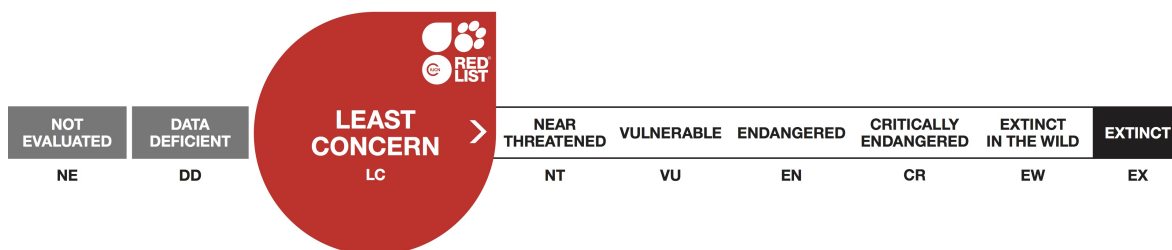


## *Ophrys melitensis*, Maltse Spider Orchid

Assessment by: Mifsud, S.



View on [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org)

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## Taxonomy

Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family
Plantae	Tracheophyta	Liliopsida	Asparagales	Orchidaceae

**Taxon Name:** *Ophrys melitensis* (Salkowski) J et P Devillers-Terschuren

**Synonym(s):**

- *Ophrys sphegodes* Mill. subsp. *melitensis* Salk.

**Common Name(s):**

- English: Maltse Spider Orchid

**Taxonomic Source(s):**

Mifsud, S. 2006. *Ophrys melitensis* on MaltaWildPlants.com. Available at: [http://www.maltawildplants.com/ORCH/Ophrys\\_melitensis.php](http://www.maltawildplants.com/ORCH/Ophrys_melitensis.php). (Accessed: May 2018).

**Taxonomic Notes:**

*Ophrys melitensis* is treated by some as one morphologically and phenologically highly variable entity of *Ophrys × flavicans*. The total range of *Ophrys × flavicans* extends from Cataluna across the Balearic Islands, southern France and mainland Italy to Dalmatia, Sicily and Malta (Pedersen and Faurholdt 2007).

## Assessment Information

**Red List Category & Criteria:** Least Concern [ver 3.1](#)

**Year Published:** 2018

**Date Assessed:** March 28, 2011

**Justification:**

This Mediterranean orchid is endemic to Malta. It is listed as Least Concern (LC) because new population data show that it is present in at least 50 sites spread over Malta, Comino and Gozo and it is highly unlikely that any single threat could affect more than three or four of these subpopulations at any time over the next ten years. Continuation of ongoing conservation measures directed to protect the living individuals and adequately protect and manage the habitat are recommended.

