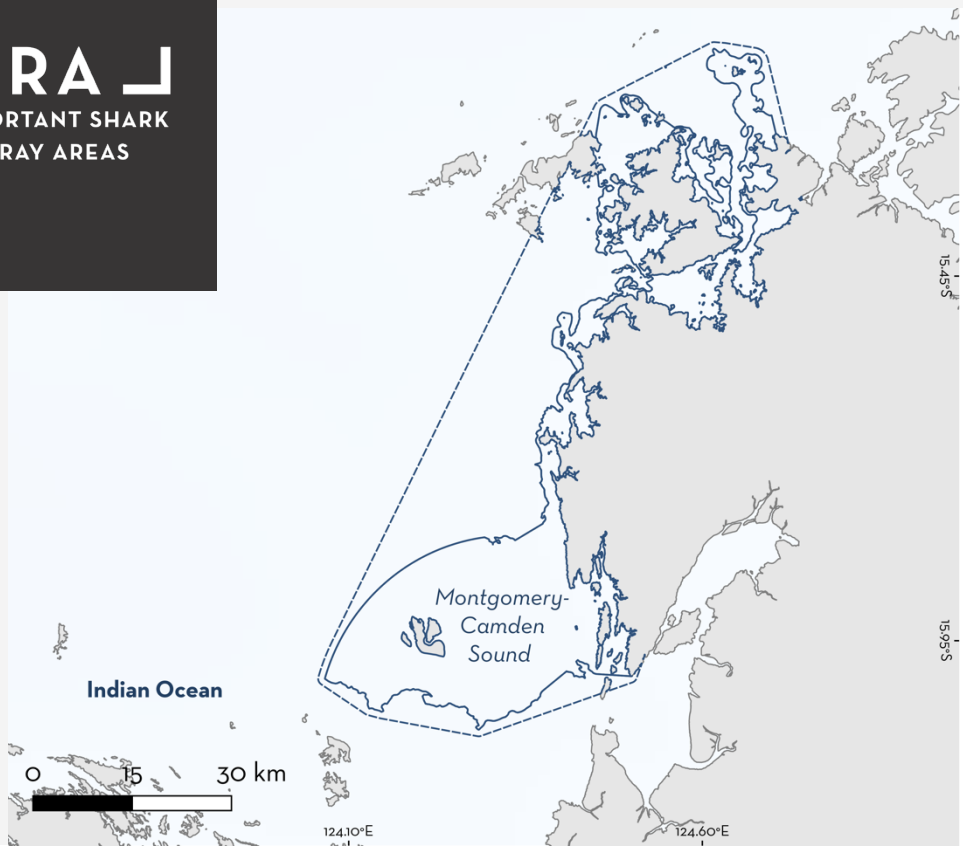
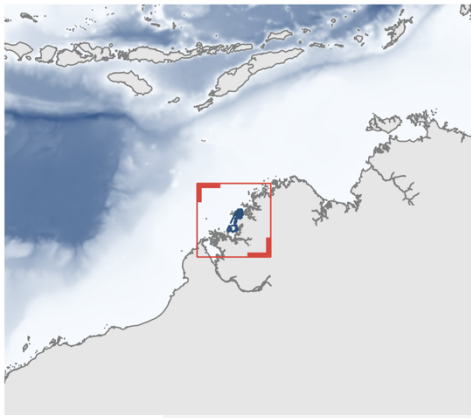
ISRA
IMPORTANT SHARK AND RAY AREAS





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

MONTGOMERY-CAMDEN SOUND ISRA

Australia and Southeast Indian Ocean Region

AUSTRALIA

0–20 metres

1,414.6 km²

SUMMARY

Montgomery-Camden Sound is located in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, Australia. It is situated in Dambimangari Country. This area sits in Camden Sound and Collier Bay and includes Montgomery Reef (Yowjab) and Montgomery Island (Yawajaba). This area is a complex, shallow inshore seascape dominated by an extensive intertidal reef platform, mosaic sand flats, macroalgal beds, expansive shallow seagrass meadows, and mangrove forests on sheltered bays, islets, and inlets. This area overlaps with Lalang-garram/Camden Sound Marine Park. Within this area there are: **threatened species** and **reproductive areas** (Blacktip Reef Shark *Carcharhinus melanopterus*).

