



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 winter

The surroundings of the Tower of Hercules become more serene, with flora adapted to cold and windy conditions. The seabirds that reside all year round become more visible on the cliffs.

It is a time of reflection and calm in the natural environment. The sea, although cold, is still home to rich marine life, visible to attentive observers. Migratory birds pass through the area, offering a fascinating spectacle.



Donicela

Mustela nivalis

ESP: Comadreja | ENG: Weasel | POR: Doninha

One of the carnivorous mammals existing in the surroundings of the Tower of Hercules. Its presence is frequent throughout Europe. The coloration of its coat is reddish brown, with a white belly. Its body is small, elongated and very flexible. Its diet focuses on small rodents, although it also hunts other vertebrates, or even carrion.

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Pica dos prados

Anthus pratensis

ESP: Bisbita pratense | ENG: Meadow pipit | POR: Petinha-dos-prados

Bird with undistinctive and striking characters, like other species of pipits, as they are commonly called. The coloration of its plumage is greenish-brown and the belly is white, with many dark striations. It is almost always observed on the ground and in groups, blending in with the environment. It is a wintering species, that is, it spends the winter season in this area.

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Gaivota chorona

Chroicocephalus ridibundus

ESP: Gaviota reidora | ENG: Black-headed gull | POR: Guincho-comum

During the reproductive period it has a completely dark head, while the rest of the year it shows a spot behind the ear, a characteristic coloration that occurs in both males and females. Its vernacular name is due to its distinctive song.

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Corvo mariño grande

Phalacrocorax carbo

ESP: Cormorán grande | ENG: Great cormorant | POR: Corvo-marinho-de-faces-brancas

It is one of the only two species of cormorants present in Spain and its waters. It is a wintering species, with black coloration and whitish features in the throat area. It is an eminently fishing bird, which spends long periods of time on rocks or vegetation with its wings open to dry its plumage.

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Ourizo cacho

Erinaceus europaeus

ESP: Erizo europeo | ENG: Western hedgehog | POR: Ouriço cacheiro

It is present in countryside, forests and even semi-urban gardens. It is a predominantly nocturnal and solitary mammal. Its spiked body allows it to defend itself against predators, curling into a ball when threatened.

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Toxo

Ulex europaeus

ESP: Tojo | ENG: Gorse | POR: Tojo-arnal

This plant is capable of colonizing poor soils. Despite being a native species of the northwest of the peninsula, it is invasive in other places such as the Canary Islands or the American continent. It has a showy yellow flower, called «chorima», which appears between the months of December and June.





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



GOBIERNO
DE ESPAÑA

MINISTERIO
DE INDUSTRIA
Y TURISMO



Plan de Recuperación,
Transformación
y Resiliencia



2.1

Natural Area of Local Interest (ENIL)

