



Concello da Coruña

# EXPLORE THE COAST OF A CORUÑA



Concello da Coruña

1

# TOWER OF HÉRCULES

# 1.1

## Two thousand years of light

The Tower of Hercules is the only Roman lighthouse that from its origins to the present day has fulfilled its initial function, that of serving as a maritime signal and navigation instrument for the ships that crossed and still cross the Atlantic corridor. It was probably built in the second half of the first century by the Roman Empire, at the Finisterrae, the end of the known world, to accompany the ships that bordered the westernmost end of the Empire, but mainly to mark the entrance to the port of Artabria.

The lighthouse is accompanied by a very characteristic and attractive environment, from which you can observe all kinds of marine and terrestrial species, as well as historical sculptures.





# 1.2

## A place full of life in the heart of the city



# ...in summer

During the summer, the flora around the Tower of Hercules is at its best, with green meadows and flowers adorning the landscape. Seabirds fly over a clear sky, and the sun shines brightly over the sea. Visitors can enjoy marine biodiversity in the warmer waters. This is the best time to explore the coastal nature and enjoy the good weather.



# Macaón ou cola de andoriña

## Papilio machaon

ESP: Macaón | ENG: Swallowtail | POR: Borboleta-cauda-de-andorinha

It is a diurnal butterfly easily identifiable by the color pattern on its wings. This species and others related to it usually exhibit a behavior known as hill-topping: males and females ascend hills and mountains to perform courtship flights.



# Furabuchos balear

## Puffinus mauretanicus

ESP: Pardela balear | ENG: Balearic shearwater | POR: Fura-bucho das Baleares

It is the only endemic seabird in our country and is currently critically endangered. It only breeds in the Balearic Islands, but travels to our coasts in winter.



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# Rato de campo

## Apodemus sylvaticus

ESP: Ratón de campo | ENG: Wood mouse | POR: Rato-do-campo

This rodent is widely spread and common throughout Europe and the Iberian Peninsula. It is present in most existing environments. It has short, yellowish-brown to reddish fur along its entire body, while the tail is largely devoid of hair.



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# Cirrio común

## Apus apus

ESP: Vencejo común | ENG: Common swift | POR: Andorinhão-preto

It is a bird that lives on cliffs. However, it is very present in cities, where it nests in buildings and other constructions. A curiosity about this species is that it is capable of developing its entire life cycle in flight, except nesting: an extreme adaptation of these birds to aerial life.

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# Anduriña común

## Hirundo rustica

ESP: Golondrina común | ENG: Barn Swallow | POR: Andorinha-das-chaminés

It is a bird with an aerodynamic appearance, black in color and with metallic blue reflections on the back, and creamy white on the belly. His face has a very characteristic red color. Its wings are long and pointed, showing white tones on the lower front. Likewise, its tail is very long and forked.

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# Lavandeira amarela

## Motacilla flava

ESP: Lavandera boyera | ENG: Western yellow wagtail | POR: Alvéola-amarela

It is a bird with multiple subspecies and hybrids, which can be distinguished by their differences in coloration.





# 1.3

## Sculpture Park

Devised by the engineer Eduardo Toba, this sculptural project was proposed in a mythical-symbolic key. It is made up of figurative, abstract and LandArt works, but all of them united by a common thread: the presence of the Tower, and the myths and legends around the lighthouse and its site.

Some works respond to mythological stories that link the foundation of the Tower with Hercules himself or with the Celtic leader Breogán, others refer to the world of the sea, navigation and routes. Two cultures that coexist today in Galicia struggle in this space, the Atlantic represented by Geryon, and the Mediterranean, by Hercules.







*Hoxe é un gran día  
cheo de emoción  
pois conseguiremos  
facé-la ilusión  
Porque a Torre estaba  
xa engalanada  
mais o seu entorno  
ficaba maltreito  
faltáballe o adorno  
Non sei se algún día  
se decatarán  
polo que fixestes  
saíndo do chan  
Pantásmas de ferro,  
de bronce e de pedra  
seres abraiantes  
que dan a harmonía  
e nos fan vivir, mitos e lendas  
Hoxe é un gran día  
cheo de emoción pois conseguiremos  
facé-la ilusión*

Eduardo Toba Blanco



Engineer Eduardo Toba visiting the facilities



# 1.4

## Conservation is up to you

As visitors and residents, our decisions and behaviors have a direct impact on local biodiversity. It is crucial to follow sustainable practices, avoid leaving garbage, respect flora and fauna, and participate in clean-up activities. In addition, informing and educating others about the importance of conserving this natural and cultural heritage is vital.

To help conserve it we must know it, here you can find invasive species such as *Carpobrotus edulis*, *Cortaderia selloana* and *Sargassum muticum*. In this place occurred the great maritime environmental disasters of Galicia, the sinking and subsequent fire of the ship Aegean Sea.





# The Aegean Sea disaster

The sinking of the ship «Aegean Sea» in A Coruña occurred on the 3rd of December of 1992. This Greek oil tanker ran aground near the Tower of Hercules due to a storm, spilling thousands of tons of oil into the sea. The resulting environmental disaster severely affected the coast, polluting beaches and harming marine life.

The initial response was slow, increasing the effects of the spill. This event underscored the need to improve emergency and environmental protection protocols in the region, as well as to raise awareness of the importance of preventing future similar disasters in vulnerable coastal areas.



Image provided by La Voz de Galicia. Photographer: César Quián.



# Invasive species



# Plumeiro da Pampa

## Cortaderia selloana

ESP: Plumero de la Pampa | ENG: Pampas grass | POR: Capim-dos-pampas

This plant species has an enormous invasive capacity, affecting coastal and fluvial habitats. Today, it is an ecological emergency problem in almost every country in the world.



# Sargazo xaponés

## Sargassum muticum

ESP: Sargazo japonés | ENG: Japanese sargasso weed | POR: Sargaço-japonês

This seaweed is of Japanese and Chinese origin. It has reached our shores after having reached the south of England, dispersed through ballast water. Their capacity for invasion is increased by their high tolerance to changes in the environment and their rapid growth and proliferation.

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# Herba do coitelo

## Carpobrotus edulis

ESP: Uña de gato | ENG: Hottentot-fig | POR: Chorões

It is a succulent and creeping plant of South African origin, widespread on the Spanish coasts. The shape of its leaves is what gives rise to its common name, such as «Cat's Claw». It is an invasive species in Spain, capable of displacing native species and adapting to very poor or difficult soils for the adaptation of other species of flora. In fact, it has a high tolerance and resistance to salinity. Its introduction in Spain was due to its use as an ornamental plant that fixes soil in coastal areas. From these crops it has been widely naturalized in sandy areas, rocks and coastal cliffs. In addition, its eradication is complicated, as it has a high capacity for regrowth.



