



Ramsar Information Sheet

Published on 22 December 2023

Update version, previously published on : 24 September 2001

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Overseas territories) Sea Lion Island



Designation date	24 September 2001
Site number	1104
Coordinates	52°26'S 59°05'59"W
Area	1 655,00 ha

<https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris/1104>

Created by RSIS V.1.6 on - 22 December 2023

Color codes

Fields back-shaded in light blue relate to data and information required only for RIS updates.

Note that some fields concerning aspects of Part 3, the Ecological Character Description of the RIS (tinted in purple), are not expected to be completed as part of a standard RIS, but are included for completeness so as to provide the requested consistency between the RIS and the format of a 'full' Ecological Character Description, as adopted in Resolution X.15 (2008). If a Contracting Party does have information available that is relevant to these fields (for example from a national format Ecological Character Description) it may, if it wishes to, include information in these additional fields.

1 - Summary

Summary

Sea Lion Island is an isolated island, 17 km off the southern tip of East Falkland, noted as an important Falkland breeding site for Southern Sea Lion *Otaria byronia* and Southern Elephant Seal *Mirounga leonina*. Unusually in the Falklands, the island is free from introduced cats, rats and mice resulting in a diverse community of land birds and breeding seabirds.

The island is made up of two rocky plateaus, well vegetated with oceanic heath and mixed grassland on their higher points, joined by a broad sandy beach. It retains, for an inhabited and formerly farmed island, unusually large stand of Tussac Grass round the coastline above the sandy or pebbly shores, although past overgrazing has resulted in erosion in some areas. There are permanent pools and boggy ground which provide habitat for waterbirds.

The main economic activity currently is wildlife tourism with about 2,000 visitors a year. The island was managed as a sheep farm from at least 1904 until about 1997 and last remaining sheep removed in 2008.

2 - Data & location

2.1 - Formal data

2.1.1 - Name and address of the compiler of this RIS

Responsible compiler

Institution/agency

Postal address

National Ramsar Administrative Authority

Institution/agency

Postal address

2.1.2 - Period of collection of data and information used to compile the RIS

From year

To year

2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish)

2.1.4 - Changes to the boundaries and area of the Site since its designation or earlier update

(Update) A. Changes to Site boundary Yes No

(Update) B. Changes to Site area No change to area

(Update) For secretariat only: This update is an extension

2.1.5 - Changes to the ecological character of the Site

(Update) 6b i. Has the ecological character of the Ramsar Site (including applicable Criteria) changed since the previous RIS? No

2.2 - Site location

2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

b) Digital map/image

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Former maps

Boundaries description

2.2.2 - General location

a) In which large administrative region does the site lie?

b) What is the nearest town or population centre?

2.2.3 - For wetlands on national boundaries only

a) Does the wetland extend onto the territory of one or more other countries? Yes No

b) Is the site adjacent to another designated Ramsar Site on the territory of another Contracting Party? Yes No

2.2.4 - Area of the Site

Official area, in hectares (ha):

Area, in hectares (ha) as calculated from GIS boundaries

2.2.5 - Biogeography

Biogeographic regions

Regionalisation scheme(s)	Biogeographic region
Marine Ecoregions of the World (MEOW)	186. Malvinas/Falklands

Other biogeographic regionalisation scheme

3 - Why is the Site important?

3.1 - Ramsar Criteria and their justification

- Criterion 1: Representative, rare or unique natural or near-natural wetland types

Hydrological services provided	The water requirements of the lodge building are supplied by a spring.
Other reasons	Sea Lion Island qualifies under Criterion 1 because it includes good representative examples of most of the natural wetland types characteristic of the Falklands, both marine/coastal and inland. Among coastal/marine types, it is a rocky offshore island (type D), set in shallow marine waters (type A) with kelp beds (type B), and has extensive sand and pebble beaches (type E) and a sizeable coastal brackish saline lagoon, Beaver Pond, (type J); for an island with a history of sheep ranching, the extent and condition of the stands of Tussac Grass <i>Poa flabellata</i> are particularly good. Among inland wetland types, the higher parts of the island are made up of peatlands on oceanic heath (type U), with a few permanent freshwater pools (type Tp).