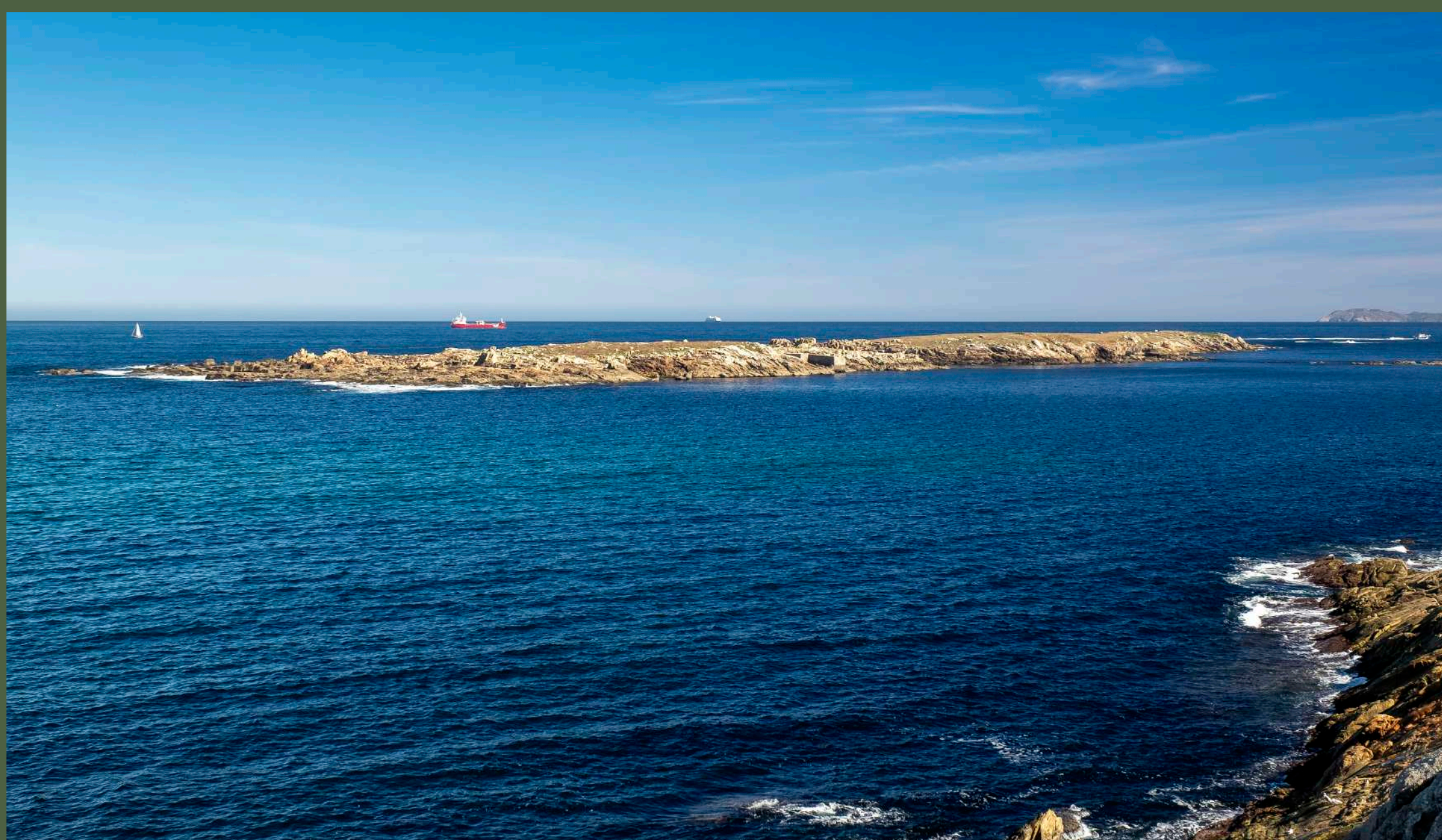
The San Pedro Islands are located on the western limit of the Council of A Coruña. This small archipelago, provisionally declared as a Natural Area of Local Interest (ENIL) by the Xunta de Galicia in 2017, consists of three main islands (As Tres Illas, O Pé and Vendaval) and several shallows, such as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



Corvo mariño cristado

Phalacrocorax aristotelis

ESP: Cormorán moñudo | ENG: European shag | POR: Corvo-marinho-de-crista

It is a species of seabird that nests on the islands. Their presence is significant due to their reproductive habits and their role in the ecosystem. Its vernacular name refers to the plume of feathers that both males and females exhibit on their heads during mating season. It should not be confused with the large cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*), which is a larger and less slender species.

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Gabita común

Haematopus ostralegus

ESP: Ostrero euroasiático | ENG: Eurasian oystercatcher | POR: Ostraceiro

It is a wading bird that migrates to our coasts in winter, but does not nest frequently in Galicia. It has a very characteristic beak, reddish in color and large, which it uses to break or leverage the shells of the crustaceans and molluscs on which it feeds.



Mourelo común

Melanitta nigra

ESP: Negrón común | ENG: Common scoter | POR: Pato-preto

It is a migratory duck, which moves to our coasts in winter. In this species we can observe sexual dimorphism, that is, different characters between males and females. While the former are brown, the males are completely black, except for a small yellow portion of the beak.

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Mascato común

Morus bassanus

ESP: Alcatraz atlántico | ENG: Northern gannet | POR: Ganso-patola

A seabird of great wingspan, one of the largest that can be observed on our coasts. Males are slightly larger than females. Its coloration is generally white, with the tip of its wings black. Its head has a yellow hue and its beak is grayish.



