



The Globally Threatened Species

The Audouin's Gull is considered nationally threatened as it formerly bred in Palm Islands until the seventies of the last century. It ceased from nesting due to disturbance. This species breeds on uninhabited islands and islets and may abandon the nest under the pressure of heavy visitation. Lives mainly on small fish. Presently, this species is a nonbreeding migrant in Lebanon.



The Yelkouan Shearwater is endemic to the Mediterranean & globally vulnerable. Accordingly, it merits conservation to prevent its extinction. In Lebanon, it is a winterer and migrant. Shearwaters spend most of their life in the sea and take rest on the surface of water. They visit the land for nesting only.

The Sooty Shearwater is classified Near Threatened by the IUCN. The European Storm Petrel is one of the smallest seabirds in the world. Its size is that of a swallow. The seabirds feed on sick fishes and as such they contribute in safeguarding the best genes of fishes.

Threats facing the sea and coastal birds: High rates of bycatch mortality in adults, pollution, predation (mainly by large gulls, rats and cats), disturbance, lowered water level around nests, lead poisoning, egg collection and collisions; loss of foraging habitat and breeding sites; shooting and persecution by fishers, illegal hunting, wetland alteration, and over-exploitation of fish stocks, oil spill and climate change.

By convention all of the Sphenisciformes and Procellariiformes, all of the Pelecaniformes and Suliformes except the darters, and few Charadriiformes (the skuas, gulls, terns, auks, and phalaropes) are classified as seabirds. Many waders (or shorebirds), including herons, are also highly marine, living on the sea's edge (coast), but are treated as coastal birds.



Sea and coastal birds of Lebanon

Legal status of sea and coastal birds.

All the sea and coastal birds are protected by the Lebanese Hunting Law 580/2004. Many of them are also covered by the AEWa Agreement, CMS, and Barcelona Convention.

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Many species of waterbirds have marine affinity and live close to the shore or sea coasts, like waders, including herons, where they find both resting places and shallow waters rich in fish and invertebrates.



Little Stint

I am a small wader but with my population, I contribute to purifying and recycling the sea water. I also effectively disperse plant seeds to remote areas.



Black-winged Stilt

My long legs with partially webbed feet help me walking on mud and wading in shallow water. Due to my migration across seas and oceans, my potential importance in diaspore dispersal to oceanic islands has long been recognized.

Shore or Coastal birds

Black-tailed Godwits

We are transporting in our inners seeds of berries to new areas but we are also controlling pests in agricultural fields



Grey Heron

I feed on fish in both fresh and sea waters but on terrestrial lands I eat lizards among other herptiles and subsequently ingest



seeds from the eaten lizards, playing a role in dispersing them all around. I am also used as indicator for monitoring studies

How to conserve seabirds:

- Use appropriate fishing gear by fishermen (equipment and tool for fishing such as legal nets and baits or proper reels and ropes, etc.).
- Reduce seabirds bycatch by using appropriate fishing lines, seabirds scaring devices, etc.
- Mitigate the impact of fishing on seabirds e.g.:
 - Do not fish near breeding sites of seabirds.
 - Do not fish in the water where seabirds fish to feed their chicks.
 - Stop fishing using dynamite.
 - Stop taking seabirds by hooking them using baits or lures whilst flying overhead.
- Raise awareness of fishermen and the general public about the importance and benefits of the seabirds and the need for their protection together with their nests, eggs and chicks.



