

GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF ANAGA AND TENO

Sky Dancers

We invite you to discover and learn more about these fascinating creatures that have mastered the art of flight, each with its own unique choreography, making them true masters and dancers of the skies: birds.

In addition to their remarkable ballet, they have developed a musical language of their own which captivates the ears of attentive listeners.

To see these birds, nothing beats a visit to the Anaga and Teno massifs. These settings boast natural and rural scenery of breathtaking beauty, where these unique aerial navigators play a starring role.

Take the time to enjoy this spectacle of nature.











RURAL PARKS

RESIDENT NATIVE BIRDS

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Introduction

Know them to value them and value them to protect them.

We have always enjoyed the company of birds, our closest allies in many areas: they disperse seeds and pollinate plants, control pests, form part of the food chain in ecosystems and, with their songs and trills, they play their part in composing a soundtrack for nature.

The presence of these airborne dancers is a sign of the quality of the environment in which we live. If they are flitting around above our heads, then all is well. But if we do not see their aerial dance, we should be concerned.

In the following pages, with the aid of maps of the parks, we have compiled various locations for spotting the most significant birds found in the two rural parks of Tenerife. You can see these birds anywhere, but the likelihood of spotting them is greater at these sites. The list is intended to cover all habitats, from the coast to the forested summits.

We have selected eighteen species out of all of the birds that nest in the two parks, each of which is described in this guide. There were two selection criteria: either they are endemic species, or they are common and easy to spot.

Each entry contains a drawing of the species and a description of the bird's identifying features to help you to recognise it. There is also a link for more information on each species.

The last pages feature the most common species, both resident and migratory, grouped under the habitats that are indicated on the maps. Some species, such as the common kestrel, can be found in different habitats, as their range is not bound to a particular habitat, while others, such as the Bolle's pigeon, are found only in the monteverde ecosystem, and are seldom seen anywhere else.

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The Anaga and Teno Rural Parks

Anaga and Teno are protected natural areas with immense heritage value. Extending from coast to summit, they are home to myriad landscapes. These areas were declared rural parks in 1994 with the aim of protecting nature and helping to conserve the cultural heritage that is still safeguarded today by local residents of the hamlets dotted throughout the two massifs. Rural parks are like open books that testify to the cultural and natural history of Tenerife.

The island possesses a vast, unique biodiversity, including many nesting birds, some of which are found only in the archipelago of the Canary Islands. For many others, once widespread and abundant on the island, these massifs are now their last refuge, as they seek sanctuary in the cliffs, ravines, and inaccessible islets.

And then there are others that choose to spend a season in the Teno and Anaga massifs or to rest and feed on their long migrations, contributing to the ornithological diversity and importance of these two natural areas.

For these reasons, both natural areas were nominated and, in 2006, designated SPAs (Special Protection Areas for birds) under the EU Natura 2000 network.

In addition, in 2015, UNESCO declared the entire Anaga massif a Biosphere Reserve, in recognition of its high natural and cultural value at a global level.



Native birds found nowhere else in the world

Of all the bird species that you can see in the Teno and Anaga massifs, around fifty or so are residents, living on the island all year round and nesting here. Most of them are native. This means that they arrived naturally on the islands a long time ago.

However, others, such as the Eurasian collared dove, have only recently arrived in the Canary Islands.

Some of these nesting birds have been introduced by humans. Some, such as the Barbary partridge, were brought to the island as game birds, others as pets that were released or escaped and have managed to establish themselves in the wild.

As with other ocean islands located far from the continents, the number of birds in the Canary archipelago is not high. Nevertheless, we are home to a considerable percentage of endemic species. These birds, unique in the world, trace their ancestry to the continent, but because they have inhabited the islands for many years without any genetic interaction with their continental relatives, they have evolved to become their own specie s, found exclusively on the archipelago.

Of the nine species of birds that are endemic to the Canary Islands, five live in the two rural parks. In addition to this figure, there are the endemic subspecies, which make up a large part of the native birds of the archipelago. We also share endemic species that are exclusive to Macaronesia, such as the Atlantic canary, with the Azores and Madeira.

Bolle's pigeon ENDEMIC SPECIES OF Laurel pigeon THE CANARY ISLANDS Canary Island chiffchaff Canary Island chaffinch Tenerife robin

ENDEMIC SPECIES OF MACARONESIA

Barolo shearwater

Atlantic canary

Berthelot's pipit

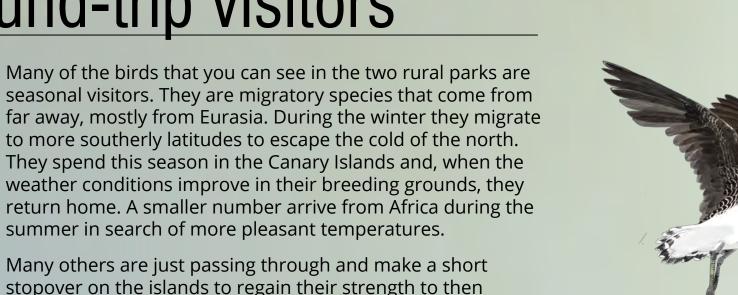




Northern lapwing

CANARY ISLANDS

Atlantic route between Eurasia and Africa



Winter tourists and round-trip visitors

seasonal visitors. They are migratory species that come from far away, mostly from Eurasia. During the winter they migrate to more southerly latitudes to escape the cold of the north. They spend this season in the Canary Islands and, when the weather conditions improve in their breeding grounds, they return home. A smaller number arrive from Africa during the summer in search of more pleasant temperatures.

Many others are just passing through and make a short stopover on the islands to regain their strength to then continue their long outbound or inbound journey. They are usually seen for only a few days. Some are regular visitors and others are vagrant.

Black-tailed godwit

Grey heron

EURASIA



ÁFRICA

Green sandpiper



Conservation and the future of birds

Bird populations are in decline all over the world. In the latest edition of the Red List of Spanish Birds, SEO/Birdlife reports that a third of bird populations have declined and almost a hundred species are on the verge of disappearing.

Birds in the Canary Islands are not immune to this situation. They are also disappearing from our countryside, leaving a void in the complex functioning of island ecosystems, causing significant imbalance. Extinctions on our islands go back a long way, but the decline in populations and the disappearance of species on the island of Tenerife has accelerated since the middle of the last century.

The red kite disappeared in the second half of the 20th century, a victim of pesticides. In 1986, the last pair of Egyptian vultures,



which had found refuge in the Teno massif, also disappeared. A few years later, the Mediterranean short-toed lark joined the list of extinct species in Tenerife.