Virapedras común

Arenaria interpres

ESP: Vuelvepedras común | ENG: Ruddy turnstone | POR: Rola-do-mar

Like other waders, it migrates in winter to the Galician coasts, coming from northern Europe. It owes its common name to its particular ability to turn stones with the help of its beak in search of food.

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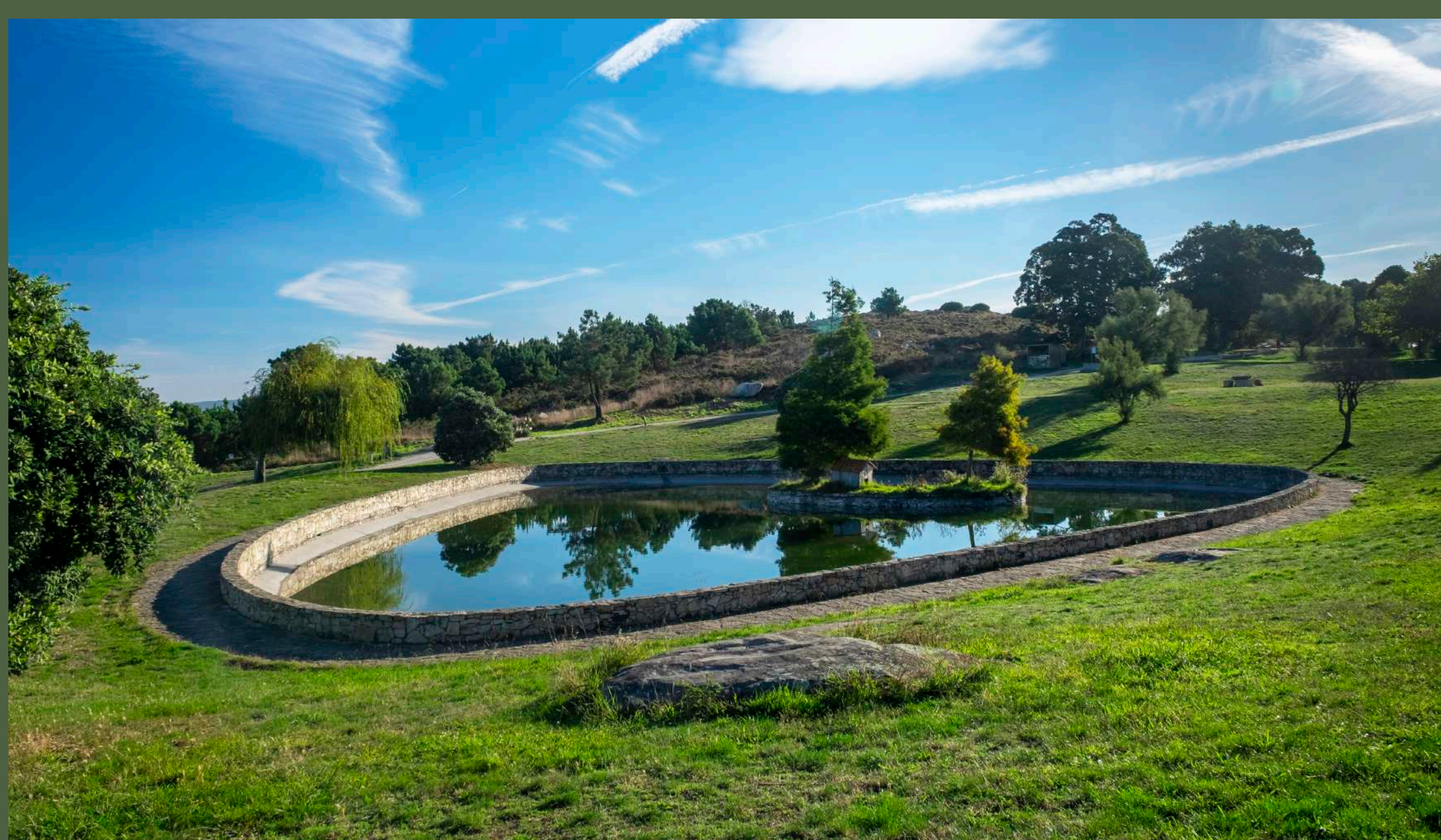
