QUINTA DO EGA

Wetlands present undeniable biological and landscape value. "Ria de Aveiro" is one of the most important Portuguese coastal wetlands, acknowledged by the integration in CORINE Biotopes and Ria de Aveiro SPA (Special Protection Area, Birds Directive). Although it is not a true "ria", but a lagoon system, this rich ecosystem encompasses several biotopes, such as saltmarshes, reed beds, rushes, slime, islands, free water masses, salt ponds and fish culture and bird breeding sites.

Marshlands originate in coastal zones with calm waters. The reduced tidal flow facilitates the deposition of detritus and suspended sediments in mudflats that allow the installation of a particular vegetation type: halophytic plants. In "Quinta do Ega" we can find middle level marsh zones, habitat to sea purslane (*Halimione portulacoides*), and, to a lesser extent, sea aster (*Aster tripolium subsp. pannonicus*), sea lavender (*Limonium vulgare*), small marsh flower (*Cotula coronopifolia*) and sea arrow-grass (*Triglochin maritima*).

In further coastline we can find high salt marsh, where sea rushes (*Juncus maritimus*) dominate, being the formations locally called as "juncal". Here and there, within the "juncal", we can also observe sea club-rush (*Bolboschoenus maritimus* = *Scirpus maritimus*).

The expansion of freshwater favors reedbeds, which are pure stands of reeds (*Phragmites australis*). Despite being monospecific, reedbeds have great ecological important, providing rest and breeding sites for many aquatic species, especially birds.

Text: Rosa Pinto
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Halimione portulacoides


Aster tripolium subsp. pannonicus


Limonium vulgare


Juncus maritimus


Bolboschoenus maritimus


Phragmites australis