

***BIRD FAUNA OF NORTH EASTERN AEGEAN SEA, GREECE:
ASSESSING RESIDENT AND MIGRATORY BIRD POPULATIONS
IN THE LAGOON OF ALIKI-KALLONI ON LESBOS ISLAND.***

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The study focuses on the Aegean Sea which lies between the Greek mainland and Turkey and particularly on the island of Lesbos in the north eastern Aegean Sea. The lagoon, where the research took place, is the third biggest saltpan of Greece, and is a significant resting place on one of the most important routes of the migration of birds.

The aim of the study was to record the breeding and migratory bird populations during the spring and the autumn periods. The methodology was a direct counting along the street where each individual was counted. Additionally, the avifauna was counted on blocks where groups of 20, 50, 100 or more individuals were separated in large flocks. Moreover, the activities of the birds as well as the factors that affect them were noted.

Bird fauna was categorized as either resident, passage migrant or breeding migratory species. During the survey 127 species were documented. In the spring period 101 bird species (65 % of them were migratory) and during the autumn period 76 bird species (51 % of them were migratory) were recorded. Of the 127 species 55% are species mentioned in the Red List of Threatened Species, protected by Ramsar Convention, and/or Natura 2000 project. In spring the numbers of birds were much higher than in autumn. Consequently, in spring there were more rare species than in autumn. However, in autumn a critically endangered (*Numenius tenuirostris*), species with less than 50 individuals left was documented.

The study showed that this significant bird area is totally exposed to great dangers. As a result, an effective nature conservation management is necessary to be initiated.

Keywords: Avifauna, migratory and resident birds, north east Aegean Sea, Salt pans, Lesbos Island, Greece.