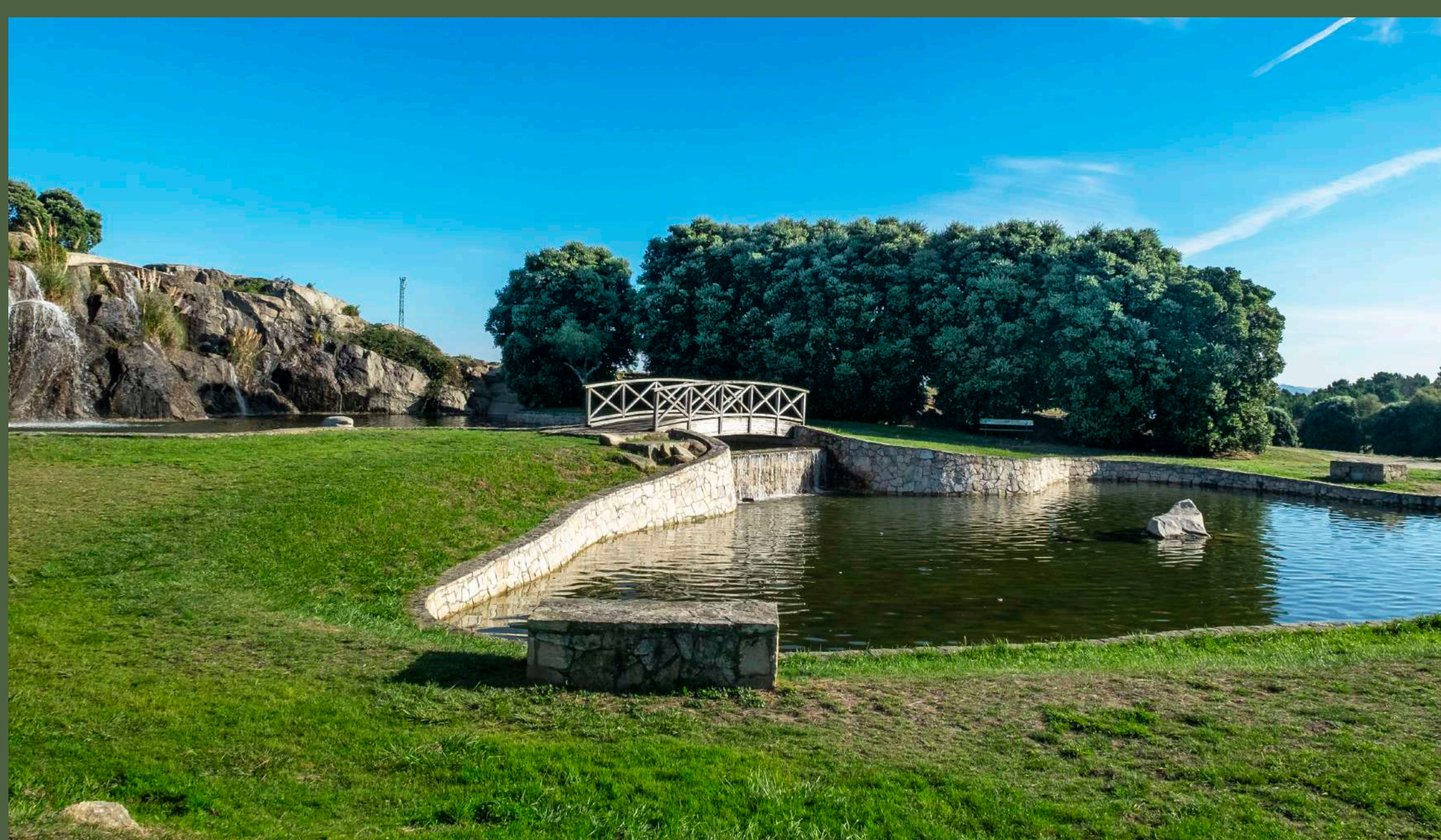
2.3

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



XUNTA DE GALICIA



Financiado por la Unión Europea



GOBIERNO DE ESPAÑA

MINISTERIO DE INDUSTRIA Y TURISMO



Plan de Recuperación, Transformación y Resiliencia



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.