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2

# SAN PEDRO ISLANDS



XUNTA  
DE GALICIA



Financiado por  
la Unión Europea



Plan de Recuperación,  
Transformación  
y Resiliencia





# 2.1

## Natural Area of Local Interest (ENIL)

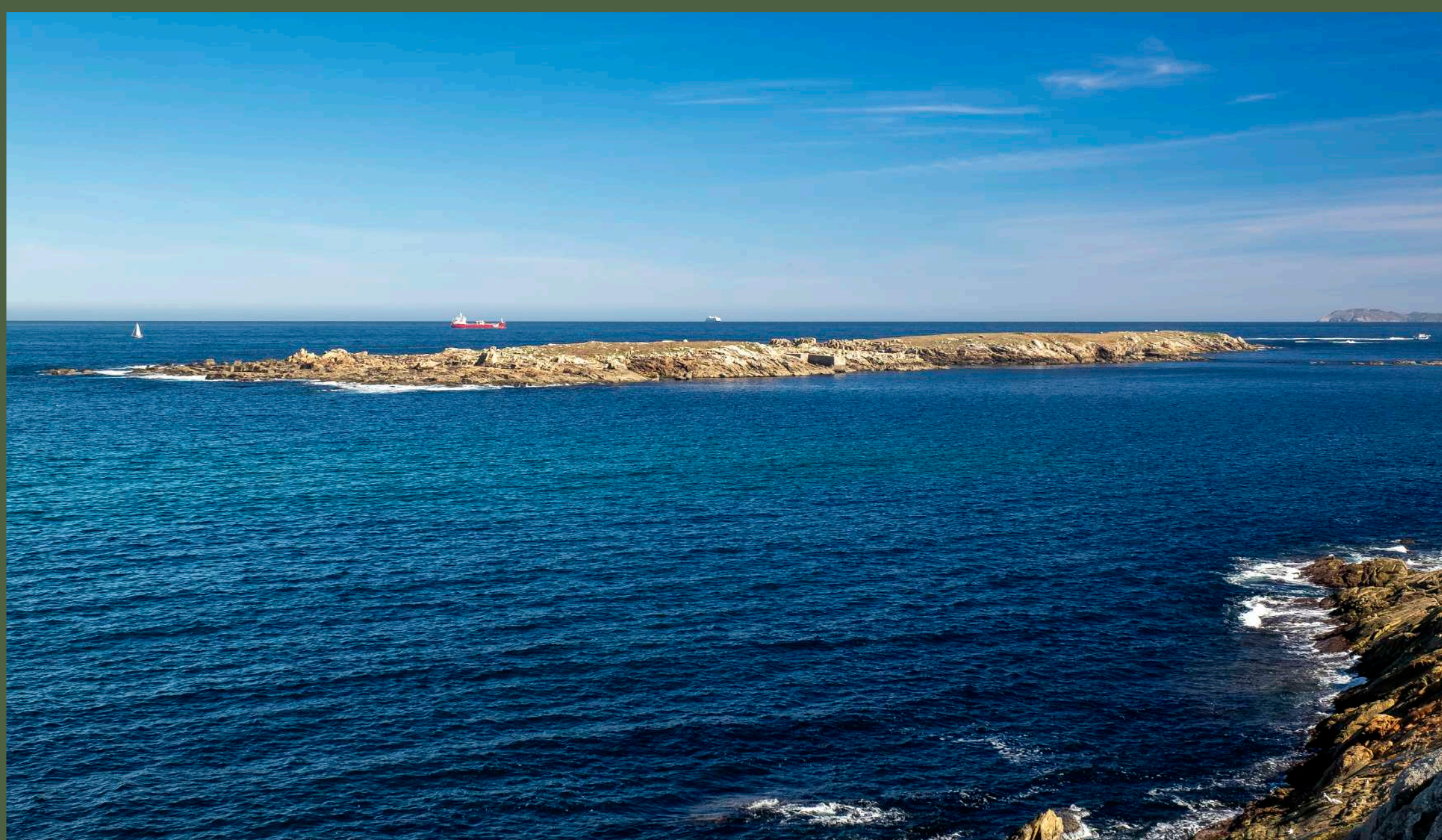
The San Pedro Islands are located on the western limit of the Council of A Coruña. This small archipelago, provisionally declared as a Natural Area of Local Interest (ENIL) by the Xunta de Galicia in 2017, consists of three main islands (As Tres Illas, O Pé and Vendaval) and several shallows, such as O Aguión.

The configuration of the islands follows a straight line parallel to the coast, with a length of one kilometer and a width of -250 300 meters, occupying an area of 10.4 hectares. The orography is gentle, with steeper slopes towards the land, where cliffs and small grottoes are found, while the outer face has softer and lower reliefs.



The San Pedro Islands have a geomorphology influenced by natural processes such as tides and ocean currents. The orography of the islands shows gentle slopes, with cliffs on the side facing the land and gentle reliefs on the outer face. A prominent element is the dune of Mount San Pedro, which represents a significant geomorphological feature of the area.

The region's climate is heavily influenced by the Atlantic Ocean, which moderates temperatures and contributes to a humid environment. These climatic factors are crucial for the biological diversity of islands and their marine environment.





# 2.2

## An oasis of nature next to the city

The environmental value of the San Pedro Islands lies in its biodiversity and its role as a habitat for seabird species. These islands serve as a nursery, although they face challenges due to the presence of predators.

Protecting this environment is crucial for the conservation of seabird populations and for maintaining the ecological diversity of the region.



...in summer



# Silene dioica

## Silene dioica

ESP: Borbonesa | ENG: Red campion | POR: Silene dioica

It is a perennial herbaceous plant present in the northern region of the Iberian Peninsula. It blooms from April or May to August. It owes its scientific name to the fact that it is a dioecious plant, that is, with male and female flowers in different individuals.



# Pardela cincenta atlántica

## Calonectris borealis

ESP: Pardela cenicienta atlántica | ENG: Cory's shearwater | POR: Cagarra-do-atlântico

Pelagic seabird with long, slender wings and prominent yellowish beak. Its plumage is generally dark, with a slight contrast between the neck and head. In addition, the plumage on the underside is white, with the outline of the wings in dark tones. It breeds on the coasts of the Galician coast.



# Rabirrubio tizón

## Phoenicurus ochruros

ESP: Colirrojo tizón | ENG: Black redstart | POR: Rabirruivo-preto

As its vernacular name mentions, this small bird exhibits a reddish tail, while the rest of the plumage is dark, brown or black. The wings usually have whitish bands. It is a kind of cliffs; however, it is also common in urban areas.



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# Lavatera cretica

## Lavatera cretica

ESP: Malva | ENG: Cornish mallow | POR: Malva-alta

It grows in grasslands, roadsides, sandbanks and rocky outcrops on the coast. It blooms from March to July, presenting mauve flowers with darker veins on its petals.

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# Uva de raposo

## Sedum album

ESP: Uva de gato | ENG: White stonecrop | POR: Arroz-dos-telhados

Succulent plant, with very varied shapes. It has small, fleshy green leaves that can turn reddish during the winter. Some of its stems are erect, although they are also crawling and sterile. The flowers, which appear in spring and summer, are white and appear in panicles above the leaves. It is a very resistant species and adapted to drought.

