L'Olla and es Burri, that have kept the same name at least from the beginning of the 16th century. The fishing practices did not change very much until the 19th century. We will mention a curious piece of news from the end of that century warning about the risk of exhaustion of some fishing grounds because of the use of damaging techniques.: "In all the islands fish is plentiful but particularly in Na Foradada Island. Among all the fishing grounds, the three inside the port of Cabrera are outstanding. In general we can say that one can find them in every cove, but there would be even more if some unwise hands did not dare to throw explosives, which is the way many fishermen used to fill their vessels"



*Illustrations of lobster fishermen with pots and dyeing nets in the port. Biel Bonnin Fuster*

It is quite likely that, from ancient times, some fishermen might have lived in Cabrera, mainly those related to the fish salting industry as we mentioned above. The preservation of certain species in nurseries and the establishment of regular transport lines at the end of the 19th century and through the 20th century, allowed them to stay on the island for longer periods. Archduke Luis Salvador talks about some fishermen among the inhabitants of Cabrera. In 1913, Armand Pin de Latour talks about "a dozen men and women who fish the abundant lobsters in those waters". They lived in four of the houses of the port. In the year 1957, from the dozen rooms in the port, five were dormitories or refuges for fishermen. One of them had a cool box for the fish; another was a storeroom for the nets, and there was a small room for dyeing them. This layout remained relatively unchanged, occupied by three families, until the establishment of the National Park.

The fishermen who used to live in Cabrera during the fishing season were only a small part of all the professionals that have fished and still fish in its waters. The development of the fishing fleet in the surrounding ports gives us an idea of the importance of fishing in Cabrera's waters during the 20th century. Before the declaration as a National Park, half of the professional vessels that worked in the Cabrera area belonged to the Colonia de Sant Jordi, and from the rest, half came from Palma, and the other half from ports in the south, the region of Migjorn (S'Estanyol, Sa Ràpita y Cala Figuera).

One of the oldest fishing fleet censuses we know about, dates from the year 1872, and it registers 181 fishery vessels in the port of Palma and only 9 in Portocolom, that in those days was one of the most important fishing ports in the region

of Migjorn. Fishing in the waters of Cabrera was probably not such an important activity at the time.

In the beginning of the century trawling, that in the old days they performed using two small sailing vessels, experiences an expansion due to the introduction of the Diesel engine as well as the improvement of trawling and harvesting gear. In 1935, we found in the census around thirty-five fishery vessels, twelve trawlers, in Portocolom, while in Cala Figuera there were already eight trawlers. At the same time, the fishing communities of Colonia de Sant Jordi, S'Estanyol and Sa Ràpita started to settle. During the 1940s, the census registered around forty fishing boats in the Colony.

The official census of 1991 registered 115 vessels in Palma (twenty-five trawlers and sixteen gathering boats), forty-three of them in the Colony, twenty-four in S'Estanyol, eleven in Cala Figuera and nine in Sa Ràpita. In short, the fishing business in Cabrera's waters increased considerably during the first half of this century as a result of the development of the fishing ports near the archipelago and stimulated by the improvement of fishing techniques.

However, the extent of fishing in these waters continued to grow, mainly during the 1970s, for different reasons. The progressive decline of fish stocks close to the ports due to the overexploitation, encouraged the search for fishing grounds further away. A practically uncontrolled boom in recreational fishing was responsible for decimating the fish stocks even further (M. Massutí, 1971).

The traditional fishing gear most used in Cabrera in the last decades before the institution of the National Park, was the *trasmallo* (trammel nets), *palangre* (longlines), *bou* (trawling), the *jonquiller*, the *solta*, the *potera* (gear for fishing squid consisting of a plumb bob rigged with hooks) and the *fluixa* (looselines). The trammel nets were the most commonly used. The fishermen who lived in Cabrera and the Colony favoured it. They worked all year round, although less frequently in winter. The main fisheries they used were the ones in the west of Cabrera, in general, those in the harbours and sheltered coves. The *solta* was used from the shore, preferably inside harbours. Trawling was limited to four fisheries in Palma and two in Cala Figuera. Selective fishing gear such as *potera*, *fluixa* and *curricán* (a hook thrown from the bow) was used by small boats, mainly the ones from Colònia de Sant Jordi. The favoured areas were the north and the west of the archipelago.

