



For this route a permit is required.

Route 5: El pinsapar, the famous fir forest walk

6 HOURS
STRENUOUS



Largest Spanish fir forest in the world.
Beautiful mountain scenery with matching flora, butterflies and birds.
Best place within the Grazalema to find Spanish Ibex.



Habitats along this route: pine and Spanish fir forest (p. 37), dehesa, (p. 32), scrubland (p. 42) and karst (p. 52).

This is the walk of walks within the Grazalema Natural Park. It leads through the Spanish fir forest -the largest in the world- that forms the main attraction of the natural park. The fir forest is indeed attractive, but shady and with a poor herb layer that might not live up to the expectations

created by the stories and brochures. Don't let this put you off, because the forest takes up only a small portion of this diverse route. The views, mountain scrublands, butterfly and bird communities on these highest parts



of the mountains make this route spectacular. Numerous species occur here that you won't encounter on any other route in the Grazalema.

Departure point Grazalema

Getting there Leave in the direction of El Bosque and after about two kilometres turn onto the minor road towards Zahara and Algodonales. After about one kilometre the trail starts from a sizeable car park on your left-hand side.



These first Spanish firs mark the entry of one of the rarest forest types in the world: the pinsapar or Spanish fir forest.

1 Immediately after you start your walk, you are treated to one of Grazelema's prize turns: the Reverchoni's star-of-Bethlehem* (p.82), which is almost endemic to the limestone mountains of the park and flowers in April and May.

The trail steeply climbs up the mountain through a forest of Aleppo pines, which alternates with open patches of thorny scrubland. This is the warm south slope of the mountain, which has an entirely different character than the cool north slope, where the Spanish firs grow. Blue aphyllanthes and the occasional dull bee and southern early-purple orchids (p. 95) grow under the Aleppo pines.

2 Once on the ridge you have a magnificent view towards the mountains to the north. If you found the ascent strenuous, you'll be pleased to know that, from now on, the trail is either level or downhill. Once you have reached the ridge, the vegetation changes abruptly into a rather low scrubland and pasture, with the first small specimens of Spanish fir. These mountain scrublands are interesting for birdwatchers. Rock buntings and melodious, Dartford and subalpine warblers inhabit the dense vegetation.