



PORTS AND YACHTING DIRECTORATE

NOTICE TO MARINERS N° 30 of 2025

Our Ref: **TM/PYD/ 88/06**

4 August 2025



Transport Malta

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Restricted Area between “Ponta tal-Ahrax” and “Dahlet ix-Xilep”

The Ports and Yachting Directorate, Transport Malta, notifies that as part of an EU LIFE project, aimed at protecting the Yelkouan Shearwaters (**GARNIJA**), seabirds that breed on cliffs, a restricted area is established. One such breeding area is located at “Rdum tal-Madonna” on the cliffs between il-Ponta tal-Ahrax and Dahlet ix-Xilep.

The habitat and breeding ground of ten per cent (10%) of the world's population of Yelkouan Shearwaters, is located at “Rdum tal-Madonna”. The Area has been designated as a “Special Protection Area” (SPA) and is now of International Importance and interest in the conservation of the species and of other seabirds. Light and noise seriously disturb the birds with the danger of them deserting the colony.

The buffer zone to the SPA (about 1.1 Nautical Mile from shore) lies between the following imaginary points and the intermediate coastline, as shown on attached chart 1:

	LATITUDE (N)	LONGITUDE (E)
(A)	35°59'.268	14°22'.574
(B)	35°59'.231	14°23'.759
(C)	36°00'.624	14°23'.088
(D)	36°00'.874	14°22'.692
(E)	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 all year round.

No lights, other than lights prescribed in the Convention on the International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea, 1972 (COLREGs) shall be exhibited. No loud noise from any vessel, other than the sound signals as prescribed in the Collision Regulations (COLREGs), shall be permitted when navigating in or near the buffer zone.



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Operators of pleasure cruises holding organised “Boat Parties” are obliged to follow the above guidelines. All lights, not related to the navigation of the vessel, shall be extinguished when transiting the indicated area. Loud noise and music are not permitted in the SPA.

The ‘letting off’ of petards and other fireworks from sea is strictly prohibited in or near the buffer zone to the SPA - all year round.

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 powerful bright lights (lampara etc) are prohibited in line with Regulation 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.

Further to the above, the Ports and Yachting Directorate, Transport Malta notifies mariners that as part of the LIFE Arċipelagu Garnija project, the Environment and Resources Authority (ERA) has established a number of restrictions, in line with:

- the Birds Directive (Directive 2009/147/EC) transposed into Maltese legislation through the Conservation of Wild Birds Regulations (S.L. 549.42)
- the Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) transposed into Maltese legislation through the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations (S.L. 549.44).
- the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (Directive 2008/56/EC) transposed into Maltese legislation through the Marine Policy Framework Regulations (S.L. 549.62).

All vessels, other than vessels engaged in fishing and vessels engaged in recreational diving operations during daylight hours, are prohibited from anchoring in the area enclosed by the imaginary line X – Y and the intermediate coastline shown in red on the attached chart 2. All vessels operating in this area shall not exceed the maximum permitted speed of 3 knots.

	LATITUDE (N)	LONGITUDE (E)
(X)	35°59'.584	14°22'.339
(Y)	35°59'.539	14°22'.361

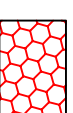
Notice to Mariners N° 18 of 2024 of Transport Malta is hereby **CANCELLED**.

