

European Wilderness Network

Peneda-Gerês Wilderness



2018

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Let's get Wild!

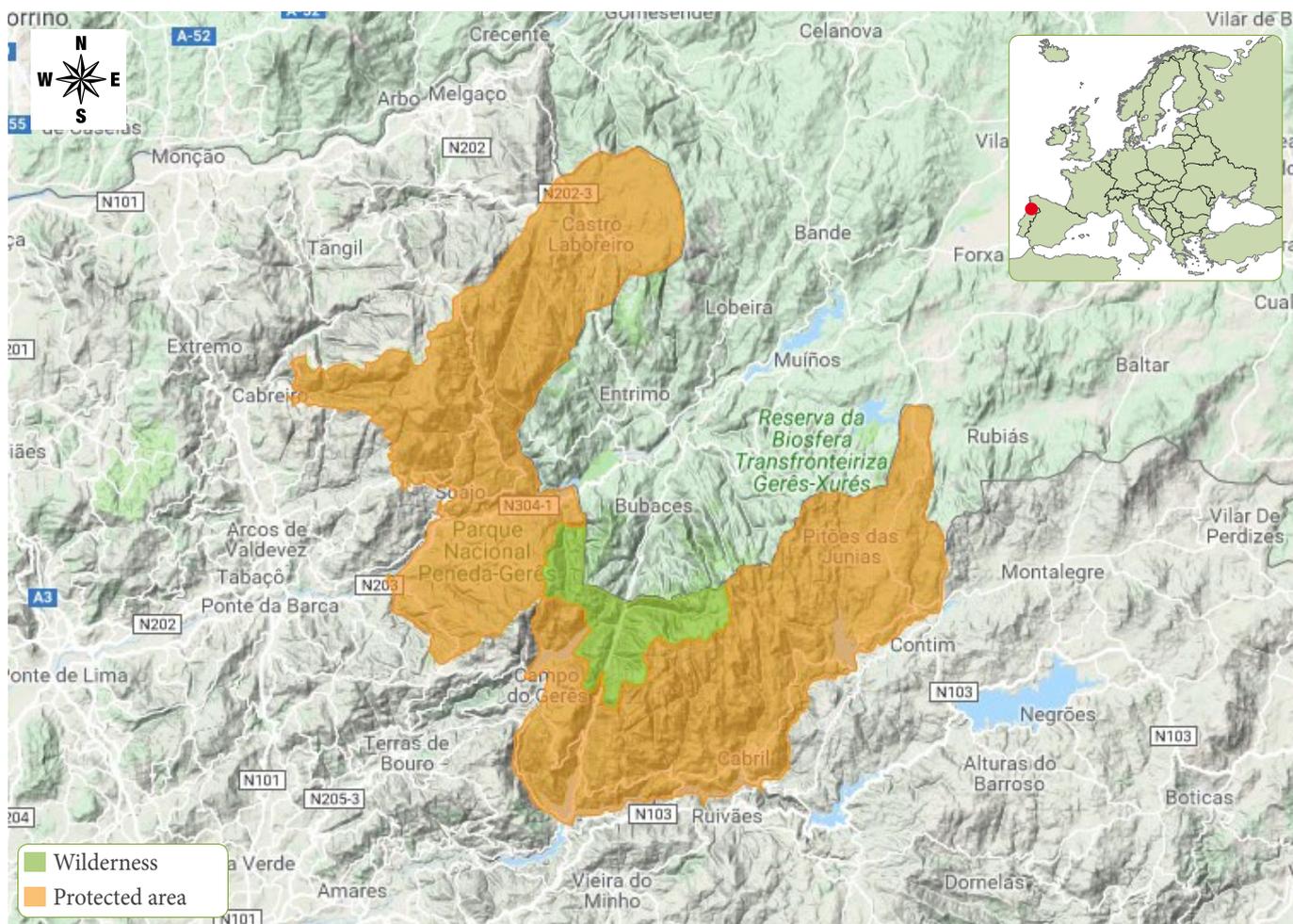
Peneda-Gerês Wilderness, Portugal

The 5 000 ha of Peneda-Gerês Wilderness are embedded in the Peneda-Gerês National Park, Portugal. The Peneda-Gerês National Park was created in 1971 due to its national and international scientific values, with the aim to protect the existing human and natural resources. Since the Peneda-Gerês National Park was established, it has been acknowledged as the wildest area of Portugal. The area also has a cultural history from prehistoric times through Roman occupation to the present day. Cultural influences in the area represented a challenge for the National Park in achieving a Wilderness Quality Standard without extractive use. As there is currently grazing in the large part of the potential Wilderness, a contract was signed allowing for a withdrawal of grazing over a 10-year period to ultimately expand Peneda-Gerês Wilderness into this area.

European Wilderness Quality Standard Audit System

The 5 000 ha Peneda-Gerês Wilderness was audited and monitored in 2007, 2008 and 2011 and meets the Gold Wilderness Quality Standard. A European Wilderness Quality Standard Renewal-Audit is scheduled for 2021. The Wilderness has the potential to be enlarged.