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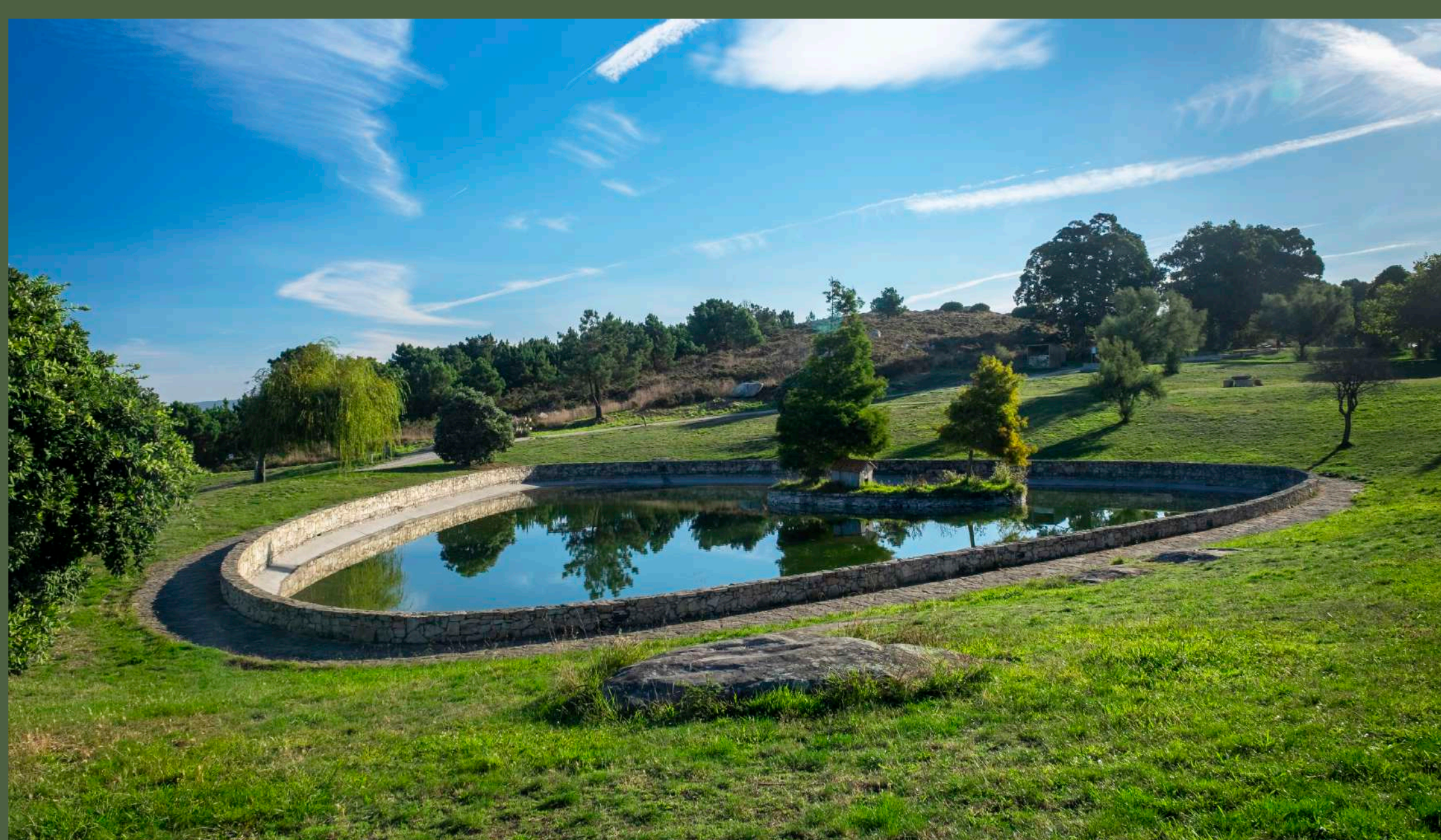
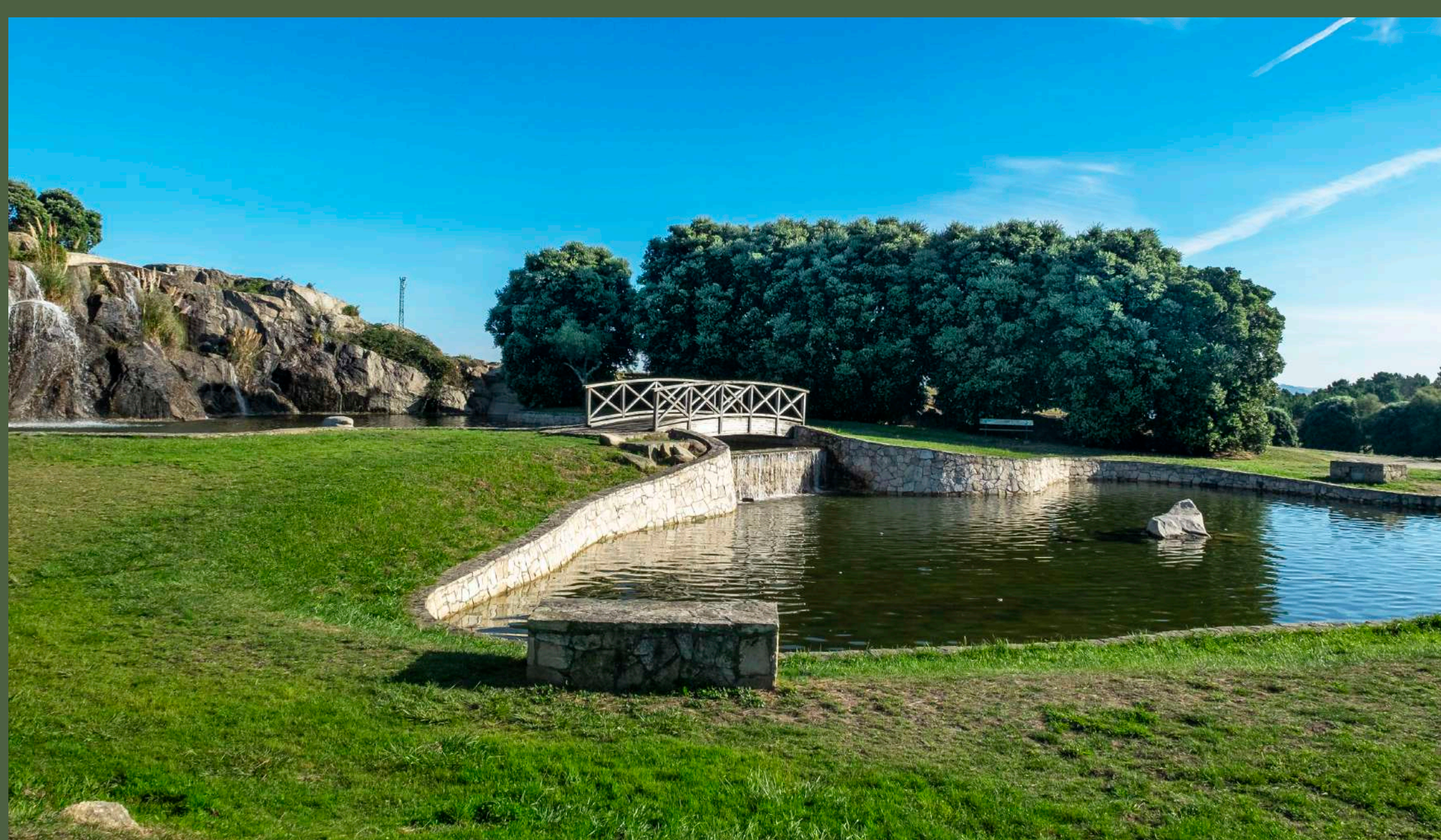
# 2.3

