



GOZ011 - Il-Qattara

Description

Il-Qattara is a permanent freshwater natural pool, located along the eastern wall of the hollow that is connected by an intermittent watercourse to the Inland Sea. The pool is fed by a perennial spring seeping from the walls of the hollow. Seepage extends along the entire escarpment and is channelled into the pool by a man-made ledge carved into the rock (Lanfranco and Cassar, 2007). The pool is scheduled as an Area of Ecological Importance and a Site of Scientific Importance and is designated as a Tree Protection Area. The site also lies within a Natura 2000 site. Evidence of an underground rock cut gallery is found at il-Qattara (Nature Trust (Malta) et al., 2005). Groundwater is mostly used for agricultural practices in view of the lack of other land uses in the management plan area. Over-extraction of the groundwater would lead to further sea water intrusion in view that the SAC and SPA is found in the vicinity of the coast. *Zannichellia melitensis* and *Chara globularis* are known to grow in this pond (Cassar et al., 2004). Other hydrophilic species inhabit the banks of the spring, including *Rumex bucephalophorus*, *Mentha pulegium*, *Cyperus longus* and *Scirpoides holoschoenus*. The structure of this habitat is well conserved despite a large number of visitors visiting the area all year round. Unfortunately, however, goldfish have been introduced into the pool and were recorded by Cassar et al. (2004).

General information

Basic information

Wetland location:	Inland
Wetland type:	Natural
Natural / Artificial:	Permanent freshwater pond
Area (Ha):	0.10
Hydrological interaction with other wetland:	No -
Water salinity:	Fresh (< 0.5 g/l)
Fresh water entry:	Karstic spring
Surface water runoff:	Other
Open water area (%):	5 - 25
Hydroperiod:	Permanent

Geographic information

Census district:	Gozo and Comino
Island:	Gozo
Local council:	San Lawrenz
Coordinates (WGS84):	14.192530 E - 36.051310 N

Wetland condition

Wetland condition:	2 - Original habitats/landform still predominant (>50%)
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Ramsar wetland types

Ramsar type	Coverage (%)
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Tp -- Permanent freshwater marshes/pools; ponds (below 8 ha), marshes and swamps on inorganic soils; with emergent vegetation water-logged for at least most of the growing season

Property status

Public

Protection statuses & other designations

Protection status

Protection status category	Protection status subcategory	Site name	Code	Coverage (%)	Legislation
National	Area of Ecological Importance/Site of Scientific Importance	Id-Dwejra u l-Qawra, limiti ta' San Lawrenz u Kercem, Ghawdex	555546301	100	Development Planning Act (Act VII of 2016)
National	Area of Ecological Importance/Site of Scientific Importance	Ghadajjar ta' l-ilma helu fil-Qattara, Dwejra (l/ta' San Lawrenz, Ghawdex)	555546301	100	Development Planning Act (Act VII of 2016)
National	Area of High Landscape Value	Dwejra	555546312	100	Development Planning Act (Act VII of 2016)
National	Bird Sanctuary	Il-Qawra, Ghawdex	194414	100	Environment Protection Act (Act I of 2016)
International	Special Areas of Conservation - International Importance	L-Inhawi tad-Dwejra - Qawra, inkluz Hagret il-General	330731	100	Environment Protection Act (Act I of 2016)
International	Special Protection Areas	Rdumijiet ta' Ghawdex: Il-Ponta ta' San Dimitri sal-Ponta ta' Harrux	555552411	100	Environment Protection Act (Act I of 2016)
National	Tree Protection Area	Il-Qattara (limiti ta' San Lawrenz)	555546275	100	Environment Protection Act (Act I of 2016)
International	Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas	Dwejra Bay to San Dimitri Point	MT011	100	
International	Pools	Il-Qattara	MT SW 01	100	Water Framework Directive
Other	Scheduling - Archaeology	Buffer zone for road, basin and rock-cut site		1	

CDDA protection status

CDDA code	Category
MT02	Area of Ecological Importance/Site of Scientific Importance
MT15	Area of High Landscape Value
MT03	Bird Sanctuary
MT11	Special Areas of Conservation - International Importance
MT13	Special Protection Areas
MT06	Tree Protection Area

Important bird areas

IBA Code	Site name	Coverage (%)
MT011	Dwejra Bay to San Dimitri Point	100

Ecosystem Services, Activities & Impacts

Ecosystem Services

Type of Ecosystem service	Ecosystem service	Scale of Benefit	Importance
Provisioning services	Fresh water		
Regulatory services	Water regulation		

Activities on wetland

Activities	Intensity
020 = Resource conservation	Low
701 = water pollution	High
702 = air pollution	High
703 = soil pollution	High
920 = Drying out	Low
954 = invasion by a species	Low

Activities on drainage basin

Activities	Intensity
010 = Habitat conservation	High
501 = paths tracks cycling tracks	Low
502 = roads motorways	High
608 = camping and caravans	Medium
701 = water pollution	High
702 = air pollution	High
703 = soil pollution	High

Impacts

Impact type	Intensity
EB- = Increase in aesthetic qualities	
ES- = Increase in water supply	
EU- = Increase of tourist/recreation potential	

Habitats & Vegetation

Habitat types

Habitat types	Coverage (%)
3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp.	26 - 50

Vegetation types

Vegetation type	Coverage (%)
Ammophilous	
Emergent	
Floating-leaved	
Halophytic	
Other	
Shrubby / Arborescent	5 - 25
Submerged	
Wet meadow	< 5

Species

Flora

Species	Dominance	Reference
Arisarum vulgare		
Arundo donax		
Asparagus aphyllus		
Bituminaria bituminosa		
Chara globularis		

Cyperus longus subsp. badius		
Galium aparine		
Geranium molle		
Hedysarum coronarium		
Hyoseris frutescens		
Rumex bucephalophorus		
Salix alba		
Scirpoides holoschoenus		
Silybum marianum		
Tamarix africana		
Urginea pancracion		
Vitex agnus-castus		
Zannichellia melitensis		

Fauna

Mammals		Presence in wetland	References
Myotis punicus (Felten, 1977)			
Birds		Nesting status	References
Gallinago gallinago (Linnaeus, 1758)			
Ardeola ralloides (Scopoli, 1769)			
Nycticorax nycticorax (Linnaeus, 1758)			
Emberiza calandra (Linnaeus, 1758)			
Amphibians		Presence in wetland	References
Discoglossus pictus (Otth, 1837)			
Fishes		Presence in wetland	References
Cyprinus carpio (Linnaeus, 1758)			
Invertebrates		Presence in wetland	References
Augyles (Littorimus) maritimus (Linnaeus, 1758)			
Lymnaea truncatula (O. F. Müller, 1774)			
Mercuria cf. similis (Draparnaud, 1805)			

References

Adi Epsilon Consortium (2014h) L-Inhawi tad-Dwejra – Natura 2000 Management Plan (SAC). Prepared for the Malta Environment and Planning Authority under CT3101/2011. San Gwann, Malta, pp. 112 + Annex

ERA (2015) The 2 nd Water Catchment Management Plan for the Malta Water Catchment District 2015 - 2021

Representative Image & Map