In this century, this trend has continued. Recently, the Kentish plover and, in all probability, the common starling have disappeared from the island. The trumpeter finch, the corn bunting and the rock sparrow also seem to have their days numbered.

Of particular concern is the survival of the osprey, with very few breeding pairs clinging onto survival on the cliffs of Los Gigantes, or the dwindling populations of the stone-curlew, Iberian grey shrike and hoopoe, which until a few years ago were common. Seabirds, such as the Barolo shearwater and the Manx shearwater, also have an uncertain future, as does the little ringed plover.





The causes of this decline lie in the fragmentation of habitats, with no possibility for birds to find natural corridors between the small pockets where they still survive. We humans exert great pressure on these last few enclaves, especially in coastal areas (there is hardly a stretch of coastline without buildings, harbours, beaches crowded with bathers, dogs roaming free in the thickets where birds nest, tourist and recreational boats...). The presence of invasive species, such as feral cats and rats, is another of the main threats. And to this list we can add pollution, which, together with climate change and the increase in extreme weather events, and the devastating forest fires they cause, put the final nail in the coffin for the survival of our birds.

But this is not always the case. The raven, which was almost lost, is now beginning to recover thanks to a recovery programme in the Teno Rural Park. It is now beginning to be seen and heard relatively frequently on the rest of the island. A similar case is that of the Barbary falcon, which until a few years ago was also on the verge of extinction and is now well and truly on the road to recovery. Both cases are a ray of hope and show us the way forward.





Birdwatching tips

Before setting out into the countryside to go birding, bear in mind the following tips which will help you to achieve your goal.

> The first thing you need to put in your backpack, in addition to good binoculars, a bus pass and this guide, is patience. Lots of patience. Birds are sometimes easy to spot and sometimes less so.

> The best times of the day to observe them are at dawn and dusk. Your chances of seeing them are better at these two times of day.

> It is important **not to make any noise or sudden movements**. And it is highly advisable to wear clothing that blends in as much as possible with the environment you are going to.

> Respect the privacy of the residents of Anaga and Teno.

> Remember, of course, that wild birds must not be fed, as this would lead to changes in their diet and habits and could also lead to disease. Do not be tempted to use food as a lure.

> It is not advisable to take your dog with you. If your pet accompanies you, you will have very little chance of seeing birds.

> Do not leave litter or stray from authorised paths and trails.

> If you see an injured bird, call the **Tahonilla Wildlife Recovery Centre** (Centro de Recuperación de Fauna Silvestre de la Tahonilla 900 282 228 – freephone).

> If you have had a successful day, celebrate by sampling some **local cuisine** to take home a memorable taste of your experience. And if you have not achieved your goals, there is a good excuse to celebrate anyway. Eating local produce helps to keep farmland in production, for which many birds linked to agriculture will thank you.



Birdwatching sites in the Teno massif

Teno should preferably be reached by bus. In this way you can contribute to not clogging up this protected natural area with cars, to saving energy and to the fight against climate change.

