

Ewa Chmielewska

ProDunas Marbella project

DAY 1

In the first day we were collecting Sabina Berries. In some of the most important dunes there are few examples of medium sized juniper bushes whose presence have been strengthened by repopulation in recent times, helping to reintroduce them to areas from where they had been eliminated years ago.

Sabina(*Juniperus phoenicea turbinata*) is a protected species in Andalusia. Its leaves are scale-shaped, overlapping one another thus differentiating arranged in rows of four.

Harvesting the berries depends on the dune environment; as they do not all ripen at the same time. The technique is: slide your hand along the branch, from inside the bush outwards, taking the berries with you



Then we went for a walk along the coast. While walking, we found shells in the sand. The volunteer of the organization talked about the history of the dunes in Marbella, as well as about the plants that grow in this environment. We saw species such as sea urchin, algae, corals, shark's, ray's and squid's eggs and many, many more.







Day 2

In the second day of practice, we had a videocall with one of the volunteers – Maria. Maria talked a little bit about what is and what parts make up the dune ecosystem. Then we talked about Marbella's dunes and what animals and plants live in the dunes. She told us what is "ProDunas" and how we can help them.

Day 3

In the third day we have a little conversation with representative of the municipal office of the city of Marbella. He told us about what they do to teach kids and adults about protecting the environment, he told us about history of dunes and how much they got destroyed. He told us about flora and fauna on the dunes. Then we changed the topic and started talking about mountains surrounding Marbella. We get know about animals that living on Marbella's mountains. After small

talk we went to work. Today's work was get rid of a regrowth of High Ice Plant - plant invasive alien species. We helped to protect native flora that will sprout once the invasive plants are grubbed out.





DAY 4

On the 4th day we were getting rid of all unwelcome garbage on the dune – Natural Monument “Dunes of Artola”. There was 58 participants and together we collected 150 kg of garbage. The dunes have interesting vegetation, adapted to withstand the strong sunlight, scarcity of water and continuous buffeting of the wind. The most common species to be found here are Marram grass and sea holly, while close to the beach you can often see the perfumed sea daffodil. Further away from the coast, shrubs such as "turbinate" juniper are common.



DAY 5

On the last day in the dunes, we cleaned the area where the members of the organization eliminated the invasive species of plant. The international Union for Conservation of Nature considers this Giant Reed as one of the 100 most dangerous plant species in terms of its invasiveness and how it alerts the habitats it colonises. We raided the dried remnants and helped to get the larger parts of the plant out into the container. After hard work, we were very kindly said by the members and founders of the organization.



Summary

Thank you very much to all the people who made this adventure even more amazing. I learned a lot or saw a lot of new things. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to help with such an important project as the protection of the dunes in Marbella. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to help with such an important project as the protection of the dunes in Marbella. It was very nice to meet you all and hope to see you soon guys.

With Best wishes,

Chmielewska Ewa