## Geographic Range

**Range Description:**

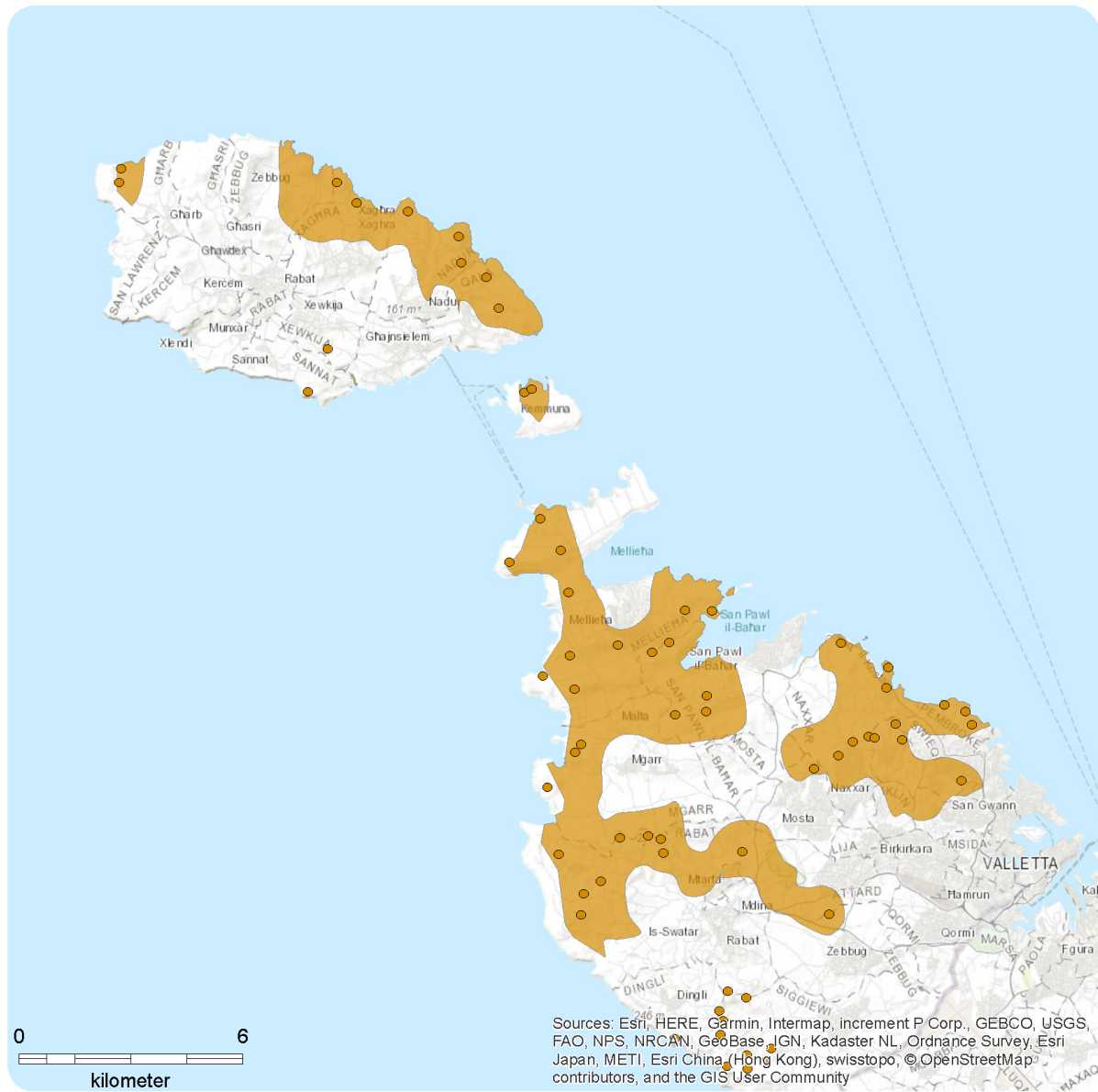
This orchid endemic to the Mediterranean is only known from the Maltese Islands of Malta, Comino and Gozo (Bartolo *et al.* 2001 and S. Mifsud pers. obs.) and often locally frequent where it occurs (Mifsud 2006).

**Country Occurrence:**

**Native:** Malta

# Distribution Map

*Ophrys melitensis*



**Range**

- Extant (resident)
- Extant (resident)

Compiled by:

IUCN Mediterranean Red List

NE
DD
LC
NT
VU
EN
CR
EW
EX

> **LEAST CONCERN**



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply any official endorsement, acceptance or opinion by IUCN.



## Population

This widespread but local species is often fairly frequent where present. Although there are no precise counts, the total population is estimated at 10,000 mature individuals. The population trend is unknown but there is evidence of continuous decline of the habitat of this species (Commission of the European Communities 2009, S. Mifsud pers. comm. 2015).

**Current Population Trend:** Unknown

## Habitat and Ecology (see Appendix for additional information)

The plant grows in grassy and karstic habitats, garrigue, phrygana, grassland, pre-desert scrub and steppic communities; it is also known amongst pine woodland undergrowth. It occurs in dry to moist soil in full sunlight to light shade (Pederson and Faurholdt 2007, Commission of the European Communities 2009).

**Systems:** Terrestrial

## Use and Trade

According to Schembri *et al.* (2002), this taxon is collected.

## Threats (see Appendix for additional information)

Although garrigue and steppic habitats are still relatively widespread, some areas have been subject to considerable human influence because such habitats were considered as 'wasteland' and as such have been either destroyed (e.g., due to development, transport and ancillary facilities or quarrying) or degraded; trampling, dumping and invasive alien species have been identified as main threats to this species (Pederson and Faurholdt 2007, Commission of the European Communities 2009).

## Conservation Actions (see Appendix for additional information)

A large proportion of the population falls within Natura 2000 sites. In Malta, it is strictly protected by Legal Notice 311/2006 of the Maltese Islands (Schembri *et al.* 2002) and considered a species of national interest with need of strict national protection (Government of Malta 2006). This species is listed under Annex II of the Habitats Directive (EEC 1992). It is included in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and Annex B of the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations (CITES 2018). It can be protected in two fundamental ways through specific protection of the living individuals and through protection and management of the habitats of the species.