CLICK ON MAP



Marine coastal



Lowland scrub





Cropland and grassland

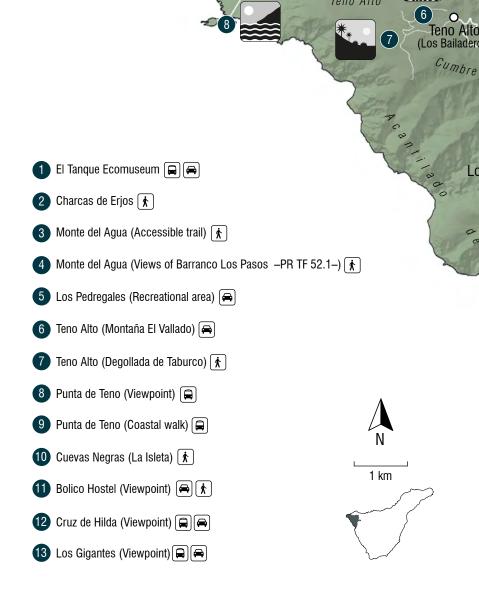




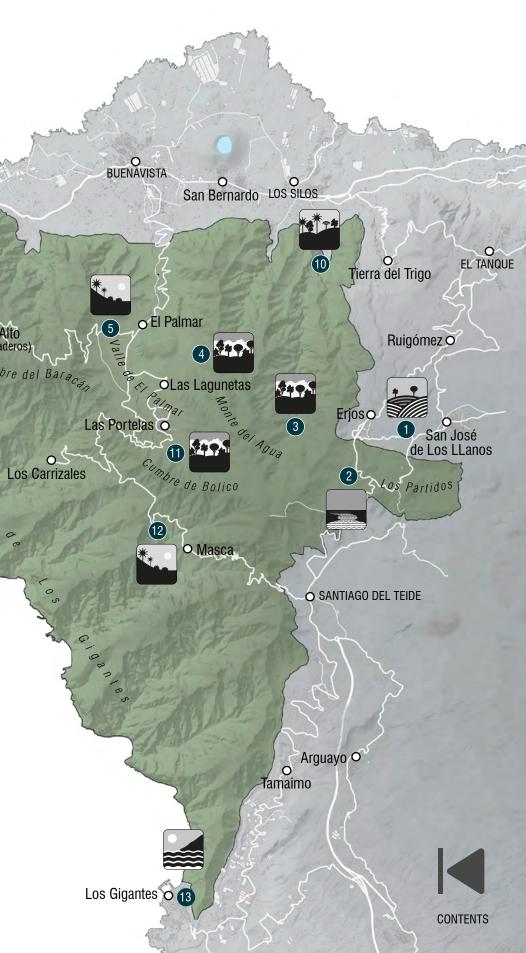
Thermophilous

Thermophilous and scrub

Wetlands and reservoirs



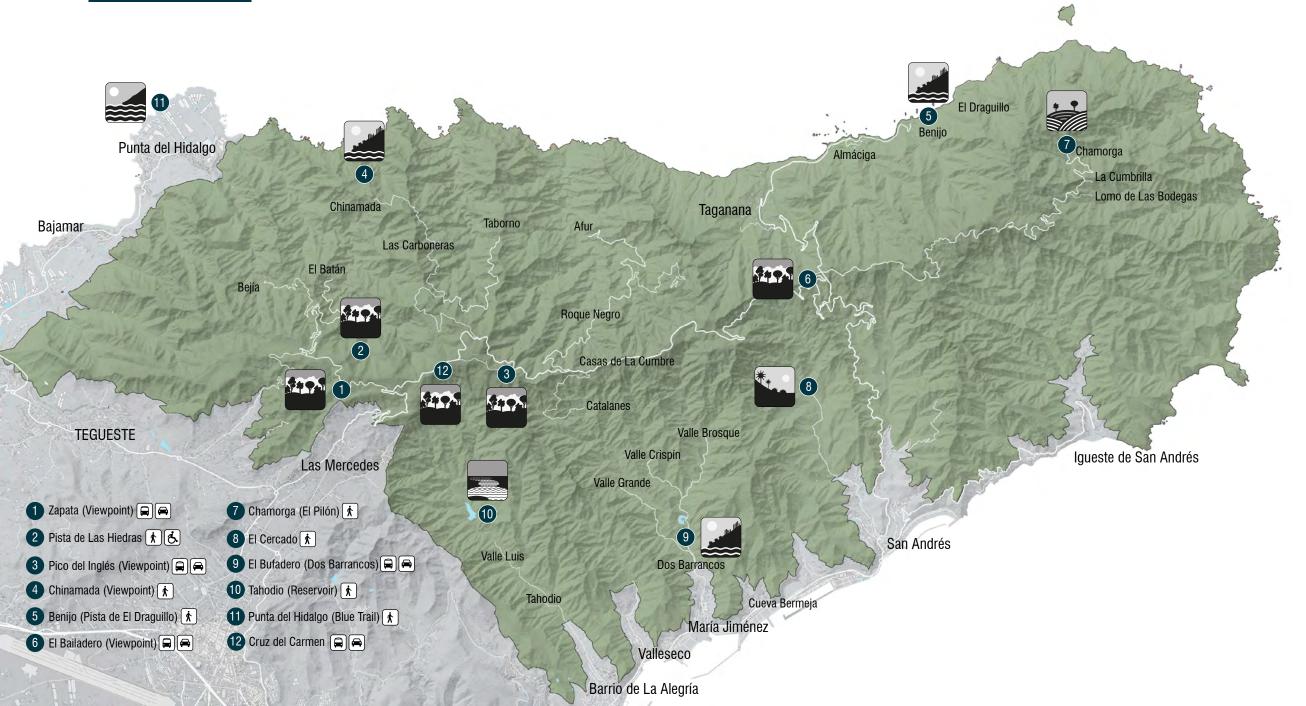
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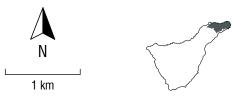


Birdwatching sites in the Anaga massif

Anaga should preferably be reached by bus. In this way you can contribute to not clogging up this protected natural area with cars, to saving energy and to the fight against climate change.

CLICK ON MAP





Habitats



Marine coastal



Lowland scrub



Cropland



Thermophilous and scrub

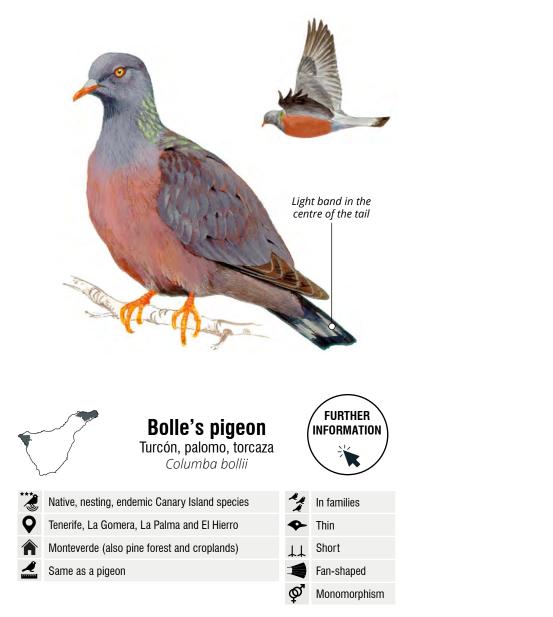


Wetlands and reservoirs

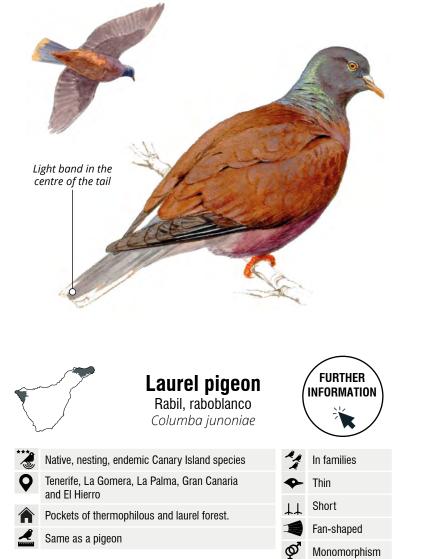


Monteverde





Inhabits the laurel forest together with the white-tailed laurel pigeon. This species is endemic to the Canary Islands and is considered a living fossil – as is its natural habitat. Perfectly adapted to the monteverde ecosystem, although it also frequents the mixed pine forest in the north of the island, where it hides away in thick woodland. As is common in many island birds, it lays only one egg, instead of two like other pigeons. Its only natural predator is the sparrowhawk, although it is also vulnerable to feral cats and rats. It nests in trees and is often seen in small groups.



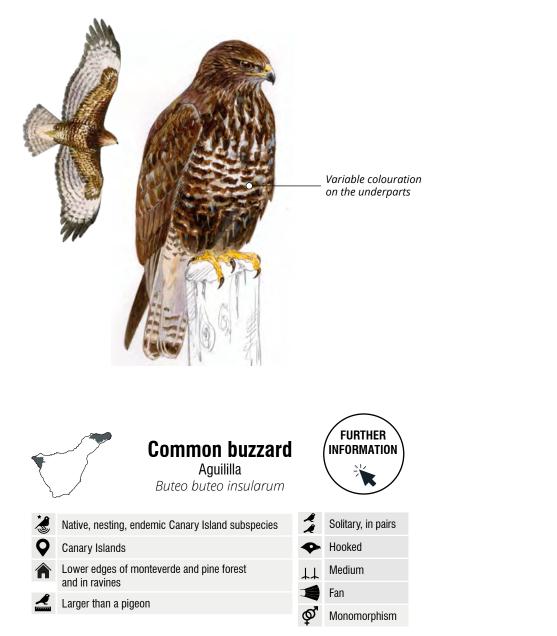
Also known as the white-tailed laurel pigeon, this is the other pigeon species endemic to the archipelago. Unlike Bolle's pigeon, it lives at altitudes below the monteverde forest. It was most likely a species native to thermophilous forests, which are nowadays largely depleted. It seeks refuge in the lower reaches of the laurel forest, in ravines and on rocky escarpments, where it lays a single egg on the ground, and on the ledges and crevices of rock faces, which makes it easy prey for rats and feral cats. It sometimes ventures into cultivated areas in search of food.



