



Paracas National Reserve and Ballestas Islands

Just a few hours from the South of Lima, as I was going on the Pan-American Highway, I understood why this region was home to some of the world's most amazing civilizations and why it is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Peru for lovers of marine (a) _____, amazing birds, and beautiful landscapes that include spectacular coastal deserts, stunning beaches and sand dunes.

My first stop was Pisco, the worst affected area by the 2007 (b) _____. From there a small bus took me to Paracas and on the road that runs along the (c) _____, I enjoyed some great views across the Pacific at sunset. After just thirty minutes I was in this small town that consists basically of hostels, restaurants and fishing trade.

The tour I took to visit the Ballestas Islands departed from the pier El Chaco at 8 am, probably the best time to see the islands. While we were riding on the boat, I saw dozens of sea lions welcoming tourists and thousands of birds sitting on the rocks or flying in the clearest blue sky I have ever seen. "The Chandelier", carved into the sandy slope of a (d) _____ several centuries ago for unknown reasons, and the remains of the Cathedral, a unique rock formation caused by erosion from the sea and wind, are also breathtaking attractions.

After such a marvelous journey, I set off for the Paracas National Reserve located on the Paraca Peninsula. This reserve, one of the richest (e) _____ in the world, was established in 1975 to protect the diversity of wildlife and ecology between the Pacific Ocean and the tropical (f) _____ desert. This reserve covers 335,000 hectares (117,406 on land and 217,594 in the ocean) and it is the only national reserve that protects part of the Peruvian sea that is influenced by the effects of the Humboldt Current's cold water. This area is one of the most biologically productive (g) _____ areas in the world and it is a major food source for fish, birds and marine mammals.



Whales, dolphins, sea lions and sea otters are among the 36 species of marine and land mammals that live in the reserve and more than 215 species of migratory birds spend at least part of their lives in Paracas. Among the

birds I had the chance to see while I was strolling along the shore, were the Parihuana, red and white flamingos, which according to tradition, inspired the red and white independence flag designed by San Martín. Unfortunately several (h) _____ of birds in Paracas have been declared endangered by the Peruvian government, including the Humboldt Penguin, the American flamingo, the Peruvian diving petrel, the Blue-footed and Peruvian and masked boobies.



To learn more about the (i) _____ of this area I visited the Centro de Interpretación de Paracas and since Paracas Reserve is also dedicated to the protection of the cultural and historical patrimony, my visit to the onsite museum Julio C. Tello was a must.

On my way back to Lima, I considered myself one of the luckiest people alive for being part of a country full of natural wonders.


Before reading

- What words or things come to your mind when you think of Ica?
- What is a natural reserve?

Match the words with the definitions.

coastline species ecosystems earthquake dune
 flora and fauna wildlife marine coastal

- The land along a coast= _____
- On land beside an ocean = _____
- A group of animals or plants of the same kind = _____
- Animals and plants of a place = _____
- Sudden violent movement of the Earth's surface = _____
- Animals and plants that grow in natural conditions = _____
- All the living things in an area and the way they affect each other in the environment = _____
- a small hill of sand near a beach or in a desert = _____
- Related to the sea = _____

1. Read the article and complete it with the words in the before reading activity.
2. Where would you find this article?

- a. a travel magazine b. a history book c. a geography textbook

3. Read the article again and make notes under the headings.

- ❖ Departure and destination points: _____
- ❖ Average visit duration of the trip: _____
- ❖ Stops along the way: _____
- ❖ Interesting Facts: _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- ❖ Geographical features mentioned: _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- ❖ Your feelings about this journey: _____
- _____
- _____

4. Discuss

- Why are National reserves and parks important?

5. Grammar review: Find examples of the following in the text. Underline them.

- Three irregular past tenses
- Seven superlatives sentences.
- Three sentences in the past progressive tense