

## **AFTERNOON TOUR (THE SOUNDS OF THE FORESTS AT NIGHT)**

*THE PRICES AND SERVICES PROPOSED IN THIS OFFER WILL COME INTO FORCE BY SIGNING THE COLLABORATION AGREEMENT AND AFTER THE ACCEPTANCE OF TO THE CORE OF THINGS OF THE BOOKING REQUESTS!*

*From the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the salt industry has ensured the preservation of the Salt Lakes, wetlands that have been lately protected as a natural reserve and declared “European Special Protection Areas of Wild Birds” boasting hundreds of species some of them breeding and some of them endemic to this place and in danger of extinction. In the rear of the former Elche wetland hides as well one of the most unknown chain of mountains home of the largest population of the Eurasean Eagle Owl, the biggest nocturne predator of the country.*

*Discover some of the most astonishing, wild, well preserved and full of life natural spaces and wetlands of the region through a slow tourism excursion with us where we will guide you and introduce you to the world of birding.*

### **BACKGROUND**

The area where the Vinalopó river flows into the Mediterranean Sea is one of the best national birding places with several well known wetlands and Salt marches but also with an off the beaten track tiny chain of mountains that boasts the largest number of breeding Eurasean Eagle owl of all Europe as well as some other owl species like the little owl, the territorial Tawny owl, the so called white lady and endangered Barn owl as well as many species of eagles like the Bonelli's eagle, the Golden eagle or the Booted eagle.

The name of the mountains is “Sierra Escalona” and conform the northern strip of the Murcian “Sierra del Carrascoy”. This strip is home to one of the most dense populations of European Rabbit key for explaining the large population of Bird predators (both diurnal and nocturnal as the Eurasean Eagle Owl, the Barn Owl, the Golden Eagle, the Northern goshawk, etc.) and small mammal predators like wild cats, small spotted genet or badgers.

During this evening we want you use several of your senses to enjoy some of the most wild and beautiful places of the area walking at dusk and listening at night meanwhile introducing you to the world of birding by telling you about the most important species, their identification, their biology, their habitats and their sounds through a local guide knowledgeable of the fauna but also of all the traditions, the culture and their importance to the region.

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## Walk rating

The visit includes a gentle walking of up to 10km, walking up and down through paths in good conditions. The walk last for about 3 hours and it is done at a very slow pace and with multiple stops for listening to the sounds and birding introduction games along the way. Therefore, almost all people whether fit or in the way of being it, will enjoy it as it is not physically demanding, though it is recommended for people used to stroll at least once a week.

## Level of birding

The local guide hosting this tour is a forest management student, bird lover and a traditional craftsman. The local guide will cope the expectations of bird lovers up to a medium level and even those with an advance level interested in endemic species of the area. He has developed several research studies with the staff of the natural parks and he is member of the local environmental association focused on Sierra Escalona.

The tour is organised as an introduction to the natural reserve (*“European Special Protection Areas of Wild Birds”*) and specially as an introduction to birding, providing the basic information on what birding is about, basics on the world of birds, how to identify species (watching, listening, etc.). Therefore, the tours will not include binoculars or other materials for bird watching and we consequently encourage medium level and advanced bird watchers to bring their own material or to tell us in advance to request them.

## Average weather conditions (for a month of October)

- Average minimum temperatures: 13.4 °C
- Average maximum temperatures: 24.4 °C
- Average rain mm: 57

## ITINERARY

### TOUR “The sounds of the forest” (timing will be adjusted according to the sunset time of the season)

- **Prepack:** email sent with a detailed map on how to get to the starting point, contact phones and emails.
- **06:00 – 6:30 p.m Welcome at the meeting point:** you will have an informal welcome chat with the local person serving as your host and who will explain you the activities and the philosophy of the initiative “to the core of things”.
- **6:30-7:45 p.m. “the forest at dusk”:** with your local hosts you will head to the starting point of this walk within the mountains of Orihuela. The walk will start at dusk, the perfect moment to spot some of the eagles (Bonelli, Golden eagle, etc.) and the owls (specially the little owl tends to show up very frequently at that moment of the day).
- **7:45-9:00 p.m. “the sounds of the forest”:** after the sunset you will walk through very wide visible tracks and will sit down for listening to the sounds

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of the fauna of the forest with the nightjar and other birds singing at night. In clear nights we will spot as well the clear astronomic night of the mountains.

