CEDO

WE ARE A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION WITH *45* YEARS OF REGIONAL EXPERIENCE, WHOSE *MISSION* IS TO FOSTER VIBRANT COMMUNITIES AND RESILIENT ECOSYSTEMS IN THE NORTHERN GULF OF CALIFORNIA AND OTHER ECOREGIONS BY INTEGRATING *PEOPLE*, *KNOWLEDGE*, AND *SOLUTIONS*.

The Intercultural Center for the Study of Deserts and Oceans (CEDO), in collaboration with local communities that live and work in the ecosystems of the Northern Gulf of California, invites you to take part in a series of thrilling eco-adventures under CEDOXperiences nature tourism brand.

CEDOXperiences is part of CEDO's regional ecosystem protection strategy, a service which promotes the social development of communities that depend on these ecosystems. It supports the creation, promotion, and strengthening of small-scale businesses that meet specific social and environmental standards, as part of a sustainable resource-use model.

By participating in any of these eco-adventures, you not only enjoy outdoor exploration, but also contribute to the conservation of the unique and marvelous ecosystems of the Sea of Cortez, the Sonoran Desert, and their inhabitants.

We invite you to join us on these expeditions that blend learning with action-packed fun—while supporting local ecosystem conservation at the same time.

> "CEDOXperiences invites you to *c*onnect deeply with *n*ature and reflect on the *b*iodiversity of the Sonoran *D*esert and Sea of Cortez"



OUR TEAM

CEDO Xperiences combines CEDO's extensive experience in research and education with outdoor activities, offering immersive nature experiences for students of all levels, families, and other interested participants.

Through CEDO Xperiences, you will have the opportunity to critically reflect on our blue planet and the unique region where the desert meets the Sea of Cortez. You'll learn about biodiversity and apply the knowledge gained in classrooms and books to real-world environments.





ELEAZAR LOPEZ

Originally from Puebla, Eleazar arrived in Sonora in 2008 with a background in Physical Education. Since then, he has built a solid career at the Intercultural Center for the Study of Deserts and Oceans (CEDO), where he began as a research assistant.

With over 15 years of experience, Eleazar has specialized in monitoring priority species in coastal ecosystems, including shorebirds, marine mammals, arthropods, and wetland vegetation. He plays a key role in integrating traditional knowledge from fishers into scientific monitoring, promoting sustainable fisheries and community development.

He holds certifications in best fishing practices and fisheries monitoring from CONOCER, and leads CEDO Xperiences to connect people with nature through education, research, and conservation.



*Estuary*Xperience

Stroll Through the Estuary Sand Flats

Traverse and explore a typical estuary in the northwestern Mexican Sea of Cortez. Discover the rich diversity of species that inhabit this unique environment, and enjoy fresh oyster products cultivated and harvested by a local women-owned cooperative.

The extreme temperatures, salinity, and tidal conditions make the Morúa Estuary a one-of-a-kind ecosystem, offering a close-up view of the natural processes and phenomena that shape the region. We'll walk barefoot with care across the beautiful wetland, and with the help of binoculars, observe a wide variety of birds specially adapted to withstand these harsh conditions. Keep an eye out for small invertebrates like pistol shrimp and fiddler crabs, which use the swampy substrate as their habitat.

To wrap up the excursion, we'll visit a local women-owned oyster farm called Unica de Mujeres, where you'll learn about the oyster farming process and have the opportunity to purchase fresh oysters, manta ray tacos, or ceviche tostadas at El Barco Restaurant.

“What do we need for a safe and fulfilling Xperience?”





ITINERARY:

- Meet at the CEDO Field Station for registration.
- Drive to Morua Estuary (land travel not included).
- Guided excursion and lecture on estuary formation, environmental services, biology, and ecology.
- Birdwatching and invertebrate exploration.
- Visit the women's cooperative Única de Mujeres".
- Return to the CEDO Field Station.

AGE RANGE: ALL AGES.

GROUP SIZE: MINIMUM OF 5 | MAXIMUM OF 30.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: LOW.

DURATION: 3 TO 4 HOURS.

