

## Tips, how to help wildlife

Our parks offer a variety of natural, recreational, and historical activities. When you are in protected nature reserves, it is especially important to remember to be cautious, as many sites are endangered by human activity.

1. Dispose of all garbage, including food, in appropriate waste areas for collection or take your garbage back home. Garbage in the landscape, also food leftovers are threatening the wildlife. Animals might eat plastic bags and bottles which will result in their death!
2. Avoid feeding animals, hunting, or collecting plants, trees and insects. Your food is not digestible for wildlife and can kill it! Despite their beauty, popular wildflowers are protected. Don't pick, uproot, buy or sell them.
3. Do not damage or remove pieces of historic structures.
4. If you encounter damaged or hurt wildlife, report the location to the nearest Park Ranger.
5. Do not smoke, burn firewood, or attempt to alter the landscape in anyway. Fires are a main threat to the plants of the area!
6. Illegal activities will not be tolerated. If you see something suspicious, please report to the nearest Park Ranger.
7. Be thoughtful, responsible, and friendly towards others as you enjoy the delights of the nature reserves. Greet anybody you see on the trail.



Mahmiyat.ps  
دليلك إلى الطبيعة والسياحة البيئية

@ info@mahmiyat.ps f mahmiyat.ps #BeitilluPark

Hanns  
Seidel  
Foundation



PROMOTING THE ROLE OF NATURE  
RESERVES IN ECOTOURISM

**BEITILLU  
NATURE RESERVE  
(WADI JANATAH)**





## Location and access

Beitillu Nature Reserve is 3356680 m<sup>2</sup> in size, located 19 km north of Ramallah in the Al-Ittihad (الاتحاد) Municipality, referred to by locals as the “The Union” of three towns: Beitilu, Deir ‘Ammar, and Jammalah. Driving on the outskirts of Ramallah, passing by local villages, you will encounter the “fellahin” (فلاحين) pace of life. Palestinian fellahin are a group of traditional agricultural laborers living and working in orchards and fields. The rows of olive trees, fruit orchards, and rolling hills might remind you of similar Mediterranean landscapes, such as Napa Valley in California, or Tuscany, Italy. The residents of Beitillu offer traditional hospitality upon encountering visitors.

Arriving in the village of Beitillu, age-old architecture, such as traditional homes and religious relics will fascinate you. In the center of town, the citadel of the newly renovated mosque serves as a guide as you venture into the wilderness.



## Explore by foot

Amidst the freshwater streams that divide the landscape of Beitillu, there are many quiet trails, buzzing with the sounds of butterflies, birdcalls, and the gentleness of your own footsteps. In the bottom of the valley, the orchards of pistachio trees and orange groves grow adjacent to the trail.

On the descending slopes, olive trees and small forests of non-native eucalyptus provide shade for picnicking. It is possible to gaze in the distance from one village to the next, witnessing the unique differences of the local villages, for example, the nearby Ein Arik, 7km west of Ramallah on the way to Beitilu. Ein Arik is home the tallest citadel mosque in the West Bank and serves as a visual landmark. Walking in these villages, the architectural ruins of Byzantine, Ottoman, and Crusader period are often encountered: ancient water cisterns, church ruins, and traditional structures open for exploration. Ask a local. Tread lightly.

On the edge of Beitillu, the iron gates of the forest are remnants of British Mandate-era conservation plans. Along the edge of the forest are “Natufian” caves, marked by charcoal fires.

## Flora and Fauna

On your way through the Nature Reserve you might encounter Water Mint, Western Caspian Turtle, Palestine Viper or Eurasian Worm Snake. Also the Levant Green Frog, Savigny’s Tree Frog, Persian Cyclamen and Pink Rock-Rose are seen frequently. Mountain Gazelles, Palestine Sunbird, Palestine Oak and the Mouse-Tailed Bat might cross your way as well.

## Use of natural resources and ecosystem services

Where there are natural resources humans usually use them in a more or less sustainable way. To keep resources available also for future generation sustainable use is very important.

In Beitillu the spring water is used for irrigation and in household use during summer. Grazing in this area is very limited because of strict enforcement of the reserve.

As for wild plants, people use Jerusalem sage, Biblical-hyssop, common mallow, in their households as well as Palestine Arum and various edible mushrooms.

More than 200 visitors per week are approaching the reserve for recreational reasons. According to the local ranger, this makes it a very important place for recreation at the national level and for Palestinians from Israel.

## Pressures and threats

As a main leisure site for many inhabitants of the area, the nature of Beitillu is threatened by many impacts like for example fire, unsustainable tourism development (disturbance, littering) and hunting. Threats for effective management arise from incorrect or aggressive behavior of settlers from nearby Israeli settlements. The intensive agriculture close to the nature reserve causes chemical pollution of water bodies and threatens freshwater biodiversity in the area. Also the conversion to agricultural land is an imminent threat to the nature reserve.