## A place to protect

These islands have great environmental value and are very close to the city's population, so we must conserve and protect them. The main threat was the collapse in 1996 of the Bens landfills, which flooded the site with garbage, as well as the fecal waste outfall.

Nowadays the old landfill has become an European example of recovery of a degraded area, and there is a sewage treatment plant that has an outfall that keeps the discharges away from the islands.









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# 3

# PORT AND CITY

# 3.1

## A common story

The port of A Coruña, with a history dating back to Roman times, has evolved at the same pace as the city. During the first centuries, the port served for the exchange of basic products such as wine, grain, oil, fish and metals.

Between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, the port experienced remarkable growth. Commercial activity flourished, pushing the development of the Pescadería neighborhood and expanding trade routes with ports in the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean. By the end of the 18th century, port movement was significant, with 250 ships and 14.000 tons of goods.





The beginning of the twentieth century brought with it important transformations. Alfredo Álvarez Cascos, the first president of the Port Works Board, promoted a modernization project that divided the bay into three docks, separating the ships according to their size and type of merchandise. This is how the docks of Linares Rivas, Santa Lucía, A Palloza and del Este were born in 1909.

In 1918 the project of Eduardo Vila who designed the dock of La Marina and the dry dock of O Parrote was completed. Five years later, the Transatlantic Pier, now known as Calvo Sotelo, was created due to the increase in passengers to North America. The work faced numerous problems and was completed in 1936.

The approval of the General Project of Works and Improvements of the Port in 1946 marked a turning point, with the construction of the fishing port of San Diego, the docks of As Animas and the breakwater of Abrigo, completed in 1965. The port as we know it now. This allowed A Coruña to become the fifth national port in 1960.



In the 70s, the Centenario dock diversified traffic, expanding fishing and oil operations to solid bulk. However, the lack of space and the accidents of the oil tanker Aegean Sea in 1992 and the Prestige in 2002 led to the construction of the outer port at Punta Langosteira.

On 2 April 2005, the foundation stone of the outer port, financed by the European Union, was laid. In 2012, the first commercial operations began. In 2021, an agreement was reached between various administrations to finance the railway connection, thus ensuring the future growth and modernization of the port of A Coruña.





## 3.2

# Marine biodiversity as a source of wealth

Marine biodiversity is an essential source of wealth for the fishing port of A Coruña. The abundance of marine life in the waters of A Coruña is partly due to the confluence of ocean currents that create an environment conducive to various species. The sustainable management of these resources is crucial to maintain the health of the ecosystem and ensure the continuity of this source of wealth.

The four species described below are some of the most relevant and economically valued in the A Coruña fish market.



# Peixe sapo

## Lophius piscatorius

ESP: Rape blanco | ENG: Anglerfish | POR: Tamboril

It is a fish that lives at the bottom, hidden in the mud. It belongs to a group of fish, the lophiids, where it is common for males to be much smaller than females and, sometimes, they can even parasitize them.

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# Polbo

## Octopus vulgaris

ESP: Pulpo | ENG: Common octopus | POR: Polvo

It is a cephalopod animal, solitary, capable of blending in with the environment. It has a very complex nervous system and exceptional vision, as well as a beak-like mouth. Its capture is carried out in an artisanal way using various fishing gears, one of them being the use of pots specifically created and designed for the capture of individuals of this species.



# Pescada

## Merluccius merluccius

ESP: Merluza | ENG: European hake | POR: Pescada

It is a bony fish of metallic gray color, lighter on the side and brighter on the belly. It usually lives on the bottom, made of mud or sand, and it is not frequent that it approaches the coast in winter. It is fished throughout the year, although it is more abundant in late spring and summer.

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# Sardiña

## Sardina pilchardus

ESP: Sardina | ENG: European pilchard | POR: Sardinha

Bluish fish with greenish and silvery reflections on the belly. It is located in coastal waters in spring and moves to greater depths in the months of November to March. Its capture is carried out by various fishing gears, highlighting the purse seine, which is carried out during the night. Normally this capture is carried out between the months of March and September.

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# 4

# BEACHES





# 4.1

## What can we find....?

The beaches of the coast of A Coruña offer a rich coastal biodiversity. On these sandy beaches, we can find seabirds and various coastal plants, while underwater, diving reveals a fascinating world with sea urchins, anemones and seaweed. Each beach is a unique ecosystem that invites exploration and admiration.

The most common species are *Larus michahellis*, *Saccorhiza polyschides*, *Ulva spp.*, *Actinia equina* y *Carcinus maenas*.



# Gaivota patiamarela

## Larus michahellis

ESP: Gaviota patiamarilla | ENG: Yellow-legged gull | POR: Gaivota-argêntea

Es un ave frecuente, no solamente en nuestras playas, sino también a lo largo de toda la ciudad. Puede alimentarse de restos presentes en vertederos o descartes pesqueros, por lo que se desarrolla bien en ambientes humanizados. Con todo, las poblaciones gallegas se encuentran actualmente en declive, como consecuencia de diversos factores.



# Golfo

## Saccorhiza polyschides

ESP: Argazo bravo o golfo | ENG: Furbellow | POR: Golfo

Esta especie de alga parda forma parte de los bosques de kelp, junto con otras macroalgas frecuentes, como *Laminaria ochroleuca*. Son ecosistemas muy productivos y que sirven de refugio para otros seres vivos. Durante las tormentas de verano, o al final del período de vegetación, estas dos especies de algas mencionadas suelen ser arrancadas y transportadas por las corrientes, y acumuladas en las costas y playas, lo cual origina la deposición de las denominadas “algas de arribazón”.

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# Leitugas de mar

## Ulva spp.

ESP: Lechugas de mar | ENG: Sea lettuces | POR: Alfaces-do-mar

Las algas llamadas «lechugas de mar» incluyen varias especies del género *Ulva*, incluidas especies dulceacuícolas. Es un grupo de algas muy heterogéneo, pueden encontrarse desde algas filamentosas hasta de morfología laminar.