INCLUDES:

✓ Bilingual naturalist guide.

✓ Estuary lecture.

✓ Wildlife species identification guides.

✓ Travel insurance.

✓ Binoculars.

✓ Bottled water.

RESTRICTIONS:

- Pets must be kept on a leash.
- No shell or other species extraction.
- Swimming in the estuary is prohibited.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Hat.
- Water-resistant shoes/boots.
- Comfortable clothing.
- Sunscreen.
- Change of clothes (optional).



CEDO
XPERIENCES



KayakXperience

Kayak Paddle Through Estuary Channels

Glide silently in a kayak through the tranquil waters of one of Puerto Peñasco's estuaries, and enjoy observing rare and endemic bird species while learning from an expert naturalist guide about estuarine ecology, biology, and human interaction.

High tides in the Upper Gulf of California allow nature enthusiasts to access otherwise unreachable estuary channels that fan out into the salt marsh. These winding waterways are home to a rich diversity of life: fiddler crabs, flounder, egrets, willets, long-billed curlews, herons, and many other migratory bird species, along with halophyte plants. These hypersaline ecosystems serve as refuges, hatcheries, nurseries, feeding and breeding grounds, and resting places for countless migratory birds.

Experience firsthand the simple yet rewarding effort of paddling in a single or tandem kayak through the scenic channels of Morúa Estuary. The EcoTour ends at Única de Mujeres, a local women-owned oyster farm cooperative, where you can support estuarine conservation by purchasing freshly harvested oysters, ceviche tostadas, and manta ray tacos.

What do we need for a safe and fulfilling Xperience?





ITINERARY:

- Meet at the CEDO Field Station for registration.
- Drive to Morita Estuary (land travel not included).
- Lecture on estuary formation, environmental services, biology, and ecology.
- Kayaking instructions.
- Kayak through the water channels at the end of the estuary.
- Dock in one of the estuary's larger channels for snacks and exploration.
- Kayak to the women's cooperative "Única de Mujeres" and learn about oyster farming.
- Wash and load equipment.
- Return to the CEDO Field Station.

AGE RANGE: 6 TO 60 YEARS.

GROUP SIZE: MINIMUM OF 4 | MAXIMUM OF 9.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE.

DURATION: 4 HOURS.

INCLUDES:

✓ Kayaks and paddles.
✓ Life jackets.
✓ Bilingual naturalist guide.
✓ Estuary lecture.
✓ Wildlife species identification guides.
✓ Travel insurance.
✓ Binoculars.
✓ Bottled water.
✓ Snacks (energy bars, chips, and assorted fruit).

RESTRICTIONS:

- No shell or other species extraction.
- Not suitable for pregnant individuals.
- Swimming in the estuary is prohibited.
- Available only during high tide.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Hat.
- Water-resistant shoes/boots.
- Comfortable clothing.
- Towel and change of clothes.
- Sunscreen.
- Reusable water bottle.





OysterXperience

Visit a local oyster farm and become an oyster farmer for a day

Step into the world of oyster farming and experience firsthand the processes behind this gourmet delicacy and vital rural economic activity.

Engage with local oyster farmers and learn all about this fascinating mollusk—once so highly valued that ancient Romans considered it worth its weight in gold.

In this Xperience, you'll join oyster farmers with over 20 years of experience as they guide you through the various stages of the farming process. You'll also lend a hand with some of their daily tasks, including planting oyster seed, washing crates, sorting oysters by size, and, of course, selecting those ready for harvest.

To wrap up the experience, a CEDO naturalist guide will give an engaging talk on the region's estuaries, followed by a group walk to fully appreciate the unique beauty and ecological importance of this coastal ecosystem.

“What do we need for a safe and fulfilling Xperience?”





ITINERARY:

- Meet at the CEDO Field Station for registration.
- Drive to Morita Estuary (land travel not included).
- Talk with oyster farmers.
- Assist with oyster farming activities.
- Lunch at the oyster farm.
- Lecture on estuaries.
- Return to CEDO.

AGE RANGE: ALL AGES.

GROUP SIZE: MINIMUM OF 4 PARTICIPANTS.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: LOW.

