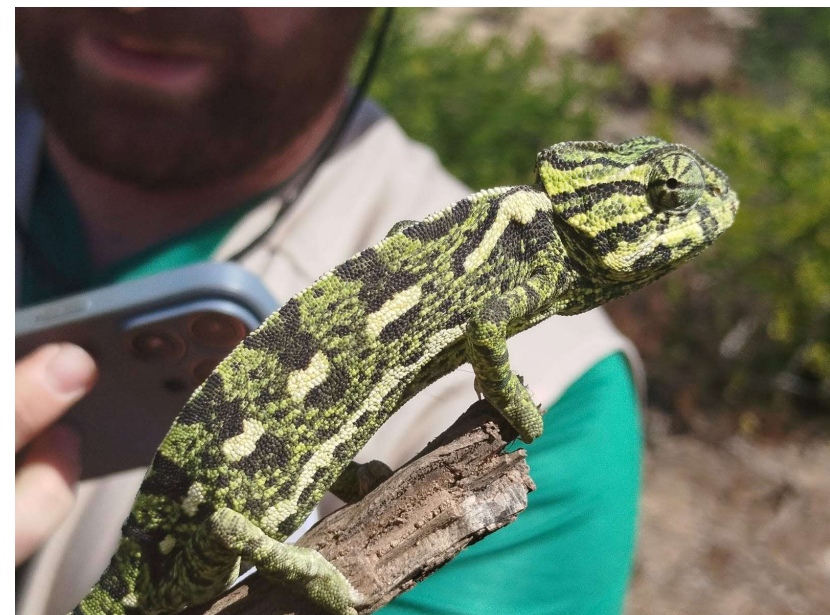


Marbella, July 2026

NEWSLETTER



A surprise on the shore! We discovered “mermaid’s purses” on our latest school trip

Who said the beach only has sand and shells? The pupils who took part in our latest workshop became real marine scientists when they found these treasures: **egg cases from sharks and rays, both of which belong to the elasmobranch group!** Although they are popularly known as “**mermaid’s purses**” because of their unusual shape, technically they are structures made of keratin—just like our fingernails—which protect the embryo while it develops in the sea.

They are true examples of natural engineering: ray egg cases have horn-shaped extensions that help them attach to the sandy seabed, while those of the small-spotted catshark develop long, coiled tendrils that become entangled in marine vegetation and help them withstand the waves.

What did we learn today?

Ray egg cases: They have four “horns” or extensions at the corners, which help them anchor themselves to the seabed so they are not carried away by the current.

Shark egg cases—usually from the small-spotted catshark (*Scyliorhinus canicula*): They have longer, more tightly coiled tendrils, ideal for attaching themselves to seaweed.

The egg cases shown in the photographs are already empty, but their presence along our coastline is a wonderful sign of the biodiversity found in our sea. Finding these hatched egg cases is an important indicator of the health of our ecosystem. Their presence confirms that our coastal waters contain active breeding and nursery areas, reflecting the rich marine biodiversity that we must learn about and protect.

What an amazing day of hands-on science! The children had a fantastic time.



ATTENTION: Injured seagulls or fallen seagull chicks



This year has been particularly difficult and overwhelming. We are receiving many requests from members of the public who have found injured seagulls with broken wings or chicks that have fallen onto rooftops or private terraces.

Unfortunately, seagulls are not included on the list of **protected birds**. Therefore, our Association does not have the necessary authorisation from the Regional Government of Andalusia to collect or care for these birds. We also do not have a veterinarian or suitable facilities for their treatment and care.

For this reason, it is essential to contact the **Local Police**, who can assist people experiencing difficulties when a mother seagull aggressively defends her chicks while they are still dependent on her.

Where a residential complex or building has a caretaker or concierge, their cooperation should also be sought to move the chicks to a safer place until they are able to fly, or until the mother becomes accustomed to the presence of people who are simply trying to help the chicks survive.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

ProDunas Marbella attends the dinner celebrating the first anniversary of the Malaga Province Environment Foundation (MPEF), held at the Carmen Thyssen Museum in Málaga...

The event brought together organisations and individuals committed to protecting the environment in the province of Málaga. It provided an opportunity to highlight the joint work carried out by foundations, associations and projects involved in conserving the natural environment.