# Estruga de mar

## Actinia equina

ESP: Tomate de mar | ENG: Beadlet anemone | POR: Morango-do-mar

It is a frequent bird, not only on our beaches, but also throughout the city. It can feed on remains present in landfills or fish discards, so it develops well in humanized environments. However, Galician populations are currently in decline, as a result of various factors.



# Cangrexo común

## Carcinus maenas

ESP: Cangrejo verde o común | ENG: Green crab | POR: Caranguejo-verde

This species of brown algae is part of kelp forests, along with other common macroalgae, such as *Laminaria ochroleuca*. They are very productive ecosystems that serve as a refuge for other living beings. During summer storms, or at the end of the vegetation period, these two species of algae are usually uprooted and transported by currents, and accumulated on the coasts and beaches, which causes the deposition of the so-called «Drift Seaweed».

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# Ourizo de mar

## Paracentrotus lividus

ESP: Erizo de mar | ENG: Stony sea urchin | POR: Ouriço verde

The algae called «sea lettuce» include several species of the genus *Ulva*, including freshwater species. It is a very heterogeneous group of algae, ranging from filamentous algae to laminar morphology. currently in decline, as a result of various factors.





# 4.2

# Description of our beaches



# 1 Riazor

## DESCRIPTION AND FEATURES

Riazor is a central urban beach located in the city of A Coruña, 570 meters wide and very popular with locals and tourists. It is an open, windy beach with moderate waves, and white coarse sand which makes it an ideal place for surfing and other beach sports. Its characteristic shell shape is framed by the city's Paseo Marítimo.





## SERVICES

- Blue Flag
- Car park
- Lifeguards
- Showers
- Toilets
- ISO 14001 certified

## ACCESIBILITY

Accessible for people with disabilities, with adapted accesses to facilitate entry and exit from the beach. In addition, the beach is well connected by public transport, with bus lines such as 3A, 3 and 7, which have stops nearby.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is advisable to confirm the depth of the water before bathing and avoid diving headfirst into shallow areas to prevent any possible accidents.



# 2 Orzán

## DESCRIPTION AND FEATURES

Orzán Beach is a central urban beach in A Coruña, with high occupancy and very popular with both locals and visitors, with a width of 700 meters and white coarse sand. It is adjacent to Riazor Beach, separated only by the well-known «Rompeolas». The beach is windy and has moderate waves, making it ideal for surfing and other beach sports such as beach volleyball.





## SERVICES

- Blue Flag
- Car park
- Lifeguards
- Showers
- Toilets
- ISO 14001 certified

## ACCESIBILITY

Accessible for people with disabilities, with adapted accesses to facilitate entry and exit from the beach. It is well connected by public transport, with bus lines such as 3A, 3 and 1, which have stops nearby.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

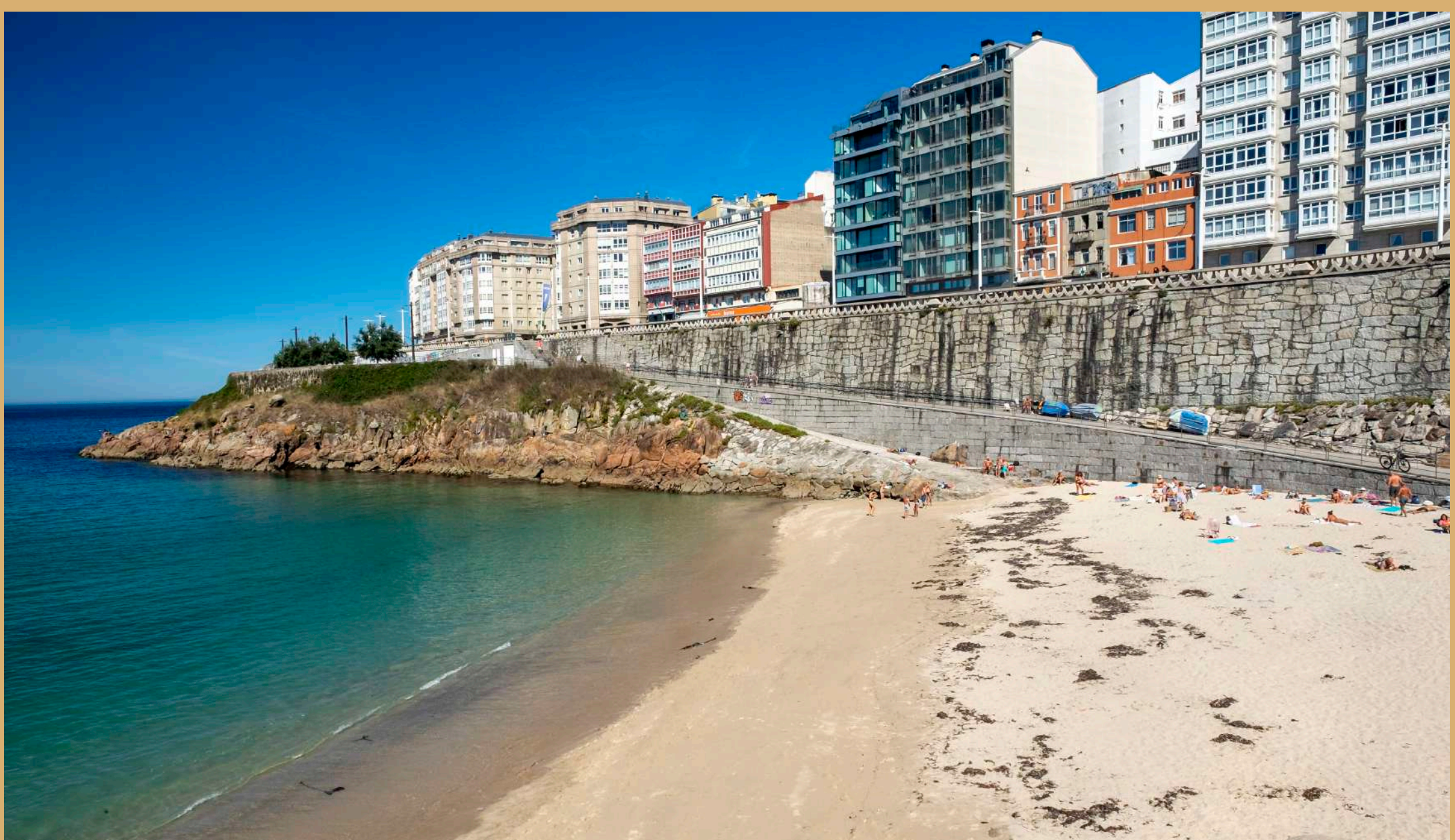
It is advisable to confirm the depth of the water before bathing and avoid diving headfirst into shallow areas to prevent any possible accidents.



# 3 Matadero

## DESCRIPTION AND FEATURES

Matadero Beach is a central and busy beach in A Coruña, with high occupancy due to its environment, which protects it during the days of the most intense breeze. It is a beach with light wind and very moderate waves, which makes it suitable for surfing. The beach features coarse sand and is a popular choice among locals and visitors to the city.





