



Two more hikes in Serra Malagueta:

The guides at the Nature Park Office are indispensable for both tours.

1.) LAGOA (more or less 3 hours, one steep climb down, then gentle. Back about 45 min steep climb up)

The name may sound strange here amidst the mountains. You never see the sea here. Steep mountainsides lead down to some fertile ribeiras and little villages on terraces high above the banana-groves. It is a world without roads, without electricity, with long walks to wells and waterholes. Most houses are abandoned but especially the village of Lagoa forms a nice, orderly complex of houses and looks as if it was constructed according to a settlement plan. What makes the walk so pleasant is the nicely made trail. Sometimes wide enough to allow room for a donkey and you, side by side, it is in some places constructed on walls of hand laid stones. If you walk on straight north towards Achada Lagoa you can extend the walk. You could even walk on until you hit the north coast. Ribeira Lagoa would lead you northwest towards Chao Bom, at one point you can walk down into Ribeira Principal to the east. The way back to the road and the car crosses Rib. Lagoa in a semi-circle, passes the village of Lagoa and then comes a 45 min. climb up. The locals do it in flip-flops. Do not imitate! Watch out for monkeys! Falcons a frequent, so are Black-cap, Passer ia-goensis, and Alexander's Swift.

One locality is called "coruja" after the Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*). Plant-watching is rewarding here! Most of the endemic specialities are on the trailside: *Euphorbia*, *Echium* ("Lingua de Vaca"), *Limonium Lobinii*, *Mostarda-brabo* (*Diplotaxis*), *Figueira-Brabo* is one of the two endemic tree species.

2.) Crossing the Serra from Ribeira Principal to San Miguel

(or the other way round! Anyway at least 5 hrs, demanding. Only with guides!)

Gongon-Valley is described in the Ribeira Principal section.

The easiest way is to start at Pilao Cao in the morning, so you walk up with the sun behind you on your left. The trail follows the ridge which runs down from the Serra to the sea. Spectacular views down left into Ribeira San Miguel and right into Gongon. You can aim at the telecom mast on the ridge. Before you reach it (!) you must climb down right to some farmhouses and into Gongon valley.

In terms of views, landscape, - and altitude-difference one of the best hikes. At the well in Gongon you find *Bryophyllum* (*Calanchoe pinnata*) and the edible "Njam", widely cultivated only on Santo Antao.

Other walks in the Serra could bring you to a colony of endemic Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*) only recently discovered by park staff or into a wild canyon leading down to Ribeira da Prata.

If you contact the Nature Park Office in advance, they can organise a local lunch on a shady verandah.

Advisable!

There is accommodation in Assomada (lively market every Wednesday and Saturday!!) but tourists will mostly find the beach in Tarrafal more attractive. Hotels of all levels there.

