

PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF MONITORING THE BREEDING PERFORMANCE OF THE CORY'S SHEARWATER ON STROFADES ISLANDS (IONIAN SEA, WESTERN GREECE)

Karris Georgios¹, Stavros Xirouchakis², Kostas Grivas³, Tasos Dimalexis³, Stella Fraguedakis-Tsolis⁴, Sinos Giokas⁴ and Spyros Sfenthourakis⁴

¹ Department of Ecology and the Environment, Technological Educational Institution (TEI) of Ionian Islands, GR-29100, 2 Kalvos Square Zakynthos, Greece
E-mail: gkarris@teiion.gr

² Natural History Museum of Crete, PO Box 2208, GR-71409 Crete, Greece

³ Hellenic Ornithological Society, GR-10682 Vas. Irakliou 24 Athens, Greece

⁴ Section of Animal Biology, Department of Biology, University of Patras, GR-26500 Patra, Greece

A seabird survey was initiated in 2007 in the National Marine Park of Zakynthos in the Ionian Sea (western Greece). The study is part of a broader conservation project on the seabird populations of Greece aiming to assess their status, evaluate their breeding performance and investigate their foraging ecology. Here we report preliminary data on the population of the Cory's shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea diomedea*), in the Strofades island complex, which constitutes the most significant seabird species in this National Marine Park area. This long-lived and highly site-faithful species holds a substantial colony on Strofades islands, numbering 2,000-3,000 breeding pairs. In a sample of 103 nest sites that were being monitored during the last two breeding seasons (2007-2008), a hatching and fledging success of 83.5% and 84.9%, respectively, were found. Overall breeding success was 0.7 chicks per nesting pair per year, with most nest failures occurring during the incubation stage. Meanwhile 30% of hatchling losses were attributed to rat predation. Future research will focus on the assessment of the exact population size of the colony and its foraging activity in space and time.