



Scopoli's shearwater. Photo: JUPPIO archive

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# LIGHT POLLUTION

## AND HOW IT AFFECTS SEABIRDS



The **Lastovo Archipelago** is home to the only two breeding species of shearwater in Croatia: 70-85% of the **Yelkouan shearwater** and 35-65% of the **Scopoli's shearwater** national populations.



Zaklopatica. Photo: Ante Cugic





Lastovo town. Photo: Ante Gugic

## HOW CAN I HELP?

- Switch off unnecessary lights.
- Direct light to where it is needed (best full-cut off lights).
- Install light timers or motion sensors.
- Keep light intensity low.
- Keep pets indoors or on a leash.
- Keep an eye out for grounded birds and be prepared to help rescue them.

## WHEN DOES IT HAPPEN?

Yelkouan shearwaters leave the nest between the end of June and the end of July, while Scopoli's shearwaters do so in early October.



Yelkouan shearwater. Photo: B. Ječmenica

## WHAT IS LIGHT POLLUTION?

Light pollution is the presence of artificial brightness in the night sky, caused by inappropriate, misdirected and excessive use of light. It has multiple sources, including light coming from buildings, advertising signs, street lights and ships.

## HOW DOES IT AFFECT SHEARWATERS?

When the shearwater chicks leave their nests (fledglings), they can become disoriented by artificial light. As a result they can end up flying inland and collide with buildings or get stranded on roads. This can lead to the birds' death, either by the injuries sustained, starvation/ dehydration, being vulnerable to predation by pets, or as a victim of road kill.



Yelkouan shearwater. Photo: B. Ječmenica

Yelkouan shearwater fledgling. Photo: B. Metzger



## WHAT TO DO IF I FIND A GROUNDED BIRD?

- Be careful - the bird might try to bite you.
- Approach it from behind and carefully contain the wings with **both your hands**.
- Place it in a **cardboard box** with **air holes** and a soft cloth at the bottom.
- Do **not give food or water** to the bird.
- Handle the bird for the **bare minimum**, as this situation is very **stressful** for the animal.
- Leave the box in a **dark and dry area**, away from people and animals.

Please contact **Lastovo Nature Park** to arrange the bird's pick up and release.

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