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NPO: DE

NATURE TRAIL MARÍA CRISTINA CANAL NETWORK



Guide to the
Nature Trails
of Spain

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NATURE TRAIL MARÍA CRISTINA CANAL NETWORK

MAIN SECTION OR MARÍA CRISTINA CANAL (3-5KM)

1. This section begins at the Parque Fiesta del Árbol on the outskirts of Albacete, continuing along the right bank of the María Cristina Canal. After finding an information panel explaining some geographic and geological features of the area, the traveller passes under road N-430, before meeting back up with the right bank of the canal after crossing a bridge.

The section then reaches a rest area known as "El Palo." It then crosses the bridge and continues along the left bank of the canal before reaching a fork in the road that marks the end of this route.

From the beginning of this section, it is also possible to take a route which leads to the town of Tinarajos, 13.5 km from the starting point.

OJOS DE SAN JORGE CANAL SECTION (4-4KM)

2. From the fork in the road to the end of the main section, this second route runs parallel to the San Jorge canal, passing under the Linares-Albacete motorway (A-32) in the direction of the Huerta del Rey recreation area. The route forks where it meets the Acequión Canal, taking the path parallel to Huerta del Rey.

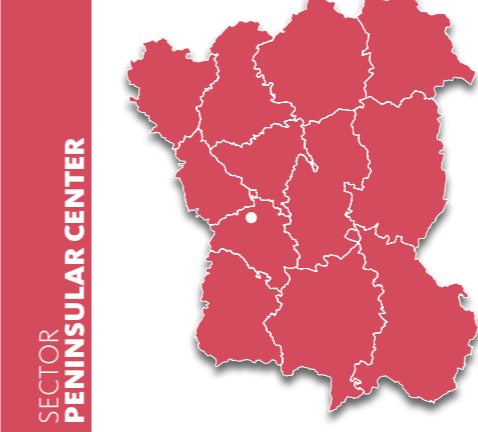
The trail passes a crossing with the Alcaraz Greenway, another leading to the Ruta del Quijote and the Acequión Canal and, after passing an exercise area,

ALONGSIDE THE CALMEST WATERS



This nature trail has been divided into five sections coinciding with the most important canals that make up this great feat of engineering.

Construction on this network of canals began in 1804 during the reign of Charles IV, to drain the swamp waters around Albacete and divert them to River Júcar. Thanks to this drainage, many previously barren lands were made available for agricultural use, while it also led to improved sanitation for the local population. Today, this network of canals has lost its original function due to the drop of water levels, except for in the city of Albacete, where it still operates as part of the urban drainage system.



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reaches a recreation area that marks the end of the section.

EL ACEQUIÓN CANAL SECTION (10.9KM)

3. This section begins just before the Huerta de Rey rest area, at a fork in the road, taking the path that runs along the right bank of the canal. The route passes a crossing with the Leniza track and a rest area where it is also possible to follow the Alcaraz Greenway. The route then passes through a crossing with access to the road to Barrax (N-430) and the Ojos de San Jorge Feeder Canal, arriving at the confluence with the La Lobera Canal. It then crosses a bridge over the canal retaking the left bank as far as the N-430 underpass. The trail passes the sports area and continues towards a farm, soon reaching a bridge. It then continues along the left bank of the canal until it reaches the dry lagoon of El Acequión.

EL SALOBRAL CANAL SECTION (7.1KM)

4. This section, which leads to the village of Aguas Nuevas, begins at the intersection of the El Salobral and La Estacadilla Canals. The first section runs along the right bank of the canal, reaching a crossing with the Balazote path. After crossing this, the route passes under the road to Jaén (N-322a).

Subsequently, it crosses the La Bacariza path, leaving behind the sports area and borders a residential

complex. It later crosses the "Cañada Real Andaluza" before reaching the end of the section. The nearby village of Aguas Nuevas is accessible along a rural track.

LA ESTACADILLA CANAL SECTION (7.6 KM)

5. This section begins just after the "El Palo" rest area. At the fork, take the path on the right, which runs alongside the El Salobral Canal, crossing the bridge and continuing along a path parallel to the La Estacadilla Canal.

It reaches an underpass under the Linares-Albacete motorway (A-32) then runs along the left bank of the La Estacadilla, heading away from the road. It then reaches a cross with a road that provides access to a residential complex and connects the Ojos de San Jorge Canal with road N-322. Past this crossing, the trail passes a sports area on the left and over a bridge where it crosses to the left bank of the canal.

After a section where travellers can admire the old locks of the canal, now restored, the section ends where it meets the Alcaraz Greenway.