DURATION: 3 TO 4 HOURS.

INCLUDES:

✓ Bilingual naturalist guide.
✓ Travel insurance.
✓ Seafood platter.
✓ Bottled water.

RESTRICTIONS:

- No shell or other species extraction.
- Not suitable for pregnant individuals.
- Swimming in the estuary is prohibited.
- Available only during low tide.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Hat.
- Sunscreen.
- Water-resistant shoes.
- Extra change of clothes.



Tidepool Xperience

Discover Life in the Rocky Intertidal

Uncover the marvels hidden within tidepool ecosystems, learn about the unique forces behind extreme tides, and spend hours exploring the mysteries of life in the rocky intertidal reef—fun for the whole family.

Famous for its dramatic tidal shifts, the Upper Gulf of California offers a unique opportunity to explore tidepools in the rocky intertidal zone, both during daylight and nighttime. Here, you'll encounter a stunning array of plants and animals that thrive in this ever-changing environment. Starfish, hermit crabs, sea anemones, pistol shrimp, sea hares, and sergeant majors are just a few of the remarkable species that call these ecosystems home.

Guided at all times by an expert naturalist, you'll learn about the special conditions that make Puerto Peñasco an ideal location for observing extreme tide phenomena—and how the sun and moon influence their formation. This EcoTour invites the whole family to join in a hands-on adventure, searching under rocks and in crevices for rare and elusive species like the predatory sun star, the shy two-spotted octopus, and the elusive tidepool shrimp.



“What do we need for a safe and fulfilling Xperience?”





ITINERARY:

- Meet at the CEDO Field Station for registration.
- Drive to local rocky intertidal reef (land transportation not provided).
- Guided excursion covering:
  - Tidepool formation.
  - Intertidal biology.
  - Coastal ecology.
- Hands-on exploration:
  - Safe rock lifting techniques.
  - Marine invertebrate observation.
  - Adaptation lecture.
- Species identification and examination.
- Return to CEDO Field Station.

AGE RANGE: ALL AGES.

GROUP SIZE: 4 - 20 PARTICIPANTS.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: LOW.

DURATION: 3 HOURS.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Sun hat with chin strap.
- Water-resistant closed-toe shoes.
- Quick-dry clothing.
- Reef-safe sunscreen SPF 30+
- Additional recommendations:
  - Knee pads (optional).
  - Waterproof camera.
  - Small dry bag.

INCLUDES:

✓ Bilingual naturalist guide.

✓ Comprehensive tidepool ecology lecture.

✓ Rocky intertidal species identification guide.

✓ Travel insurance.

✓ Specimen collection nets.

✓ Bottled water.

RESTRICTIONS:

- No pets allowed.
- Strictly prohibited:
  - Removing shells or marine organisms.
  - Disturbing habitat beyond guided activities.
- Tide-dependent: Only available during safe low tide periods.



CEDO
XPERIENCES



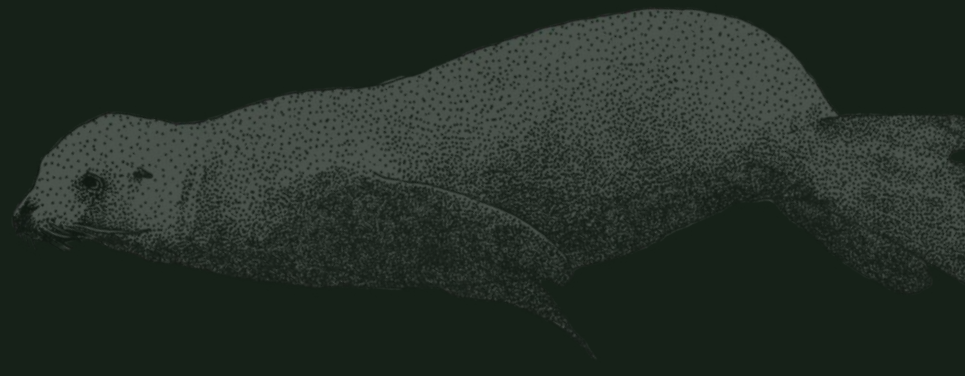
Sea Lion Xperience

Snorkel with Sea Lions at Bird Island

Travel by boat through the Upper Gulf of California to Isla San Jorge —also known as Bird Island—a federally protected natural area and home to a massive sea lion colony. Here, you'll have the opportunity to snorkel or scuba dive and witness the island's rich biodiversity up close.