There is much debate about the classification of this falcon. For some authors, it is a subspecies of the smaller and lighter peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus pelegrinoides*), and for others it is a separate species*.

It is the fastest bird in the world, reaching 300 km/h when it swoops down on a rock pigeon, its favourite prey. It lives on sea cliffs and steep ravines where it builds its nest and keeps watch over its hunting grounds. In the Canary Islands it is an endangered species, although in recent years its population has steadily recovered.



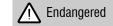


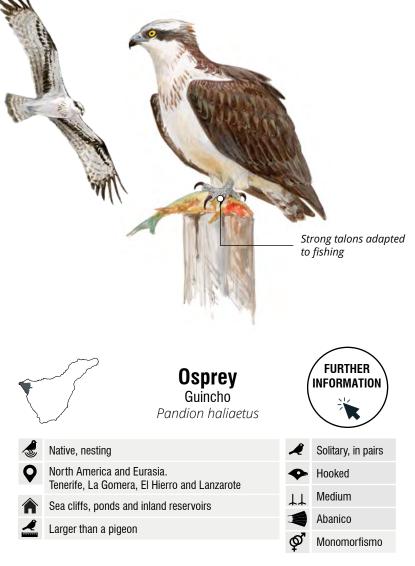
Easily recognised by its circling flight and plaintive call and cat-like mew, the buzzard resembles a small, stocky eagle with its outspread wings with splayed tips. Today, it is one of the most common and widespread birds of prey in the two rural parks. Buzzards are skilled hunters of rats and rabbits, two introduced species that have proven to be harmful to the balance of the fragile island ecosystems.



Although it may not look like it, the raven is a passerine or perching bird, like the sparrow or the canary. But it is the largest perching bird in the world, reaching 65 cm in length, and is also one of the most intelligent.

It was once found in great numbers in the countryside of Tenerife, in connection with crops and livestock, as it feeds on cereal, fruit and carrion. The disappearance of traditional agriculture and livestock farming, together with poisons and other threats, drove ravens to the brink of extinction on most of the Canary Islands.





The largest bird of prey in the archipelago, with a wingspan up to 174 cm. The osprey is a fish-eating bird of prey. Its diet consists exclusively of fish. For this reason, it has a number of morphological adaptations that are unique among birds of prey.

It is widely distributed in the northern hemisphere, but in the Canary archipelago its presence is currently limited to a few islands, although the large number of toponyms (the local name for osprey is "guincho") that dot the coasts of the Canary Islands suggests that it was once much more widespread. Its last refuge on Tenerife is the Teno Rural Park.



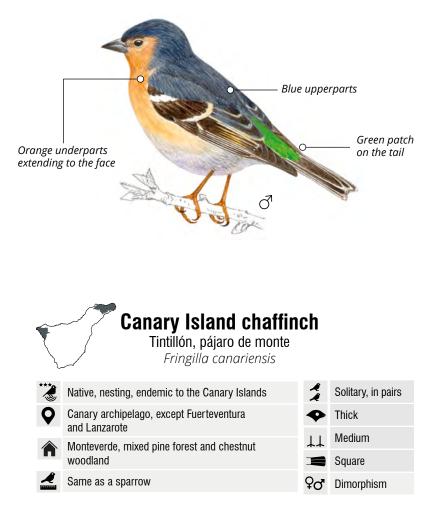




Of the three species of swift found in the Canary Islands, the plain swift is the only species native to the Canary Islands and Portugal (Madeira and Oporto), although its population is mostly confined to our archipelago.

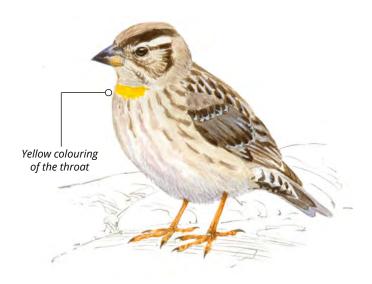
Every aspect of the swift's world is remarkable: its acrobatic flying skills as it hunts insects, its only food, and its ability to remain in the air for most of its life, only landing to breed.

It is easy to spot on summer evenings, around lampposts and street lighting. It usually nests, among other places, in abandoned buildings and construction sites. The loss of breeding colonies due to the demolition of these buildings is one of its main conservation threats.



Recent scientific studies have elevated this bird - which until now was considered a subspecies of the chaffinch (Fringilla coelebs) – to the status of endemic Canary Island species. This new classification has added yet another jewel to the biodiversity of our islands.

This chaffinch is omnivorous, like all of its family, and is found in abundance in the monteverde woodland of Anaga and Teno. Easy to spot, this species exhibits a pronounced sexual dimorphism: the males have colourful plumage while the females have duller, more uniform colours.





Rock sparrow Chillón, pájaro risquero Petronia petronia

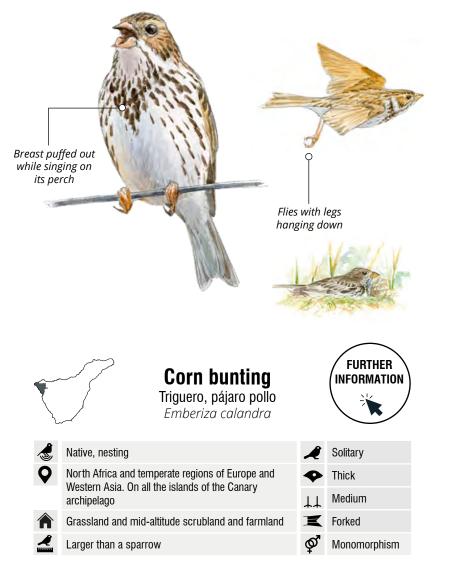


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Native, nesting	A.A.	Colony
North Africa and temperate regions of Eurasia. Nadeira and Canary Islands, except Fuerteventura and Lanzarote.	•	Thick
	11	Medium
Nid-altitude vegetation belt and lowland scrub		Square
Same as a sparrow	ଷ	Monomorn

