

# Cabrera archipelago

Legal status

National parc

Foundation year

1991

Foundation text

Law n°14/1991

Management body

Department of Environment of the Balearic Islands, Regional Government and the Ministry of the Environment, and Rural and Marine Affairs

Superficy

10021ha

Management category

II

(IUCN, 1994)



## Territory



Cabrera is a small archipelago, compounded with 19 islets, situated to the south of Majorca (Balearic Islands). The main islands are Cabrera Gran (1118 ha) and Conillera (137 ha) with a subset of 17 rocky islets of variable size, ranging from 0.1 ha (Illot de l'Olló) to 10.7 ha. Islands and islets are aligned approximately in a NE to SW direction. Cabrera is the only uninhabited archipelago of its size in the western Mediterranean,



Cabrera archipelago has been a SPAMI since 2003 thanks to its richness in marine birds, fauna and flora and its endemics species



## Physical features

The waters of the Archipelago are characterised by their oligotrophy, accentuated by the low continental influence, and in consequence by an elevated transparency. The bottoms are very heterogeneous. The maximum depth in the protected marine zone reaches 110 m.

Cliff morphologies are dominant in the shores of Cabrera, ranging from very high rocky cliffs to complex and stepped ones. Cliffs higher than 50 m are common. Sea caves, either aerial or submarine are frequent and spectacular in some cases.

## Specificities and Importance



The landscape of Cabrera is dominated by two main shrublands communities: a littoral *màquia* with the prevalence of sclerophyllus bushes, and a shrubland dominated by malacophyllus bushes with an arboreal stratum in some areas.

Close to the sea, there is a continuum belt of halonitrophilous vegetation. The calcareous cliffs are rich in crevices that host remarkable communities with some endemics. Nearly 500 of terrestrial vascular plants are present, including 30 endemic taxa.

Cabrera is the main site for seabirds and sea-cliff raptors in the Balearic Islands, hosting breeding populations of all the species that can be found in the western Mediterranean, with remarkable numbers of breeding pairs. The archipelago hosts 80% of the world population of the endemic Balearic lizard (*Podarcis lilfordi*) a population splitted into several subspecies. Aracnids are rich in species and two coleoptera are endemics of the archipelago.

The marine biota has 455 species Diatoms, Macroalgae and Seagrasses and 951 metazoans. The Archipelago is outstanding for its extraordinarily diverse fish assemblage. The great abundance of the thermophilic decapod crustacean *Scyllarides latus* is also remarkable. Anchialine cave fauna is noteworthy, with up to 8 endemic species exclusive of the archipelago.



## Threats and Pressures

The potential human impacts on the site derive from the activity of a fishery fleet based on the near ports of Mallorca and from the visitors.

Only traditional artisan selective fishing (gill nets, line) is allowed and professional fishing is accepted and integrated in the park's management objectives

On 2001, the Park received 60.000 visitors. The regime of visits is very seasonal, 50% of total visitors concentrating on July-August. Landing is very restricted and only permitted around Cabrera's harbour



## Management

A management plan was established in 1995 and a new one is used since 2003. Nowadays, a new one is expected in few months.

Like every Spanish National Parc, Cabrera defines four different areas for zonification:

- Reserves (no public use at all, only management and scientific activities allowed)
- Special use areas (buildings and paths connecting them)
- Restricted use areas (public use allowed with strict limitations)
- Moderate use areas (public use allowed with limitations and regulations).

The staff is compounded by 21 permanent members and more others for reinforcing in summer time.

Basic financing is ensured by means of budget from the Spanish National Park Authority (Ministry of the Environment, and Rural and Marine Affairs).

Cabrera is the ordinary research playground for the major biodiversity research laboratories of either the Balearic Islands (i.e., IMEDEA (CSIC), Spanish Oceanographic Institute (IEO) and the University of the Balearic Islands) and Catalonia (CEAB, ICM and University of Barcelona). Seven scientists of these laboratories spend a significant proportion of their time on this research at present.

The park carries out and finances an educational program called Discover Cabrera. Since 1991, a total of 32982 students have visited the park by means of this project, but also to social groups and collectives of particular interest: third age, special educational centers, youth clubs, etc.