- Criterion 2 : Rare species and threatened ecological communities

Optional text box to provide further information	Sea Lion Island qualifies under Criterion 2 because it supports populations of three threatened bird species. These include Cobb's Wren <i>Troglodytes cobbi</i> , a species which favours Tussac Grass as a nesting habitat, and Ruddy-headed Goose <i>Chloephaga rubidiceps</i> , which were respectively listed as Vulnerable and Near Threatened by the IUCN (1996) at the time of designation of the site; Striated Caracara <i>Phalacrocorax australis</i> , which remains Near Threatened on the IUCN (2022) global Red List, is also present. In addition, the Fuegian Violet <i>Viola magellanica</i> is present, a probable endemic plant species that is listed as Critically Endangered on the Falkland Islands.
--	--

- Criterion 3 : Biological diversity

Justification	The site qualifies under Criterion 3 because the island is of special value for maintaining the genetic and ecological diversity of the region. The site has extensive stands of Tussac Grass, provides an important Falkland breeding site for Southern Sea Lion <i>Otaria byronia</i> , holds much the largest numbers of Southern Elephant Seal <i>Mirounga leonina</i> breeding in the Falklands, and supports a wide variety of Falkland breeding birds, especially on the beaches, rocky shores and in the Tussac Grass. Sea Lion Island also qualifies under Criterion 3, since it supports breeding populations of one endemic species Falkland Steamer Duck <i>Tachyeres brachypterus</i> , and endemic sub-species of four other waterbirds (Upland Goose <i>Chloephaga picta leucoptera</i> , Kelp Goose <i>Chloephaga hybrida malvinarum</i> , Imperial Shag <i>Leucocarbo atriceps albiventer</i> and Black-crowned Night Heron <i>Nycticorax nycticorax falklandicus</i>). In addition, it supports breeding populations of other endemic bird species and sub-species for which Tussac Grass is an important habitat, notably Cobb's Wren and Tussacbird <i>Cinclodes antarcticus</i> . Populations of endemic species and sub-species may be of international importance on this site. Several endemic plant species occur, including Coastal Nassauvia <i>Nassauvia gaudichaudii</i> , Falkland Cudweed <i>Gamochaeta malvinensis</i> and Fuegian Violet <i>Viola magellanica</i> .
---------------	---

- Criterion 4 : Support during critical life cycle stage or in adverse conditions

Optional text box to provide further information

Sea Lion Island qualifies under Criterion 4, as it is of critical importance to a number of birds and animals during the breeding season, a critical stage in their biological cycle. Among birds, this is true of Gentoo Penguins *Pygoscelis papua*, Southern Rockhopper Penguin *Eudyptes chrysocome*, Magellanic Penguin *Spheniscus magellanicus* and Southern Giant Petrel *Marconectes giganteus*. Woods & Woods (1997) note that the Falklands hold one of the world's most important populations of Gentoo Penguins and probably the largest population of Southern Rockhopper Penguin. For marine mammals, it is of importance, both as a breeding and moulting site, to Southern Sea Lion *Otaria byronia* and Southern Elephant Seal *Mirounga leonina*.

3.2 - Plant species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum	Scientific name	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 4	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	Other status	Justification
Plantae								
TRACHEOPHYTA/ MAGNOLIOPSIDA	<i>Gamochaeta malvinensis</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Near-endemic to the Falkland Islands	Scarce species, near-endemic to the Falkland Islands
TRACHEOPHYTA/ MAGNOLIOPSIDA	<i>Lilaeopsis macloviana</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Formerly considered an endemic species	Original site qualifier; formerly considered an endemic species
TRACHEOPHYTA/ MAGNOLIOPSIDA	<i>Nassauvia gaudichaudii</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	Endemic to the Falkland Islands	Scarce species, endemic to the Falkland Islands
TRACHEOPHYTA/ MAGNOLIOPSIDA	<i>Viola magellanica</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Probably endemic to and listed as Critically Endangered on the Falkland Islands	Scarce species, probably endemic to and listed as Critically Endangered on the Falkland Islands