## SERVICES

- Blue Flag
- Car park
- Lifeguards
- Showers
- Toilets
- ISO 14001 certified

## ACCESIBILITY

Matadero Beach is accessible to people with disabilities, with adapted accesses that facilitate entry and exit from the beach. It is also well connected by public transport, with bus lines 3A, and 11, having stops nearby.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is advisable to confirm the depth of the water before bathing and avoid diving headfirst into shallow areas to prevent any possible accidents.

# 4 Las Lapas

## DESCRIPTION AND FEATURES

Las Lapas Beach is located at the foot of the iconic Tower of Hercules in A Coruña. It is a moderately occupied beach, sheltered by its natural environment, which makes it a quiet place to enjoy the sea. With a width of 70 meters, it is a smaller beach compared to others in the city, but offers a cozy and sheltered atmosphere.





## SERVICES

- Blue Flag
- Car park
- Lifeguards
- Showers
- Toilets
- ISO 14001 certified

## ACCESIBILITY

Las Lapas Beach is accessible and well connected by public transport, with bus lines 3A and 5, having stops nearby.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is advisable to confirm the depth of the water before bathing and avoid diving headfirst into shallow areas to prevent any possible accidents.



# 5 San Amaro

## DESCRIPTION AND FEATURES

San Amaro Beach is an open and very busy urban beach in A Coruña. Its waters are calm and cold, with moderate waves. The sand is white and fine, which makes it a pleasant place to enjoy the sun and the sea. This beach is popular with locals and visitors due to its location and easy access.





## SERVICES

- Blue Flag
- Car park
- Lifeguards
- Showers
- Toilets
- ISO 14001 certified

## ACCESIBILITY

San Amaro Beach is accessible to people with disabilities, with adapted accesses that facilitate entry and exit from the beach. It is also well connected by public transport, with bus lines 3A, 3 and 5, having stops nearby.

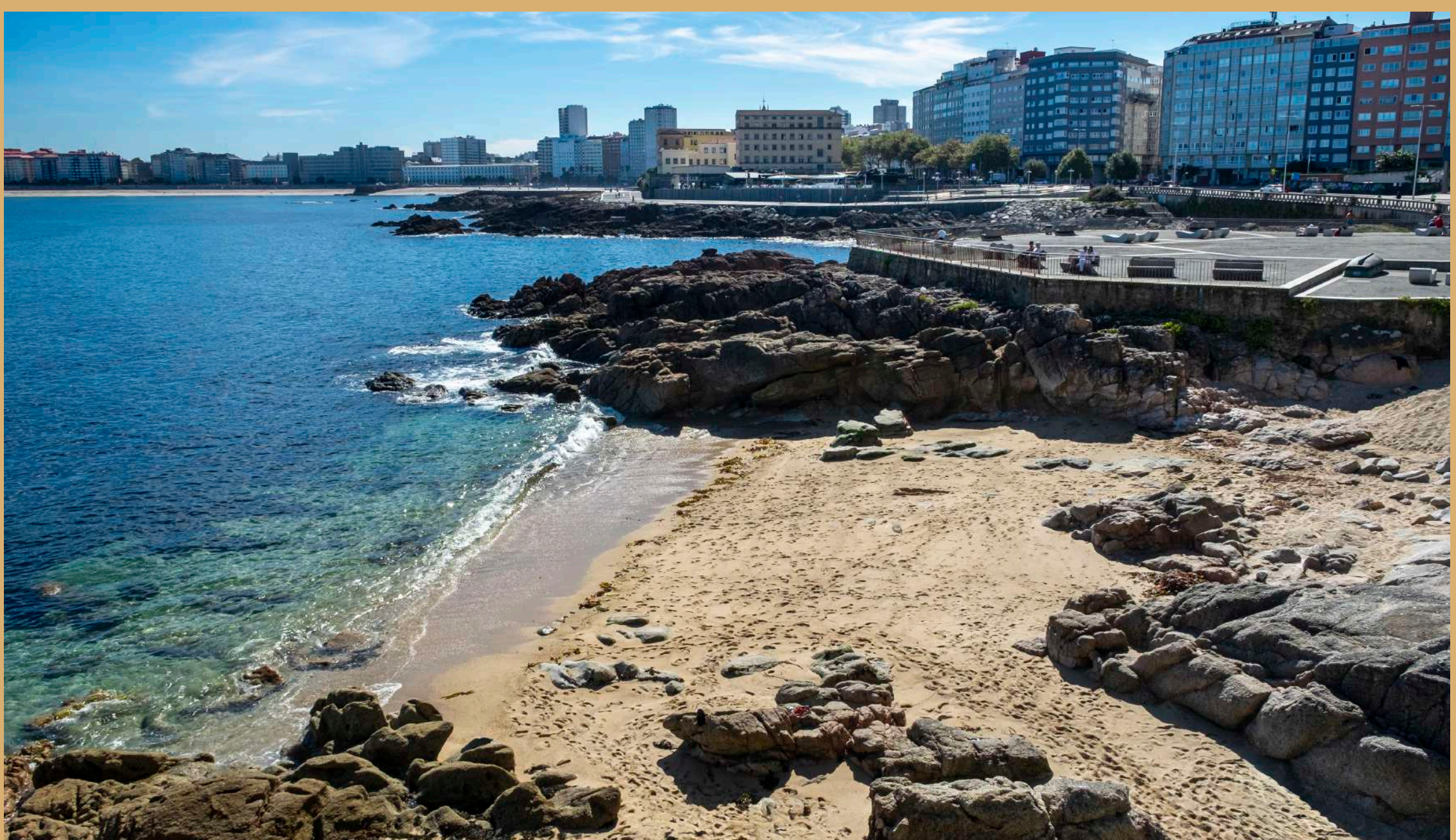
## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is advisable to confirm the depth of the water before bathing and avoid diving headfirst into shallow areas to prevent any possible accidents.

# 6 San Roque

## DESCRIPTION AND FEATURES

San Roque Beach is a medium-sized urban sandy area in A Coruña. It is a sheltered beach with moderate waves, ideal for those looking for a quieter place compared to other beaches in the city. The sand is coarse and the beach has a rocky bottom.





## ACCESIBILITY

San Roque Beach is accessible by public transport, with bus lines 3A, 3 and 7, having stops nearby.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important to check the depth of the water before bathing and avoid diving headfirst into shallow areas to prevent accidents. Special care must be taken due to the rocky bottom of the beach, especially at high tide.

