

# CAUSES OF ADMISSION FOR SEABIRDS TO THE TAFIRA WILDLIFE REHABILITATION CENTER IN GRAN CANARIA ISLAND, SPAIN: 2003-2013

J. Orós<sup>1</sup>, DVM, PhD; N. Montesdeoca<sup>1</sup>, DVM; J. A. Corbera<sup>1</sup>, DVM, PhD; P. Calabuig<sup>2</sup>, DVM

<sup>1</sup>Veterinary Faculty, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain; <sup>2</sup>Tafira Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, Gran Canaria, Spain

## ABSTRACT

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Recently, it has been estimated that the monitored portion of the global seabird population declined overall by 69.7% between 1950 and 2010.<sup>1</sup> Spain is the country of the European Union with most marine areas designated as Special Protection Areas for Birds.<sup>2</sup> However, no surveys have been published on causes of morbidity and mortality in seabirds in the Canary Islands.

### 2 MATERIAL AND METHODS

A total of 2,051 seabirds were studied. Primary causes of morbidity were classified into eleven categories: trauma, fishing gear, infectious/parasitic disease, metabolic/nutritional disease, glue trapping, orphaned young birds, crude oil, toxicosis, captivity, other causes, and unknown/undetermined.

### 3 RESULTS

Cory's Shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea borealis*) (n=400) and Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*) (n=980) were the species most frequently admitted. The most frequent causes of morbidity were trauma (41.83%), toxicosis (23.54%) and unknown/undetermined (15.94%). The other primary causes had frequencies below 10%. The most frequent cause of trauma was due to light pollution or dazzle (58.72%), mainly in Cory's Shearwater, White-faced Storm-Petrel (*Pelagodroma marina*), and Bulwer's Petrel (*Bulweria bulwerii*). Trend analyses showed that

admissions tended to increase among years. A total of 1,246 seabirds were released (68.34% of the 1,823 seabirds admitted alive).

#### **4 DISCUSSION**

Among seabirds included in our study, six species are currently included in the Spanish Catalogue of Menaced Species as “vulnerable” and one species as “in danger of extinction”.<sup>3</sup> This must alert regional government to intensify actions to prevent mainly light pollution and toxicosis caused by anthropogenic waste.

#### **5 CITATION INDEX**

1. Paleczny M., Hammill E., Karpouzi V., Pauly D. Population trend of the world’s monitored seabirds, 1950-2010. PLoS One 10(6): e0129342.
2. BirdLife International website. 2015. <http://www.birdlife.org>
3. Real Decreto 139/2011. Desarrollo del Listado de Especies Silvestres en Régimen de Protección Especial y del Catálogo Español de Especies Amenazadas. Madrid, Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Medio Rural y Marino. 2011

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