

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

ALCALÁ-PLAYA SAN JUAN ISRA

European Atlantic Region

SUMMARY

Alcalá-Playa San Juan is located on the western coast of Tenerife Island, Canary Islands, Spain. It encompasses the coastline between Alcalá and San Juan beaches bounded by rocky outcrops. The area is characterised by sandbanks and rocky reefs. The area is influenced by the Canary Current and the seasonal coastal upwelling system off northwest Africa, which brings cold, nutrient-rich waters, enhancing primary productivity especially from the boreal spring to autumn. Within this area there are: **threatened species** (Common Stingray *Dasyatis pastinaca*); and **undefined aggregations** (e.g., Round Fantail Stingray *Taeniurus grabatus*).

CRITERIA

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

—	—
SPAIN	—
—	—
0-30 metres	—
—	—
3.30 km²	—
—	—





DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT

Alcalá-Playa San Juan is located on the western coast of Tenerife Island, Canary Islands, Spain. It encompasses the coastline between Alcalá and San Juan beaches bounded by rocky outcrops. The area is characterised by sandbanks and rocky reefs (EKM Meyers pers. obs. 2025).

The area is influenced by the Canary Current and the seasonal coastal upwelling system off northwest Africa, which brings cold, nutrient-rich waters, enhancing primary productivity especially from the boreal spring to autumn (Gómez-Letona et al. 2017).

This area overlaps with the Oceanic Islands and Seamounts of the Canary Region Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area (EBSA; CBD 2025).

This Important Shark and Ray Area is benthic and is delineated from inshore and surface waters (0 m) to 30 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 Common Stingray (Jabado et al. 2021).

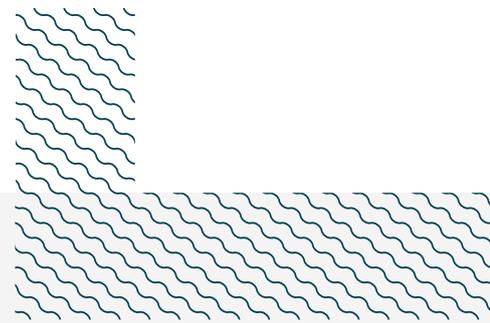
SUB-CRITERION C5 – UNDEFINED AGGREGATIONS

Alcalá-Playa San Juan is an important area for undefined aggregations of two ray species.

During recreational diving activities at this well-known site, popular for regular and predictable sightings of rays, citizen scientists and divers have documented year-round aggregations of Common Stingray and Round Fantail Stingray. Daily diving (weather permitting) has been ongoing since 2019, with sightings of 1–8 individuals of each of these species recorded on each dive (Pama Diving pers. comm. 2025).

Between 2021–2025, Common Stingrays were consistently observed in the area throughout the year (RedPROMAR Gobierno de Canarias 2025; Pama Diving pers. comm. 2025). Aggregations were regularly reported by recreational divers and citizen scientists. Aggregations ranged between 3–5 Common Stingrays (Pama Diving pers. comm. 2025). Additional data on the size and sex of the individuals remain unavailable. Further information is required to understand the nature and function of these aggregations.

Between 2021–2025, Round Fantail Stingrays were consistently observed in the area throughout the year (RedPROMAR Gobierno de Canarias 2025). Aggregations were regularly reported by recreational divers and citizen scientists. Aggregations ranged between 3–8 Round Fantail Stingray, with at least four aggregations documented in 2023 and 2025 (RedPROMAR Gobierno de Canarias 2025; Pama Diving pers. comm. 2025). Additional data on the size and sex of the individuals remain unavailable. Further information is required to understand the nature and function of these aggregations.



Acknowledgments

Alicia Rodríguez-Juncá (Universidad de la Laguna; Manta Catalog Canarias), Eva KM Meyers (Angel Shark Project; Leibniz Institute for the Analysis of Biodiversity Change), David Jiménez-Alvarado (Angel Shark Project; Universidad Las Palmas de Gran Canaria; Rays of Paradise), and Marta D Palacios (IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group - ISRA Project) contributed and consolidated information included in this factsheet. We thank all participants of the 2025 ISRA Region 02 - European Atlantic workshop for their contributions to this process.

This factsheet has undergone review by the ISRA Independent Review Panel prior to its publication.

This project was funded by the Shark Conservation Fund, a philanthropic collaborative pooling expertise and resources to meet the threats facing the world's sharks and rays. The Shark Conservation Fund is a project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors.

Suggested citation

IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group. 2025. Alcalá-Playa San Juan ISRA Factsheet. Dubai: IUCN SSC Shark Specialist Group.

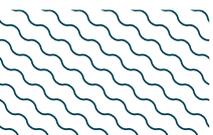
QUALIFYING SPECIES

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>Dasyatis pastinaca</i>	Common Stingray	VU	0-200	X						X		
<i>Taeniurops grabatus</i>	Round Fantail Stingray	NT	0-450							X		

SUPPORTING SPECIES

Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category
SHARKS		
<i>Squatina squatina</i>	Angelshark	CR
RAYS		
<i>Bathytoshia lata</i>	Brown Stingray	VU
<i>Gymnura altavela</i>	Spiny Butterfly Ray	EN
<i>Myliobatis aquila</i>	Common Eagle Ray	CR
<i>Torpedo marmorata</i>	Marbled Torpedo Ray	VU

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

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). 2025. Oceanic Islands and Seamounts of the Canary Region. Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs). Available at: <https://chm.cbd.int/database/record?documentID=263484> Accessed July 2025.

Gómez-Letona M, Ramos AG, Coca J, Arístegui J. 2017. Trends in primary production in the Canary Current Upwelling System—A regional perspective comparing remote sensing models. *Frontiers in Marine Science* 4: 370. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2017.00370>

Jabado RW, Chartrain E, De Bruyne G, Derrick D, Dia M, Diop M, Doherty P, Leurs GHL, Metcalfe K, Pacoureaux N, et al. 2021. *Dasyatis pastinaca*. *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* 2021: e.T161453A124488102. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2021-2.RLTS.T161453A124488102.en>

RedPROMAR Gobierno de Canarias. 2025. Red de Observadores del Medio Marino en Canarias, Gobierno de Canarias. Available at: <https://redpromar.org/home> Accessed July 2025.