

Cap de Creus

Legal status	Nature park
Foundation year	1998
Foundation text	Regional law no. 4-98
Management body	Cap de Creus Nature Park public institution
Superficy	13824 ha
Management category (IUCN, 1994)	VI



Territory

The Cap de Creus Nature Park is part of the Cap de Creus peninsula, which constitutes the easternmost tip of the Pyrenean mountain chain and the easternmost point of the Iberian peninsula. It is entirely located in Girona province and the Catalonia region.



Cap de Creus has been a SPAMI since 2001 because of its remarkable faunistic and floristic richness and its being enclosed, and is one of the most productive in the whole Mediterranean.

Physical features

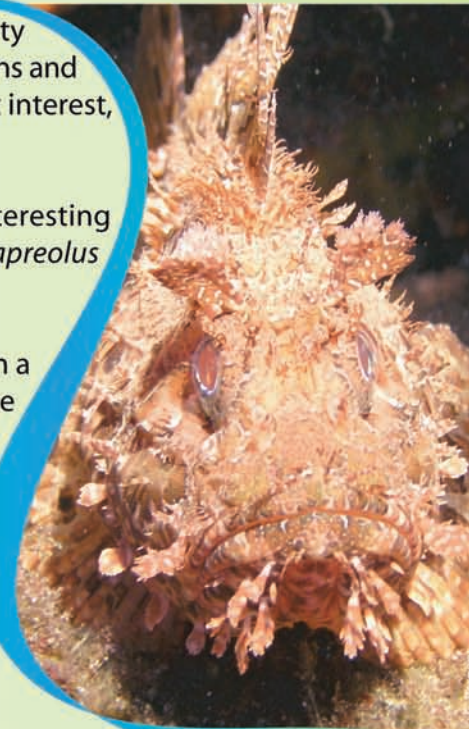
Cap de Creus forms a length of rocky coast that is high and steep, made up of Cambrian-Ordovician dark schist cut into by cliffs and with a number of inlets and outlets. Generally speaking, the coast is subject to strong dynamic pressure from the sea. Added to the diversity of this fairly mountainous and high place is a system of valleys forming a complex hydrographical network. The Cap de Creus area offers a very complete sequence of old rocks subject to a regional type of metamorphism.

Specificities and Importance

The Cap de Creus peninsula offers an enormous diversity and striking peculiarity of plant communities and landscapes. Mediterranean forests, shrubby populations and dry meadows occupy much of the peninsula. The coastal fringe presents most interest, with the presence of some remarkable endemic plants.

The bird community is extremely varied and the nature park has rich and interesting mammal populations such as the stone marten (*Martes foina*) and the roe (*Capreolus capreolus*).

Out at sea, the vegetation is composed of coastal and benthic populations with a great diversity of species in good conservation condition. The biocenoses are important for their presence in the phanerogam meadows or prairies (*Posidonia oceanica*, *Cymodocea nodosa* and *Zostera noltii*), as well as those on hard substrata, and host a large number of invertebrate species like the spiny lobster (*Palinurus elephas*), the red coral (*Corallium rubrum*) and the red gorgonian (*Paramuricea clavata*). The Cap de Creus seabed has a great abundance and diversity of western Mediterranean species of fishes and marine mammals, such as the red scorpion fish (*Scorpaenopsis diabolus*), the corb (*Sciaena umbra*) and the striped dolphin (*Stenella coeruleoalba*).



Threats and pressures

Conservation of the physical environment is affected by erosion due to the urbanisation of the territory, the abandoning of cultivated land and the great number of fires. Many piles of detritus, small-scale work, and movement of earth also change the environment.

Forest fires are among the main agents that have shaped Cap de Creus's current landscape, these fires occurring very frequently in the summer period.

Out at sea, pleasure boats very frequently anchor over Posidonia meadows and this is a major cause of impact on this protected plant.

Sport fishing is an activity that has an impact because of the great number of fishermen who use several fishing techniques (fishing from boats, boatless fishing and underwater



fishing and underwater

Management

A Management Plan for the whole Nature Park was approved in 2006, but a management plan that specifically concerns the marine part is in the process of being crafted, and will set out measures for the various marine protected areas (partial reserve, integral reserve, park).

The team is made up of 10 permanent staff and, because of its agreements, the Park can count on about 10 people during the summer season to monitor and inform users about the Nature Park *in situ*.

The Cap de Creus Nature Park is funded by the Environment Department of the Catalonia Generalitat.

The area is patrolled by the Rural Police Service (Environment Department) and by the Guardia Civil out at sea. Rescue services are also most important.

Permanent anchorage was provided in the coves that were most frequented and for the diving centres' boats.

Management of Cap de Creus has been made effective through involving and collaborating with the local administrations.

There are currently two public information centres: Palau de l'Albat (the St. Pere de Rhodes Monastery) and the Cap de Creus Lighthouse (Cadaqués).