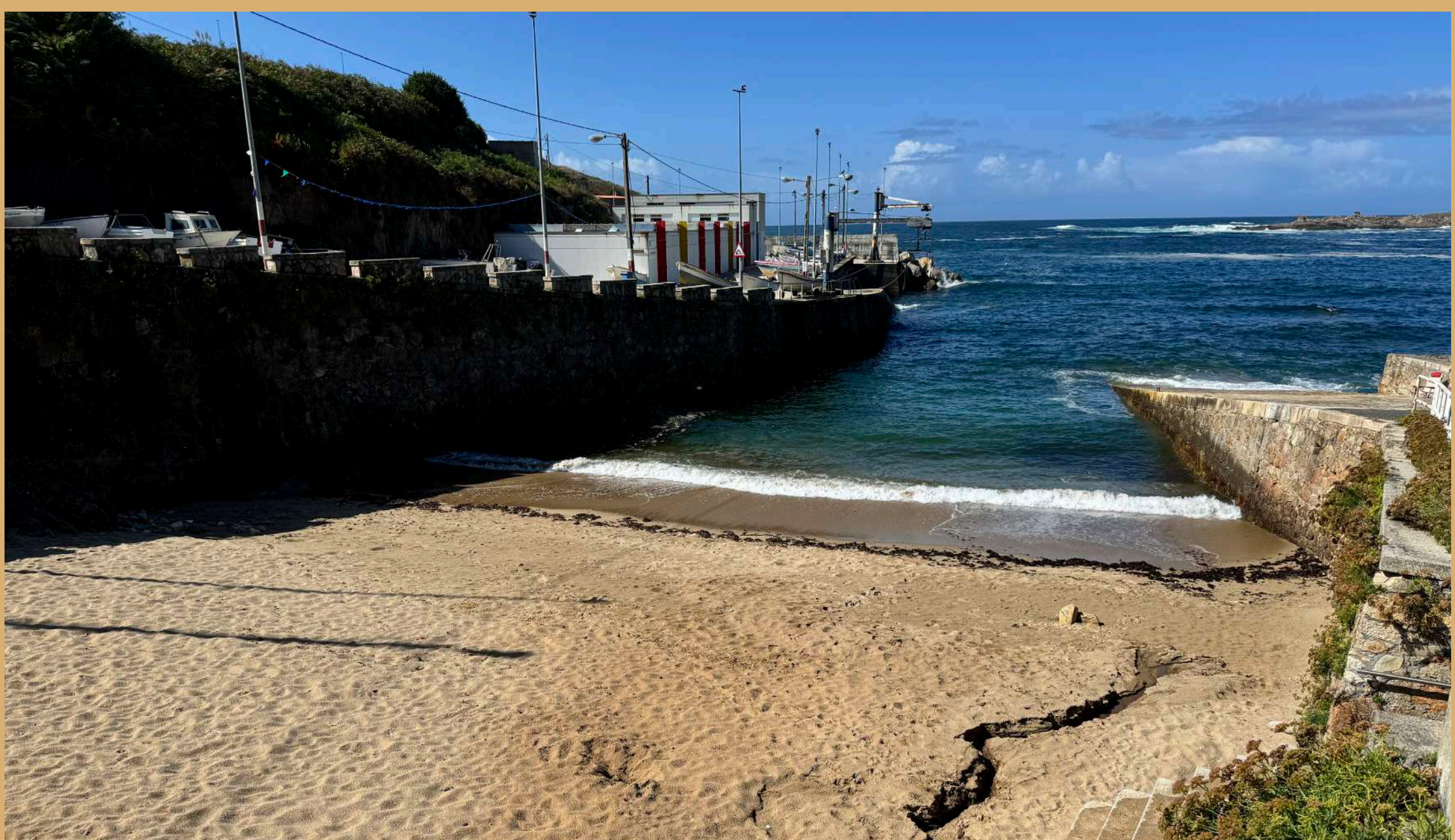




# 7 Portiño

## DESCRIPTION AND FEATURES

O Portiño is a small semi-urban beach in A Coruña, with an extension of 20 meters long and 47 meters wide. The beach has a type of soil combined with rock and golden sand, with moderate waves. Its occupancy rate is low, making it a quiet place for those looking for a more relaxed experience.





## ACCESIBILITY

O Portiño is accessible by public transport, with bus lines 3 and 3A, having stops nearby.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

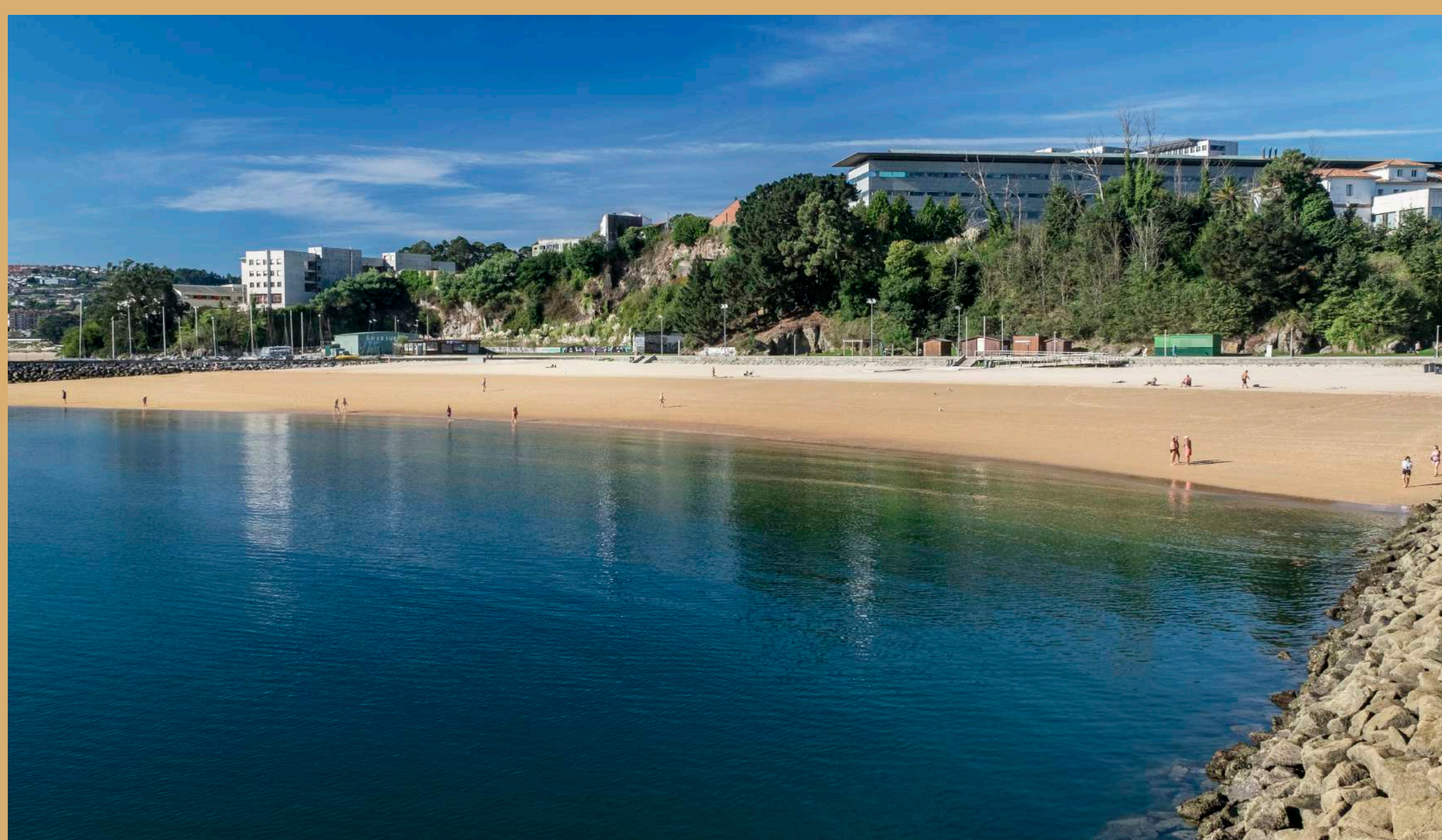
It is advisable to confirm the depth of the water before bathing and avoid diving headfirst into shallow areas to prevent any possible accidents.