3.3 - Animal species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum	Scientific name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence 1)	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
		2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
Others																	
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Mirounga leonina</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	696	2019		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Uses site for breeding and moulting
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Otaria byronia</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	111	2020/21		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Breeding species
Birds																	
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Chloephaga hybrida malvinarum</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	70	2020/21			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Breeding species; endemic race to the Falkland Islands
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Chloephaga picta leucoptera</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	102	2020/21			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Breeding species; endemic race to the Falkland Islands
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Chloephaga rubidiceps</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	13	2020/21		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Original qualifier for site	Endemic race to Falkland Islands; formerly listed as Near Threatened by the IUCN (1996)
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Cinclodes antarcticus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Endemic race to the Falkland Islands; listed as Near Threatened on IUCN Red List (2022)
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Eudyptes chrysocome</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	374	2020/21		WU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Probably largest breeding population in the world; listed as Vulnerable on IUCN Red List (2022)
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Leucocarbo albiventer</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	15000	2019		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Breeding species; endemic sub-species to the Falkland Islands
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Macronectes giganteus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	2020/21		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Breeding species; endemic sub-species to the Falkland Islands
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax falklandicus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Endemic sub-species to the Falkland Islands
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Phalacrocorax australis</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2120	2020/21		NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Original qualifier for site	Breeding species; 2% of Falklands population; listed as Near Threatened on IUCN Red List (2022)
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Pygoscelis papua</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3872	2020/21		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		One of the largest breeding populations in the world
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Spheniscus magellanicus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Breeding species
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Tachyeres brachypterus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	46	2020/21		LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Endemic to the Falkland Islands
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Tragodytes cobbi</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Original qualifier for site	Endemic to the Falkland Islands; formerly listed as Vulnerable by the IUCN (1996)

1) Percentage of the total biogeographic population at the site

The population figures given in the table above based on the following statistics:

Southern Sea Lion *Otaria byronia* = 111 breeding females, 103 pups, 213 individuals

Southern Elephant Seal *Mirounga leonine* = 696 breeding females, 667 weaned pups, 2424 to 2543 individuals

Ruddy-headed Goose *Chloephaga rubidiceps* = 13 pairs, 51 goslings, 124 individuals

Striated Caracara *Phalacrocorax australis* = 2120 pairs

Southern Rockhopper Penguin *Eudyptes chrysocome* = 374 pairs

Southern Giant Petrel *Marconectes giganteus* = 5 pairs

Gentoo Penguins *Pygoscelis papua* = 3872 pairs

Kelp Goose *Chloephaga hybrida malvinarum* = 70 pairs, 299 individual adults

Upland Goose *Chloephaga picta leucoptera* = 102 breeding pairs, 1215 individual adults

Falkland Steamer Duck *Tachyeres brachypterus* = 46 breeding pairs, 434 individual adults

Counts of Gentoo Penguin *Pygoscelis papua* and Rockhopper Penguin *Eudyptes chrysocome* in 1995/96 numbered 1484 and 504 respectively

3.4 - Ecological communities whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

<no data available>

[Optional text box to provide further information](#)

Information on ecological communities is provided in a separate document – see section 6.1.2.

4 - What is the Site like? (Ecological character description)

4.1 - Ecological character

Sea Lion Island is a high-quality example of a substantially unmodified sub-Antarctic island holding a wide range of typical ecological communities and without introduced populations of mammalian predators. These communities support diverse and abundant communities of breeding birds and marine mammals. It is made up of two rocky plateaus, well vegetated with oceanic heath and mixed grassland on their higher points, joined by a broad sandy beach, and retains, for an inhabited and farmed island, unusually large stand of Tussac Grass *Poa flabellata* round the coastline. The significant breeding seal populations attract Killer Whales *Orcinus orca* to the surrounding marine waters.

Further information on ecological communities is provided in a separate document – see section 6.1.2.

4.2 - What wetland type(s) are in the site?

