

Marine IBA inventory in Greece just published!

Title

The [Hellenic Ornithological Society](#) (BirdLife Greece) has just published its national inventory of marine Important Bird Areas (IBAs) presented in the book [Important Areas for Seabirds in Greece](#). This 200-page colour edition concentrates data on seabirds collected by HOS over the last 15 years, through various projects in the Aegean and Ionian Seas, with most recent and significant the [LIFE-Nature project](#) 'Concrete Conservation Actions for the Mediterranean Shag and Audouin's Gull in Greece, including the inventory of relevant marine IBAs' (LIFE07 NAT/GR/000285). The present edition comprises one of the main outputs of the above-mentioned project. The edition includes useful information on seabird populations in Greece with focus on those species used in the definition of the marine IBA inventory, namely the Mediterranean Shag, Cory's Shearwater, Yelkouan Shearwater, European Storm-petrel and Audouin's Gull. In addition, short reference is made on the various threats facing seabirds at sea arising through human activities such as fisheries, aquaculture, marine traffic, tourism development, marine industrial activities, coastal development and renewable energy. Methods used during data collection (direct seabird records, tracking and collection of oceanographic and marine biological data), as well as data analysis leading to the selection and delineation of candidate sites, are described in detail. The final marine IBA inventory and the delineation of their boundaries concluded through the application of IBA criteria to these sites. Comprehensive descriptions are given for the 41 newly designated marine IBAs, as well as up-to-date seabird population information, human activities occurring and threats to seabirds. The IBA inventory covers a total area of 9,943 km² which is equivalent to approximately 8.7% of the territorial waters of Greece. The majority of the sites are colony seaward extensions and are located in the Aegean Sea, while few designate as areas for pelagic species, migratory bottlenecks and non-breeding (coastal) concentrations. Several pelagic areas which are known to be important for shearwater species, as well as coastal marine areas which host significant numbers of waterbirds still remain to be designated in the near future. Thus, although the marine IBA identification process in Greece is not yet considered complete, the current inventory provides a point of reference for the designation and management of marine Natura 2000 sites for seabirds and the promotion of marine conservation in Greek waters. For more information: contact [Roula Trigou](#), HOS Communication Coordinator.
