

**MONITORING PROGRAMME FOR THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT
OF YELLOW-LEGGED GULL PREDATION ON LOGGERHEAD
TURTLE HATCHLINGS AT THE ZAKYNTHOS NATIONAL PARK,
GREECE**

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The Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*) is the most common and wide-spread larid in the Mediterranean and its numbers have dramatically increased over the past decades, causing significant impacts both on fauna and flora (not to mention human interests). Predation on other birds' species has been a common object of study; however, no studies have ever been focused on turtle hatchlings predation. Zakynthos Island is no exception on the increasing population of Yellow-legged Gull. Laganas Bay, on the south of Zakynthos, houses nearly half of the Loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*; classified as endangered species) nesting effort in Greece, which represents up to 60,6% of the documented nesting effort in the whole of the Mediterranean. During the past few years an increasing predatory behaviour of gulls on turtle hatchlings had been reported on Laganas Bay beaches. We here report on the development and results of the monitoring study taken place at Zakynthos National Marine Park during turtle hatching season 2007, along with preliminary results for season 2008.