



MALTA MARITIME AUTHORITY

Notice to Mariners No 4 of 2009

Restricted Area between “Ponta ta’ I-Ahrax” and “Dahlet ix-Xilep”

Reference is made to the Malta, EU LIFE project, which is focussed on taking action to protect the Yelkouan Shearwaters (**GARNIJA**), seabirds that breed on cliffs. One such breeding area is located at “Rdum tal-Madonna” on the cliffs between il-Ponta ta’ I-Ahrax and Dahlet ix-Xilep. The “Rdum tal-Madonna” breeding colony has been designated as a “Special Protection Area” because Malta has 10% of the world’s population of Yelkouan Shearwaters and is internationally important for these birds. Light and noise can easily disturb the birds and cause them to desert the colony.

The buffer zone to the “Special Protection Area (SPA)” (about 1.1 Nautical Mile from shore) lies between the following imaginary points and the intermediate coastline:

	LATITUDE (N)	LONGITUDE (E)
(A)	35°59'.268	14°22'.574
(B)	35°59'.231	14°23'.759
(C)	36°01'.124	14°22'.849
(D)	35°59'.901	14°22'.057

In view of the above Masters of all vessels and craft are to adhere to the following conduct while transiting the area between **1st February and 30 July - every year**. The hours between which the conduct is applicable are **2 hours before sunset till 2 hours after sunrise**.

During the above mentioned period:

- Lights, other than lights prescribed in the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972 (COLREGs) have to be switched off and no loud noise, other than sound signals prescribed in the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972 (COLREGs), from vessels is allowed whilst moving along this stretch of coast.
- Pleasure cruises operating as “Floating Discos” are obliged to follow the above guideline and switch off all lights and music while passing in the indicated area or otherwise keep clear from the buffer zone to the SPA.
- The letting off of petards and other fireworks from sea is not allowed in the buffer zone to the SPA during the above mentioned dates **AT ANY TIME**.
- The buffer zone to the SPA is a “no stopping zone” for all vessels other than vessels carrying out fishing activities.
- Fishing activities in the area using strong lights (lampara etc) are prohibited in line with Art.4 of the Fishery Regulations (SL425.01) and Council Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 concerning management measures for the sustainable exploitation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean Sea, amending regulation (EEC) No 2847/93 and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1626/94.

Charts Affected: BA 211A , 2538, 2537, 194