

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

BABY BANK ISRA

New Zealand & Pacific Islands Region

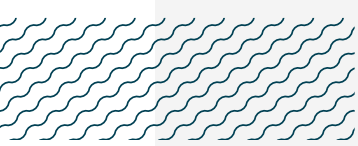
SUMMARY

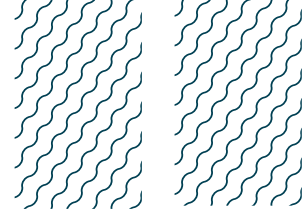
Baby Bank is located in Guam, a United States of America island territory in Micronesia. The area is a seamount situated ~40 km southwest of Guam Island, below Galvez Bank seamount. The area around it is characterised by rocky substrate with sparse coral cover and intermittent sandy patches. It is influenced by the North Pacific Equatorial Current. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **reproductive areas** (Grey Reef Shark *Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos*).

CRITERIA

Criterion A - Vulnerability; Sub-criterion C1 - Reproductive Areas

— —
GUAM — —
 — —
0-40 metres — —
 — —
3.54 km² — —
 — —





DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT

Baby Bank is located in Guam, a United States of America island territory in Micronesia. It is situated in 'The Southern Banks', which are located ~22-47 km southwest of Guam Island in the southern Marianas Archipelago (Orr 2019). The Southern Banks includes three seamounts: Baby Bank, Santa Rosa Reef, and Galvez Bank. Baby Bank is often referred to as part of the Galvez Bank seamount, however, the seamounts are separated by a 625 m deep channel, which is 4.6 km wide (Orr 2019). Baby Bank is the deepest seamount (~40 m) with the smallest surface area (8.72 km²) of seamounts in The Southern Banks. Guam is influenced by currents from the North Pacific Equatorial Current and the area is characterised by rocky substrate with sparse coral cover and intermittent sandy patches (Orr 2019).

This Important Shark and Ray Area is benthopelagic and is delineated from surface waters (0 m) to 40 m depth based on the bathymetry of the area.

ISRA CRITERIA

CRITERION A - VULNERABILITY

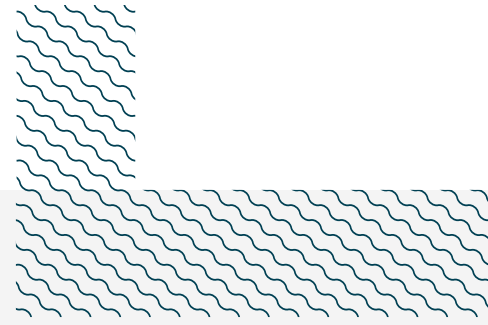
One Qualifying Species considered threatened with extinction according to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species regularly occurs in the area. This is the Endangered Grey Reef Shark (Simpfendorfer et al. 2020).

SUB-CRITERION C1 - REPRODUCTIVE AREAS

Baby Bank is an important reproductive area for one shark species.

Young-of-the-year (YOY) Grey Reef Sharks have been recorded in the area during three snorkelling and freediving surveys in March 2018 and March 2019 (Orr 2019; M Orr unpubl. data 2024). These are the first and only shark-focused surveys undertaken at the three seamounts that comprise 'The Southern Banks'. The highest number of YOY Grey Reef Sharks were recorded from this area from the three surveys undertaken (M Orr unpubl. data 2024). Grey Reef Sharks at this life stage were found to be 9.3 and 5.6 times higher in abundance in this area compared to the surrounding seamounts over successive years (Orr 2019). This is a regionally important reproductive area, especially considering that Guam has a very low shark abundance (MacNeil et al. 2020). Overall, aggregations of 14-28 YOY were observed in Baby Bank during each survey, with fewer being recorded in Galvez Bank and Santa Rosa. All individuals had an estimated size ranging between 69-87 cm total length (TL; estimated from calibrated still images; Orr 2019; M Orr unpubl. data 2024). The size-at-birth of this species is 45-60 cm TL (Ebert et al. 2021). An individual with a partially closed umbilical scar was also observed during the 2018 survey in this area (Orr 2019). During the surveys, adults were generally observed on top of the seamount but data on these animals were not recorded. Surveys were undertaken specifically in this location due to prior knowledge of opportunistic observations of Grey Reef Sharks at this life stage (M Orr pers. obs. 2024). Additional temporal data are required to determine seasonality.





Acknowledgments

Michael Orr (University of Guam) and Ryan Charles (IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group - ISRA Project) contributed and consolidated information included in this factsheet. We thank all participants of the 2024 ISRA Region 10 - New Zealand and Pacific Islands workshop for their contributions to this process.

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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	
SHARKS													
<i>Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos</i>	Grey Reef Shark	EN	0-280	X		X							

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



REFERENCES

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MacNeil MA, Chapman DD, Heupel M, Simpfendorfer CA, Heithaus M, Meekan M, Harvey E, Goetze J, Kiszka J, Bond ME, et al. 2020. Global status and conservation potential of reef sharks. *Nature* 583(7818): 801–806. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-020-2519-y>

Orr M. 2019. Potential grey reef shark (*Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos*) nursery on seamounts southwest of Guam. *Micronesica* 41: 1–8.

Simpfendorfer C, Fahmi, Bin Ali A, Dharmadi, Utzurrum JAT, Seyha L, Maung A, Bineesh KK, Yuneni RR, Sianipar A, et al. 2020. *Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos*. *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* 2020: e.T39365A173433550. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2020-3.RLTS.T39365A173433550.en>