- Fare well

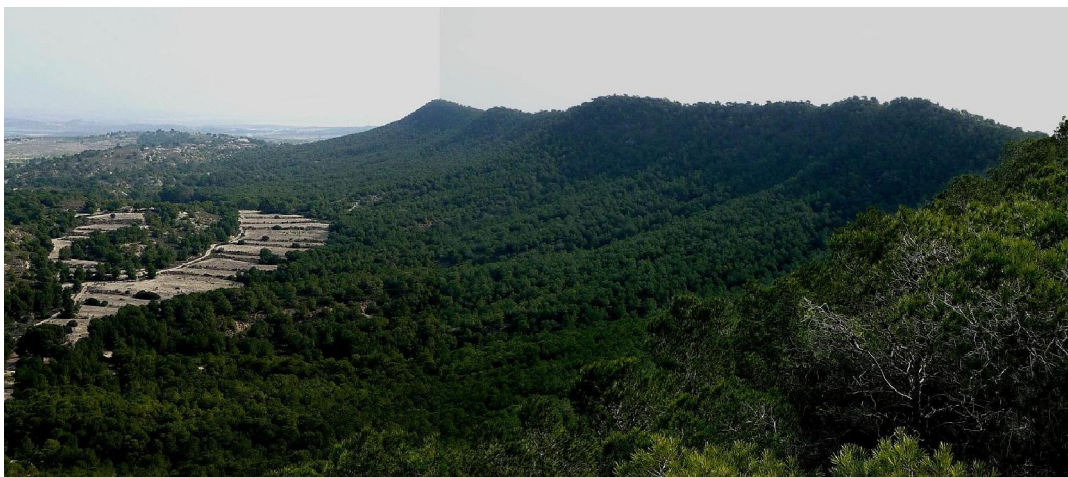
A tawny owl



A golden Eagle



Sierra Escalona



Our local expert



Eurasian eagle owl



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#### THINGS GUESTS SHOULD BRING:

- Dark coloured clothes (green, brown, grey, black)
- Hat - Water - Appropriate shoes and clothes
- Snack - sun cream - Umbrella and rain coat in rainy seasons
- Binoculars, cameras and other materials for birding (if passionate and experienced birdwatchers)

#### BASIC DATA OF THE EXCURSION

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- MAX. SIZE OF GROUP: 15
- NUMBER OF HOSTS ACCOMPANYING THE GROUP: 2 (1 local fauna and flora expert and 1 local host speaking English)
- DATES: AVAILABILITY EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK TO BE CONFIRMED BY BOOKING REQUEST

#### PRICES PER INDIVIDUALS:

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PRICE PER PERSON: 19.5€ (16,1€ + VAT)

**(ASK FOR OUR SPECIAL DISCOUNTS FOR GROUPS!)**

#### PRICES FOR POTENTIAL EXTRA SERVICES

- Extra hour: 5€ per person
- Binoculars rent: 50€ per day
- Any other extras: According to market prices

Prices include: 3 hours guided stroll in the natural park of el Hondo, 1 knowledgeable local host, 1 local expert on fauna and flora and game fiches for birding.

\*extra charge of 5€ per person for trips during regional and national bank holidays

\*\* Other services not mentioned are not included in the price (transportation, etc.)

#### BANK ACCOUNT TO TRANSFER PAYMENTS:

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**HOLDER:** TO THE CORE OF THINGS S.L.U

**IBAN:** ES20 1465 0716 5119 0047 3109

**Código BIC/SWIFT :** INGDESMMXXX

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