

'Ran de mar', from ses Covetes to es Marquès

(Parc Natural Maritimoterrestre des Trenc-Salobrar de Campos)

Take a walk along this hiking trail by the sea and enjoy the unsurpassed beach views and the different types of coastal landscapes.

Along the way, we will discover how dunes are formed and spot the local wildlife that inhabits the nearshore ecosystems, which can be very sensitive. Feeling the bracing sea breeze and the waves in front of us, we will peek at the different marine organisms washed ashore after storms.

Route difficulty: Low
Route length: 3.866 m (one way)
Time: 2 hours

WALK BY THE SEASHORE AND RESPECT THE CORDONED OFF AREAS THAT PROTECT THE DUNES.

1. BEACH-DUNE SYSTEM

The trail begins at the S'Arenal d'en Tem beach. Park the car in the public parking lot of Sa Barralina and follow the 500 m walking path that leads to the urban center of Ses Covetes. Once there, turn left to pass through an area under restoration, where several old buildings were demolished in 2013. Soon enough, we will reach the beach and be ready to start our hike along the shoreline.

We refer to the «beach» when we mean the patch of sand where we stretch the towel out in the summertime. But from an ecological point of view, the beach cannot be taken in isolation, it must be considered a part of a beach-dune system instead.

This system can be understood as if we had three connected boxes: one box in the sea, another between sea and land, and the other one inland. Between them, there is a constant flow of sediment that changes depending on wind and wave energy. The loss of one of these three compartments makes beaches more vulnerable to erosive events such as storms. Hence the importance of the Natural Park being both terrestrial and maritime.



2. MACHINE GUN SHELTERS



After a 500 m walk, we will notice an ensemble of machine gun shelters built after the Civil War between 1940 and 1942. These defensive fortifications were known as the Tamarit Line, in reverence of General Ricardo Fernández de Tamarit, Inspector of Fortifications and Military Engineering in the Balearic Islands.

In her recent book 'Esclaus oblidats. Els camps de concentració a Mallorca' (Forgotten slaves. Concentration camps in Majorca), Maria Eugènia Jaume i Esteva estimates a total of 160 machine gun shelters were built and provides their location in different coastal areas. Along the coast of Es Trenc, we will find up to eight shelters.

They were originally built in hidden spots behind the dunes, camouflaged in the sand, but nowadays, some of them are right by the sea. They are a testament to the history and evolution of the coastline. In 2014 they were painted by a group of Boa Mistura artists at ArtNit (Catalan for The Night of the Arts) in Campos, who inscribed in the walls the words from the poem "Cala Gentil" by Miquel Costa i Llobera.

3. THE ORIGIINS OF SEDIMENTS

We mentioned earlier that the coast is a unique area consisting of three compartments: the shoreface, the beach and the dune field. These three connected environments are in a constant exchange of materials. But where does this sediment come from?

About 92% of the sand from Es Trenc is of bioclastic origin, so it comes from the remains of marine organisms. If we picked up a magnifying glass to look at the sand, we would find the remains of animals, small fragments of skeletons of crabs, crows, starfish, hedgehogs and foraminifera, tiny organisms with a calcareous shell that live on Neptune grass meadows.

Neptune grass is a seagrass species endemic to the Mediterranean Sea living on sandy beds. Because it is a deciduous plant, Posidonia sheds its leaves in late summer. These leaves, loaded with organisms, are detached from the plants and washed ashore, where they form berms or banquettes. The berms are not only a huge contribution of sand to the beach but also protect the beach against storms.

Stop off to enjoy the superb views. See some dark spots offshore? These spots are Neptune grass meadows, an "underwater forest" of about 40 hectares that span the entire length of Es Trenc-Salobrar Maritime-Terrestrial Natural Park in Campos.