WHAT WE DO



YELLOW-LEGGED GULL

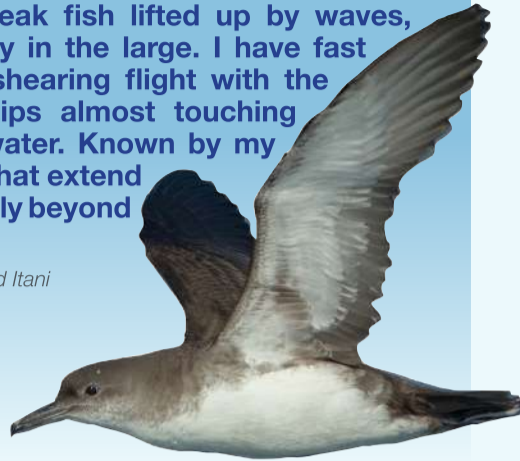
I am the most common gull in Lebanon. I only breed on Palm Islands Nature Reserve and feed on discarded food waste, including corpses and trash to keep the beaches and the environment clean. known by my yellow legs and bill and the white spots on my primaries.

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YELKOUAN SHEARWATER

I am usually seen in Lebanon in flocks during winter and on passage. I feed on weak fish lifted up by waves, mainly in the large. I have fast and shearing flight with the wingtips almost touching the water. Known by my feet that extend slightly beyond tail.

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LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL

I have similar habits to those of the Yellow-legged Gull. I feed on discarded food waste that would otherwise attract rats and mice and other vermin. I am common in winter and on passage. Known by my black back.

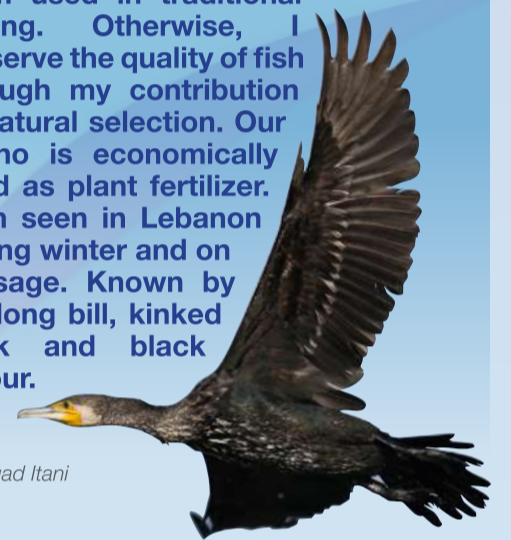
© Ghassan Ramadan-Jaradi



GREAT CORMORANT

I am used in traditional fishing. Otherwise, I preserve the quality of fish through my contribution to natural selection. Our guano is economically used as plant fertilizer. I am seen in Lebanon during winter and on passage. Known by my long bill, kinked neck and black colour.

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COMMON BLACK-HEADED GULL



I occur in Lebanon during migration and in winter. I preserve the quality and sustainability of squids since I mainly feed on surface or consume weak squids. I am also assisting farmers to keep pests under control.

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EUROPEAN STORM PETREL



I am vagrant to Lebanon but it is worth to know that I am one of the smallest marine birds. I am indicator of healthy Waters. Identified by my small "swallow" size and the white rump above the tail.

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COMMON TERN

Common Tern I play a role in natural selection but also I am a vector for nutrients between terrestrial and aquatic habitats.

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AUDOUIN'S GULL

I used to breed in Lebanon when it was a haven for birds but I stopped to do so due to human disturbance. However, I am visiting the country from time to time. I eat small weak fish but I also consumes insects and contribute to keeping pests under control for the sake of farmers and gardeners.

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LITTLE GULL

I am fond of crickets that threaten the crops of the nearby farmers. I also control pests in agricultural areas and serve recreation and tourism

© Sergey Uryadnikov



SANDWICH TERN

My food is almost fish. Some times I take insects and marine invertebrates. I contribute to the dispersal of flora Known by my long black bill, tipped yellow, a unique feature among crested terns.

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SLENDER-BILLED GULL

I am a natural pest control and play an important role in the dispersal of plant seeds.

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PALLAS GULL

I am predatory, taking fish, crustaceans, insects and even small mammals. Fishermen use me as a guide to fish school areas. I resemble to the Lesser Common Black-headed Gull but larger with specific white wingtips pattern

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