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

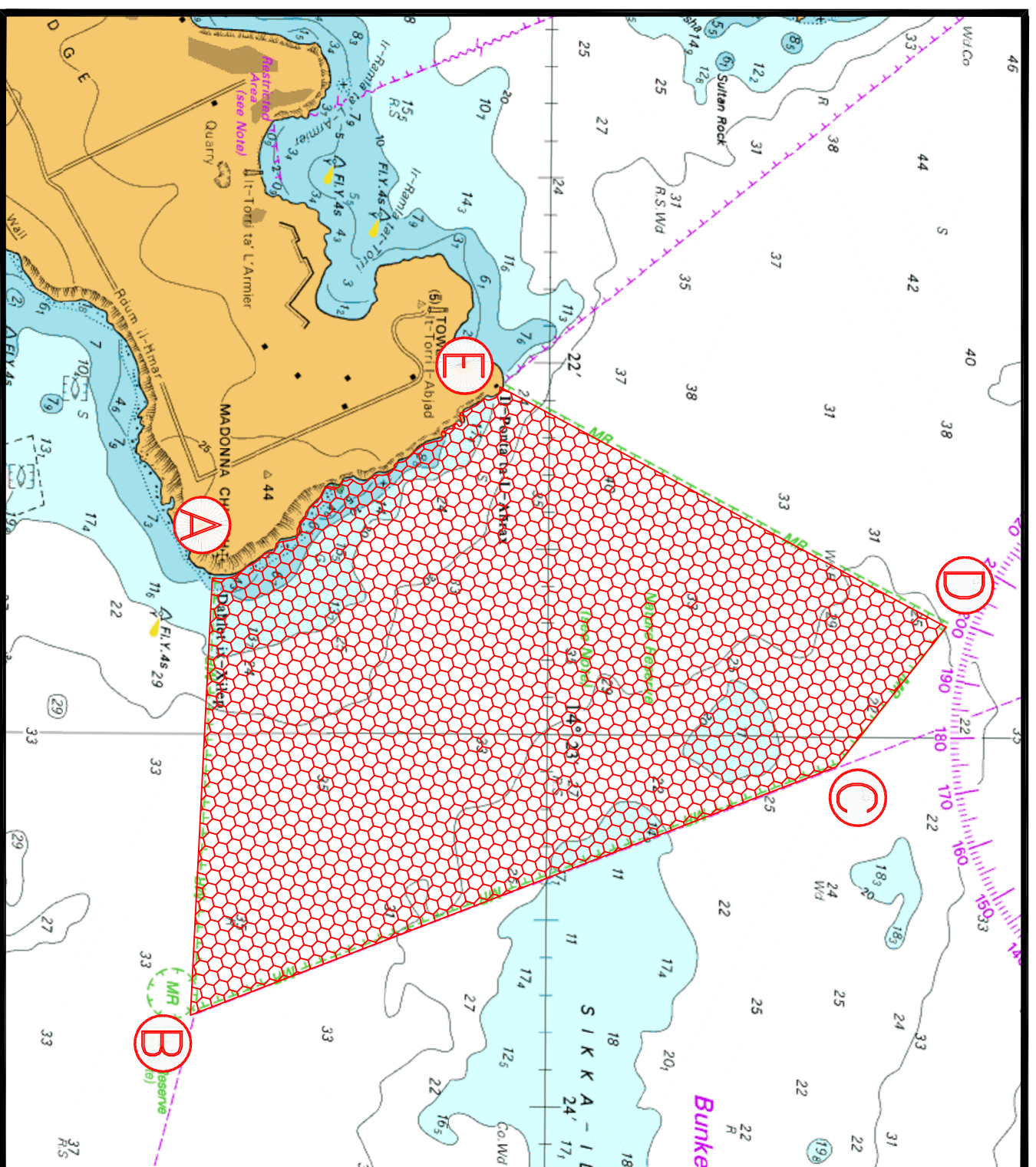
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DISCLAIMER

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Only compulsory lights and
sound - applicable to all vessels
including pleasure cruises
operating as boat parties. No
petards or other fireworks. No
stopping except for fishing
vessels, but cannot use strong
lights (like lampara).
All year round and at all times.

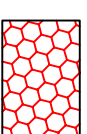


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The material supplied is used entirely at the Recipient's own risk.



Only compulsory lights and sound including pleasure cruises operating as boat parties.
No petards or other fireworks.
No stopping except for fishing and diving vessels during daylight hours.
Strong lights cannot be used (lampara etc).
Maximum speed 3 knots.
All year round and at all times.