At ProDunas Marbella, we would like to thank the Malaga Province Environment Foundation for its support, whose collaboration is proving essential to the development of one of our current projects. Thanks to its grant, the Association is currently carrying out the restoration of the Las Golondrinas dune, an area of great environmental value on Marbella's coastline.

This initiative will help advance the recovery and improvement of this dune environment, strengthening the work that ProDunas Marbella has been carrying out for many years to conserve biodiversity, protect natural habitats and raise public awareness of the importance of our dunes.



An unexpected gift from nature

Nature is a gift. We know it, we often say it, and we are very aware of it. Yet there are moments when this idea becomes even more evident.

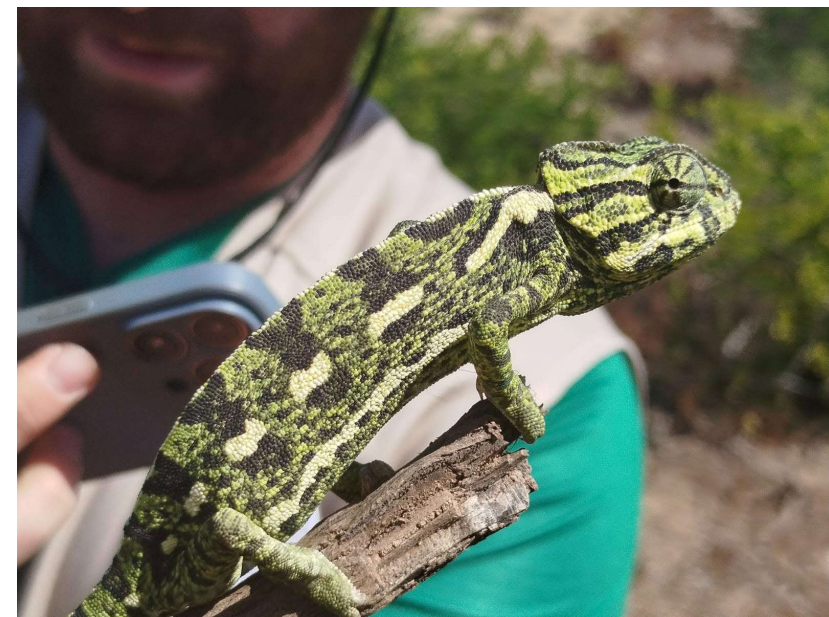
While we were explaining to the students the value of the dune system and the importance of the “Dunas de Artola” Natural Monument, a common chameleon (*Chamaeleo chamaeleon*) suddenly appeared. Right at that very moment, as though the dune itself wanted to show us, in real life, one of the small wonders it protects.

It was a wonderful sight and also a special experience for the students who were with us. Being able to observe such a discreet and unique species at close range helps us understand that dunes are not simply sand and vegetation: they are places of shelter, balance and life.

The common chameleon is a reptile closely associated with the warm areas of the Mediterranean coast. It moves slowly through the vegetation, feeds mainly on insects and has an extraordinary ability to camouflage itself. Its presence reminds us of the importance of conserving these natural spaces, respecting native flora and always walking carefully along the designated paths.

Moments like this are what give meaning to environmental education: learning by observing, listening and allowing nature to speak for itself.

Thank you to all the students for their attention, respect and curiosity throughout the activity.



VERIFY BEFORE TAKING ACTION

We are always grateful for the public's cooperation. However, people sometimes act too hastily on their own initiative, which can have disastrous—and even fatal—consequences for the animal they are trying to help.

A few days ago, we received an emergency call after a turtle had been found on the beach near Victor's Beach. We asked for photographs and some information about the turtle, including its appearance and size, so that we could make an initial assessment.

One detail immediately caught our attention: the turtle did not want to enter the sea and was trying to climb onto a small walkway leading to the promenade at Ancón Beach. This information gave us an important clue:

A sea turtle would NEVER try to walk along a wooden walkway by itself. Once we received the photographs, they confirmed that it was actually a freshwater turtle.

We activated the appropriate procedure to ensure a happy outcome for this little turtle, whose behaviour had clearly shown that it was not a sea turtle.



SEE YOU IN AUGUST

ASOCIACIÓN
ProDUNAS
MARBELLA

