



M. Mañó

Foz de Lumbier

FOZ DE LUMBIER Nature Reserve

The *Foz de Lumbier* is a gorge carved out of limestone by the Irati river on the western edge of the *Sierra de Leire*. The water flows through the gorge via narrow canyons that are less than a metre wide. The spectacular geology and centuries of isolation of these inaccessible crannies has aided the conservation of some exceptional natural treasures. Declared a nature reserve (40 ha) in 1987, it is one

of Navarre's 42 SCI (Sites of Community Interest) that form part of the Natura 2000 Network.

What makes this gorge unique, however, is that you can walk the entire 1,300 m of the gorge via an easy path that runs alongside the river at the foot of the cliffs. This path is the legacy of the old Irati railway line that first made the gorge accessible.

As you walk along this path, you quickly feel as if you have entered into another world that is hemmed in by massive red walls in which you discover trees and shrubs hanging from impossible crevices, vultures flying overhead, the murmur of the water and the squawks of the crows. The *Foz de Lumbier*, along with the *Foz de Arbaiun*, is one of the twelve places in Navarre recommended for bird watching.

WARNING! LANDSLIDE RISK.TAKE EXTREME CARE



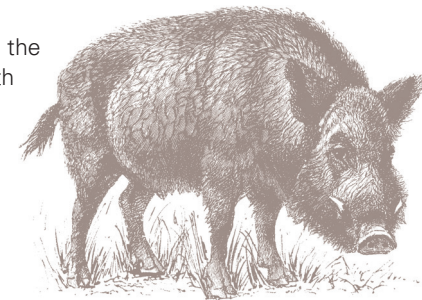
J. Ellegren

Blue rock-thrush

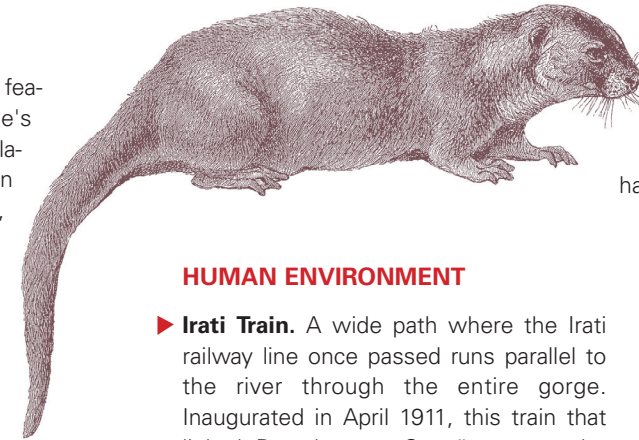
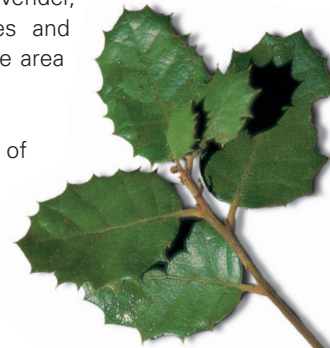
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

► The **limestone rock** is the most striking and visible feature. The ochre and red tones highlight the gorge's beauty, but its most important treasure is its population of rock-dwelling birds, presided over by the griffon vulture who is accompanied by crows, jackdaws, Egyptian vultures, swifts, blue rock-thrushes and the mythical bearded vultures, who spy the terrain from above. In 2005, a camera was installed to learn more about the gorge's winged inhabitants. The images are received live in the Gorge Interpretation Centre located in the centre of the town of Lumbier.

► The **vegetation** is predominately Mediterranean shrubland. The centuries of human activity on the hillsides surrounding the *Foz de Lumbier* have seen the original Holly Oak forest replaced with the current thickets of Kermes Oak, thyme, gorse, lavender, etc. Wild boars, badgers, foxes and martens are known to inhabit the area although they are rarely seen.