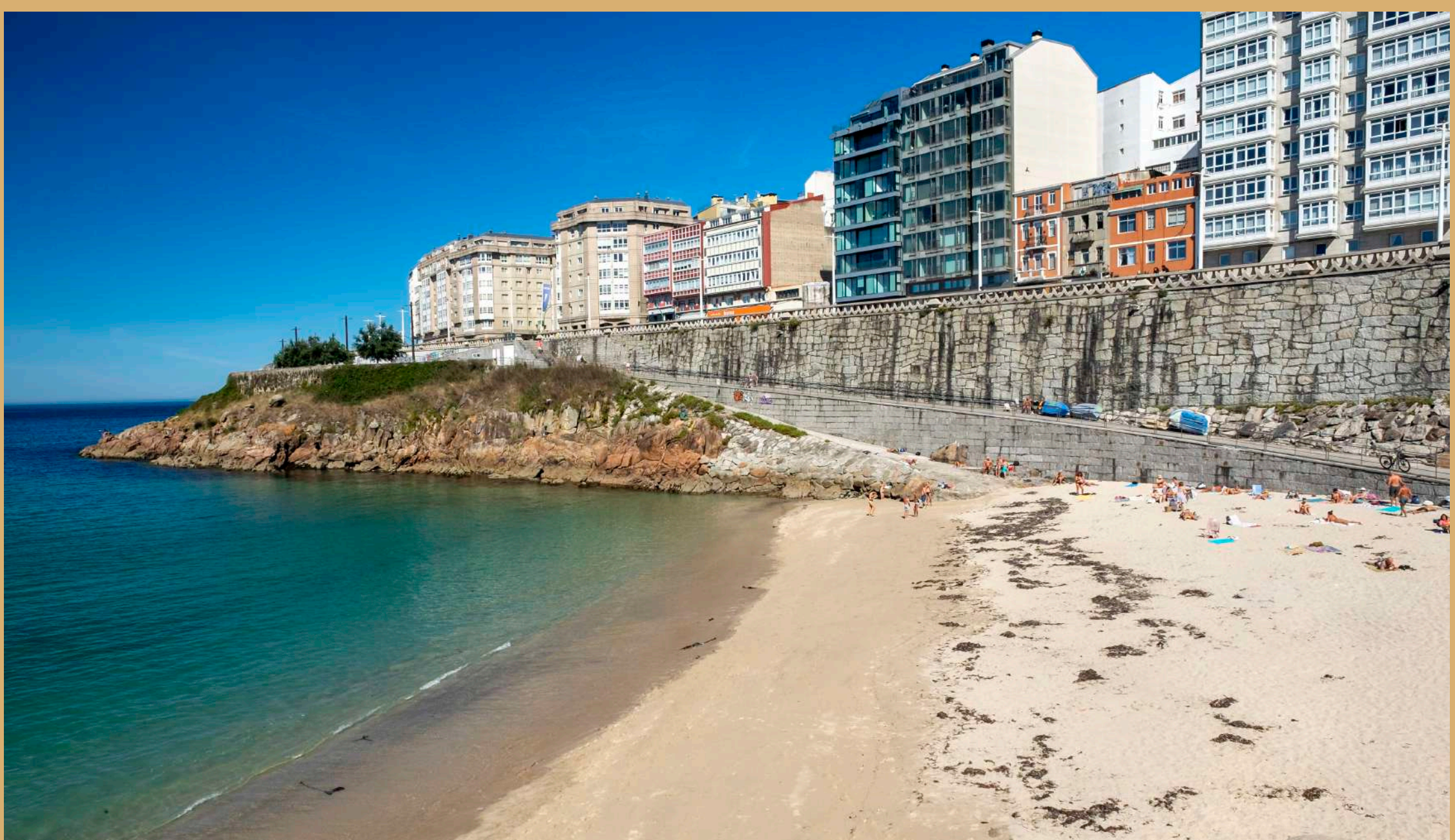
RECOMMENDATIONS

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

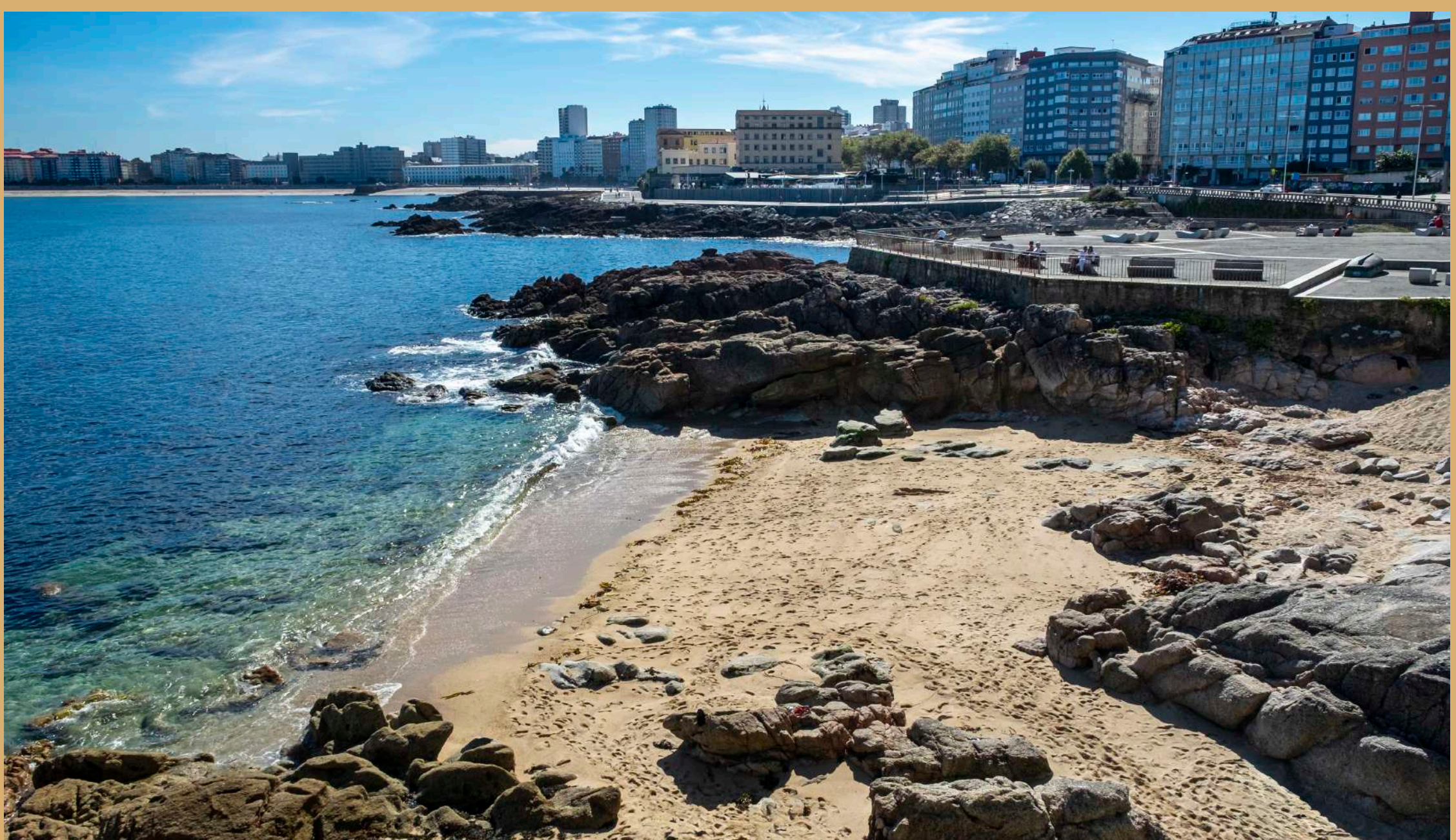
It is advisable to confirm the depth of the water before bathing and avoid diving headfirst into shallow areas to prevent any possible accidents.