Marine or coastal wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
A: Permanent shallow marine waters		2	100	Representative
B: Marine subtidal aquatic beds (Underwater vegetation)		2	100	Representative
D: Rocky marine shores		3	75	Representative
E: Sand, shingle or pebble shores		3	75	Representative
J: Coastal brackish / saline lagoons		4	30	Representative

Inland wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
Fresh water > Lakes and pools >> Tp: Permanent freshwater marshes/pools		4	20	Representative
Fresh water > Marshes on peat soils >> U: Permanent Non-forested peatlands		1	600	Representative

Other non-wetland habitat

Other non-wetland habitats within the site	Area (ha) if known
Dwarf-shrub heath	

4.3 - Biological components

4.3.1 - Plant species

Other noteworthy plant species

Phylum	Scientific name	Position in range / endemism / other
TRACHEOPHYTA/LILIOPSIDA	<i>Anthoxanthum redolens</i>	
TRACHEOPHYTA/LILIOPSIDA	<i>Poa flabellata</i>	

Invasive alien plant species

Phylum	Scientific name	Impacts	Changes at RIS update
TRACHEOPHYTA/MAGNOLIOPSIDA	<i>Rumex longifolius</i>	Actual (major impacts)	No change
TRACHEOPHYTA/MAGNOLIOPSIDA	<i>Sonchus asper</i>	Actual (minor impacts)	No change

Optional text box to provide further information

In November 1998, 56 species of flowering plants were recorded on the island. Of these, at least 12 species were introduced agricultural weeds or grasses, and only three species were Falkland endemics (Falklands Lilaeopsis *Lilaeopsis macloviana*, Falkland Cudweed *Gnaphium affine* and Coastal Nassauvia *Nassauvia gaudichaudii*).

The main invasive plant is the introduced Northern Dock *Rumex longifolius* in the mid-west of the island, for which there is an annually programme to eradicate and more recently a programme to control the spread of Prickly Sow Thistle *Sonchus asper* in the eastern sand dunes.

4.3.2 - Animal species

Other noteworthy animal species

Phylum	Scientific name	Pop. size	Period of pop. est.	% occurrence	Position in range / endemism / other
CHORDATA/MAMMALIA	<i>Orcinus orca</i>	30	2020		

Optional text box to provide further information

Between 1983 and 2021, 99 bird species were recorded on the island and in the immediate surrounding waters (M. Reeves pers. comms, eBird). Of these, 43 were breeding or probably breeding, including eight of the nine resident songbirds of the Falklands and five species of penguins. The Macaroni Penguin *Eudyptes chrysolophus* occasionally breeds amongst the Rockhoppers but only in small numbers. Unusually for a habited island in the Falklands, there are no introduced cats, rats or mice.

4.4 - Physical components

4.4.1 - Climate

Climatic region	Subregion
C: Moist Mid-Latitude climate with mild winters	Cfc: Marine west coast (Mild with no dry season, cool summer)

The Falkland Islands has a maritime climate in the transition region between the tundra and subpolar zones.

4.4.2 - Geomorphic setting

a) Minimum elevation above sea level (in metres)

a) Maximum elevation above sea level (in metres)

- Entire river basin
- Upper part of river basin
- Middle part of river basin
- Lower part of river basin
- More than one river basin
- Not in river basin
- Coastal

4.4.3 - Soil

Mineral

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Organic

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

No available information

Are soil types subject to change as a result of changing hydrological conditions (e.g., increased salinity or acidification)? Yes No

4.4.4 - Water regime

Water permanence

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Usually permanent water present	No change

Source of water that maintains character of the site

Presence?	Predominant water source	Changes at RIS update
Marine water	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change
Water inputs from precipitation	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Water destination

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Marine	No change

Stability of water regime

Presence?	Changes at RIS update
Water levels fluctuating (including tidal)	No change

Please add any comments on the water regime and its determinants (if relevant). Use this box to explain sites with complex hydrology:

Smaller winter ponds located in the centre of the island virtually dry out in summer (November – early March). The water requirements of the lodge are supplied by a spring.

