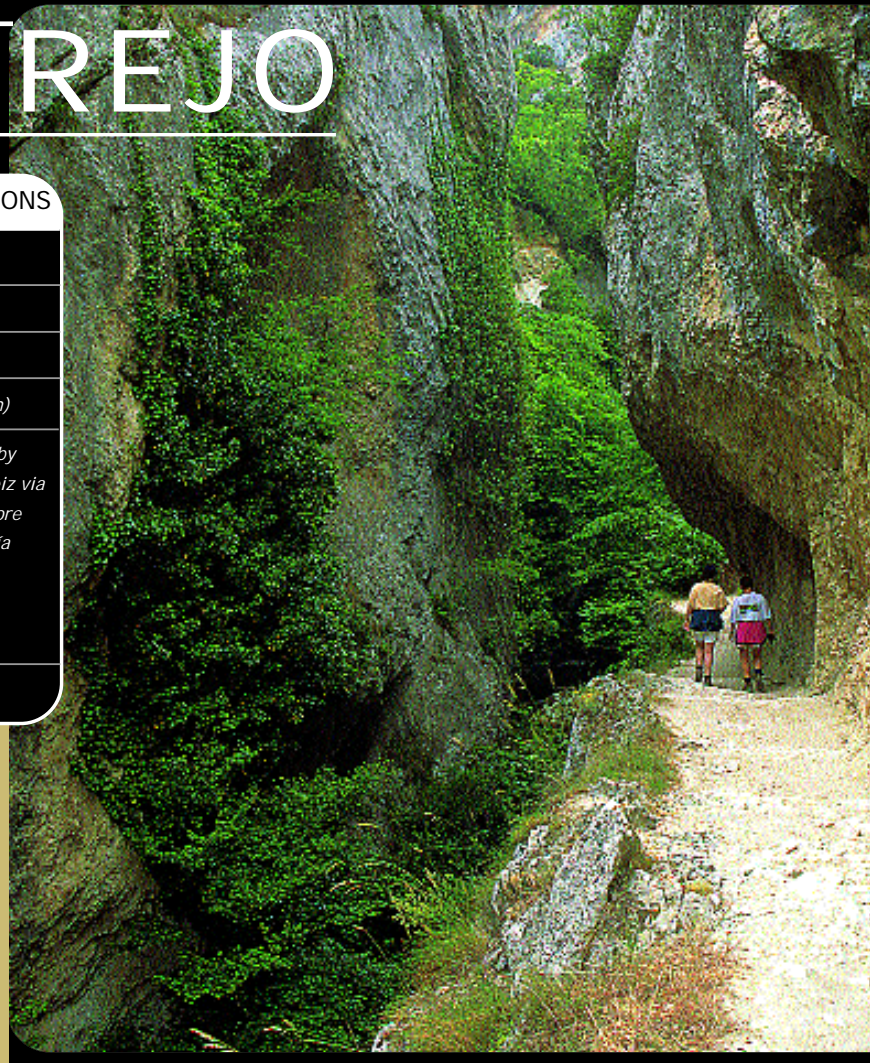


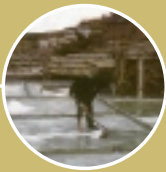
# VALDEREJO

## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Classification	Nature Reserve
Municipalities	Valdegovia
Area covered	3,418.5 ha
Height	Highest point: Vallegrull (1,226 m)
How to get there	From Bilbao over Orduña pass, by the A-625 and from Vitoria-Gasteiz via the A-2622. Take the turning before Espejo to Villanueva de Valdegovia and continue along the A-4338 to Lalastra and Lahoz.
Information	Tel: 947.35.31.46



## NOT TO BE MISSED...



### AÑANA SALTPANS

This village has been exploiting the salt left by the river since Roman times. The water runs into small terraces or pans, from which the salt is obtained by evaporation. The area has been designated the title of cultural heritage site.