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

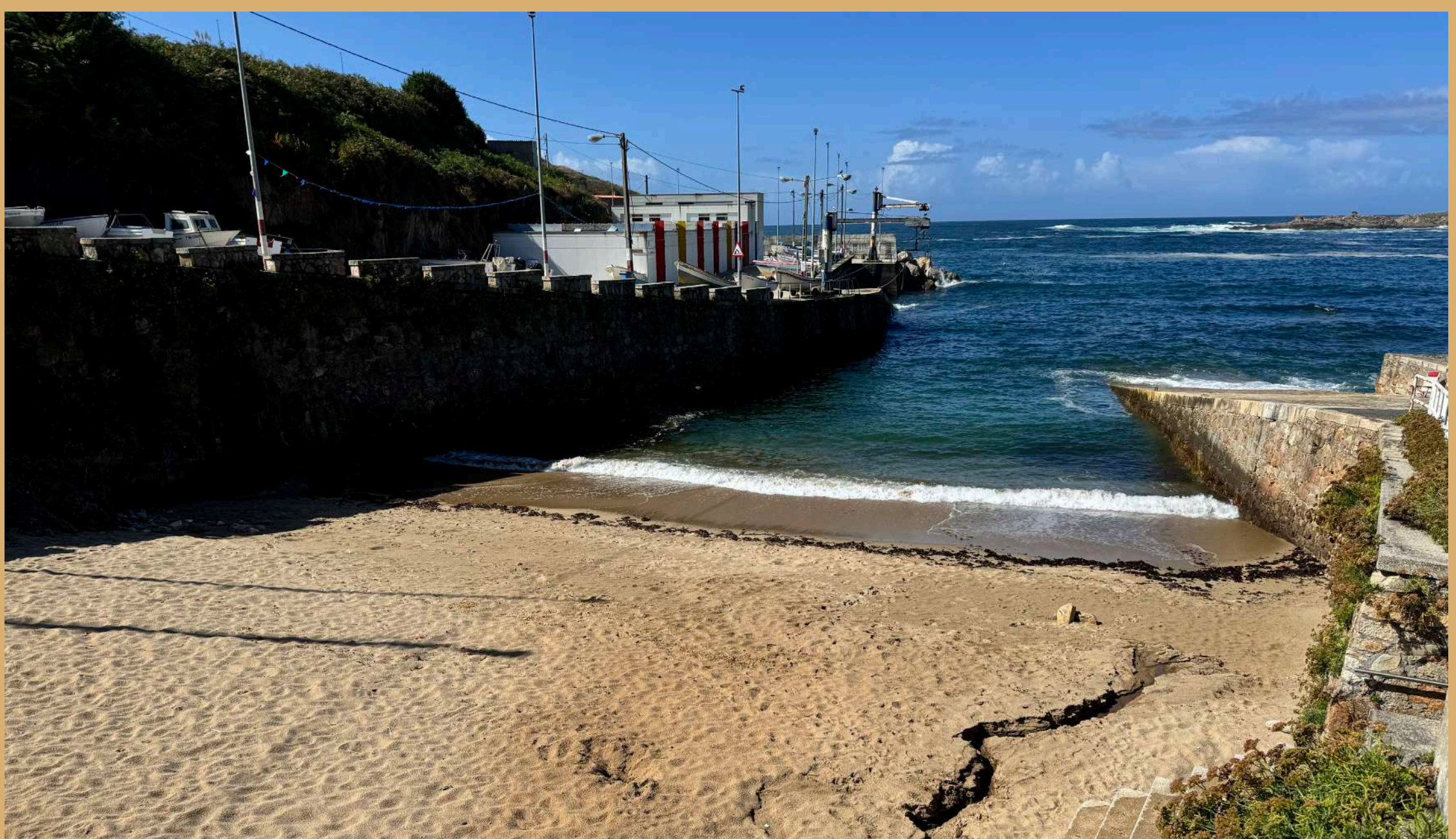
It is important to check the depth of the water before bathing and avoid diving headfirst into shallow areas to prevent accidents. Special care must be taken due to the rocky bottom of the beach, especially at high tide.



