

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

NEW BRIGHTON ISRA
North American Pacific Region

SUMMARY

New Brighton is located in California, United States of America. The area sits in Monterey Bay and is characterised by sandy substrates. It is influenced by wind-driven upwelling mostly in the boreal spring and summer. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **undefined aggregations** (White Shark *Carcharodon carcharias*).

CRITERIA

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

— —
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
 — —

0-17 metres
 — —

2.70 km²
 — —





DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT

New Brighton is located in California, United States of America (USA). The area sits in the northern part of Monterey Bay and includes multiple beaches from New Brighton in the west to Seacliff in the east. It is characterised by sandy substrates.

The area is influenced by wind-driven upwelling, which is strongest during the boreal spring and summer (April–July) and almost absent during winter (Harcourt-Baldwin & Diedericks 2006). Circulation is dominated by the southward-flowing California Current, with associated upwelling bringing cool, nutrient-rich water to the surface which is enhanced by the Monterey Submarine Canyon (Castro et al. 2018). The region experiences seasonal current reversals, with the poleward-flowing Davidson Current becoming active during autumn and winter months (Johnson et al. 2015).

This Important Shark and Ray Area is benthic and pelagic and is delineated from inshore and surface waters (0 m) to 17 m based on the bathymetry of the area.

ISRA CRITERIA

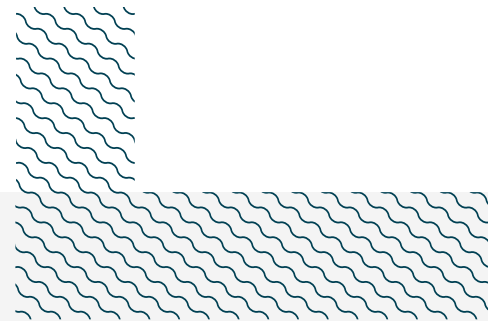
CRITERION A – VULNERABILITY

One Qualifying Species considered threatened with extinction according to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species regularly occurs in the area. This is the Vulnerable White Shark (Rigby et al. 2019).

SUB-CRITERION C5 – UNDEFINED AGGREGATIONS

New Brighton is an important area for undefined aggregations of one shark species.

Acoustic tagging, boat-based surveys, and drone surveys have confirmed the regular presence of White Shark aggregations in the area (Tanaka et al. 2021; DiGiacomo et al. 2025, 2026). Surveys (n = 48) conducted between 2018–2024 recorded the presence of 55 White Sharks in the area. The majority of these animals were either juveniles (n = 43; 78.2%) or sub-adults (n = 11; 20.0%) based on their size (DiGiacomo et al. 2025, 2026). Juveniles in the region range between 175–300 cm total length (TL) while sub-adults measure between 300–360 cm TL for males and 300–450 cm TL (DiGiacomo et al. 2026). The average number (\pm standard deviation) of White Sharks recorded per day showed the presence of aggregations in all years, from a minimum of 4.7 ± 2.7 individuals/day in 2023 to a maximum of 8.3 ± 5.4 individuals/day in 2019. Aggregations were confirmed with acoustic telemetry monitoring between 2022–2025. Aggregations (defined as the presence of >3 unique White Sharks in the same receiver within the same 5-minute window) were detected in 124 instances (DiGiacomo et al. 2026; BA Block et al. unpubl. data 2026). There was a seasonal signal, with more aggregations recorded in summer (June–August; Montalto 2025; BA Block et al. unpubl. data 2026). While sub-adult and adult White Shark aggregations are known to occur regularly in islands and coastal areas from Central California (Andrzejaczek et al. 2025), aggregations of juveniles in the Monterey Bay region have appeared recently (Tanaka et al. 2021). In this area, an increase in the presence of juveniles was recorded after the marine heatwaves of 2014–2016 (Tanaka et al. 2021). Additional information is required to understand the nature and function of these aggregations.



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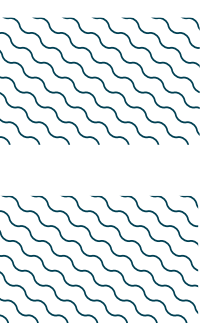
QUALIFYING SPECIES

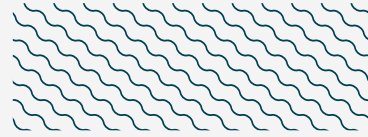
Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category	Global Depth Range (m)	ISRA Criteria/Sub-criteria Met									
				A	B	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1	D2	
SHARKS													
<i>Carcharodon carcharias</i>	White Shark	VU	0-1,277	X							X		

SUPPORTING SPECIES

Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category
RAYS		
<i>Myliobatis californica</i>	Bat Ray	LC
<i>Platyrhinoidis triseriata</i>	Thornback Ray	LC

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.





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