4.4.5 - Sediment regime

Sediment regime unknown

Please provide further information on sediment (optional):

Active sand dune systems are present on some parts of the coast

4.4.6 - Water pH

Acid (pH<5.5)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Alkaline (pH>7.4)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Unknown

4.4.7 - Water salinity

Fresh (<0.5 g/l)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Mixohaline (brackish)/Mixosaline (0.5-30 g/l)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Euhaline/Eusaline (30-40 g/l)

(Update) Changes at RIS update No change Increase Decrease Unknown

Unknown

4.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended nutrients in water

Unknown

<no data available>

4.4.9 - Features of the surrounding area which may affect the Site

Please describe whether, and if so how, the landscape and ecological characteristics in the area surrounding the Ramsar Site differ from the site itself: i) broadly similar ii) significantly different

Surrounding area has greater urbanisation or development

Surrounding area has higher human population density

Surrounding area has more intensive agricultural use

Surrounding area has significantly different land cover or habitat types

Please describe other ways in which the surrounding area is different:

The site is an isolated marine island

4.5 - Ecosystem services

4.5.1 - Ecosystem services/benefits

Provisioning Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Fresh water	Drinking water for humans and/or livestock	High

Regulating Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Maintenance of hydrological regimes	Storage and delivery of water as part of water supply systems for agriculture and industry	Low

Cultural Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Recreation and tourism	Nature observation and nature-based tourism	High
Scientific and educational	Important knowledge systems, importance for research (scientific reference area or site)	Medium

Supporting Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Biodiversity	Supports a variety of all life forms including plants, animals and microorganisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems of which they form a part	High

Optional text box to provide further information

The site supports significant eco-tourism: <https://www.sealionisland.com/ecotourism-conservation/>

Outside the site:

Have studies or assessments been made of the economic valuation of ecosystem services provided by this Ramsar Site? Yes No Unknown

4.5.2 - Social and cultural values

- i) the site provides a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland
- ii) the site has exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland
- iii) the ecological character of the wetland depends on its interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples
- iv) relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland

<no data available>

4.6 - Ecological processes

<no data available>

5 - How is the Site managed? (Conservation and management)

5.1 - Land tenure and responsibilities (Managers)

5.1.1 - Land tenure/ownership

Public ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Other public ownership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Provide further information on the land tenure / ownership regime (optional):

The island is owned and managed by the Falkland Islands Development Corporation, a quasi-autonomous government-funded body. Along with The Lodge, it has been leased to Wild Falklands Ltd (99 year leasehold) since 2017.

5.1.2 - Management authority

Please list the local office / offices of any agency or organization responsible for managing the site:

Department of Environmental Planning, in collaboration with the Farm Manager, Fitzroy Farm, East Falkland and Falkland Landholdings (landowner), Shackleton House, Stanley, Falkland Islands

Provide the name and/or title of the person or people with responsibility for the wetland:

Mike Jervois

Postal address:

Shackleton House, Stanley, Falkland Islands

E-mail address:

environment@sec.gov.fk

5.2 - Ecological character threats and responses (Management)

5.2.1 - Factors (actual or likely) adversely affecting the Site's ecological character

Human intrusions and disturbance

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Recreational and tourism activities		Low impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change
(Para)military activities		Low impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Natural system modifications

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Fire and fire suppression	Low impact	Low impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change
Unspecified/others	Low impact	Low impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Invasive and other problematic species and genes

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Invasive non-native/ alien species		High impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Climate change and severe weather

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	Changes	In the surrounding area	Changes
Droughts		High impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change

Please describe any other threats (optional):

Probably the greatest potential threat would be the inadvertent introduction of rats or mice to the island, in particular with food stores for the Lodge arriving from Stanley or Mount Pleasant on East Falkland. All visitors need to be informed of the dangers of accidentally introducing alien species to the island. Climate change and a drying climate could also severely impact the island.

The Lodge is well managed and has operated to a high standard of environmental protection, with increased renewable energy capacity. This policy should be kept under review given increasing tourist numbers to the Falklands and consequent higher demands on the staff at the Lodge.