Located just south of San Jorge, Bird Island is considered a unique destination by both locals and visitors due to its stunning scenery, remote location, and the incredible variety of species found on land and in the surrounding waters. Cruise across the Sea of Cortez with an experienced naturalist guide—sometimes even accompanied by hundreds of dolphins swimming alongside the boat—while learning about the geological processes that formed the island and the ecological factors that influence species distribution in marine environments.

Once we arrive, grab a pair of binoculars and try your hand at birdwatching using field guides provided by the naturalist. Then, gear up and dive in for a refreshing swim with the curious and playful sea lions, and get a close-up view of the vibrant underwater life that makes this place so unforgettable.



What do we need for a safe and fulfilling Xperience?

ITINERARY:

- Meeting point: CEDO Field Station
- Drive to the port of Puerto Peñasco
- Boat ride to San Jorge Island
- Birdwatching
- Swimming and snorkeling with sea lions
- Lunch
- Return to Puerto Peñasco

AGE RANGE: ALL AGES.

GROUP SIZE: MINIMUM OF 6 | MAXIMUM OF 17

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: LOW.

DURATION: 8 HOURS.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Hat.
- Water-resistant shoes/boots.
- Comfortable clothing.
- Bathing suit.
- Wetsuit (November-March).
- Sunscreen.
- Basic swimming ability.

INCLUDES:

✓ Bilingual naturalist guide.

✓ Upper Gulf of California island ecosystem lecture.

✓ Seabird identification guides.
✓ Binoculars.

✓ Travel insurance.

✓ Lunch.

RESTRICTIONS:

- No pets allowed.
- No shell or other species extraction.
- Prohibited: Walking on Bird Island.







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XPERIENCES

DuneXperience

Hike the Gran Desierto de Altar Dunes

Let the breathtaking sea of sand in the Gran Desierto de Altar transport you to an ecosystem unlike any other in the Northern Hemisphere—the towering dunes of the El Pinacate y Gran Desierto de Altar Biosphere Reserve.

Journey alongside an experienced naturalist guide and learn about the natural forces that shaped this vast dune system, as well as its deep cultural significance for the Indigenous Tohono O'odham people. Along the way, take in sweeping panoramic views that reveal the Pinacate volcanic shield, Sierra Blanca, and the shimmering Sea of Cortez.

Keep an eye out for some of the world's most unique desert species, including horned vipers, sand-burrowing lizards, and, during the rainy season, colorful carpets of wildflowers that briefly blanket the desert floor in a rare and stunning display of life.





What do we need for a safe and fulfilling Xperience?





ITINERARY:

- Meet at the CEDO Field Station for registration.
- Drive to El Pinacate y Gran Desierto de Altar Biosphere Reserve - Shuk Toak Museum to begin the tour.
- Guided excursion and lecture on sand dune formation, biology, and ecology.
- Nature photography and appreciation.
- Exploration of sand dune landscapes with expert explanation.
- Lunch break.
- Return to the CEDO Field Station.

AGE RANGE: 6 - 50 YEARS.

GROUP SIZE: MINIMUM OF 6 | MAXIMUM OF 12..

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE.

DURATION: 7 TO 8 HOURS.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Hat.
- Windproof clothing.
- Long pants (e.g., jeans).
- Trekking boots.
- 2+ liters of water per person.
- Sunscreen.
- Sunglasses ("shades").

INCLUDES:

✓ Bilingual naturalist guide.

✓ Shuk Toak Museum experience.

✓ Desert species identification guides.

✓ Travel insurance.

✓ Lunch.

RESTRICTIONS:

- Pets are not allowed.
- No shell or other species extraction.
- Not available June–September.