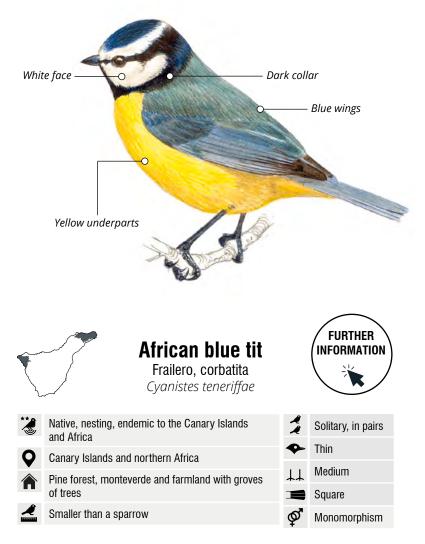
This is a strictly protected species. Although in its global range the populations of this bird are not facing serious conservation problems, this is not the case in the Canary Islands. In the past it was abundant, linked to croplands and steppe environments where it congregated in large flocks. The abandonment of crops and the reduction and fragmentation of its natural habitat have confined it to Teno Alto, where the last population in Tenerife is found.





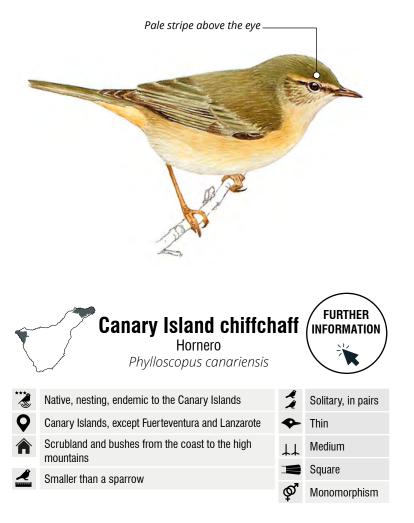
Range and habitat similar to the house sparrow, also sharing the same fate. The corn bunting, once abundant in Tenerife's cereal fields, has seen its numbers drastically reduced. Until recently, the last populations were located in Los Rodeos, Teno Alto, the valley of El Palmar and Icod el Alto. But its worrying decline continues, and it is now confined to Teno Alto and another small population in Los Rodeos.

The male is easy to identify when he performs his metallic song from a branch, puffing out his chest. This species nests on the ground, which makes it very vulnerable to rats, dogs and cats.



The range of the African or Canary blue tit extends from the seven largest islands of the Canary archipelago to north-east Africa. It is the most diversified bird species in the Canary Islands, as up to five subspecies have been identified and described, all of which are endemic to the archipelago.

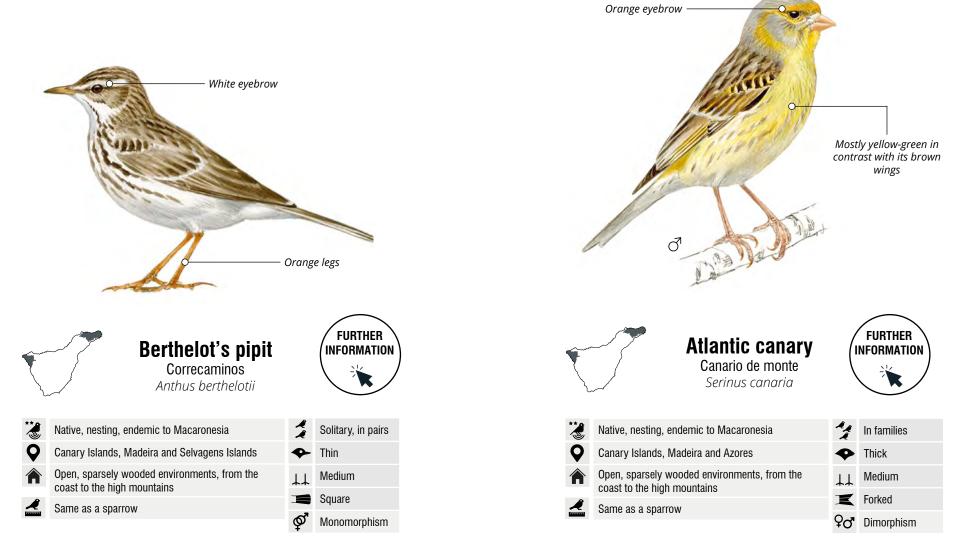
It is also the acrobat par excellence of our birdlife. It forages for the invertebrates it feeds on like a circus tightrope walker, hanging from the branches and leaves of trees, showing off its colourful and striking plumage. This bird also likes fleshy fruits and nectar. It nests in cracks and holes in trunks and walls and is the most common occupant of nesting boxes.



The Canary Island chiffchaff is another of the endemic birds found only in the Canary Islands, occurring in both the Anaga and Teno massifs. It lives in all types of environments where vegetation is present and is the most abundant bird in the Canary Islands. The chiffchaff is insectivorous, although it also feeds on nectar from different flowers, which makes it an important pollinator of certain endemic plants, such as the Canary Island bellflower (*Canarina canariensis*), known locally as bicácaro.

You can spot it and hear its constant calls as it constantly hops among the vegetation in search of food. It builds its nest in the shape of an old-fashioned bread oven, with a side entrance.

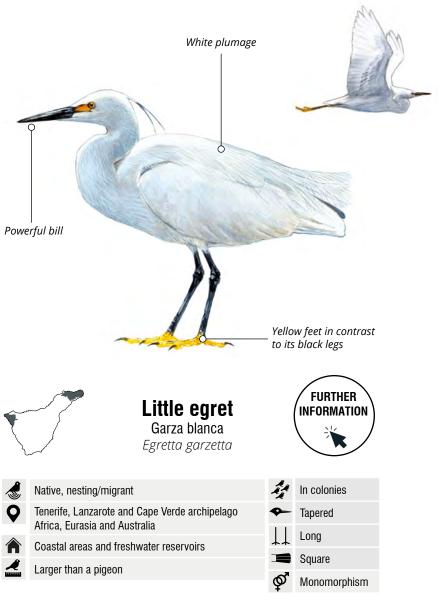




This is one of the most widely distributed birds and, except in dense woodland, it is very common and easy to observe in all habitats. It is an all-rounder, ranging from the intertidal zone on the coast to more than 3,000 metres above sea level, from malpais (lava terrain) and farmland to villages and towns. It has a habit of running along the ground and rarely flies. As it nests on the ground, when it senses a threat, it feigns injury in order to distract potential predators from the nest.