# 8 Oza

## DESCRIPTION AND FEATURES

Oza Beach is an urban beach in A Coruña, located in an area sheltered from the wind and waves, which makes it a quiet and safe place for swimming. The sand is white and fine, offering a pleasant environment to enjoy the sun and the sea.





## SERVICES

- Blue Flag
- Car park
- Lifeguards
- Showers
- Toilets
- ISO 14001 certified
- Rental of nautical equipment

## ACCESIBILITY

Oza Beach is accessible to people with disabilities, with adapted accesses that facilitate entry and exit from the beach. It is also well connected by public transport, with bus lines 2A, 12 ,12A, 17 and 22, having stops nearby.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is advisable to confirm the depth of the water before bathing and avoid diving headfirst into shallow areas to prevent any possible accidents.

# 9 Adormideras

## DESCRIPTION AND FEATURES

Adormideras Beach is a small urban sandy area in A Coruña, not very crowded and sheltered, which makes it a quiet place to enjoy the sea. Its waters are very clean, with moderate waves and light wind. The sand is fine, providing a pleasant and safe environment.





## ACCESIBILITY

Adormideras Beach is accessible by public transport, with bus lines 3A, 3 and 5, having stops nearby.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

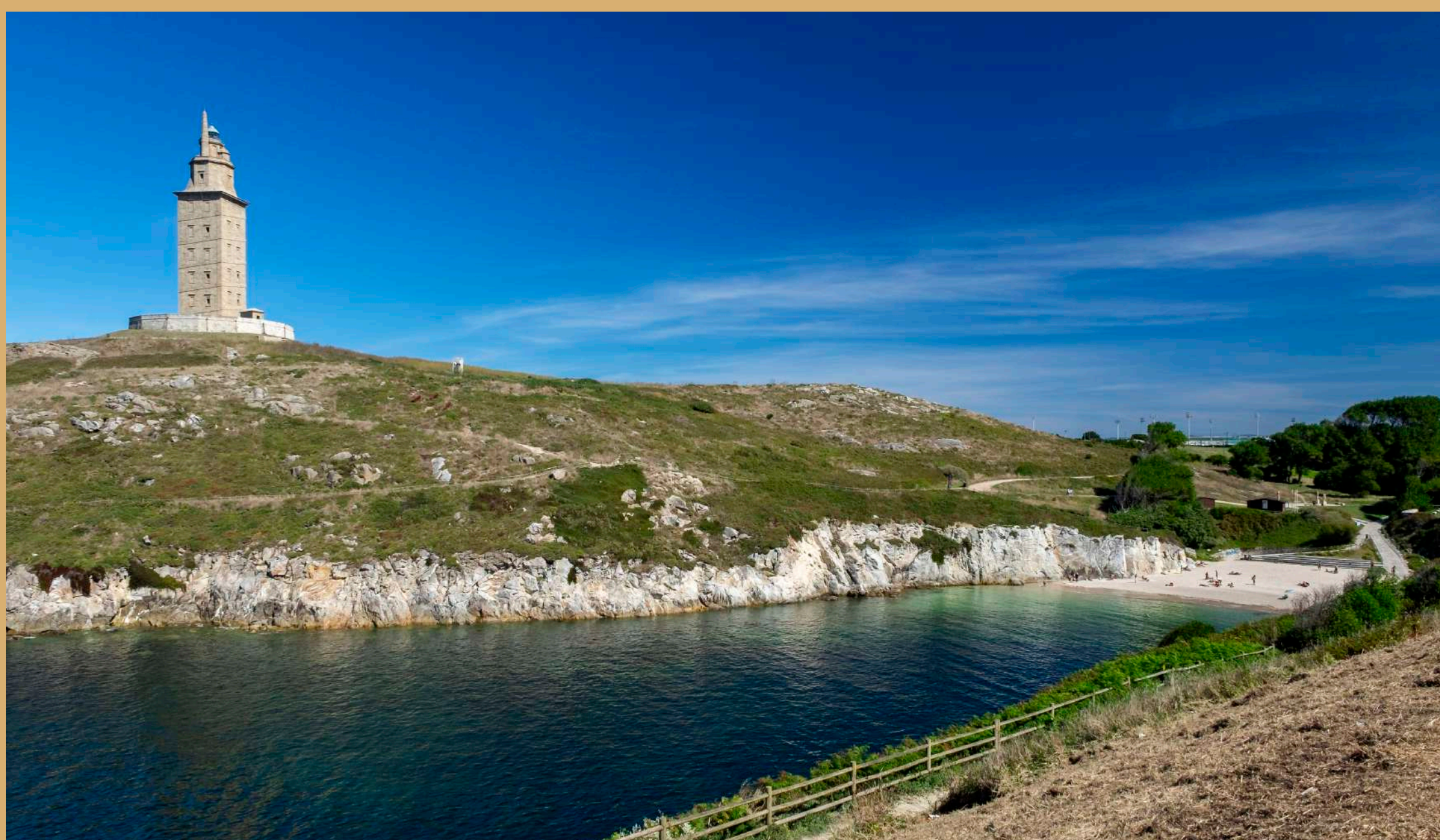
It is advisable to confirm the depth of the water before bathing and avoid diving headfirst into shallow areas to prevent accidents.

# 4.3

## Protect your beach

To protect the coastline, it is essential to follow environmentally friendly practices. Not leaving garbage or waste in the sand or water and using recycling containers are key steps. It is crucial not to collect marine flora and fauna and to respect wildlife protection areas, especially during nesting.

Animals are not allowed to enter the beaches of A Coruña from June to September.





# 5

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# EXPLORE THE COAST OF A CORUÑA

GUIDE FRAMED IN THE CREATION AND PRODUCTION PROJECT OF TWO DIGITAL GUIDES AIMED AT THE DISCLOSURE AND PRODUCTION OF THE NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF THE MUNICIPAL COAST OF LA CORUÑA, SUBSIDIZED BY THE XUNTA DE GALICIA WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE RECOVERY, TRANSFORMATION AND RESILIENCE PLAN, FINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION-NEXTGENERATIONEU.