El Pinacate Xperience

Hike the Gran Desierto de Altar Dunes

Venture into the heart of the volcanic region within the El Pinacate y Gran Desierto de Altar Biosphere Reserve—the fourth-largest terrestrial reserve in Mexico. Recognized as one of Mexico's 13 Natural Wonders, El Pinacate is a site of immense geological, biological, cultural, and scenic value.

Travel along the reserve's 50-mile scenic loop, where you'll visit El Elegante Crater and Cerro Colorado, the reserve's only tuff cone. Along the way, marvel at dozens of solidified lava flows and the striking variety of landscapes, including ocotillo fields and towering saguaro forests, characteristic of the Sonoran Desert.

Learn about the volcanic processes that shaped this shield volcano, dotted with over 400 cinder cones, and drive through sacred Tohono O'odham lands to reach Shuk Toak, their revered Sacred Mountain. Don't miss the chance to experience the region's remarkable biodiversity and capture its raw beauty through landscape photography.





“What do we need for a safe and fulfilling Xperience?”





ITINERARY:

- Meet at the CEDO Field Station for registration.
- Drive to El Pinacate y Gran Desierto de Altar Biosphere Reserve.
- Orientation lecture covering the Reserve's:
  - Geological significance.
  - Biodiversity.
  - Landscape features.
  - Cultural importance.
- Guided trek at El Elegante Crater with educational commentary.
- Nature photography and observation time.
- Trek through Cerro Colorado Tuff Cone with lecture.
- Scenic landscape viewing.
- Lunch break.
- Return to CEDO Field Station

AGE RANGE: ALL AGES.

GROUP SIZE: 6 - 12 PARTICIPANTS.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: LOW.

DURATION: 6 TO 7 HOURS.

INCLUDES:

✓ Bilingual naturalist guide.

✓ Desert species identification guides.

✓ Travel insurance.

✓ Lunch.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Wide-brimmed hat.
- Sturdy walking shoes.
- Minimum 3 liters water per person.
- SPF 30+ sunscreen.
- Sunglasses ("shades").
- Recommended:
  - Lightweight, long-sleeve clothing.
  - Binoculars.
  - Notebook for observations.

RESTRICTIONS:

- Prohibited:
  - Collecting rocks or any natural materials.
  - Camping within the reserve.
  - Littering.
  - Climbing or descending volcanic formations.
  - Alcohol consumption.
- Seasonal closure: June through September.



La Salina Grande Xperience

Discover the desert's secrets on this incredible expedition: the oases of life

Amid the vast, sun-drenched expanse of the Great Altar Desert, vibrant patches of life surprise the eye—desert oases. Surrounded by palm trees, reeds, and native vegetation, these natural freshwater springs are born from deep within the earth and shaped by nature's rhythm.

Fed by ancient rains from the Pinacate Mountains, these oases are more than just water in the desert—they're living sanctuaries. Here, birds soar, wild mammals roam, and over 20 unique plant species thrive in harmony.

Recognized as wetlands of international importance, these magical places invite you to connect with nature, explore the unexpected, and rediscover the wild.

Come and experience the desert like never before adventure awaits.

“What do we need for a safe and fulfilling Xperience?”

ITINERARY:

- Meeting point: CEDO Field Station
- Transfer to La Salina Field Camp, located on the Upper Gulf of California coastline
- Guided walk through the salt flats: site history, natural processes, and how local flora and fauna adapt to the saline ecosystem
- Picnic-style lunch and rest in a shaded area
- Free time for personal exploration and landscape photography
- Return to CEDO



AGE RANGE: ALL AGES.

GROUP SIZE: MINIMUM 6 | MAXIMUM 12

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: EXTREME.

DURATION: 7 TO 8 HOURS.

INCLUDES:

✓ Bilingual naturalist guide.

✓ Desert species identification guides.

✓ Travel insurance.

✓ Lunch.