## Credits

**Assessor(s):** Mifsud, S.

**Reviewer(s):** Lansdown, R.V., García, N. & Allen, D.J.

**Contributor(s):** Rankou, H., Alcázar Montañez, E., Collett, L. & Fay, M.

## Bibliography

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Pedersen, H.Æ. and Faurholdt, N. 2007. *Ophrys. The Bee Orchids of Europe*. Kew Publishing. Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, London.

Schembri, P.J., Baldacchino, A.E., Mallia, A., Schembri, T., Sant, M.J., Stevens, D.T. and Vella, S.J. 2002. Natural Resources, Fisheries and Agriculture. In: Axiak, V., Gauci, V., Mallia, A., Mallia, E., Schembri, P.J., Vella, A.J., and Vella, L. (eds), *State of the Environment Report for Malta*, pp. 180 pp.. Ministry for Home Affairs and the Environment.

## Citation

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## External Resources

For [Images and External Links to Additional Information](#), please see the [Red List website](#).

# Appendix

## Habitats

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Habitat	Season	Suitability	Major Importance?
1. Forest -> 1.4. Forest - Temperate	Resident	Suitable	Yes
3. Shrubland -> 3.4. Shrubland - Temperate	Resident	Suitable	Yes
3. Shrubland -> 3.8. Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation	Resident	Suitable	Yes
4. Grassland -> 4.4. Grassland - Temperate	Resident	Suitable	Yes

## Threats

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Threat	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact Score
1. Residential & commercial development -> 1.1. Housing & urban areas	Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.1. Ecosystem conversion 1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.2. Ecosystem degradation		
1. Residential & commercial development -> 1.2. Commercial & industrial areas	Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.1. Ecosystem conversion 1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.2. Ecosystem degradation		
2. Agriculture & aquaculture -> 2.3. Livestock farming & ranching -> 2.3.1. Nomadic grazing	Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.1. Ecosystem conversion 1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.2. Ecosystem degradation		
4. Transportation & service corridors -> 4.1. Roads & railroads	Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.1. Ecosystem conversion 1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.2. Ecosystem degradation		
5. Biological resource use -> 5.2. Gathering terrestrial plants -> 5.2.1. Intentional use (species is the target)	Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
	Stresses:	2. Species Stresses -> 2.1. Species mortality 2. Species Stresses -> 2.2. Species disturbance		
8. Invasive and other problematic species, genes & diseases -> 8.1. Invasive non-native/alien species/diseases -> 8.1.1. Unspecified species	Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
	Stresses:	2. Species Stresses -> 2.2. Species disturbance		
9. Pollution -> 9.1. Domestic & urban waste water -> 9.1.3. Type Unknown/Unrecorded	Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.1. Ecosystem conversion 1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.2. Ecosystem degradation		

## Conservation Actions in Place

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

<b>Conservation Actions in Place</b>
In-Place Land/Water Protection and Management
Occur in at least one PA: Yes
In-Place Education
Included in international legislation: Yes
Subject to any international management/trade controls: Yes

## Conservation Actions Needed

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

<b>Conservation Actions Needed</b>
1. Land/water protection -> 1.1. Site/area protection
2. Land/water management -> 2.1. Site/area management
2. Land/water management -> 2.2. Invasive/problematic species control
3. Species management -> 3.3. Species re-introduction -> 3.3.1. Reintroduction
3. Species management -> 3.4. Ex-situ conservation -> 3.4.1. Captive breeding/artificial propagation
5. Law & policy -> 5.1. Legislation -> 5.1.2. National level

## Additional Data Fields

<b>Distribution</b>
Estimated area of occupancy (AOO) (km <sup>2</sup> ): 140
Continuing decline in area of occupancy (AOO): No
Estimated extent of occurrence (EOO) (km <sup>2</sup> ): 321
Continuing decline in extent of occurrence (EOO): No
Lower elevation limit (m): 0
Upper elevation limit (m): 253
<b>Population</b>
Number of mature individuals: 10000
Continuing decline of mature individuals: Unknown
Extreme fluctuations: No
Population severely fragmented: No

<b>Habitats and Ecology</b>
Continuing decline in area, extent and/or quality of habitat: No



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