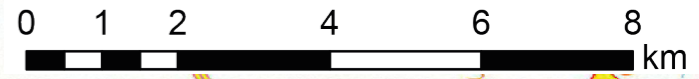
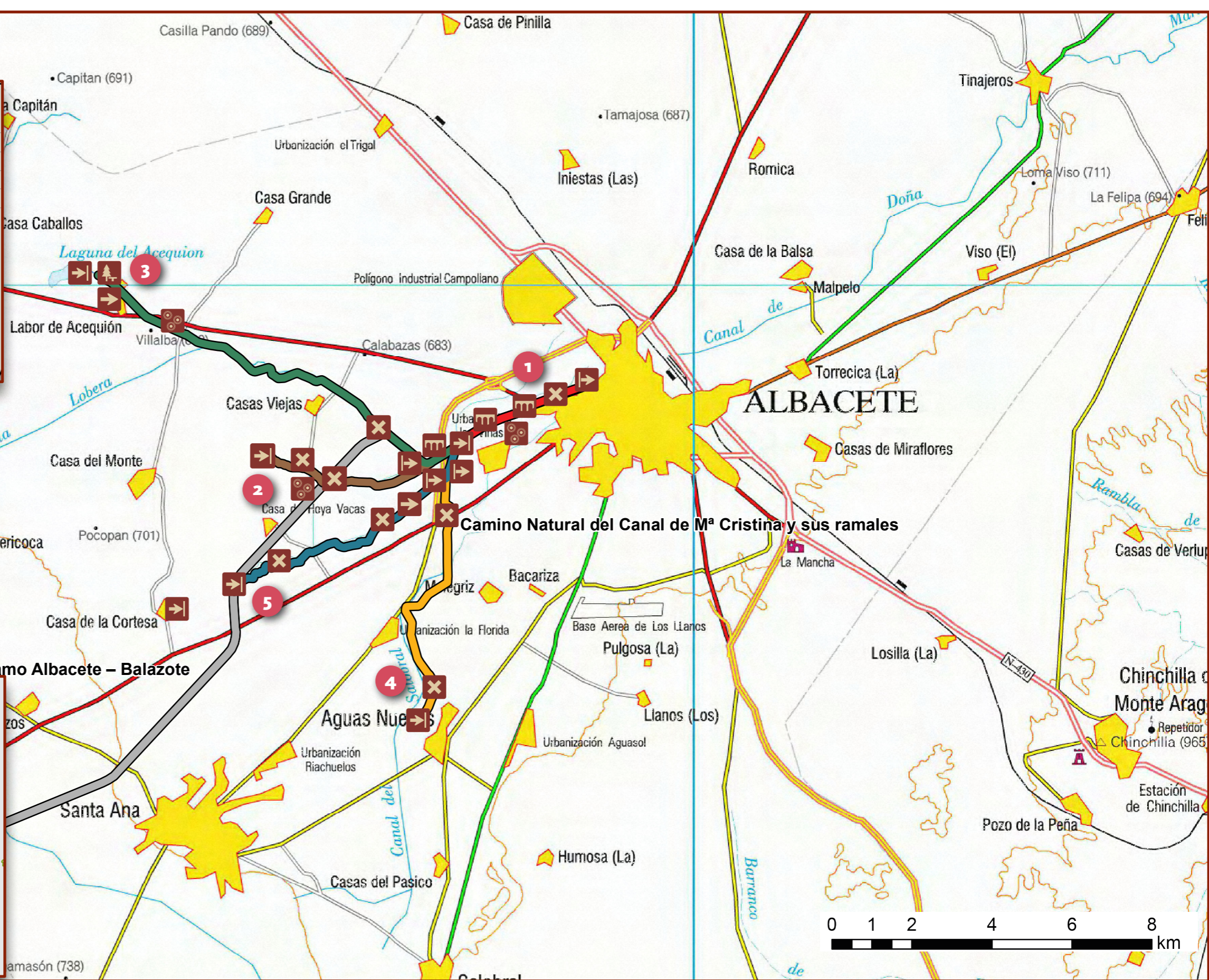
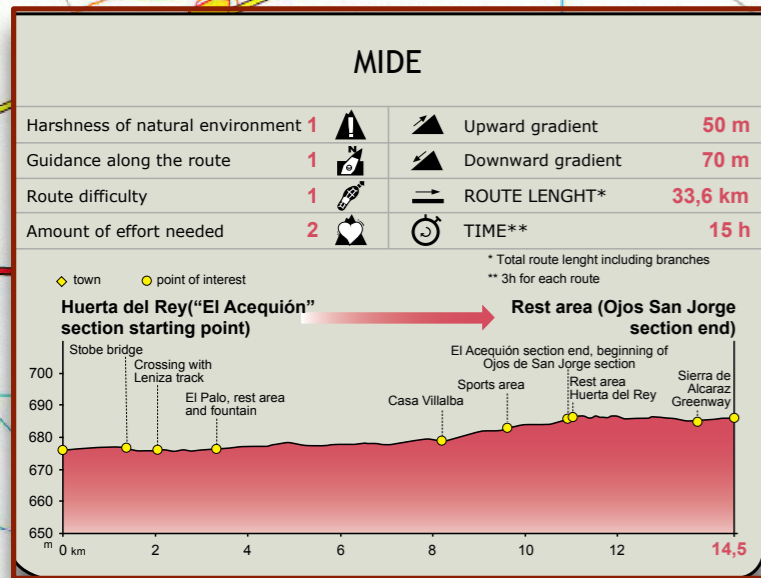
View of the landscape of Huerta del Rey



Strikes (Lamius sentio) pose on the trail fence



Young elms close to the waterway



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**MARÍA CRISTINA
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- Section starting point
- Junction
- Other sights of interest
- End of section
- Underpass
- Rest area
- Bridge