

# Tribute Newsletter

*Honorary President*

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*FERNANDO PIQUER VILLARROEL*

*1934-2022*





# Brief summary of his life up to his arrival in Marbella

Fernando was born in Valencia in 1934. To improve his life and that of his family, he moved to Marseille when he was 18 and signed up on the great ships that sailed from there to the seven seas. He raised a family of three children in Barcelona and created a transport and logistics company with more than 150 employees.

But sailing was his great passion – so when he could, after a long working life, together with Susana, his wife, he bought a sailboat.

They enjoyed sailing the Mediterranean, until they got the yearning to circumnavigate the globe together. However, when they got as far as Hierro in the Canary Islands, the jumping off ground for the trip, his heart began to give trouble so they had to cancel their dream. They landed on the Costa del Sol in 1993. The welcoming people of this town, the climate and the beauty of its natural environment captivated them in such a way that they never wanted to leave.





# ProDunas Marbella... The beginnings...

Susana and Fernando arrived in Marbella at the end of the last lashes of urban abuse and they realized that there was still some virgin nature surviving. It was, however, in danger of disappearing under the bricks of an urban project that was planned to cover half a kilometre in Bahía de Marbella. Motivated by a desire to preserve the area, in 2004 a group of residents felt the need to fight against a Beach Club being built in the “La Adelfa” dunes in Bahía de Marbella, a project that would have destroyed 1km of dune system. Their impetus served to set in motion what became a "non-profit" association and to be a link between the people of the town and the various State, regional and local administrations. This Association aimed at preserving, protecting and restoring the last dunes in Marbella, which in the past had formed an unbroken dune system from Cabopino to Río Real.

From the very first day the Association, with Fernando at the helm as President, has acted on the following maxim:

*The recovery and safeguarding of all dune systems means a strengthening of the "Natural Values of Andalusia" and it enriches the Natural Heritage of Marbella.*



Año 2004



Año 2004



Año 2004



# What he achieved....are successes and benefits for everyone in Marbella.

During his mandate, from the very beginning and for almost 20 years now, the Association has altruistically shown its wish and ability to work tirelessly on various fronts, in seven fundamental aspects. This has been based on hard work and sacrifice maintained doggedly over time:

- We work to conserve the native flora in all rehabilitated dune areas.
- We organize days of eradication of the foreign invasive species (FIS), and by cleaning up and/or reforestation in the dune environments.
- We support environmental education with our “Dune Sponsorship by Schoolchildren” programs.
- We promote initiatives for volunteering and participating by members of the public.
- We organise Ecotourism sessions, highlighting the enormous biodiversity that exists between El Pinillo and Cabopino.
- We nurture the contacts between the different organisms, technicians and politicians who have responsibilities and competences for the Andalusian coast, and with Universities both in Spain and in many foreign countries.
- We annually prepare statistics that attest to the work which has been carried out.
- We make sure that the media is supplied with information that keeps them up to date with our efforts to promote the need to preserve the ecosystems in dune and marine environments.





# Fernando, a tireless fighter in the effort to get dialogues going




Since its origins the collaboration and close dialogue between the ProDunas Marbella Association, Marbella Town Hall (through its Environment Delegation), the State Administration (via the Andalusia-Mediterranean Coast Demarcation), the Andalusian Government (through the Territorial Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and the Environment and Territory Planning) is a well-known example of good practice of the modern policy of Integral Management of Coastal Zones, promoted by the European Union and which the Junta de Andalusia is making huge efforts to implement.



# Awards and honours



On several occasions in its 20 year life, the Association has been awarded various awards for its altruistic work:

 -In 2008: Ministry of the Environment - Junta de Andalucía awarded the ProDunas Association a Plaque of Recognition of its altruistic contribution to the conservation of the Andalusian coast on the 10th Anniversary of the Network of Environmental Volunteers of the Andalusian coast.

 -2012: XVII Environment Award in the category of "Natural Values of Andalusia" awarded by the Ministry of the Environment - Junta de Andalucía.

 -2015: Provincial Council for the Environment and Biodiversity, Malaga: Member and spokesperson.

 -2017: Mariner Award by the Marbella Pleasure Harbour, 2nd Edition.





# There are many projects that he managed to bring to fruition. Here are some of them:



- Project: Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reforestation of the Torre Real dune (Río Real).
- Project: Harvesting of seeds and berries of native flora and shrubs in the dune environments of Marbella ProDunas, Fundatul and Asociación Valores de San Pedro Alcántara joined up to encourang disabled people to volunteer.
- Project: Protection and surveillance of a loggerhead sea turtles nest (*Caretta caretta*) on Cabopino beach (Marbella).
- Presentation of the Marbella Dunes-Visitor's Guide, showing the natural wealth that exists in the Ecological Reserve.
- Leading sponsor for the Declaration as a Reserve of the 9 stretches of the dune system.
- Project: Re-introduction and protection of the Common Chameleon in the MN "Dunas de Artola"
- Project: Recovery, rehabilitation and reforestation of the dunes in the Right of Way and the Terrestrial Maritime Public Domain (DPMT) in the dune environment of Real de Zaragoza (45,000m<sup>2</sup>)
- Dune maintenance – work to remove stubs of invasive exotic species in dune areas – in collaboration with Marbella Town Hall
- Dune sponsorship by schoolchildren. Environmental education programs of the dune ecosystems in the Ecological Reserve-Dunas of Marbella and in the MN “Dunas de Artola”.



# ....and many that he had got started or in development that he had to leave unfinished. We will take up the baton.

- Project: Recover the Calahonda dune environment for the people of the area and rehabilitate the embryonic dune in the DPMT.
- Mirador Project: A Bird and Marine Fauna Observatory overlooking the Alborán Sea.
- Project: Monitoring and Study of seagrass meadows in the coastal waters between Fuengirola and Manilva – their restoration and conservation.
- Project: recovery and rehabilitation of the mobile embryonic dune "El Pinillo".
- The Torre Lance de las Cañas Project: Enhancement and Protection of the Historical-Cultural Heritage of Marbella.
- Nature Lecture theatre Project: Centre for Research, Teaching and Study of nature, its dune and marine flora and fauna, with interactive presentations by students at the Centre.
- Pioneer project: Implementation of multifunction artificial reefs off the coast to the east of Marbella that has dune systems.









Fernando set an example of how the President of a non-profit Association should behave - with humility, strong will and being prepared for the hard slog. This ensured that by 2015, 9 dune environments were nominated officially as the Ecological Reserve-Dunas of Marbella. He took this title as an honour for him and it made him redouble his work as a major defender of respect for the Institutions. He supported everyone who sought out more dune environments to be recovered and rehabilitated. Fernando had a clear picture of what he wanted to do. He wanted - and we are sure that he wants, wherever he is - that his legacy be kept alive by future generations. For the entire ProDunas team, co-workers, partners, volunteers and supporters, it has been an honour to have learned from you, and we are proud to have been able to accompany you for so many years of the hard struggling against those who put obstacles and difficulties in our way.

We are sure that your pacifist spirit will continue to be a maxim at ProDunas.

Thank you, Fernando.







**Fernando Piquer**

Presidente "Asociación ProDunas Marbella"

ProDunas Marbella will continue to follow your vision and values to protect the environment, and to give future generations the possibility of appreciating these ecosystems, these healthy beaches and wonderful coastline.



*ProDunas Marbella*