Some fishermen described the fishing techniques and the gear they used:

*Longline fishing is done in four stages: baiting, setting, towing and harvesting. During the winter, the smaller longlines are baited with squid or cuttlefish. It is set around the areas where algae grow, in order to fish striped sea breams, different kind of scorpionfish, and sea rats. During the summer, the bait used is mainly picarel, herrings, or other small fish, and the longline is set in the sandy seabed to fish arenas and fragatas.*

*Cotton and hemp nets had to be dyed every fifteen or twenty days. An infusion was prepared by boiling pine bark in a big pan. Afterwards, the juice was poured into a basin and the net was put inside,*

*where it remained all night long. In the morning it was laid in the sun to dry. In this way the net took shape and did not rot.*

**Salvador Vadell**

*In the winter days, when the weather was not good, they used to throw the fishing nets from the dock. They caught small squid, cuttlefish...*

**Joana Aina Paniza Ginard**



*Fishermen in the port of Cabrera in the 1970s. Josep Mascaró Passarius*

## SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL USE

One of the first defenders of the natural and cultural values of Cabrera was the professor Odón de Buen (1863-1945). In his memoirs, he wrote some notes about the idea he had of the archipelago, which are very similar to the way we understand conservation of natural environments nowadays:

*I used to spend many months a year with my uncle in Ses Salines. I spent many days with him in his vessel dedicated to the study of the south shore and the island of Cabrera [...]. In his house, I had my first modest laboratory; I was feeding the hope of building a laboratory of experiences at his expense.*

The oceanographic laboratory dreamt of by Odón de Buen came true in 1908, in Portopí. He organized a visit to Cabrera with the steamer Bellver, coinciding with the hundredth anniversary of the Independence war. From that trip there remain some photographs and the story written in his memoirs. In the centre's inauguration speech he said:

*To divulge, spread and popularize the study of nature is an important social deed. It is, at the same time, to prepare the way, to create the right environment for scientific progress.*

Since the 19th century, important scientific studies of Cabrera have contributed to the knowledge we now have of the island and have proved decisive for its conservation. This kind of research is crucial in the management of the Natural Reserve, and for now, the amount of studies keeps increasing.

Cabrera has also been a source of inspiration for many artists. Fiction books like *Cabrera*, by Jesús Fernández Santos (1981); *L'emperador o l'ull del vent* by Baltasar Porcel (2001), or *Un encargo difícil* by Pedro Zarraluki (2005) are recent examples. Miquel Rayó has published *Cabrera, natura entre les ones*, which incorporates the archipelago into children books. In poetry we have to highlight the references to Cabrera by Damià Huguet, and the visual poetry of Andreu Terrades who wrote a theatre play dedicated to the French prisoners: *Els silencis de migjorn*. Concerning memoirs, Francisca Sunyer portrays the Cabrera of her childhood in the book *Viure a Cabrera, una illa feta a mida*.

In the fine arts section we have to highlight the work of Antoni Ribes, Archduke Luis Salvador of Austria, Joan Fuster, Pere d'alcàntara Peña, Bernareggi, Andreu Terrades and Perejaume, among many more.



Illustration by Cas Pagès, 1861.  
Pere d'Alcàntara Peña

Several scholars of popular culture like J. Lladó, R. Ginard Bauçà and Cosme Aguiló, have collected popular poems talking about Cabrera:

*A Cabrera hi ha un pi  
i una nineta robada,  
un aljub que no té fi  
i una auzina esmoixinada.*

\*

*Si vós fósseu a Cabrera,  
mon bé estimat, i jo aquí,  
m'arriscaria a venir  
amb una barca de pi  
o de canya, que és jutgera.*

\*

*En Jordà damunt Cabrera  
ha sortit molt furiós,  
trons i llamps de dos en dos  
i aigo que desespera.*

\*

*—Que em barates sa somera  
amb un covó de cançons  
—Amb unes condicions:  
si em fas una carretera  
per anar a peu a Cabrera  
sense banyar-me es calçons.*

\*

*A Cabrera he pensat  
de vuit dies estar-hi  
cercant fanoi marí,  
que és molt bo envinagrat.*

We have also collected some references to the cuisine of Cabrera. It is not, of course, a cuisine specifically from the island, but some fishermen have described the food they consumed during their stays on the island. The most common dishes were the ones with noodles and fish or soups, fried or grilled red mullet and rice and fish. Sailors always used to eat the fish first and then the rice: this was the most sensible way, as they boiled the fish, and later, rice was cooked in the same water. Lobstermen prepared lobster dishes with the damaged ones they could not sell; lobster with onion or with wild rabbits from the carrascal or lobster American style (boil the lobster for five minutes; cut in the middle; add chopped garlic, add onion and bread crumbs, pour over a trickle of sherry and olive oil, and finally, put into the oven until cooked).