The Atlantic canary, despite its name, is not exclusive to the Canary Islands, but is also found in Madeira and the Azores. It is probably the most iconic bird in the world. The king of songbirds, it has one of the most melodious songs of all birds and is the ancestor of the domestic canary.

This bird lives in groups, feeds on the ground and is able to adapt to a variety of habitats, preferring meadows and sparse woodlands, especially thermophilous vegetation and farmland.



Another recent coloniser of the Canary Islands, this all-white, small heron occasionally nests on Tenerife. Colonies are made up a few pairs, but when they are joined by pairs that migrate to spend the winter here, they may number up to two hundred individuals.

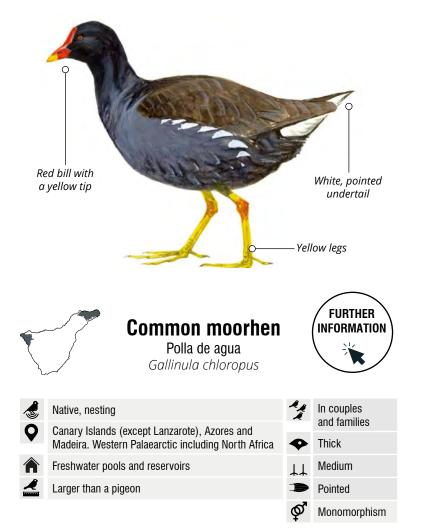
The little egret frequents intertidal pools where it hunts crustaceans and small fish, but can also be found in inland pools, where it catches frogs, fish and insects with its harpoon-like bill.



The coot is thought to be a recent coloniser of the islands. The first records of it nesting date from the 1980s, probably earlier, perhaps as a result of the expansion of irrigation and the construction of dams and reservoirs.

It lives on the banks of pools without much vegetation, where it feeds on fruits, seeds, invertebrates, and aquatic plants, sometimes diving for its food.

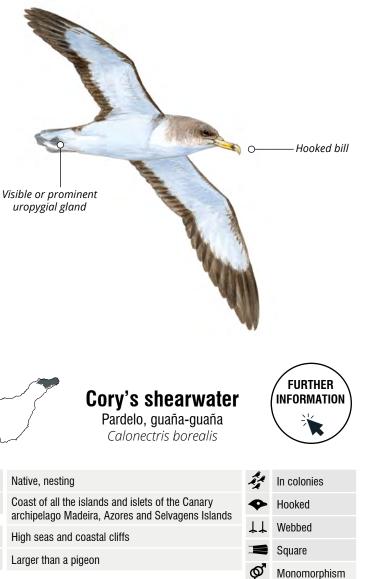
During breeding season, it becomes very territorial, and scuffles and fights are common, with both members of the pair getting involved. In these skirmishes, they are often seen "running" over the water as they flee or chase each other.



Its worldwide distribution makes it a species that adapts remarkably well to any environment. It is a wary, elusive bird, always seeking the shelter of reeds, rushes and aquatic plants. Nervous in its movements, its pointed tail is always in motion when it is on the go. At the slightest threat, it dives underwater and holds on to the vegetation with its head poking out of the water to keep watch.

It is omnivorous, but prefers to feed on aquatic plants.

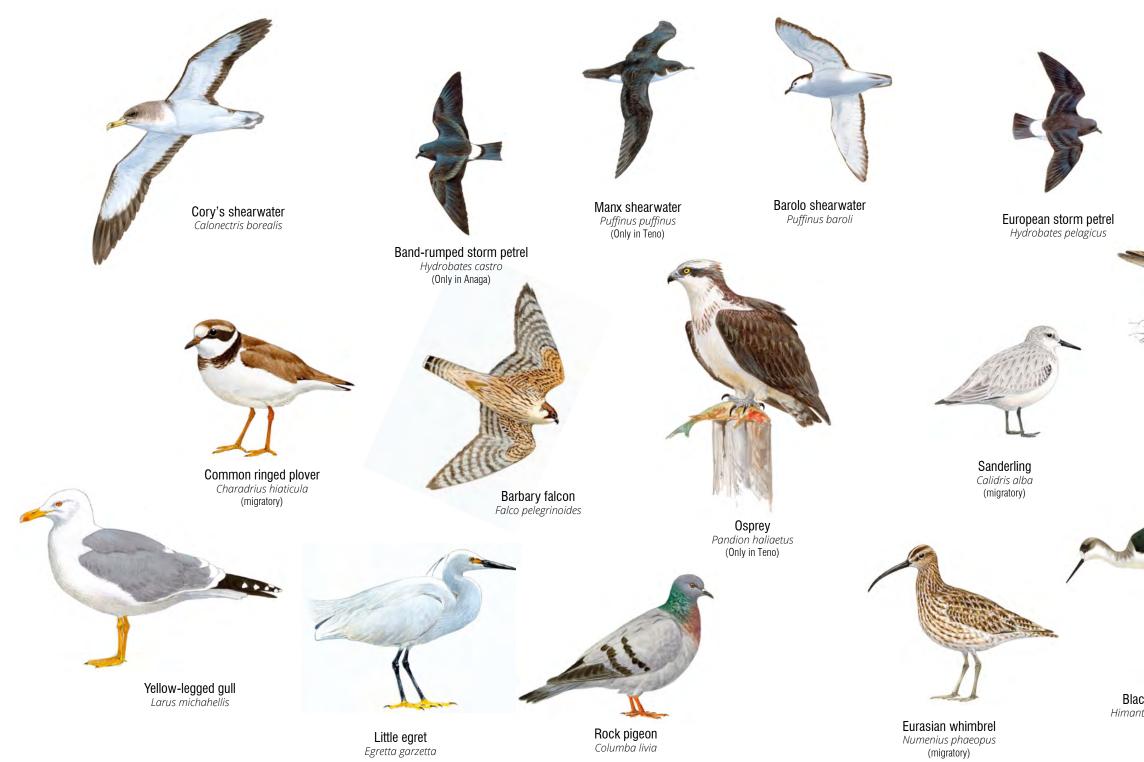
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This spectacular bird is the best known and largest of the seabirds that breed in the Canary Islands. It spends its entire long life on the open ocean, feeding on fish and squid that it catches by diving to a depth of up to fifteen metres. At night it gathers in large congregations that rest on the ocean surface. It only returns to land to breed in burrows, crevices on cliff faces, ravines and on sea stacks and islets. It comes to feed its chick at night, emitting its peculiar and mysterious call reminiscent of a crying baby. One of the traits that it shares with other shearwaters and petrels, and which enables it to live on the high seas all year round, is the uropygial gland, known also as the preen gland, which secretes a viscous oil that it uses to waterproof its plumage.