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

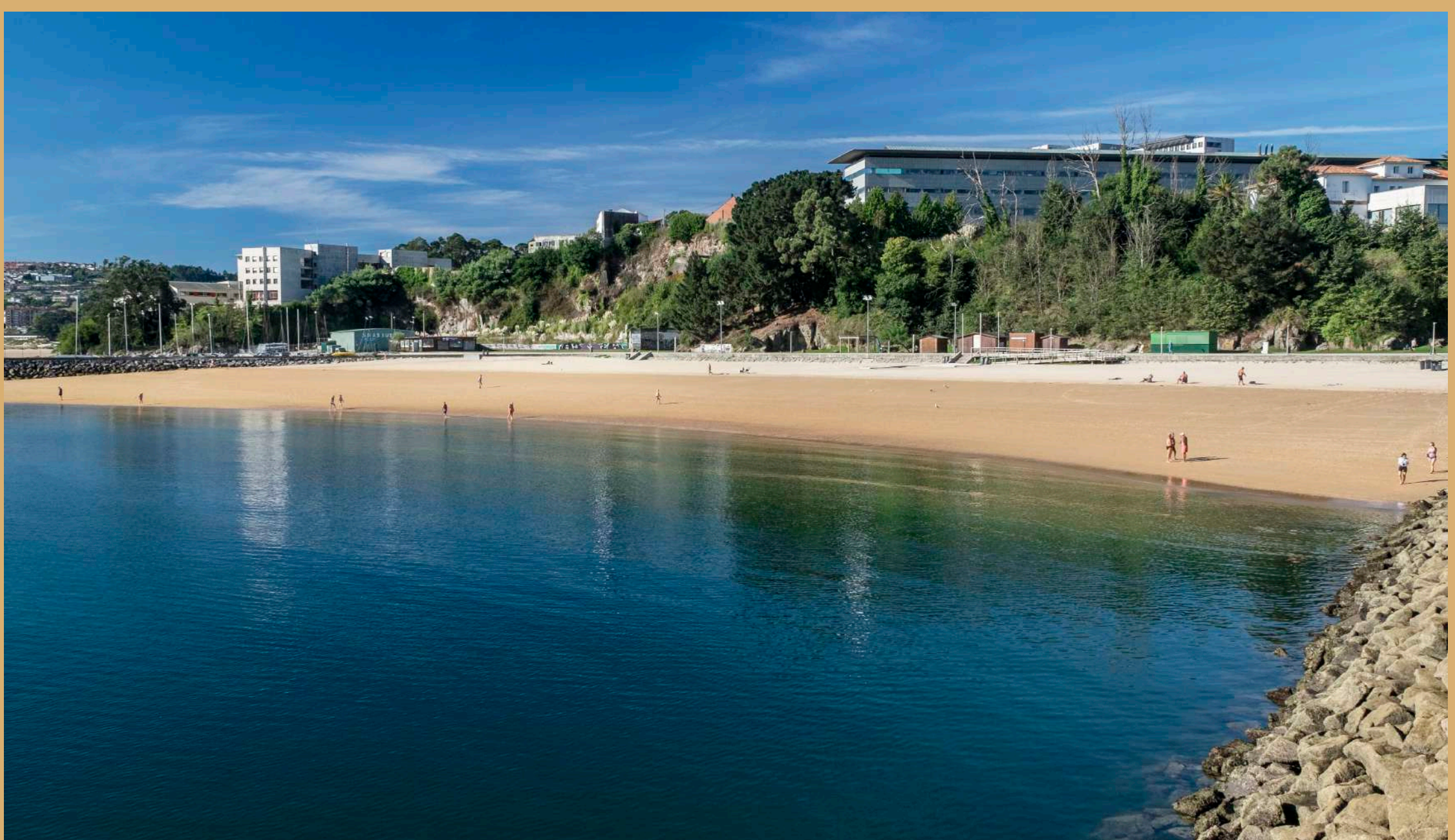
It is advisable to confirm the depth of the water before bathing and avoid diving headfirst into shallow areas to prevent any possible accidents.



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.