### DÉLICA CANYON

A 300-metre viewpoint at the source of the river Nervión offers fabulous views to the most daring.



### SOBRÓN GORGE

Impressive views are to be had from the gorge flanking the river Ebro and its meanderings. It's here that the river draws the boundary between Alava and Burgos.



### TUESTA, CHURCH OF LA ASUNCIÓN

A real gem of Romanesque architecture containing objects of important artistic value, including a 16th century al tapestry.





The river Purón and its canyon

**A** high, spacious valley enclosed by steep hillsides ending in rocky cliffs is probably the best way to sum up the landscape of the Valderejo Nature Reserve.

This area stands to the far west of Alava, on the boundary with Burgos.

The Sierra de Bóveda and the western stretch of the Sierra de Arcena enclose and protect this valley, the rough mountain-tops of which mean that the only practicable way out is towards the Valdegovía valley. The crests of the Peña Karria-Arrayuelas-Recuenco and Lerón (1,238 m in height) alignment to the north, and of Revillallanos (1,283 m)-Santa Ana-Vallegrull (1,225 m) to the south, meet to encircle the valley in the north-west.

It is in this same Sierra de Arcena that the river Purón has opened an

extremely narrow gorge towards the south, an area that can be visited from the uninhabited village of Ribera. A path will take us along the bottom of the gorge.

The reserve is entered through the Valdegovis valley, from the village of San Millán de Zadornil in the province of Burgos. The road will take us to the village of Lalastra, at the centre of Valderejo, home to the main services of the Nature Reserve, and the information centre.

The meadows and cultivated areas of the valley give way to wooded hills: Scots pine, beech and holm-oak are the main species to be found on the steep mountain foothills. There are also a number, though dwindling, of gall-oak trees in the vast valley they used to virtually cover. The hillside woodlands are replaced by the typical vegetation of rocks and crests, where little plants manfully drive their roots deep into the fissures and cracks. But there are still some trees to be found in this area, a mixed forest of gullies and ridges comprising several species of trees and shrubs. One good example of this phenomenon is to be found in the already-mentioned gorge of the river Purón.

Perhaps the best known fauna in Valderejo is the colony of griffon vultures, the biggest in the Basque



A griffon vulture

Autonomous Community. This species, which was in danger of extinction, is now experiencing a far more prosperous moment. The rocky crags crowning and enclosing the valley offer the perfect breeding habitat for this and other species of bird including the Egyptian vulture, peregrine falcon, royal swift and rock thrush. The goshawk flits among the trees of the forest, where there are also a number of mammals including quite a few roe deer, wild cat and martens. Wolves make the odd incursion into this western strip of Alava.

Prehistoric man likewise left the occasional trace of his life, both in caves and in the shape of megalithic monuments (the tumulus of San Lorenzo, the monolith on Mount Lerón). The Roman period is likewise present with the remains of a road, and some lovely medieval paintings in Ribera church. The harsh living conditions of the area have left their mark on the ruined walls of the now uninhabited villages of Ribera and Villamardones.



Rocks on Mount Vallegrull

## TO KEEP YOURSELF BUSY

*There are guided tours of the Reserve. Ask about them at the Information Centre.*

### Trekking:

*The area enclosing the valley offers a series of hill-walking trails and mountaineering excursions. These routes run the length and breadth of the reserve and come in differing lengths and difficulties. You can find out more about them at the Information Centre. One interesting option is a visit to the ruined villages of*

*Villamardones and Ribera. The latter of the two still preserves a church with Romanesque remains and curious medieval paintings.*

### Birdwatching:

*You'll be able to spot many of the birds that live in the Reserve, and particularly the griffon vulture.*

### Other activities:

*Two Active Tourism companies offer all sorts of ways to make your visit to the reserve a real adventure.*

*For more information:*

*NATURLAN: 94.430.46.57*

*ARTADI: 94.617.12.02*