Qurm Nature Reserve

Site number: 2,144 | Country: Oman | Administrative region: Muscat - the Capital City of the Sultanate of Oman
Area: 106.8 ha | Coordinates: 23°37'12"N 58°28'41"E | Designation dates: 19-04-2013

Qurm Nature Reserve is located in the Qurm neighbourhood in the heart of the capital city of Muscat, facing the Gulf of Oman at the foot of the Hajar Mountains. The Site is internationally important as it supports one of the largest areas of natural mangrove forests along the east coast of the Arabian Peninsula as well as in the Oman Sea ecoregion. The mangroves provide natural control against tropical storms and cyclones that regularly affect the city, play a critical role in shoreline stabilization, and maintain water quality by retaining stormwater run-off. In addition, the mangroves sustain the rich biodiversity of the biogeographic region by supporting essential ecological processes for over 40 fish species. These fish include a number of high-valued commercial species that are already under considerable pressure from intensive commercial fishing in the Oman Sea. The Site also supports 194 species of birds, 27 species of crustaceans, and 48 species of molluscs. It is a popular nature observation and outing venue for tourists and Muscat city residents, and it is being developed into the first conservation/education site in the city with a state-of-the-art visitors’ centre. In addition to its recreational and educational values, Qurm Nature Reserve is home to archaeological remains of fishing activities that might have taken place more than 4,000 years ago.