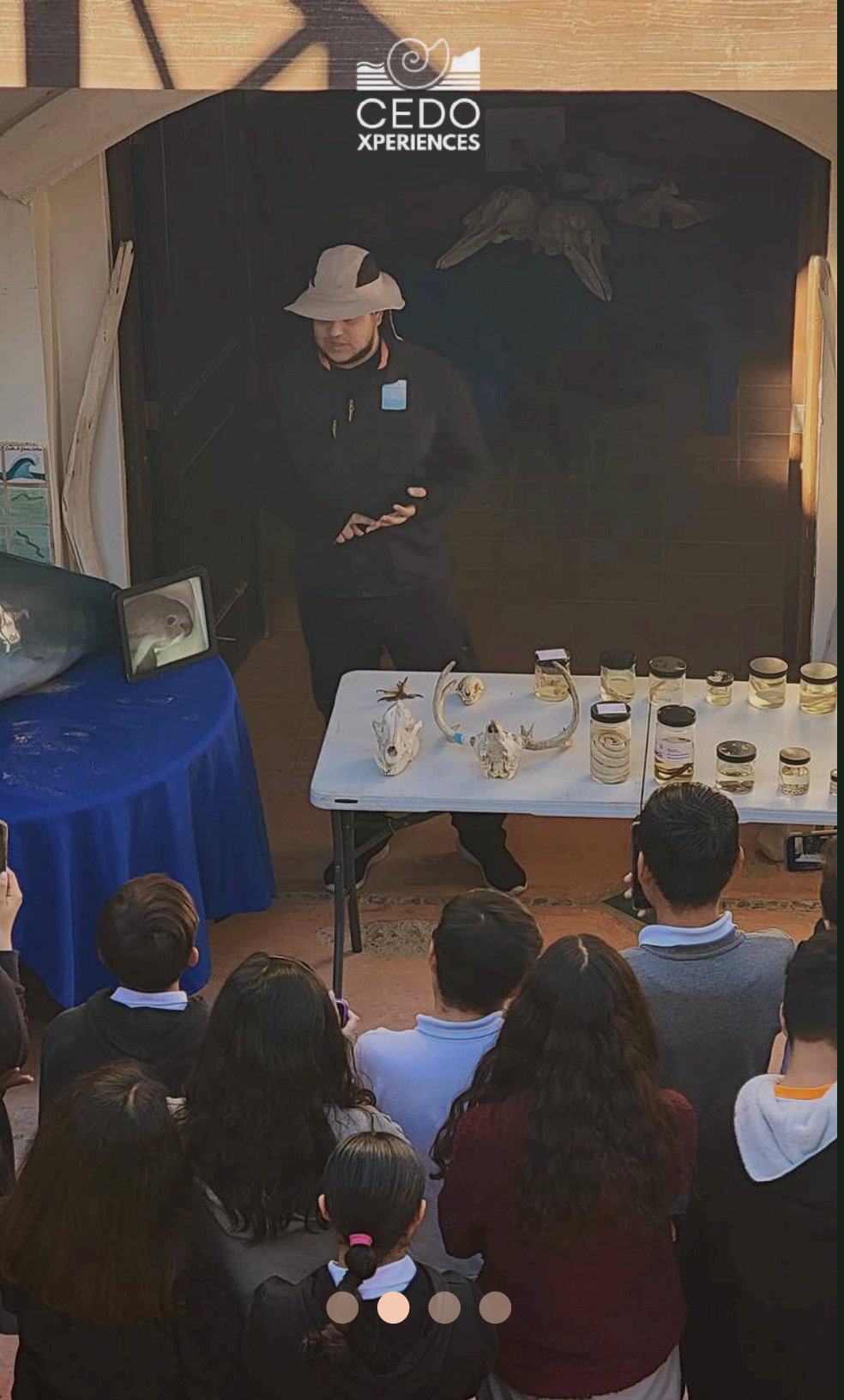


RESTRICTIONS:

- Strictly prohibited:
  - Removing any natural materials (plants, rocks, species).
  - Camping within the reserve.
  - Littering of any kind.
  - Climbing or sliding on volcanic formations.
  - Alcohol consumption.
- Seasonal closure: June through September

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Wide-brimmed hat.
- Sturdy hiking shoes.
- 3+ liters of water per person
- High-SPF sunscreen.
- Sunglasses (“shades”)
- Recommended additions:
  - Long-sleeve sun protection.
  - Daypack.
  - Electrolyte supplements.