It is important that all visitors follow the Falkland Islands Countryside Code, especially to avoid disturbance to the breeding Southern Giant Petrels and to guard against the risk of fire and increasing erosion.

5.2.2 - Legal conservation status

National legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
National Nature Reserve	Sea Lion Island	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/view/whole/inforce/2021-03-12/fis-l-2017-27	whole

Non-statutory designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Important Bird Area		http://datazone.birdlife.org/site/factsheet/sea-lion-islands-group-iba-falkland-islands-(malvinas)	whole
Important Bird Area	Sea Lion Islands Group	http://datazone.birdlife.org/site/factsheet/sea-lion-islands-group-iba-falkland-islands-(malvinas)	whole

5.2.3 - IUCN protected areas categories (2008)

- Ia Strict Nature Reserve
- Ib Wilderness Area: protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection
- II National Park: protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation
- III Natural Monument: protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features
- IV Habitat/Species Management Area: protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention
- V Protected Landscape/Seascape: protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation
- VI Managed Resource Protected Area: protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems

5.2.4 - Key conservation measures

Legal protection

Measures	Status
Legal protection	Implemented

Species

Measures	Status
Control of invasive alien plants	Implemented

Human Activities

Measures	Status
Regulation/management of recreational activities	Implemented

Other:

There is an annual programme to eradicate the main invasive plant, Northern Dock *Rumex longifolius* which occurs in the mid-west of the island, and more recently a programme to control the spread of Prickly Sow Thistle *Sonchus asper* in the eastern sand dunes.

The previous owner of the island fenced off large areas of Tussac in the 1970s to safeguard from livestock grazing, but livestock were removed in 2008. Since 2010 Tussac Grass has been re-planted. Current management efforts by the leaseholders include annually restoring stands of Tussac Grass in eroded areas. The Lodge is a corporate member of Falklands Conservation and works in close collaboration arranging annual tussac planting weekends. Since 2013, 17 hectares (42 acres) of Tussac Grass have been planted. However, this is a long-term and difficult process, in which the drying wind can make the task more difficult along the most exposed and severely eroded western parts of the island.

The Sea Lion Island National Nature Reserve Regulations 2017 were published on 5 October 2017 and create a legal regulatory regime for the island – see <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/view/whole/inforce/2021-03-12/fis-l-2017-27>

5.2.5 - Management planning

Is there a site-specific management plan for the site? Yes

Has a management effectiveness assessment been undertaken for the site? Yes No

If the site is a formal transboundary site as indicated in section Data and location > Site location, are there shared management planning processes with another Contracting Party? Yes No

Please indicate if a Ramsar centre, other educational or visitor facility, or an educational or visitor programme is associated with the site:

A tourism Lodge is present on the island accommodating a maximum of 27 visitors, with approximately 1,200 bed/nights per annum.

URL of site-related webpage (if relevant): <https://www.sealionisland.com>

5.2.6 - Planning for restoration

Is there a site-specific restoration plan? Yes, there is a plan

Further information

Past management for stock-raising has led to the total loss of some areas of Tussac Grass, and to degradation of other tussac areas. This loss and degradation had come about through both grazing and trampling. In the western part of the island, severe erosion problems are apparent. All of the Tussac Grass is now protected as there are no animals /livestock on the island. Since grazing livestock was removed permanently since 2008, Tussac Grass has been self-expanding and recovering. Taller grasses (semi-naturalized introduced for grazing) have benefited from not being grazed by provided habitat and improving soil health and retention of water.

5.2.7 - Monitoring implemented or proposed

Monitoring	Status
Animal species (please specify)	Implemented
Plant species	Implemented
Birds	Implemented

The breeding biology and population dynamics of Southern Elephant Seal are studied – this involves marking individuals in entire population (Elephant Seal Research Group - ESRG). Sea Lions are also monitored by ESRG.

Falkland Skuas *Catharacta antarctica*, Striated Caracara *Phalacrocorax australis* and other bird species are opportunistically surveyed by ESRG. Gentoo and Southern Rockhopper Penguins are monitored as part of the Falkland Islands Seabird Monitoring Programme under Falklands Conservation. Bird surveys are conducted monthly by Wild Falklands Ltd and collated on eBird.

