



Blue lines indicate the area meeting the ISRA Criteria; dashed lines indicate the suggested buffer for use in the development of appropriate place-based conservation measures

## EL TORO-SA DRAGONERA ISRA

### Mediterranean and Black Seas Region

#### SUMMARY

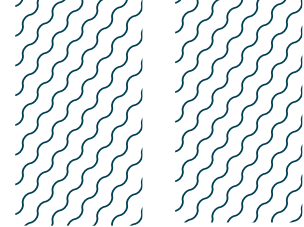
El Toro-Sa Dragonera is located on the southwest coast of Mallorca Island in the Balearic Sea off Spain, northwestern Mediterranean Sea. The area is characterised by coastal detrital substrates, with seagrass meadows and scattered coralligenous habitats. The area overlaps with two Ecologically and Biologically Significant Marine Areas and one Key Biodiversity Area, two marine reserves, and two Natura 2000 sites. Within the area there are: **threatened species** and **undefined aggregations** (Spiny Butterfly Ray *Gymnura altavela*).

#### CRITERIA

**Criterion A - Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C5 - Undefined Aggregations**

— —  
**SPAIN**  
 — —  
**0-50 metres**  
 — —  
**68.7 km<sup>2</sup>**  
 — —





## DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT

El Toro-Sa Dragonera is located on the southwest coast of Mallorca Island in the Balearic Sea off Spain between Sa Dragonera Island and Morro d'en Feliu (east Punta de El Toro). The Balearic Sea is a transitional area between two sub-basins: the Gulf of Lions, with cold, saline water, and the Alborán basin, with warmer and less saline Atlantic water (García et al. 1994). The Balearic Islands form a topographical barrier between the two, and their coasts are affected by one or other of these waters coming from the east, depending on the time of year and the mesoscale processes in adjacent areas (Pinot et al. 2002). The coastline in the area is characterised by cliffs and sandy bays, and a seafloor with a very gentle slope (Domínguez et al. 2013). The dominating habitat is coastal detrital substrates with seagrass meadows of Neptune Grass *Posidonia oceanica* in shallow and sheltered waters, and scattered coralligenous habitats (EEA 2021; Domínguez et al. 2013).

The area overlaps with two marine reserves: Illa del Toro, and the Illes Malgrats declared in 2004, and Freu de sa Dragonera declared in 2016 (GOIB 2023). The area also overlaps with two Natura 2000 sites: Espacio marino del poniente de Mallorca (ES0000519) included in the Birds Directive, and Sa Dragonera (ES0000221) included in both Birds and Habitats Directive (EEA 2021). The area also overlaps with two Ecologically and Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSA): the North-western Mediterranean Benthic Ecosystems EBSA (CBD 2023a), and the North-western Mediterranean Pelagic Ecosystems EBSA (CBD 2023b). It also overlaps with one Key Biodiversity Area (KBA), the Aguas del Poniente de Mallorca KBA (KBA 2023).

This Important Shark and Ray Area is benthopelagic and is delineated from 0 m to a depth of 50 m based on the distribution of the Qualifying Species in this area.

## ISRA CRITERIA

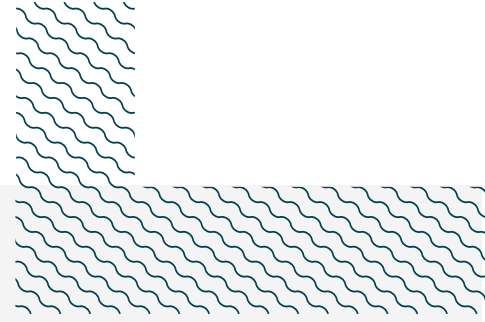
### CRITERION A – VULNERABILITY

The one Qualifying Species within the area is considered threatened with extinction according to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. The Spiny Butterfly Ray is assessed as Critically Endangered (Walls et al. 2016).

### SUB-CRITERION C5 – UNDEFINED AGGREGATIONS

El Toro-Sa Dragonera is an important area for undefined aggregations of one ray species. Spiny Butterfly Rays have been observed each year since 2017 regularly from the boreal late spring to mid-autumn (between May to October) at specific locations within the area between 0 and 50 m depth. Groups of up to nine individuals have been reported in an area of ~10,000 m<sup>2</sup> (G. Morey pers. obs. 2023). These observations have been made by recreational divers who dive regularly in this area down to 40 m for the last five years.





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## **Acknowledgments**

Gabriel Morey (Save the Med Foundation), Amanda Batlle Morera (IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group - ISRA Project), and Adriana Gonzalez-Pestana (IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group - ISRA Project) contributed and consolidated information included in this factsheet. We thank all participants of the 2023 ISRA Region 3 - Mediterranean and Black Seas workshop for their contributions to this process.

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## **Suggested citation**

**IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group. 2023.** El Toro-Sa Dragonera ISRA Factsheet. Dubai: IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group.

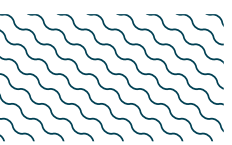
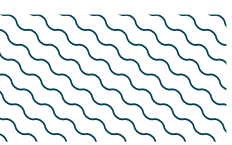
## QUALIFYING SPECIES

Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category	Global Depth Range (m)	ISRA Criteria/Sub-criteria Met								
				A	B	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1	D2
RAYS												
<i>Gymnura altavela</i>	Spiny Butterfly Ray	CR	10-150	X							X	

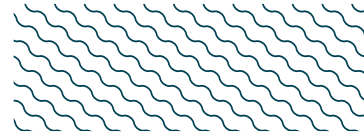
## SUPPORTING SPECIES

Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category
<b>SHARKS</b>		
<i>Scyliorhinus canicula</i>	Smallspotted Catshark	LC
<b>RAYS</b>		
<i>Aetomylaeus bovinus</i>	Duckbill Eagle Ray	CR
<i>Dasyatis pastinaca</i>	Common Stingray	VU
<i>Myliobatis aquila</i>	Common Eagle Ray	VU
<i>Raja radula</i>	Rough Skate	EN

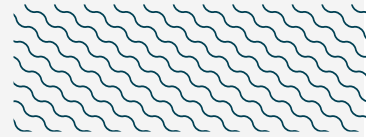
*IUCN Red List of Threatened Species Categories are available by searching species names at [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org). Abbreviations refer to: CR, Critically Endangered; EN, Endangered; VU, Vulnerable; NT, Near Threatened; LC, Least Concern; DD, Data Deficient.*



## SUPPORTING INFORMATION



There are additional indications that this area may hold the regular presence of the Rough Skate, a range-restricted species. This species occurs year-round in the area and is regularly encountered and caught in local fisheries (G. Morey unpubl. data 2014-2016) and by divers who report these encounters (especially around El Toro Island) through the citizen science platform Observadores del Mar ([www.observadoresdelmar.es/](http://www.observadoresdelmar.es/)). This species occurs only in the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem. However, further information is needed to confirm the importance of this area, compared to other areas.



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