CRITERIA

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

DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT

Montgomery-Camden Sound is located in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, Australia. It is situated in Dambimangari Country. This area sits in Camden Sound and Collier Bay and includes Montgomery Reef (Yowjab) and Montgomery Island (Yawajaba). This area is a complex, shallow inshore seascape dominated by an extensive intertidal reef platform at Montgomery Reef, and a mosaic of tidal channels, sand flats, macroalgal beds, and expansive seagrass meadows in shallow sheltered bays and flats, and mangrove forests on sheltered islets and inlets. Montgomery Reef is Australia's largest inshore reef (WA DPIRD 2025). Calcareous algae in the form of rhodoliths are the predominant reef building organisms (WA DPIRD 2025). Corals have a flattened appearance and mostly grow around the edges of shallow pools.

This area has an unusual wide tidal range (WA DPIRD 2025). The outward movement of spring tides forms a torrent of water, creating a river cutting through the reef and hundreds of cascading waterfalls (WA DPIRD 2025). This drives strong currents through channels and passages, and high turbidity zones. Rainfall is typically restricted to the summer monsoonal period between December–May.

This area overlaps with Lalang-garram/Camden Sound Marine Park (WA DBCA 2025).

This Important Shark and Ray Area is benthic and pelagic and is delineated from inshore and surface waters (0 m) to 20 m based on the depth range of Qualifying Species in 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 Blacktip Reef Shark (Simpfendorfer et al. 2020).

SUB-CRITERION C1 – REPRODUCTIVE AREAS

Montgomery-Camden Sound is an important reproductive area for one shark species.

Synthesised data from the Global Archive and The Fish Collective for Baited Remote Underwater Video System (BRUVS) surveys were extracted after quality control was undertaken using CheckEM (GlobalArchive 2025; The Fish Collective 2025; Gibbons et al. in press). From ~5,200 BRUVS surveys conducted mostly in Western Australia (2011–2024) within the geographic range of Blacktip Reef Sharks, stereo-BRUVS yielded body size measurements for 845 Blacktip Reef Sharks. Of these, 266 (31%) were neonates or young-of-the-year (YOY) (measuring 44.0–73.9 cm total length; TL) (GlobalArchive 2025; The Fish Collective 2025). In northeastern Australia, size-at-birth and YOY ranges for Blacktip Reef Shark are 58–67 cm TL and 58–73 cm TL, respectively (Chin et al. 2013). For this assessment, YOY are defined as individuals <74 cm TL. Between 2013–2015, 280 BRUVS were deployed in this area between 0–35 m depth. A total of 86 neonate and YOY (47.2–73.4 cm TL) Blacktip Reef Sharks were recorded in this area (2013 = 58; 2014 = 23; 2015 = 5), representing 32% of all records in the nation-wide BRUVS dataset (GlobalArchive 2025; The Fish Collective 2025). Within this area, 22 adults were recorded, representing 12% of all adults documented in the nation-wide BRUVS dataset.

Between 2013–2015, 484 BRUVS surveys were conducted in this region, with Blacktip Reef Sharks detected on 159 deployments (32%). Fourteen aggregations with a MaxN (maximum number of individuals of a species observed in a single frame) of 3–7 individuals were recorded during this period (GlobalArchive 2025; The Fish Collective 2025). Additional BRUVS surveys were undertaken at Montgomery Reef in September 2013, June 2014, and August 2015 at depths of 2–37 m. Across 56 deployments in this location, Blacktip Reef Sharks were observed on 23 deployments (41%), with ten aggregations (MaxN: 3–5 individuals) reported during this period (FinPrint unpubl. data 2016).

Tourism conducted in this area reports Blacktip Reef Sharks as a common species observed and is the only species of shark mentioned in online posts, including the Western Australia government webpage (TrueNorth 2024; NGA 2025; WA DPIRD 2025).

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Vanessa Bettcher (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 2025 ISRA Region 08 – Australia and Southeast Indian Ocean workshop for their contributions to this process.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognise the continuing connection to land, waters, and culture. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

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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												
Carcharhinus melanopterus	Blacktip Reef Shark	VU	0–100	X		X						

SUPPORTING SPECIES

Scientific Name	Common Name	IUCN Red List Category
SHARKS		
Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos	Grey Reef Shark	EN
Carcharhinus coatesi	Australian Blackspot Shark	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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