Wilderness information	
Protected area	Peneda-Gerês National Park
Wilderness	Peneda-Gerês Wilderness
Country	Portugal
Size of the protected area	70 290 ha
Size of the Wilderness	5 000 ha
First Audit	2007
Most Recent Audit	2011
Wilderness Uniqueness	The frontier between the Euro-Siberian and Mediterranean regions with four distinct biomes: oak forest, shrubbery, marshes and riparian vegetation. Wild, inaccessible landscape with rare and unique species, such as the wild ponies "Garranos", wolf, otter, and golden eagle
Number of visitors per year to the protected area	approx. 250 000
Number of visitors per year to the Wilderness	approx. 25 000



Map scale 1 : 614 000



Biodiversity

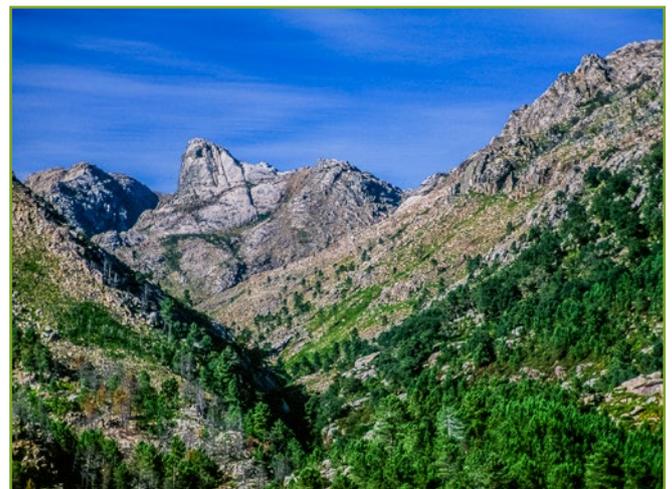
The Peneda-Gerês Wilderness provides a safe refuge for many species typical for this region. The foothills of the Serra da Gerês and the Serra da Cabreira constitute the frontier between the Euro-Siberian and Mediterranean regions. The flora in this Peneda-Gerês Wilderness is of high phyto-geographic importance. The floristic diversity includes 823 vascular plant species that occur in 128 types of natural vegetation. In the oak forests, which are common throughout the park, butcher's broom, maple and Portuguese laurel can be found amongst the oak trees.

In the past many large mammals and birds significantly suffered in the Peneda-Gerês Wilderness, such as the population of grey wolf and the golden eagle. The bear also disappeared from the region in the 17th century and the extinct Portuguese ibex, locally known as Gerês goat, was last seen last in the 1890s. More than a century later, its vacant ecological niche was reoccupied naturally by Spanish ibexes coming from Galicia, and their population numbered approximately 100 animals by 2011.

The Peneda-Gerês Wilderness is home to a large range of fauna (235 species of vertebrates), including the rare wolf, golden eagle and Pyrean desman.

Wilderness Tourism Experience

Peneda-Gerês Wilderness is offering the unique opportunity to observe spontaneous Wilderness restoration in a Mediterranean country. There is a wide spectrum of local services and opportunities, not only to enjoy this corner of Portugal, but also to learn about and explore Peneda-Gerês Wilderness. Visits include sampling the local gastronomy, canoeing tours, visiting an old village, and sun bathing in amazing landscapes.



Contact

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Let's
Get
Wild!

European Wilderness Society

Founded on more than 20 years of Wilderness work by our members, the European Wilderness Society is the only Pan-European, Wilderness and environmental advocacy non-profit, non-government organisation.

It has a dedicated multi-cultural and experienced team of Wilderness and wildlife specialists, nature conservationists, researchers and scientists, tourism experts, marketing and business professionals, legal advisors and Wilderness advocates, whose mission is to:

- ▶ identify
- ▶ designate
- ▶ steward
- ▶ promote

Europe's last Wilderness, WILDCoasts, WILDForests, WILDIslands and WILDRivers. Here non-human intervention leads to open-ended, dynamic processes.

This is conveyed through a range of projects that facilitate Wilderness knowledge exchange, including education, culture and science, from local community through to scientific and governmental level.

European Wilderness Network

The European Wilderness Network connects Europe's wildest places. Certified by the European Wilderness Quality and Audit System, these unique areas host diverse wild ecosystems governed by dynamic open-ended processes, with no or minimum human-intervention. The Network includes, for example, Europe's last primeval beech forests, the arctic tundra, and mountain landscapes in different climate conditions. It aims to promote Europe's last Wilderness, WILDCoasts, WILDForests, WILDIslands and WILDRivers, with a comprehensive marketing strategy. The European Wilderness Network offers a platform to share Wilderness Stewardship best-practice examples and Wilderness research. It connects like-minded Wilderness managers and advocates and fosters the exchange of ideas and knowledge across Europe and the world through the European Wilderness Exchange Programme.

For more information please see <http://european-wilderness.network>

European Wilderness Society

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