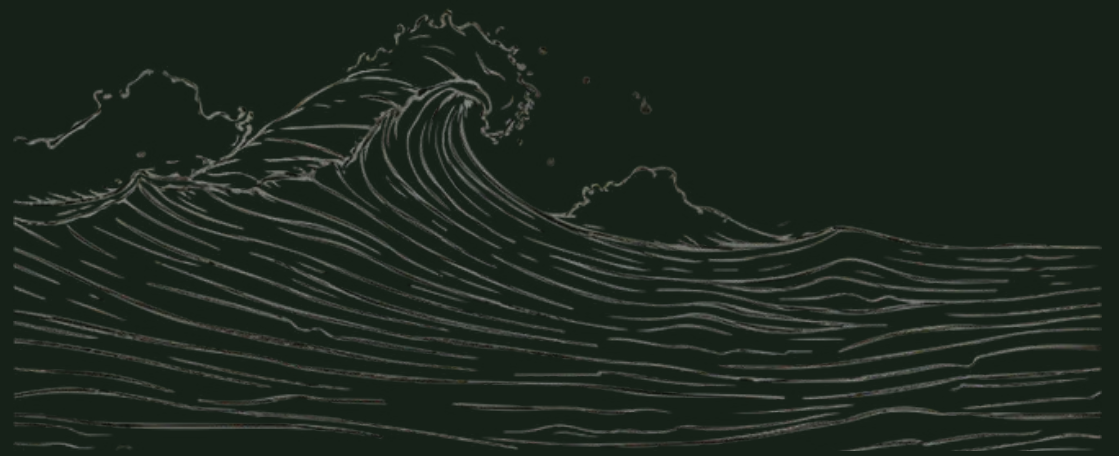


Natural History Talk

Learn about the origins and natural history of the Gulf of California

Discover the natural processes that have shaped the Upper Gulf of California—its oceans, landscapes, flora, fauna, and human interactions—through our iconic Natural History Talks. Originating in the 1980s, these engaging presentations have served as a powerful tool for environmental education, designed to reach audiences of all kinds and share key insights about biodiversity, fisheries, conservation efforts, and the region's social dynamics.

Let our bilingual intern guide you through a visual timeline of the Upper Gulf of California and introduce you to a variety of native species through our wildlife exhibits, desert fish ponds, and an impressive fin whale skeleton. You'll also have the opportunity to explore our unique ecological building—constructed from recycled tires and tin cans—an experience in sustainable architecture and innovation.



“What do we need for a safe and fulfilling Xperience?”



ITINERARY:

- Meet at the CEDO Field Station.
- Sit back and enjoy the experience.



AGE RANGE: ALL AGES.

GROUP SIZE: MINIMUM OF 6 | MAXIMUM OF 50

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: LOW.

DURATION: APPROXIMATELY 1 HOUR AND 30 MINUTES.

INCLUDES:

✓ Bilingual naturalist guide included.

✓ In-depth explanation of the Upper Gulf of California.

RESTRICTIONS:

- No pets allowed.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Comfortable shoes.
- Water.
- Hat.

CONTACT US

638 382 0113

eleazar@cedo.org
info@cedo.org

Edificio Agustín Cortés, Las Conchas,
Puerto Peñasco, Sonora

cedo.org



CEDO






*O*UR PROGRAMS

CEDO's programs are designed to promote biodiversity conservation, co-management of fisheries, and community well-being through nature-based solutions. Our realistic, science-driven, and community-centered approaches recognize, respect, and harness the cultural, socioeconomic, and biological interconnections between local communities and their ecosystems.

*O*UR SERVICES

CEDO Intercultural connects people, knowledge, and solutions to promote resilient communities and ecosystems. The organization is committed to continuous improvement by strengthening both local communities and the natural environment through:

1. Generating knowledge to support decision-making
2. Sharing and applying tools that encourage community participation and consensus
3. Education and outreach
4. Conservation, sustainable use, and promotion of regional biocultural heritage
5. Climate change adaptation
6. Designing and promoting ecosystem-based harvesting and management strategies