## HISTORY OF THE CONSERVATION

Since the 1940s, there were attempts to establish a conservationist use of Cabrera: In the first stage, they thought of reforestation and the use of the available resources, but during the last twenty years, they have viewed it as a protected natural environment.

In the beginning, there was an attempt to declare Cabrera a forest for public benefit, with exclusive forestry use. In 1945, a complex reforestation project was presented, but it never progressed. There were new attempts in 1947 and in 1952, reiterating the repopulation idea that never happened.

In this scenario, due to the repeated military manoeuvres, people started to worry about the future of the archipelago. After twenty years of pressure on all fronts, it was finally declared the Aquatic and Terrestrial National Park of the Archipelago of Cabrera in April 1991. The people or associations that played an essential role in this achievement were Félix Rodríguez de la Fuente, who inspired the CCC (Commission for the Conservation of Cabrera); the Ecologist Association of the Balearic Islands, GOB (Balearic group of Ornithology and Defence of Nature); and Greenpeace, the international ecologist association.

The support of thousands of people, who on two occasions instigated demonstrations, and loyal media following were also fundamental to accomplish the consolidation of the first National Park.

## THE LAND BENEFITS OF CABRERA. RECOLLECTION OF NATURAL PRODUCTS

We next describe some of the old and curious land benefits of which we have found documented references to.

**Recollection of wolde (1510).** Wolde is a plant from the Reseda species bearing little yellow flowers used to extract a yellow dye.

**Orchilla weed (1429).** Orchilla is a lichen that grows on rocks near the sea. Orchil, a red or violet dye used in textile dyeing, is obtained from it. In Majorca the labourers that collected it were called *orxellers*. They worked mainly in mountain areas (Andratx, Alaró, Pollença), as well as in Cabrera and Sa Dragonera.

**Preparation of tar (1519).** In olden times, they most likely used some beaches in Cabrera to clean and caulk the boats with tar prepared on the island. The name of the beaches called S'Espalmador and Paguera comes from this activity. Tar in Catalan is *pega*. It was prepared using small pieces of pine bark roasted in a stone oven.

**Salted fish factories (6th and 7th centuries).** In the Sa Platgeta area, a total of twelve receptacles of different sizes have been identified. They are carved in the rock or built with stone and mortar. They are related to the salting of fish.



Salting factory.  
Rubén Casas Oché

**Glass factory.** In 1510, Bartolomeu Ribes, a glassmaker, took on the lease of Cabrera to harvest the land, collect firewood, wolde, produce salt and other things made in the island. A text from the 18th century describes an oven in Cabrera that had been used presumably to make glass from the ashes of some local plants.

**Caustic soda.** In different texts we can find references about the obtaining of ashes that were probably used to make caustic soda. In olden times, the soda was made from the combustion of certain plants of the *Salsola* and *Salicornia* families among others. The caustic soda was used to make soap and bleach.

**Collection of cocó salt.** The collection of salt from cocons or salt pits on the shore was probably very common. The main testimonies we have about this activity are names like the old Na Pobra, that according to the map of Cardinal Despuig is the island of Sa Sal and Es Cocó de l'Encai (or L'alcaid). It is a large pit from which salt was collected until recently.

**Falconries.** There are several references from the 13th century informing us that falcons were among the products from Cabrera. Normally they would exclude the falconry fields from the leasing agreements. Falcons were sent via Ciutat, the Balearic capital, to Tarragona, as they were the property of the pavorde of Tarragona.

**Noble woods.** Besides pine wood, two more types of wood existed in Cabrera: boxwood and savine (*Juniperus sabina*). We only have evidence of their use during the 19th century, but it is probable that they were used before.

