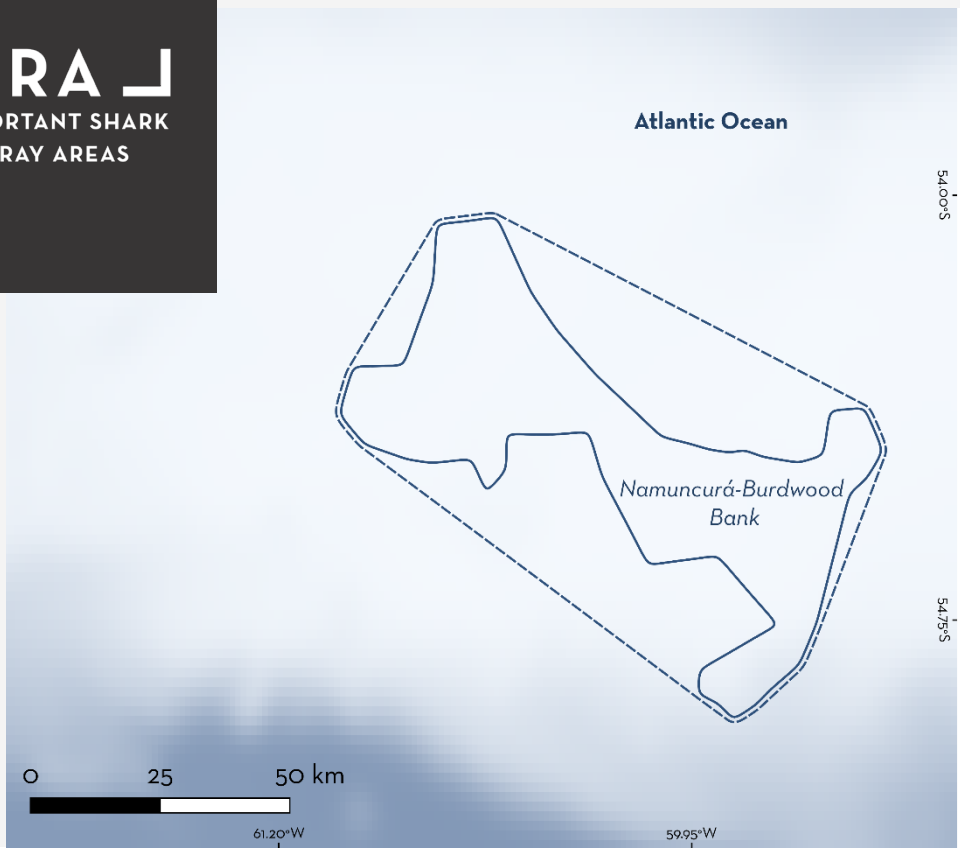
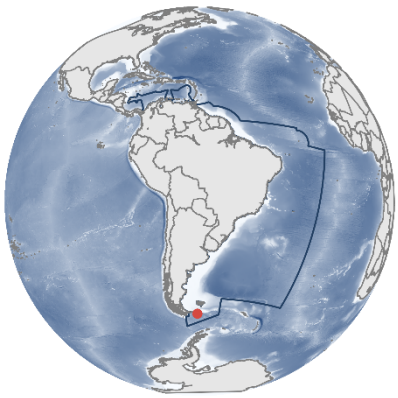
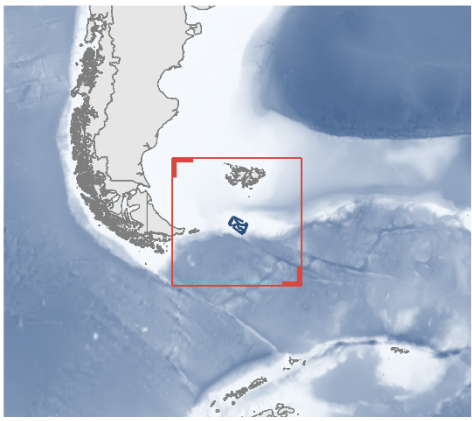
ISRA
IMPORTANT SHARK AND RAY AREAS







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

**The references included in this document are made exclusively for academic/scientific purposes and do not have any implications with regard to the recognition of the territorial sovereignty or the legal status of a State, territory, area or its authorities, when relevant. A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas), South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (Islas Georgias del Sur e Islas Sandwich del Sur) and the surrounding maritime areas.*

NAMUNCURÁ-BURDWOOD BANK ISRA

South American Atlantic Region

SUMMARY

Namuncurá-Burdwood Bank is located on a submarine plateau east of Isla de los Estados, in Argentina and Falkland Islands (Malvinas). It includes part of the Burdwood Bank plateau and part of its the south-central slope. The habitat is characterised by substrates covered with sponges, soft corals, and bryozoans. The area is influenced by the Malvinas Current that circulates around Burdwood. The area overlaps with the Namuncurá-Banco Burdwood I and Namuncurá-Banco Burdwood II Marine Protected Areas. Within this area there are: **reproductive areas** (e.g., Broadnose Skate *Bathyraja brachyurops*).