► The **Irati River** is the creator of this geological work of art. With its source in the extensive beech and fir woods of the Irati Forest, it flows into the Aragon River. It is habitat to a great variety of fish species, the most common being the barbel, which is



HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

► **Irati Train.** A wide path where the Irati railway line once passed runs parallel to the river through the entire gorge. Inaugurated in April 1911, this train that linked Pamplona to Sangüesa was the first electric train on the Iberian Peninsula. Originally built to transport timber from the Pyrenees, it was used for passengers until its decommissioning in 1955.



accompanied by the trout, South-west European nase, clown loach, Mediterranean barbel, gudgeon and minnow. The most notable mammal inhabitant is the otter, whose presence has been well-documented in recent years.



► **Almadías (Raft).** As with many other rivers in the Pyrenees, the Irati was a river-transport route for the timber cut in the high-valley forests. Transporting the lumber from the mountain passes of the Pyrenees to Zaragoza and other far-away destinations was the work of the myriad incarnations of the tough and weather-beaten *almadieros*.

► **Puente del Diablo (Devil's Bridge).** At the southern opening of the gorge, after passing through a second tunnel, you find the remains of a dizzyingly-high bridge that dates back to the 16th century. It was destroyed in 1812 during the Peninsular War. It is also known as the *Puente de la Foz* and the *Puente de Jesús*. **Take extreme care with the edge of the bridge!**



M. Mañó

Puente del Diablo



M. Mañó

Church of the Asunción

LUMBIER

The town of Lumbier has good tourist and shopping facilities, which include a camp ground, a hotel, apartments, restaurants, bars and a tourist information office. In the compact town-centre, many pleasant surprises await you, such as several monuments of interest.



M. Mañó

Reception area of the Gorge Interpretation Centre

VISITOR RULES:

- Put your rubbish in the bins in the welcome area (car park).
- Motorized vehicles are not permitted inside the gorge.
- Respect the flora and fauna and the natural environment in general.
- Do not disturb the birds with shouting or noise.
- Landslides do occur. Take extreme care.
- Do not disturb the birds with shouting or noise.
- Camping and fires are prohibited. For the good of everyone, do not start any type of fire, not even in the recreational area.
- Forest guards patrol the *Foz de Lumbier*. Cooperate with them.



THE GORGE INTERPRETATION CENTRE. LUMBIER

You can find out more about the local environment and what the area has to offer tourists at the Gorge Interpretation Centre in the village square in Lumbier (Plaza Mayor). The Centre is also a Tourist Information Office and Ornithological Information Point.

CONTACT • Environmental Information and Education Section
 Telephone: 848 42 78 65 • email: sian@navarra.es
 • Lumbier Nature Interpretation Centre
 Telephone: 948 88 08 74
 email: cinlumbi@navarra.es
 Website: www.focesdenavarra.es



• Authors: Carlos García (Cederna-Garalur) - Iñaki Cortés - Mikel Madoz (TERRA) • Design: Javier Arbillá •

▶ GETTING THERE

The *Foz de Lumbier* is located in the municipal district of *Lumbier*. At the entrance to the town coming from Pamplona, you take the turn-off for the road that takes you 2 km to the pay car park of the *Foz de Lumbier*. There are toilets, water and rubbish bins, and it is patrolled during holiday periods and weekends. In summer, there is a tourist information point. To visit the Interpretation Centre, there is a car park in the town (signposted).

▶ VISITOR WALKS

Short walk



This is the walk in the interior of the gorge that follows the flat path of the old railway line. The most typical route of the gorge, this walk is easy and adapted for people with impaired sight and mobility. You start out from the car park, cross the gorge alongside the river, passing through the two tunnels (167 and 206 m respectively), and end up at Devil's Bridge, from where you make your way back via the same route. Total length (both ways): 2.6 km. Approximate time: 1 hr.

Long walk



This route first takes you around the outside of gorge over the adjacent hillsides and then through the gorge and back to the car park. It is longer (5.5 km with 175 m altitude change) but it takes you through the surrounding environment as well as the gorge. The path is well signposted in both directions with green and white markings and wooden posts. It begins before the first tunnel. Approximate time: 2 hr.

Bird watching route



Both walks and visiting the Interpretation Centre and the *muladar* (carrion-bird feeding station) lookout are all interesting visits for birdwatchers. There is a brochure available with more details.



NATURE RESERVE
 FOZ DE LUMBIER

Nafarroako Gobernua
 Gobierno de Navarra

Ayuntamiento de Lumbier

DL NA. 1.749-2016