



MAL022 - Ghadajjar ta' I-ilma helu fil-Qaliet (I/ta' San Gi

Description

This site is located on the coast and supports a saltmarsh. The transitional wetland dominated by *Juncus acutus* is designated as a Level 1 Area of Ecological Importance (AEI) and a Level 1 Site of Scientific Importance (SSI), a buffer area is included which is scheduled as a Level 3 AEI. Part of the area scheduled as a Level 3 AEI has since been developed. The coastline is part of the locality of St Julian's, a highly touristic area. The site is easily accessible to members of the public through an entrance at Triq il-Wilga, as there are no gates or barriers limiting access to the site. It is also accessible from a footpath along the Portomaso breakwater, however, few people use this route to reach the site. The coastline is particularly popular as a daytime bathing destination in summer, and the coast is also popular with anglers. It is also frequented in the evenings, especially during the weekend. The saltmarsh habitat type occupies natural depressions a few metres inland from the coastal edge. The habitat is dominated by rushes belonging to the species *Juncus acutus* (Sharp-pointed Rush) which constitutes over 90% of the vegetation cover. The remainder is made up of *Limbarda crithmoides* (Golden Samphire) and a combination of various ruderals and coastal species including *Euphorbia pinea* (Pine spurge), *Cichorium spinosum* (Spiny Chicory), *Dittrichia viscosa* (Sticky Fleabane), *Daucus carota* (Wild Carrot), *Capparis orientalis* (Caper Plant), *Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum* (Lesser Crystal Ice Plant), *Lagurus ovatus* (Hare's Tail Grass) and *Plantago lagopus* (Mediterranean Plantain). This habitat type is classified as Natura 2000 Annex I habitat 1410, or the Mediterranean salt meadows (*Juncetalia maritimi*), for which reason the site was originally scheduled in 1995. The rush community is relatively dense with a total vegetation cover of over 80% and an average height of around 1m. Ruderal species recorded are largely found at the edge of the habitat, and their presence is a result of the disturbance generated on site from trampling and a high footfall of visitors. Litter and a large quantity of broken glass were also observed throughout the saltmarsh. Despite the disturbance and abundance of litter, the saltmarsh is well structured, constituting one of the best conserved coastal marshes in the country. The core of the habitat is almost entirely composed of characteristic species, with ruderals being restricted to the edge of the habitat and to the footpath crossing through the habitat. The conservation of habitat function was relatively stable, and the structure of the habitat is unlikely to deteriorate in the short term, despite the large number of visitors. This is most likely because bathers avoid the marsh in view of the spiny nature of the dominant species. The saltmarsh habitat is absent from higher ground that rises above 0.5 m and is instead replaced by a coastal garrigue dominated by *Limbarda crithmoides*.

General information

Basic information

Wetland location:	Marine/Coastal
Wetland type:	Natural
Natural / Artificial:	Seasonal saltwater pond
Area (Ha):	0.50
Hydrological interaction with other wetland:	No -
Water salinity:	Salty (> 18.0 g/l)
Fresh water entry:	Catchment area (precipitation)
Surface water runoff:	Other
Open water area (%):	< 5
Hydroperiod:	Seasonal

Geographic information

Census district:	Northern Harbour
Island:	Malta
Local council:	San Giljan
Coordinates (WGS84):	14.493960 E - 35.923300 N

Wetland condition

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

Ramsar type	Coverage (%)
H -- Intertidal marshes; includes salt marshes, salt meadows, saltings, raised salt marshes; includes tidal brackish and freshwater marshes	

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	Ghadajjar ta' l-ilma helu fil-Qaliet (l/ta' San Giljan)	14780	100	Development Planning Act (Act VII of 2016)

CDDA protection status

CDDA code	Category
MT02	Area of Ecological Importance/Site of Scientific Importance

Ecosystem Services, Activities & Impacts

Ecosystem Services

Type of Ecosystem service	Ecosystem service	Scale of Benefit	Importance
Supporting services	Provision of habitat		

Activities on wetland

Activities	Intensity
010 = Habitat conservation	Medium
020 = Resource conservation	Medium
030 = Species conservation	Medium
040 = Land restoration	Low
090 = Other conservation activities	Low
720 = Trampling overuse	High
790 = Other pollution/human impacts/activities	High
954 = invasion by a species	Low

Activities on drainage basin

Activities	Intensity
010 = Habitat conservation	Low
020 = Resource conservation	Low

030 = Species conservation	Low
040 = Land restoration	Low
090 = Other conservation activities	Low
401 = continuous urbanisation	High
690 = Other leisure and tourism impacts	High
720 = Trampling overuse	High
790 = Other pollution/human impacts/activities	High
954 = invasion by a species	Medium

Impacts

Impact type	Intensity
VCD = Loss of floral diversity	

Habitats & Vegetation

Habitat types

Habitat types	Coverage (%)
1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>)	76 - 95

Vegetation types

Vegetation type	Coverage (%)
Ammophilous	
Halophytic	
Other	
Wet meadow	76 - 95

Species

Flora

Species	Dominance	Reference
<i>Allium commutatum</i>		
<i>Aloe vera</i>		
<i>Arthrocnemum macrostachyum</i>		
<i>Asparagus aphyllus</i>		
<i>Avena barbata</i>		
<i>Beta vulgaris</i> subsp. <i>Maritima</i>		
<i>Capparis orientalis</i>		
<i>Carthamus lanatus</i>		
<i>Cichorium intybus</i>		
<i>Cichorium spinosum</i>		
<i>Crithmum maritimum</i>		
<i>Crucianella rupestris</i>		
<i>Daucus carota</i>		
<i>Dittrichia viscosa</i>		
<i>Ecbalium elaterium</i>		
<i>Euphorbia pinea</i>		
<i>Frankenia pulverulenta</i>		
<i>Glebionis coronaria</i>		
<i>Hedypnois rhagadioloides</i>		
<i>Jacobaea crithmoides</i>		
<i>Jacobaea maritima</i> ssp. <i>Sicula</i>		

Juncus acutus		
Lagurus ovatus		
Lavatera arborea		
Limonium virgatum		
Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum		
Piptatherum miliaceum		
Pittosporum tobira		
Plantago lagopus		
Raphanus landra		
Spargularia sp.		

References

Representative Image & Map