Birds of coastal marine habitats





Common tern Sterna hirundo



Common sandpiper Actitis hypoleucos (migratory)





Grey plover Pluvialis squatarola (migratory)



Himantopus himantopus (migratory)



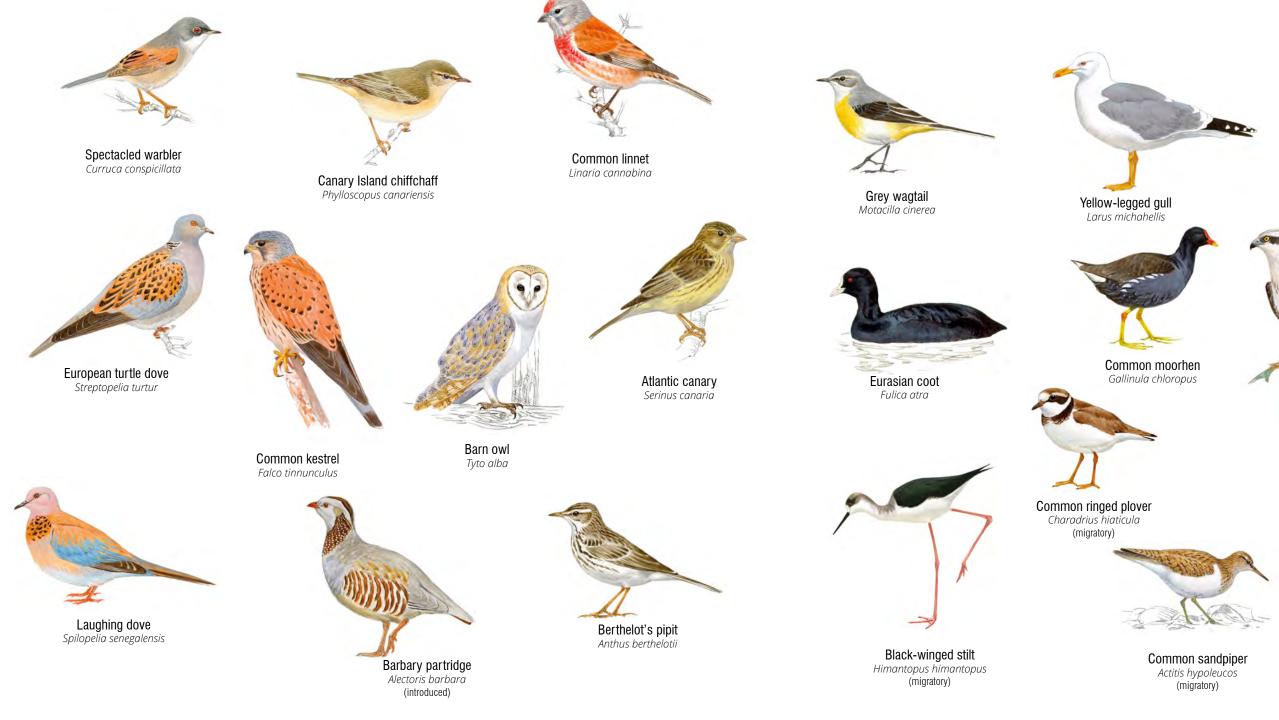
Ruddy turnstone Arenaria interpres (migratory)





Birds of lowland scrub

Birds of wetlands and reservoirs





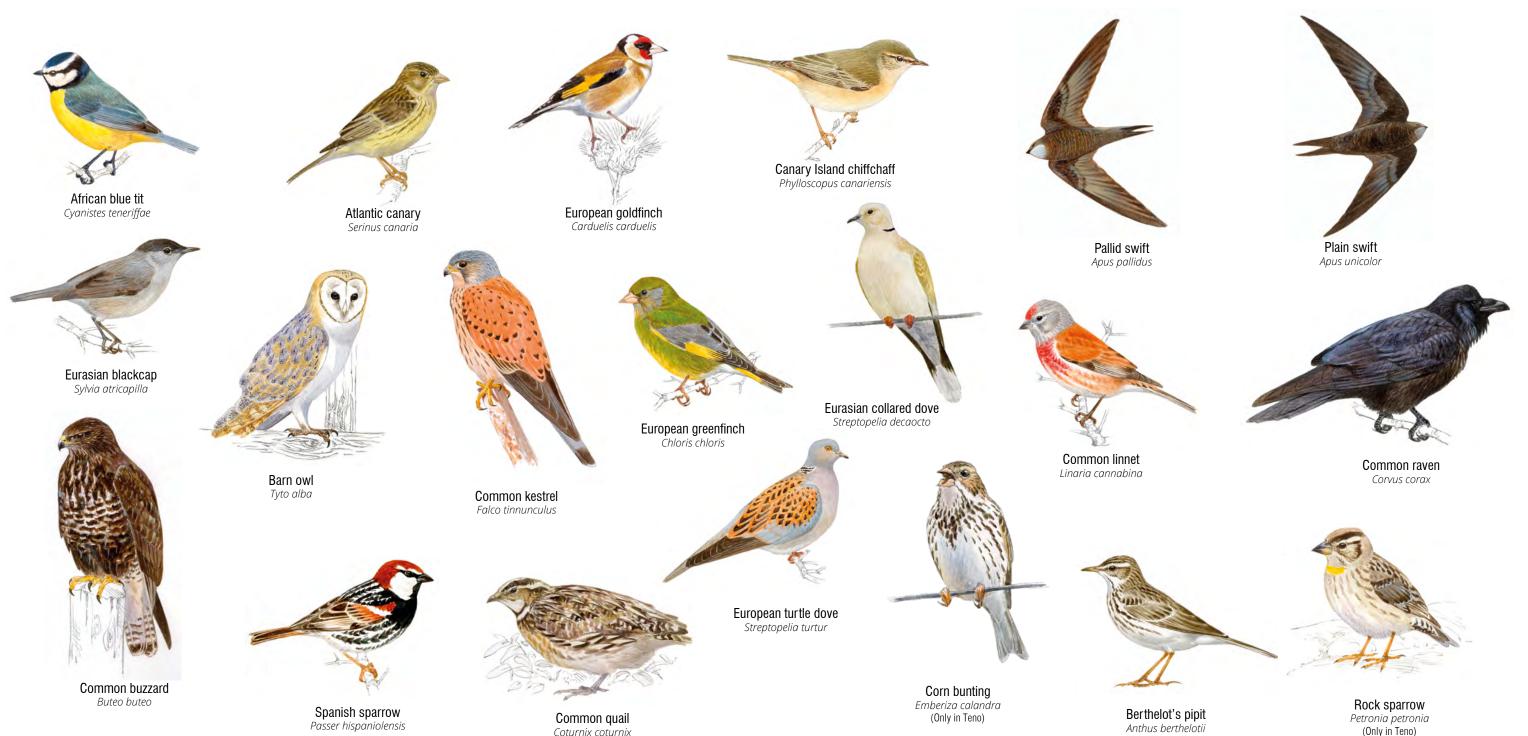
Osprey Pandion haliaetus (Only in Teno)