Sea Lion Island is mentioned in a number of scientific papers on fauna and flora of the Falklands.

Sea Lion Lodge supports the long-term monitoring carried out by resident scientists of ESRG, and since 2009, an Environmental Management Plan has been in place to guide conservation and research, including on-going environmental monitoring and practicing good biosecurity.

Tussac Grass restoration has been monitored.

6 - Additional material

6.1 - Additional reports and documents

6.1.1 - Bibliographical references

See appended bibliography

6.1.2 - Additional reports and documents

i. taxonomic lists of plant and animal species occurring in the site (see section 4.3)

<no file available>

ii. a detailed Ecological Character Description (ECD) (in a national format)

<no file available>

iii. a description of the site in a national or regional wetland inventory

<no file available>

iv. relevant Article 3.2 reports

<no file available>

v. site management plan

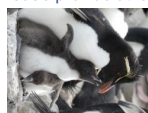
<no file available>

vi. other published literature

<6 file(s) uploaded>

6.1.3 - Photograph(s) of the Site

Please provide at least one photograph of the site:



Qualifying bird species Southern Rockhopper Penguin *Eudyptes chrysocome* ([Stefanie Carter, 18122021](#))



Qualifying bird species Gentoo Penguin *Pygoscelis papua* ([Stefanie Carter, 31102019](#))



Qualifying bird species Magellanic Penguin *Spheniscus magellanicus* ([Stefanie Carter, 19122021](#))



Qualifying bird species Striated Caracara *Phalacrocorax australis* ([Stefanie Carter, 31102019](#))



Qualifying bird species Southern Giant Petrel *Macronectes giganteus* ([Stefanie Carter, 31102019](#))



Qualifying bird species Kelp Goose *Chloephaga hybrida malvinarum* ([Stefanie Carter, 31102019](#))



Qualifying bird species the endemic Cobb's Wren *Troglodytes cobbi* ([Stefanie Carter, 06032019](#))



Qualifying bird species the endemic Falkland Steamer Duck *Tachyeres brachydactyla* ([Stefanie Carter, 31102019](#))



Qualifying bird species Tussac Bird (Blackish Cinclodes) *Cinclodes antarcticus* ([Stefanie Carter, 04032019](#))



Qualifying mammal species South American Sea Lion *Otaria flavescens* ([Stefanie Carter, 18122021](#))



Qualifying mammal species Southern Elephant Seal *Mirounga leonina* 2 ([Stefanie Carter, 31102019](#))



Wetland type D - intertidal rocky shore ([Stefanie Carter, 18122021](#))



Qualifying mammal species Southern Elephant Seal *Mirounga leonina* with Tussac Grass (*Poa flabellata*) stands in the background ([Stefanie Carter, 05032019](#))



Wetland Type D and E - intertidal rocky shore and pebble shore ([Stefanie Carter, 18122021](#))



Wetland Type E - sandy dunes and sandy shores ([Stefanie Carter, 04032019](#))



Wetland Type E - sandy shores ([Stefanie Carter, 19122021](#))



Wetland Type E - sea birds cliffs with nesting Southern Rockhopper Penguins *Eudyptes chrysocome* ([Stefanie Carter, 18122021](#))



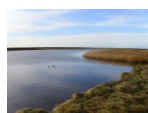
Wetland Type J - coastal brackish lagoon with bathing Gentoo Penguins *Pygoscelis papua* bathing ([Stefanie carter, 18122021](#))



Wetland Type U - peatland with mature Tussac Grass *Poa flabellata* ([Stefanie Carter, 04032019](#))



Wetland Types Tp and E - freshwater marsh and sand dunes ([Falklands Island Government, 03032016](#))



Wetland Type J - coastal brackish lagoon with Silver Grebe *Podiceps occipitalis* and California club-rush *Schoenoplectus californicus* ([Falklands Island Government, 25102010](#))

6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Date of Designation 2001-09-24