

# Paracas National Reserve



## Further Links

- One of the most biologically productive marine areas in the world.
- Hundreds of Sealions and Fur Seals.
- Excellent bird life including Humboldt Penguins, flamingoes and Inca Terns.
- Boat trips around the Ballestas Islands.

## Situation

On Peru's desert coast, 3.5 hours south of Lima.

## Activities

Boat trip to the Ballestas Islands, museum visit, peninsula visit.

The Paracas National Reserve and the nearby Ballestas Islands are on the coast between Lima and Nazca. This area is a haven for marine life and sea birds. Vegetation here is very sparse as it is a place where the desert meets the sea, but there are some interesting cactus and salt grasses that survive on water from the sea mists. The main attraction are the birds and you can take a boat trip out to the islands, often referred to as the 'guano islands' due to their covering of bird droppings. There are lots of pelicans here, and also a few Humboldt penguins and colonies of terns, boobies and Guanay cormorants. In the surrounding waters there are killer whales and dolphins and in secluded coves you will see colonies of Sealions and Fur Seals.

You may see flamingoes, and occasionally condors come down from the mountains to scavenge for food on the subtropical coastal desert of the Paracas peninsula. The Julio C. Tello Museum, located just inside the Reserve boundary, can also be visited. On view in this museum are exhibits from the ancient Paracas Culture that lived in this area from around 500 BC to 200 AD.