**Giant fennel or cañaheja.** This plant (*Ferula communis*) is known for producing very ornamental flowers, with thick flexible stems that can be over two metres high, showing above the carrascal and giving that peculiar look to the landscape of Cabrera. Traditionally it was collected to act as a sceptre or stick carried by the demons in the patron saint festivities of Santanyí.

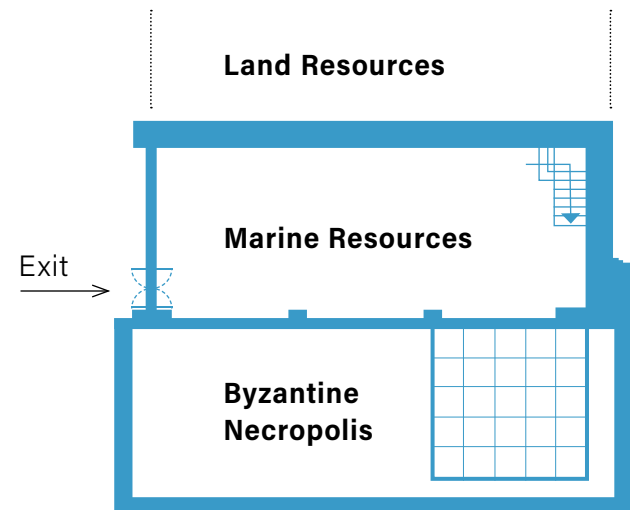
Apart from these little known products, we also have evidence of more common activities similar to those of Majorca. We are talking about hunting, mushroom collection, quarrying of sandstone and the manufacturing of plaster, quicklime or charcoal. Also, smuggling was an economic activity with a certain tradition in Cabrera during the first half of the 20th century.



*Cañaheja or ferula  
(Ferula communis).  
Miquel Frontera.*

# NATURAL RESOURCES

## FLOOR 1



## Introduction

Natural resources are the ground upon which the cultural system is supported and maintained. Up to this point we have been looking at the historical aspects and the traditional lifestyles. But, apart from the traditional Cabrera, we can talk about the Cabrera that “could have been” and the present Cabrera. Since the end of the 19th century, some projects have tried to modernize it. Nevertheless, none of them succeeded, because they basically ignore the limitations of its ecosystem. Ultimately, this natural ecosystem is protected and has become something unique and valuable due to the deterioration of the Mediterranean Sea and its islands.

## WATER

*It is essential to attract the clouds so they will unload [the water] where it is most necessary. With this purpose, we have to plant a large amount of trees on the summits and slopes of the hills of Cabrera, and this will be possible only with pine trees, as common in Majorca as they are scarce on this small island [...]. Then it would be time to look for subterranean water deposits for irrigation, with the aim of producing crops and artificial pastures: crops to feed the increasing population, and then to breed milking cows.*

**Pedro Estelrich**

*La Isla de Cabrera, 1906*

It is obvious to say that the current ideas about the use of water resources in Cabrera are very different. All the water available in Cabrera comes from the scarce amounts of rainfall (about 380 millimetres a year). The karstic system of subterranean currents comes from multiple small springs. Nowadays, only two of these springs are used to supply water to the small population: a fountain in the orchard area, and a well nearby, which extract the water from an aquifer twenty two metres deep.

In any case, overexploitation is avoided due to the possible risk of exhaustion or marine filtration, and contamination with noxious residues or polluted waters. In the last ten years the rubbish dump has been closed and water purifying filters installed, canals have been repaired and a water-saving policy introduced for the same reason.



Sa Platgeta de Cabrera. Sebastià Torrens

## VEGETATION

*Olive trees, almond trees, vines, fig trees and fruit trees decorate Cabrera with the thrust of intelligence and work and will grow quickly protected by the soft temperature. They will eventually substitute the box, the pine tree and the other wild trees in the hills[...]. This will be Cabrera's destiny when it begins to be treated with the interest it deserves, just as the lush Albufera, nearly achieved by the elaborate projects of the English.*

**Cayetano Socias**

*La isla de Cabrera. Considerations about the expropriation (1881)*

*Human interference with the vegetation will be reduced in order to encourage its spontaneous development and to have at our disposal model communities for the study of ecological processes.*

Plan de Ordenación de los Recursos Naturales del  
Parque Nacional de Cabrera, 1992

Vegetation in the National Park is composed of typically Mediterranean species, including an important number of endemic species. The shore ring, that in the smallest islets includes all areas above the tide line, is formed by little bushes, which are able to withstand the spray of seawater. Here we find the most interesting plants, such as the bushes that form the small prickly pillows (*Launaea cervicornis*, *Teucrium subspinosum*) and limoniums (*Limonium* spp.). In this habitat live the two types of

endemic vegetatio of the Park: the *Limonium caprariense* and the *Rubia angustifolia* *Rubia caespitosa*.

