

Natural landscape

The walk among the scrubland that now covers the abandoned fields provides views of the westernmost area of Montsant, of the mountaintops and of southern part of Montsant and Cingle Major (Large Cliff). This is of geological interest because red Bunter sandstone clay, limestone, dolomite and large numbers of outcrops of Muschelkalk limestone can be found there. The name «Guixar» (chalk field) is a reminder of these.

L'Escambellet or Punta del Guixar: Here you will find the Coll d'en Solans pass viewing point, which has views over the lower points of the Siurana and Montsant rivers. From here, a large part of the villages of El Priorat can be seen.

Cultural heritage

La Figuera (575 m). Legend has it that the name comes from a huge fig tree that sheltered the herds in the area from rain in Roman times. Later, a castle was built and the fig tree remained in its courtyard. Remains of it can still be seen in Carrer de la Muralla (Wall Street). La Figuera was awarded the status of settlement in 1182. Later, it joined the Barony of Cabacés; and in those times livestock farming was the main economic activity.

The parish church, which dates from the 18th Century, is built where the castle used to stand and is dedicated to Sant Martí.

The chapel of Sant Pau is located at an altitude of 635 m. At a strategic point, seven provinces can be seen from here: Tarragona, Barcelona, Lleida, Castelló, Teruel, Zaragoza and Huesca. At some 500 m to the west of the chapel, towards the top of the mountain, there is a concrete trench from which one can see as much as 40 km along the Ebro river. The general staff of the Republic had its general headquarters here in 1938 and planned its offensive during the Battle of the Ebro from here.



Dry stone walls. Joan Ferran.



TRIAL 9 LA FIGUERA

Camí de la Calçada
Grau de la Figuera
Camí de les Solcides
Coll d'en Solans
Punta del Guixar

Initiative: Parc Natural de Montsant. Contents: Casa d'Oficis Senders de Montsant i Canadua. Writing, coordination and cartography: Pedrenca Pedagogia Ambiental



A circular trail to La Figuera, taking in spectacular views of the Serra de Montsant and a large part of El Priorat. Recommended for those who want to enjoy sweeping panoramic views and take extremely impressive photographs. The reference point of the trail is the cliff of La Figuera, which has been called the Balcony of El Priorat. The walk partly follows the upper part of the cliff and partly its foot, in order to get the best possible views. Both the descent and the climb up are accessible for all types of walker, posing no real difficulty. Follow the signposts placed by Turisme de Catalunya, the Tourist Board of Catalonia, which indicate El Guixar (chalk field) trail. This trip can be made at any time of year and at any time of day, as it is short. Try to avoid the sunniest times of the day.

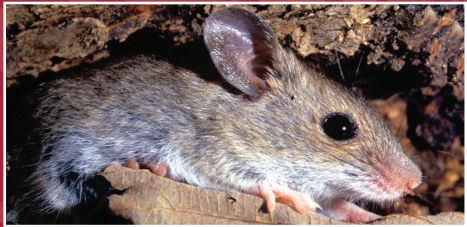
Technical description

TOTAL DISTANCE:
4.2 km

TOTAL TIME:
1 h 20 min (rest stops not included)

DIFFICULTY LEVEL:
LOW

TOTAL ASCENT:
200 m



Long-tailed field mouse (*Apodemus* sp.). Josep Gener.

Trail description

The walk leaves from in front of the school, a signpost indicates the direction to take. Take the asphalt track which leads to road T-702, which is the old path Camí de la Calçada. After around 20 minutes, another signpost indicates the path to take, which branches off to the right, in the direction of La Vilella Baixa. After a spell on this path, you will see a dry stone hut, still in a very good state of conservation. This is one of the remains bearing witness to the intense agricultural activity in the area in the past. Make the most of it and study at close quarters the perfect limestone walls surrounding it. After another short while you will come to the path for La Figuera, which descends to the Montsant river. You can go down if you wish, but bear in mind the steep uphill slope that awaits you on your way back. For a better view, you can walk to the cliff on the left. To approach this, skirt round the square-shaped heap of stones at the top of the slope. Return to the path along which you came, and continue in the direction of L'Escambellet. Here the ascent back up to La Figuera begins, taking the route of Camí de les Solsides. After a while the tip of Punta del Guixar comes into view, with the radio antennas visible on the higher slopes. Before beginning the climb up, this spot offers a view over a large part of El Priorat. At the top, you will find the GR 171 hike trail, with red and white markers, which will lead you back to the village. Before joining this path, you can climb to the viewpoint of the Coll d'en Solans pass, on the right. Follow the track and the shortcut will take you across an old threshing floor. After passing the cemetery you will arrive at the village. If you wish to complete the trail to the south, you can walk to the chapel of Sant Pau, two and a half kilometres to the west, taking the old path of Camí de les Planes.



Chapel of Sant Pau. Joan Ferran.