Little egret Egretta garzetta

Grey heron Ardea cinerea (migratory)



Birds of cropland and grassland





CONTENTS

Anthus berthelotii

(Only in Teno)

Birds of thermophilous forests and scrubland



Laurel pigeon Columba junoniae



Canary Island chiffchaff Phylloscopus canariensis



Long-eared owl Asio otus



African blue tit Cyanistes teneriffae



Atlantic canary Serinus canaria



Eurasian blackcap Sylvia atricapilla



Spectacled warbler Curruca conspicillata



Barn owl Tyto alba



Sardinian warbler Curruca melanocephala



Barbary partridge Alectoris barbara (introduced)



Tenerife robin Erithacus superbus



Berthelot's pipit Anthus berthelotii





Common kestrel Falco tinnunculus



Common raven Corvus corax



Plain swift Apus unicolor



European turtle dove Streptopelia turtur

Common buzzard Buteo buteo



Common blackbird Turdus merula



Birds of the monteverde



Long-eared owl Asio otus



Canary Island chiffchaff Phylloscopus canariensis



African blue tit Cyanistes teneriffae



Tenerife goldcrest

Regulus regulus

Canary Island chaffinch Fringilla canariensis



Common blackbird Turdus merula



Bolle's pigeon Columba bollii



Laurel pigeon Columba junoniae



Eurasian sparrowhawk Accipiter nisus



Tenerife robin Erithacus superbus



Eurasian woodcock Scolopax rusticola

NOCTURNAL **BIRDS OF PREY**

Birdwatching at night is a complicated task. But even if we do not see them, nocturnal birds are out there.

The rulers of the night skies are the owls: long-eared owls and barn owls.

Long-eared owls prefer forest habitats, while barn owls are more common in rural areas and ravines.

Both owls are accomplished rodent hunters, making them important allies in pest control.

A pair of barn owls, for example, is capable of hunting an average of 1400 rodents in a year. Having owls near our houses and crops means that rats and mice are kept at bay, with no need to use poisons. They work for free and reduce the need to use highly toxic substances, which affect both wildlife and our health.

Barn owl Tyto alba



BIRDWATCHING SITES IN TENO



El Tanque Ecomuseum

Birdwatching spot above the ponds. (5-minute walk from the ecomuseum car park)









Accessible only on foot from Erjos. Birdwatching spot next to the interpretative panel. (15 minutes from Erjos)





Wetlands





Accessible only on foot from Erjos. Walkway at the end of the accessible path. (20 minutes on foot from Erjos)





Monteverde







Follow the PR TF-52.1 trail for 0.8 km to enjoy open views of the ravine called Barranco de Los Pasos.





Monteverde





BIRDWATCHING SITES IN TENO



Thermophilous and scrub



Montaña El Vallado. Accessible by private vehicle as far as Los Bailaderos. About a 30-minute walk along a dirt track from Los Bailaderos.





Cropland and grassland





Degollada de Taburco. Accessible by private vehicle as far as Los Bailaderos. Walk along the PR TF-51 trail in the direction of Los Llanos. (20 minutes on foot with steep slopes)



Thermophilous and scrub









Marine coastal





BIRDWATCHING SITES IN TENO





Lowland scrub







Thermophilous





Viewpoint above the hostel. Accessible by private vehicle or on foot





Monteverde





Viewpoint on the TF-436 road above Masca. Accessible by private vehicle and public transport





Thermophilous and scrub









Viewpoint on Calle Adelfas, entrance from the TF-454 road. Accessible by private vehicle and public transport.











Marine coastal





BIRDWATCHING SITES IN ANAGA



Viewpoint on the TF-143 road (in the direction of El Batán). Accessible by private vehicle and public transport





Monteverde





The track can be reached by private vehicle and public transport via roads TF-143 or TF-145. Accessible on foot (section adapted for people with reduced mobility from the TF-143 road)





Monteverde

WR. Druch Elizand

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Viewpoint on the TF-12 road (Pico del Inglés turnoff). Accessible by private vehicle and public transport





Monteverde









BIRDWATCHING SITES IN ANAGA





Lowland scrub





Viewpoint on the TF–123 road (in the direction of Chamorga). Accessible by private vehicle and public transport





Monteverde

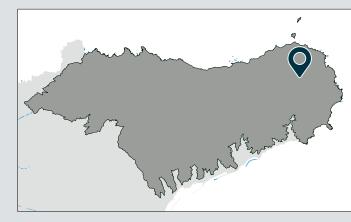








Farmland and monteverde







Barranco de El Cercado can be reached from San Andrés along an asphalted track. Birdwatching site accessible only on foot along a path through the palm grove



Thermophilous and lowland scrub





BIRDWATCHING SITES IN ANAGA



Birdwatching site located in Dos Barrancos. Accessible by public transport and private vehicle by asphalted road from María Jiménez





Accessible by asphalted road from the La Alegría nei-ghbourhood to the end of the road. From there, walk to the reservoir. The birdwatching site is located on the path that runs along the eastern slope of the reservoir



Lowland scrub, farmland and reservoirs Aquatic environment and lowland scrub



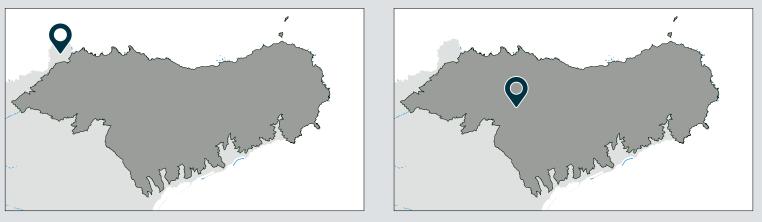




de San Juanito). This route includes a hide and signs providing information on birdlife



Marine coastal







Birdwatching site located in the area around the Cruz del Carmen visitor centre. Accessible by public transport and private vehicle



Monteverde