There are two types of carrascal, only developed on the bigger islands. Over the more rocky soil, mainly wild olive trees (*Olea europaea* var. *sylvestris*) and mastic trees (*Pistacia lentiscus*) form the carrascal, and to a lesser extent savine (*Juniperus phoenicea*) and belcho (*Ephedra fragilis*). In some spots, the dominant species are the caustic weed (*Euphorbia dendroides*) which adds a red note to the landscape at the end of the spring, and the Balearic box (*Buxus balearica*), that in Majorca is typical of the highest areas of the Sierra de Tramuntana. Over the soft eroded soils, on the contrary, we find lower vegetation, like rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis* var. *palau*), heath (*Erica multiflora*) and rock rose (*Cistus monspeliensis*), with a variable cover of pine trees (*Pinus halepensis*). In the places where the tree cover is denser, it forms a humid microclimate, with bushes like strawberry trees (*Arbutus unedo*).



*Milk lobster (Euphorbia dendroides). Miquel Frontera*

There are two types of vegetation with restricted distribution that deserve a special mention. Firstly, the community of plants growing in cracks of the Jurassic lime rocks that form the rocky area. Small plants, often endemic to the Balearic Islands, take shelter in these spots. Secondly, we have to remember the bush growing only in some of the islets (S'Estell del Coll, S'Estell de For a and the islet of Ses Bledes) where we can find very rare species: a type of chard (*Beta vulgaris* var. *marcosii*) that outside this area is only found in the Bledes Islands ("bleda" in Catalan means chard), situated to the west of Ibiza, and the bush *Medicago citrina*, which thrives here and in the Columbretes Islands.



*Efedra* (*Ephedra fragilis*). Rubén Casas Oché

## LA FAUNA

*We saw an eagle that majestically flew,  
planning over us;  
we shot twice, but we were really  
wasting gunpowder.*

*The beautiful bird, without hurry, disdainfully,  
with a slow flap, flew away calmly and landed  
out of the reach of our lead,  
going towards the coast  
of Majorca visible in the horizon.*

Armand Pin de Latour

Diary of an excursion to Majorca  
and Cabrera on board of the *Mariucha* (1913)

Today the whole of the fauna from the National Park of the Archipelago of Cabrera is one of the most valued treasures of the protected area, due to the high level of endemism we find here. The terrestrial arthropods are especially remarkable. Twenty-four types of terrestrial gastropods have also been identified, eight of which are indigenous to the islands. One of them, the *Tudorella ferruginea*, is unique and is endemic to the Eastern Balearic Islands.

The Balearic lizards (*Podarcis lilfordi*) are another very valuable element of the National Park. There exist ten endemic subspecies and another ten populations show incipient differential characteristics.



Balearic wall lizard (*Podarcis lilfordi*). Rubén Casas Oché

Bats, of which several species have been identified, are the only indigenous mammals found in the park today. In one of the caves of Cabrera, remains of the *Myotragus balearicus*, the endemic "caprine" extinct with the arrival of humans to the Balearic Islands, were found.

Birds are definitely one of the most interesting groups of animals from the Archipelago of Cabrera. We find nesting seabirds such as the –Storm Petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus*), Balearic Shearwaters (*Puffinus yelkouan mauretanicus*), Cory's Shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea*), Audouin's Gull (*Larus audouinii*)– birds of prey –Eleonora's Falcon (*Falco eleonora*), Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) and Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)– Endemic birds such –as Marmora's Warbler (*Sylvia sarda var. balearica*)– and migratory birds using the archipelago as a place of rest.

## MARINE FLORA AND FAUNA

One of the most valuable families of plants in the National Park is formed by the *Posidonia oceanica*, a flowering plant that lives in the sea. It is one of the scarcest marine phanerogams in the world and is endemic to the Mediterranean. It grows on top of sandy banks near the coast, close to the surface down to thirty-five metres deep. This detail is a sign of the exceptional transparency of the waters of Cabrera.

