



BARROCA D'ALVA
HOTEL RURAL

BIRDWATCHING TOURS

Barroca d'Alva is an excellent point of departure for visiting some of the best areas in Portugal to observe birds and nature generally.

In fact, our hotel lies basically inside the most important protected wetland in Portugal and one of the most important ones in Europe – the Tagus estuary.

There you can find estuarine habitat, marshes, saline flats, rice fields, reed beds, pasture and wooded hills, all within a few kilometres.

Put together, the greater Tagus estuary contains a quite extraordinary range of birds, from Flamingo to Black-shouldered Kite and Squacco Heron to Little Bustard.

The area bird list includes more than 250 species and visiting the Tagus estuary is a fantastic experience at all times of the year: in

winter, it holds over 120.000 waders, waterfowl and other aquatic birds; during migratory periods, the bird diversity is at its maximum, and it is not unusual to observe more than 100 species in a single day; during the summer, the estuary is alive with breeding species more usually associated with the Mediterranean.

Nature seems especially close here, because of the unique age-old relationship between agriculture and the land. Enormous, powerful black bulls abound, lazing under cork oaks, while the ecological balance created over the centuries has ensured a wide biodiversity. The range of lichens on cork is both unique and remarkable. Many wild mammals are common, especially the Egyptian Mongoose, which is regularly seen, moving in family groups.



Our specialized partner in this area, **Birds & Nature Tours**, offers half day and full day guided field tours to this estuary, but there are more distant alternatives, for whole day excursions, namely to the Sado estuary and specific sites in the Alentejo or in the Algarve areas; tailor-made alternatives are also available. Quality binoculars, telescopes and field guides are available.

www.birds.pt