

Balearic Shearwater

Maltese name: Garnija Balearika

Scientific name: *Puffinus mauretanicus*

EN. The Balearic Shearwater is a medium-sized shearwater, slightly larger than the Yelkouan, which has the typically “shearing” flight of this category of seabirds, dipping from side to side on stiff wings with few wingbeats, the wingtips almost touching the water. The species breeds between late February and early July on islands and coastal cliffs in the Balearic Islands – an archipelago of islands in Spain which can be found in the western Mediterranean Sea near the eastern coast of the Iberian Peninsula, with the largest five islands being Mallorca, Menorca, Cabrera, Ibiza and Formentera. The most recent estimates of the Balearic Shearwater population are at 19,000 individuals. The specific *mauretanicus* in its name refers to Mauretania, an old name for an area of North Africa roughly corresponding to Morocco and Algeria. This species is the most endangered seabird in Europe, classified by IUCN as critically endangered.

MT. Il-Garnija Balearika hija għasfur tal-baħar ta' daqs medju, kemxejn ikbar mill-Garnija, li jittajjar bil-mod tipiku li għalih huma magħrufin l-għasfar tal-baħar f'din il-kategorija, jiġifieri jogħdos minn naħa għal oħra bi ffit li xejn ċaqliq tal-gwienah u bit-truf ta' gwenhahj kwazi jmissu mal-ilma. Din l-ispeċi tbejjet bejn l-aħħar ta' Frar u l-bidu ta' Lulju fuq gzejjer u rdumijiet mal-kosta fil-Gzejjer Baleariċi – arċipelagu fi Spanja li jinsab fil-Punent tal-Baħar Mediterran qrib il-kosta tal-Lvant tal-Peniżola Iberika. L-akbar ħames gzejjer li jiffurmawh huma Mallorca, Menorca, Cabrera, Ibiza u Formentera. L-aktar stimi rċenti dwar il-popolazzjoni ta' dan l-għasfur jammontaw għal 19,000 individwu. It-terminu speċifiku *mauretanicus* f'isem dan l-għasfur jirreferi għall-Mawritanja, isem antik għall-parti tal-Afrika ta' Fuq fejn bejn wieħed u ieħor illum insibu l-Marokk u l-Alġerija. Din l-ispeċi hija l-aktar għasfur tal-baħar fil-periklu fl-Ewropa, u huwa kklassifikat mill-IUCN bħala f'qagħda kritika.