



IL-MELLIEĦA

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Ghadira Natural Reserve



Ghadira Reserve is a nature reserve found in the northeast of Malta. It is located across a busy road from Mellieħa Bay beach, in a basin with both sides built up, only a few kilometers away is the town of Mellieħa .

The nature reserve was designated as the first Maltese reserve in 2001. This area is about 7 hectares and contains salt marshes, but also a freshwater area. The salt marshes are wet all year round, but in the summer, when there is little or no rain in Malta, the salinity of the water increases.

On the one hand, this facility is used for the protection and study of birds and plants, but also for the environmental education of school children. The reserve is accessible during guided tours on the trails from November to May. Because of its unfavorable location, the area is subject to heavy pressure from local residents. Acts of vandalism also occur frequently. Indeed, the sensitive wetlands are polluted by hydrocarbons or the vegetation is destroyed.

232 plant species inhabited Ghadira in 2007. Attempts have been made to reintroduce plants that are very rare in Malta, which were once present in Ghadira, but were destroyed by the construction of the coastal road and the resulting destruction of the dunes.

154 bird species were seen here in 2007, of which 10 were breeding locally and 72 were ringed . Malta is a central resting place on the migratory bird route across the Mediterranean. In addition,

where possible, the presence of other animal species is monitored, including easily identifiable vertebrates and invertebrates.