CRITERIA

Sub-criterion C1 – Reproductive Areas

ARGENTINA, FALKLAND ISLANDS (MALVINAS)*

70–785 metres

2,995.5 km²

DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT

Namuncurá-Burdwood Bank is located on a submarine plateau 150 km east of Isla de los Estados, Argentina and Falkland Islands (Malvinas). It includes part of the Burdwood Bank plateau and part of its south-central slope. Burdwood Bank is bordered to the north by the Malvinas Trough, which separates it from the Malvinas Plateau and extends eastward (Guerrero et al. 1999). The habitat is characterised by substrate covered with sponges, soft corals, and bryozoans (Falabella 2017). The area is influenced by the Malvinas Current that circulates around Burdwood Bank in an anticyclonic pattern, carrying cold subantarctic waters and bringing nutrient-rich upwellings to the surface (Piola & Gordon 1989). Surface temperatures range from 4–8°C, with salinity levels between 33.8–34.2 g/L. At the seabed, conditions remain stable, with temperatures between 4–5°C and salinity ~34 g/L (Falabella 2017).

This area overlaps with the Namuncurá-Banco Burdwood I and Namuncurá-Banco Burdwood II Marine Protected Areas (UNEP-WCMC & IUCN 2025 a, b).

This Important Shark and Ray Area is benthic and subsurface and is delineated from 70–785 m based on the bathymetry in the area.

ISRA CRITERIA

SUB-CRITERION C1 – REPRODUCTIVE AREAS

Namuncurá-Burdwood Bank is an important reproductive area for three ray species.

High densities of egg cases for Broadnose Skate, Patagonian Skate, and Cuphead Skate were found in the area (Matusevich et al. 2023). Between 2016–2018, four research cruises conducted bottom trawls surveys on the southern portion of the southwest Atlantic at depths of 33–785 m (Matusevich et al. 2023). Sampling employed a small bottom trawl net (50 mm mesh in the wings, and 20 mm in the cod end; horizontal opening 6 m) with trawling durations of 5–20 minutes at speeds of 1.5–5 knots, resulting in a total of 110 fishing hauls. Catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE) for each species' egg cases was calculated based on the area swept by survey trawls (Alverson & Pereyra 1969) expressed as egg cases per km² (egg cases/km²). After taxonomic identification, the number of egg cases per haul for each species was recorded (Matusevich et al. 2023).

Broadnose Skate egg cases were collected in the area and adjacent regions of Burdwood Bank. Egg cases from this species were the most frequently encountered during the surveys, accounting for 29.2% of observations. These were found at depths between 81–608 m, with the highest densities recorded at 98 m (Matusevich et al. 2023). The density of Broadnose Skate egg cases ranged from 25–2,411 egg cases/km² (Matusevich et al. 2023). The highest densities were observed within the area including all four hauls with densities between 2,000–2,401 egg cases/km², two hauls (of the four) with 1,000–2,000 egg cases/km², and two hauls (of the four) with 500–1,000 egg cases/km² (Matusevich et al. 2023).

Patagonian Skate egg cases were collected in the area and adjacent regions of Burdwood Bank. Egg cases of this species were the second most frequently encountered during the surveys, accounting for 24.6% of observations. These were found at depths ranging from 78–785 m, with the highest densities recorded at 124 m (Matusevich et al. 2023). The density of Patagonian Skate egg cases ranged from 40–1,671 egg cases/km² (Matusevich et al. 2023). The highest densities were observed within the area including all two hauls with densities between 1,000–1,671 egg cases/km², one haul (of the six) with 500–1,000 egg cases/km², and five hauls (of the eight) with 200–500 egg cases/km² (Matusevich et al. 2023). Based on initial (n = 2 individuals) and advanced-stage embryos (n = 1) and

neonates (n = 1) captured in the area and adjacent regions, a potential egg-laying season was established during the austral autumn and spring months (March–November; Matusevich et al. 2023).

Cuphead Skate egg cases were collected in the area and adjacent regions of Burdwood Bank. Egg cases from this species were the fourth most frequently encountered during the surveys across the broader region, accounting for 4.6% of observations. The density of Cuphead Skate egg cases ranged from 254–1,446 egg cases/km^2 (Matusevich et al. 2023). The highest densities were observed within this area including the two hauls with higher densities of 1,446 egg cases/km^2 at 694 and 785 m depths (Matusevich et al. 2023).

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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
RAYS												
Bathyraja brachyurops	Broadnose Skate	NT	28–604			X						
Bathyraja macloviana	Patagonian Skate	NT	50–515			X						
Bathyraja scaphiops	Cuphead Skate	LC	30–925			X						

SUPPORTING SPECIES

Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category
RAYS		
Bathyraja magellanica	Magellan Skate	LC
Psammobatis rudis	Smallthorn Sandskate	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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