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Orientation: Integrated Management of the Sea
Specialization Area: Analysis and Environmental assessment
Research Line: 3.5 Biodiversity and littoral zone ecology



PhD project: Abundance, use of the habitat and spatial distribution of Balearic shearwater, gannet and Cory's shearwater in Portugal and Galicia

Supervisors: Dr. José Vingada (University of Minho)
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Summary: One of the main constraints to the enlargement of the Natura 2000 network to marine environments is the lack of research on marine habitats and species far from the coast. Therefore, it is important to refine the information on the target species populations and implement standardized and cost-effective census methodologies that may allow a constant long-term surveillance mechanism of their conservation status. In this sense, aerial surveys are one of the better ways to estimate distribution, abundance and habitat use by marine birds occurring along the Portuguese coast. In order to identify these potential areas it's of prime interest to: Understand the distribution and abundance of seabirds in Portuguese continental waters with special reference to Balearic shearwater, gannet and Cory's shearwater; Identify the spatiotemporal associations between seabirds and the different sources of impact on the Portuguese continental waters (fishing, oil drilling, energy exploration and navigation); Identify the habitat preferences of the Balearic shearwater, Cory's shearwater and gannet in Portuguese continental waters; Understand the modeling of sympatric occupation by seabirds in Portuguese continental waters.

