



### Natural Values



Jorox is a little village half way Alozaina and Yunquera, to the east of the Sierra de las Nieves District. Walking the steep streets of Jorox in October is like visiting an urban garden where most of the autumn fruits will soon be ready to be harvested and savoured.

We will be accompanied by birds all the time. These are some of the species we could find in Jorox: Red-legged Partridge, Wood Pigeon, Eagle Owl, Crag Martin, White Wagtail, Grey Wagtail, Robin, Song Thrush,

Blackbird, Blackcap, Sardinian Warbler, Chiffchaff, Wren, Great Tit, Blue Tit, Crested Tit, Long-tailed Tit, Short-toed Treecreeper, Jay, Spotless Starling, House Sparrow, Chaffinch, Goldfinch, Greenfinch, Serin, Cirl Bunting and Rock Bunting.



### How to get there

Type "El Rivita, Jorox" in Google Maps. Once we leave road A-366 towards Jorox, there is a car park just after a sharp bend to the right before we get into the village; we can leave our car here. There is access to a paved path from both sides of the car park.



### Jorox

The first feeling when you get down the car in Jorox is that temperature is sweeter than expected anywhere at Sierra de las Nieves. After all, this hamlet is located in the shelter of the Rio Jorox gorge and surrounded by hills to the east and a rocky plateau to the west. Without this protection from the cold winter winds, some tree species like citrus, which cannot stand frost on their evergreen leaves, could not be grown here.

The murmur of the water will soon come to our ears from the river and also from an old system of small ditches that extends across the village like a capillary network used both to irrigate the cultivated terraces and to power several mills in the past.



As we walk the narrow and steep streets linking houses, groves and orchards and see how everything is open to visitors, we will understand the friendly and hospitable personality of Jorox inhabitants.



## The groves and orchards

If we are bold enough to reach Jorox before dawn, we could be able to hear the hooting of the Eagle Owl in the cliffs of “La Mesa” (the plateau), at the other bank of the river, from the car park.

As daylight shrouds the gorge and the Cirl Bunting sings from the top of the rocks, we can start descending the streets towards the south end of the village. The paved path will take us across a little bridge over the river and we will find ourselves walking in the middle of a garden where House Sparrows, Goldfinches, Robins,



Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs flit around the trees. The tiny Wren sometimes dares to play his repetitive song from the top of an orange tree while the Blackbirds dig the leaves litter in search for worms. Grey Wagtails fly back and forth across the gorge and sometimes land on top of the roofs.

Once we go across the bridge, we turn left downhill and left again at the first fork. After going past the “Molino del Rey” house, we take the right side of the fork that will lead us to the south end of the village around the cliffs.



## The “Tajos” and Aleppo pine forest

Bear in mind that what you go down, must be walked up! Anyway, it is an enjoyable walk in which you will discover the whole set of fruits grown in Jorox: figs, oranges, avocado, nuts, tomatoes, pomegranate, loquats, grapes, almonds, lemons, quince, persimmon, olives...



We are now approaching the south end of the village and we will spot Crag Martins and Wood Pigeons flying along the “tajos” (cliffs), Blue Rock Thrushes on the rocks and Spotless Starlings feeding from the last figs on the trees closer to the top.



The south end of the plateau is quite an unstable area. Looking down from the track to the river bed, we can see three big rocks that rolled down from the cliff in 1970, and some minor rockslides have taken place since then.

As we go around the plateau, we will reach an Aleppo pine stand where Short-toed Treecreepers, Chaffinches, Sardinian Warblers, Rock Buntings, Great, Blue, Crested and Long-tailed Tits will show up in the trees and scrub while Jays will stay hidden cawing from the

thicket. Red-legged Partridges are also present in this area and may noisily fly off as we go along, the way the Song Thrush will do from the olive trees.

The views of the highest reaches of the Sierra de las Nieves are spectacular from here, but it is time to come back and have a look to the “nacimiento” (spring) of Rio Jorox.

## El Nacimiento



Back to the high part of Jorox, we will go past the Santo Cristo de la Vera Cruz Chapel and take left at the fork (the right street takes us back to the car park) and right in the next junction. Some steps ahead, we will reach the courtyard of a house from which a stair takes us to the path towards the spring.

The spring is just below the road bridge. It is the heart that pumps the water into the irrigation ditches. Like during the Muslim age, the distribution of the water to the different properties is done according to traditional agreed upon rules.

Seat down in the shade for a while, close your eyes and let your imagination run free...



## PHOTOS:

1. Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*)
2. Male House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)
3. Jorox River gorge
4. “Acequia” (irrigation ditch)
5. Jorox
6. Female House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)
7. Blackbird (*Turdus merula*)
8. Blue Tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*)
9. Lemons
10. Pomegranates
11. Quinces
12. Blue Rock Thrush (*Monticola solitarius*)
13. Track around the south face of the plateau
14. Stairs to the Nacimiento (spring) path
15. The Nacimiento