

## **Schoolchildren from San Roque learn about owls thanks to Fundación Cepsa**

- **Students from the Puente Mayorga and Campamento primary schools participated in an environmental education workshop in Madre Vieja as part of World Environment Day**
- **Children learned about the animal's behavior, its diet, and why owl conservation is important**

As part of the events planned by Fundación Cepsa in Campo de Gibraltar to commemorate World Environment Day on June 5, the Madre Vieja Environmental Station hosted an educational workshop all about owls.

The participants in this environmental education initiative were fourth grade students from the Sagrado Corazón de Puente Mayorga and Santa Rita de Campamento primary schools, both districts of San Roque. Estrella Blanco, head of Fundación Cepsa in Cádiz, highlighted the "importance of biodiversity and our commitment to developing projects that protect it, as well as supporting environmental education. Fundación Cepsa is working along both lines because we are convinced that it is important to convey to both children and adults that taking care of our environment is key."

The fifty children that participated were divided into groups, and they learned about the biology, banding process, and behavioral patterns of the Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*), as well as how to help conserve them.

Fundación Cepsa's project to recover the *Tyto alba* barn owl in southern Spain began in 2019 with the acquisition of a breeding pair on loan from the Junta de Andalucía. Since then, and up until 2021, a total of 44 owls have been released from the Madre Vieja Environmental Station, with their corresponding rings. This initiative is carried out in collaboration with the Junta de Andalucía (regional government of Andalucía) and the European Union bird ringing service, Euring, an organization that promotes international collaboration in the study of birds, particularly in Europe and along the African-Eurasian flyway. Euring has allowed Madre Vieja to use red rings with white numbers, a color combination not seen anywhere else in Europe, meaning that the birds ringed at this site will be easy to identify across the continent.

The Madre Vieja Environmental Station is a research center and nature reserve owned by Fundación Cepsa, which has worked to restore the wetland since 2009. Since its inauguration in 2014, Ornitor has been working not only to preserve the area, but also to recover species and the passage of birds in this corner of Campo de Gibraltar, which is open to the public to enjoy and learn from.

**Fundación Cepsa** is a general interest, nonprofit entity whose aim is to carry out initiatives that serve the needs and priorities of the local communities where its founder, Compañía Española de Petróleos S.A. (Cepsa), conducts its activities. The areas of action for Fundación Cepsa are social, environmental and scientific-educational.



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