Fresh-water fauna in Cabrera does not vary a lot from what we find in other parts of the Western Mediterranean, although we can find peculiarities that give it a character of its own. Both due to its southern location being more exposed to Atlantic influences than other places and the proximity of deep waters allows for the existence of warm water species such as, the red mullet (*Apogon imberbis*), the ornate wrasse (*Thalassoma pavo*) or the green moray (*Gymnothorax unicolor*), and oceanic species such as the swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*), the sunfish (*Mola mola*) or the blue shark (*Prionace glauca*). Nevertheless, the most common species in the National Park can be included in the four main ecological groups:

**Open-water fish.** These are comprised of the saddle seabream (*Oblada melanura*), the bogue (*Boops boops*) or the picarel (*Spicara smaris*), which are able to perform medium and long movements. There are other fish in this group that, despite being open-water types, inhabit deeper water habitats. This is the case of the damselfish (*Chromis chromis*) and the anthias (*Anthias anthias*). Finally we have the pelagic fish such as the greater amberjack (*Seriola dumerili*), the jack mackerel (*Trachurus* spp.) or the European barracuda (*Sphyraena* spp.).

**Deep-water bottom dwelling fish with long and medium distance ranges.** They are found over rocky bottoms and characterized by their long distance ranges. We are talking about fish such as the dentex (*Dentex dentex*), the seabream (*Pagrus pagrus*), the black seabream (*SpondylIOSOMA cantharus*) or sea bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*). Among species with shorter ranges abundant in Cabrera we find the two-banded seabream (*Diplodus vulgaris*), the white bream (*Diplodus sargus*), the sharpnout seabream (*Diplodus puntazzo*) or the saupe (*Sarpa salpa*), easily viewed in the poseidon seagrass meadows. On soft grounds we have mainly striped red mullet (*Mullus surmuletus*), the striped seabream (*Lithognathus mormyrus*), the stingray (*Dasyatis pastinaca*), and, even deeper down, the surmullet (*Mullus barbatus*), the axillary seabream (*Pagellus acarne*) and the streaked gurnard (*Trigloporus lastoviza*).

**Deep-water bottom dwelling fish with territorial behaviour and limited distance ranges.** In all the areas populated by *Posidonia oceanica* or other well-developed algae communities, there will be for sure, a good representation of Labridae. Among them we will stand out the rainbow wrasse (*Coris julis*), the big brown wrasse (*Labrus merula*) and the green wrasse (*Labrus viridis*), and up to eight species of the genus *Symphodus*. The most important of them, because of size and coloration, is the peacock wrasse (*Symphodus tinca*). Among the rockier habitat fishes are the brown meagre (*Sciaenae umbra*), and up to ten species of Serranidae, with five main ones: the pointed comb-er (*Serranus scriba*), the comb-er (*Serranus cabrilla*), the grouper (*Epinephelus marginatus*), the goldblotch grouper (*Epinephelus costae*) and the mottled grouper (*Mycteroperca rubra*).

**Bottom dwelling fish bound to the sediment.** In the broken rough ground of the seafloor in the shallow inshore waters, we

find a large group of Gobies and Blennius, such as the giant goby (*Gobius cobitis*), the tompot blenny (*Parablennius gattorugine*) and the rusty blenny (*Parablennius sanguinolentus*). Dwelling in deeper waters, we find the bigscale scorpionfish (*Scorpaena scrofa*), and other types of scorpionfish (*Scorpaena porcus*), the moray (*Muraena helena*) and the conger (*Conger conger*). On sedimentary grounds, we find the wide-eyed flounder (*Bothus podas*), the pearly razorfish (*Xyrichtys novacula*) and some species of skates (*Raja* spp.)

Several species of cetaceans frequent the waters of the National Park. The best known among them are the dolphins, which might come near the shoreline and the boats. The most common species we find are the common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*), the striped dolphin (*Stenella coeruleoalba*) and the bottlenosed dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*).

Sea turtles are another of the invertebrate group frequenting the waters of the National Park. The most numerous genus is the loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*), very often spotted swimming just below the surface. However, the leatherback turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), much bigger than the first one, is also very rare.



Dolphins in the port of Cabrera, 1961. Guillem Oliver Sunyer

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Illes Balears**

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