

## PLANTS

Learn more about the plants in the beautiful nature surrounding Areias do Seixo.



### ◆ Portuguese gorse (*Ulex jussiaei*)

This Portuguese endemic gorse is an evergreen shrub. In Spring it sprouts bright yellow flowers and it can grow up to be 2-3 metres in width. It will grow in a great variety of terrains, including on the shade of pine forests, on sandy terrains and in mixed shrub areas, preferably in places with high precipitation. It has, like other gorses, a spiny completion, a very effective defence against herbivores such as the rabbits. Although it is an endemic species this gorse is not particularly at risk and it is producing important results in the chemistry and farmaceutical industries.

Degree of Dofficulty: 5

Colour status: Green

Flowering season: Spring, but it is identifiable all year round



### ◆ Thrift (*Armeria welwitschii*)

Thrift, is a small, low growing, evergreen perennial that is native and endemic to the coast of Portugal. It has lanceolate leaves that reach up to 10 cm long by 0.7 cm wide. The plant will reach 30 cm in height and will form dense clumps up to 30 cm wide. In late spring to early summer the plants are adorned with long-lasting pink and white flowers in dense inflorescences. Individual flowers are up to 0.7 cm across and seen en masse are quite showy. Because it is an endemic species and threatened by several other plant species its presence here is very precious.

Degree of Difficulty: 7

Colour status: Red

Flowering season: March to July



### ◆ Maritime pine (*Pinus pinaster*)

The maritime pine is native to the western and southwestern Mediterranean region.

The pejorative name 'pinaster' is derived from pinus + aster, translating as 'a poor imitation of a pine'. Here in the Seixo beach the pines have been shaped wonderfully by the wind, and are great examples of the species adaptability to harsh and dry habitats and exposure to strong winds. Because of its resilience it is not endangered, and it is even an invasive species in South Africa, due to the similarities in the climate.

Degree of Difficulty: non-applicable

Colour status: Green

Flowering Season: Spring



### ◆ Herniaria marítima (*Herniaria marítima*)

The Portuguese endemic *Herniaria maritima*, with no common name in English, is a relatively well-spread vascular plant that occupies coastal areas occupied by dunes all over centre and southern Portugal. Globally it is highly restricted, it exists only in Portugal, but here it is quite common. Its flowers are microscopic, so you will only notice it by actively searching for a star-shaped creeping green plant with small round and chunky leaves.

Degree of Difficulty: 8

Colour status: Yellow

Flowering season: Spring



### ◆ Corema berry (*Corema album*)

The corema berry is an evergreen shrub, native to the atlantic coast of Portugal and Spain, that inhabits dune and coastal areas, as well as pine woods. Its special capacity to control its transpiration and water content make it highly adaptable to dry areas, and in September it ever produces an edible white berry, which explains its name.

Degree of Difficulty: 7

Colour status: Yellow

Flowering season: between March and May



### ◆ Phoenicean juniper (*Juniperus phoenicea*)

The phoenicean juniper is a large shrub or small tree reaching 2–12 metres tall, with a trunk up to 1 metre diameter and a rounded or irregular crown. The cones are berry-like, 6–14 mm in diameter, orange-brown, occasionally with a pinkish waxy bloom, and contain 3–8 seeds; they are mature in about 18 months. The male cones are 2–4 mm long, and shed their pollen in early spring. It is native throughout the Mediterranean region, and it mostly grows at low altitudes close to the coast.

Degree of Difficulty: 6

Colour status: Green

Flowering season: from December to March