

Natural beaches are a value worth conserving

The Natural Park includes **6 km of natural beaches** that still retain their functionality and constitute **a rare exception on the Catalan coast**.

The beaches and dunes in the Park are in an area that has undergone very little development and so **there are still active processes of sediment delivery and return**.

Beaches and dunes form part of the same system. Dunes build up a natural reserve of sand and **play an important part in defending the coastline**.

Easterly storms, the northerly tramuntana and the southerly garbí winds **make the dune ridge grow and move**. This shows that it is **a system that can regenerate**.

On natural beaches **there is balance between loss and delivery of sand**. When loss exceeds delivery, beaches must be regenerated with external sand, which damages breakwaters, promenades and other infrastructure behind the beaches.

Dunes have **a biodiversity of their own which should be conserved**. Exotic plant species from nearby gardens threaten this diversity and its function.

If we are to keep the beaches, we must conserve the dunes



Typical dune species



Marram grass
(*Ammophila arenaria*)
Sand-fixing plant
Photo: Sandra Saura



Kentish plover
(*Charadrius alexandrinus*)
Protected, nests in dunes
Photo: Àlex Oller



Sea daffodil
(*Pancratium maritimum*)
Emblem of coastal flora
Photo: Mapi Carabús



Spanish psammodromus lizard
(*Psammodromus edwardsianus*,
~*P. hispanicus*)
The Natural Park is home to
the largest population on the
Girona coast
Photo: David Fernández

Invasive species that must be eradicated



NINE exotic floral species have been identified in the Park's coastal dunes. These must be eradicated because they represent a loss of biodiversity and dune function. The most obvious example is the **Hottentot fig** (*Carpobrotus* sp.)
Photo: Mapi Carabús

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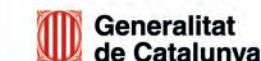
Action is taken thanks to an agreement with **Obra Social "la Caixa"** and involves people at risk of social exclusion.

With the collaboration of:



Photo: Past work on the coastal dunes.
Archive: Natural Park Documentation Centre

Photo: Mapi Carabús



BEACHES AND DUNES El Mongrí, les Illes Medes i el Baix Ter Natural Park





Illes Medes

The Natural Park beach and dune conservation programme

It aims to consolidate the continuation of dune forms on the Park's beaches

It aims to reduce sand loss outside the system as far as possible

It aims to restore natural dunes

It aims to eradicate exotic flora and replace it with native species

What is being done?

Mechanical cleaning has been discontinued in beach areas where dunes may form in favour of manual cleaning. Flattening by the machines stopped the dunes growing

Installing sediment barriers aids dune regrowth in eroded areas

Access to the area has been reorganised, reducing the numerous paths that led to fragmentation and erosion

Car parks have been regulated

Information signs have been installed

The dune area has been fenced off to prevent flattening

The Hottentot fig and other invasive species are being eradicated



How can I help to conserve the dunes and beaches?



By parking in designated areas



By using the walkways to get to the beach



By staying outside the fencing, not going onto the dunes and by staying on the marked paths



By keeping dogs off the dunes, on a leash or under strict control



By planting native plants in your garden