

## Little Egret

**Regno:** fauna

Birds

 [garzetta.jpg](#) [1]

### Little Egret - *Egretta garzetta*

Elegant, slender, pure white heron. Bill and legs black, feet yellow.

Nuptial plumage is characterised by elongated nape feathers and long fuzzy feathers on its back and wings called plumes.

Some dark individuals have been reported, attributed to sporadic cases of melanism or accidentals in Europe of dark morphs of the Western Reef Egret, *Egretta gularis schistacea*, an African species similar to our Little Egret.

The breeding grounds are similar to those of the Night Heron, a species with which it shares over 90% of its nesting sites (called heronries) in Italy.



[2]

The Little Egret usually catches smaller prey than other herons do. It employs several and more dynamic fishing techniques, like moving the bottom sediment with its feet in search of invertebrates or holding its wings half open to cast a shadow on the water to eliminate the reflection and attract tadpoles and small fish.

Short to medium range migratory species, with a partly sedentary Mediterranean component. The Little Egret is exclusively diurnal and outside the breeding season aggregates in dormitories where it passes the night.

About 30% of the total estimated European population breeds in Italy.

Its heronries are mainly found in the Po Valley, but it seems to be expanding and in the last fifteen years it has colonised several wetlands areas in Tuscany.

It nests in the heronries at Fucecchio Marshes and in the little heronry at Lake Sibolla.

**Source URL:** <http://zoneumidetoscane.it/en/little-egret>

#### Links:

[1] <http://zoneumidetoscane.it/sites/default/files/garzetta.jpg>

[2] <http://zoneumidetoscane.it/sites/default/files/Componenti/garzetta2.jpg>

## Little Egret

Published on Aree Umide della Toscana Settentrionale  
(<http://zoneumidetoscane.it>)

---