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## NEPTUNE blue trails

# Plage de la Palud underwater trail



**Warning  
FRAGILE**



**Snorkelling**



**Natural**



**High  
frequentation**

## Geographic location

France, Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur, Var, Hyères, Port-Cros Island

## Name of the conservation area (or protected area)

Heart of Port-Cros National Park

## Level of environmental protection

Heart of the National Park – highly protected

## Name of the dive site

Plage de la Palud underwater trail

## Geographic coordinates (reference system)

LAT E 06°40'04.263"

LONG N 43°12'39.480"

Reference system WGS 84



LOCATION



## Access to the dive site

**By land** – boat crossing of approximately one hour to reach Port-Cros Island and 30 minutes on foot to reach Palud beach by the coastal footpath.

## Site characteristics

Maximum depth

**12 m**

Difficulty

**Low**, swimming not recommended on days with a strong Mistral.  
Beware of jellyfish during certain periods



**Natural**

## Information about the managing body

Created in 1963, Port-Cros National Park is the oldest marine park in Europe. It manages two onshore core zones, Port-Cros Island and the natural areas of Porquerolles Island, as well as their surrounding offshore zone up to 600 m. Its main missions are the knowledge and protection of natural heritage, reception and environmental outreach, providing support to stakeholders for sustainable development within its partnership zone and the adjacent maritime area. The Plage de la Palud underwater trail was the first underwater trail to be equipped with educational buoys in France.

Contact: Port-Cros National Park

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**INFORMATION**



**Authorisation not required**



**Snorkelling**

### **More information:**

**The underwater trails booklet** (trail No.8, page 22)

<https://fr.calameo.com/read/000318363320cc568f95e>



## TRAIL MAP



## Warning FRAGILE

**You are in an area that is protected and regulated to preserve biodiversity**  
**IT IS PROHIBITED**

- to gather sea urchins, shellfish, sand, algae, etc.
- to capture or hunt fish, octopus, etc.



## NATURAL

### Description of the site of natural interest

This marked trail enables a discovery by stages of all the marine habitats of the Mediterranean. A coastal mat forms from the edge of the beach. From a depth of 2 m, the neptune grass meadow shelters a host of fish species: damselfish, green wrasse, common two-banded sea bream, peacock wrasse, etc. In well-lit rocky shallow areas, rainbow and ornate wrasse come and go, the scorpionfish on the seafloor blend in with their rocky surroundings, while the red sea star is easily visible. Further and deeper, in the obscurity of fractures in the rock, colonies of yellow cluster anemones and orange-red encrusting sponge cover the rock and form a multicoloured patchwork. In the zone affected by the swell, a few mollusks cling to the rock, including limpets. Deeper, in the rocky talus, the grouper is on the lookout and the moray eels and octopus hide away in their cavities.

The seabeds are preserved here.



Plage de la Palud underwater trail  
Red sea star  
*Echinaster sepositus*

Parc national de Port-Cros © Declic Bleu Méditerranée

### List of main species

- **Snakelocks anemone** *Anemonia viridis*
- **Damselfish** *Chromis chromis*
- **Peacock wrasse** *Symphodus tinca*
- **Rainbow wrasse** *Coris julis*
- **Ornate wrasse** *Thalassoma pavo*
- **Green wrasse** *Labrus viridis*
- **Peacock's tail** *Padina pavonica*
- **Limpet** *Patella vulgata*
- **Neptune grass** *Posidonia oceanica*
- **Salema porgy** *Sarpa salpa*
- **Common two-banded sea bream** *Diplodus vulgaris*
- **Painted comber** *Serranus scriba*



Common two-banded sea bream  
*Diplodus vulgaris*



Parc national de Port-Cros © Déclic Bleu



PNPC ©Marine Colombey

Black sea urchin  
*Arbacia lixula*

Salema porgy  
*Sarpa salpa*



PNPC ©Vincent Bardinal



Parc national de Port-Cros ©Jean-Marc Demangeon

Black scorpionfish  
*Scorpaena porcus*

Photos of environmental heritage