

RAMSAR
SITE NUMBER

1433

Esteros de Farrapos e Islas del Rio Uruguay //

(Farrapos Lagoons and River Uruguay Islands)



Area:
17,496 ha

Date of designation:
10.12.2004

Coordinates:
32°53'S 58°05'W

Summary

The site is a system of wetlands in the lower reaches of the River Uruguay and includes the Esteros de Farrapos (Farrapos Lagoons) and 24 islets with wetlands such as rivers, lagoons and forested freshwater wetlands that are permanently and/or temporarily flooded.

International importance

This site was included in the List of Wetlands of International Importance because it is a representative example of wetlands located in the transition zone between the Paraná and Chaco ecosystems. Moreover, it is of great importance due to the large number of species whose conservation status is classified as Vulnerable.

General location

The Ramsar Site is located in the west part of Uruguay and in the lower part of the Uruguay River in the Black Rivers Department.



Esteros de Farrapos e Islas del Rio Uruguay (Farrapos Lagoons and River Uruguay Islands)



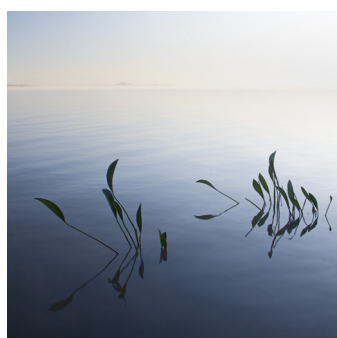
Adverse factors

The adverse factors are related to the region's economic activities such as extensive livestock rearing, charcoal production and poaching. Poor agricultural practices have also led to soil erosion in the surrounding area.

Services provided by wetlands

These wetlands are the main regulatory element that helps control flood levels in this area. Moreover, they protect the banks of the River Uruguay, since they help control erosion processes. They also play a key role in maintaining the quality of the water and constitute a major access route, since the area can be accessed by boat and has several ports.

On the other hand, wetlands contribute to the local economy through activities such as pastoralism, artisan fishing and tourism, which are carried in this area.





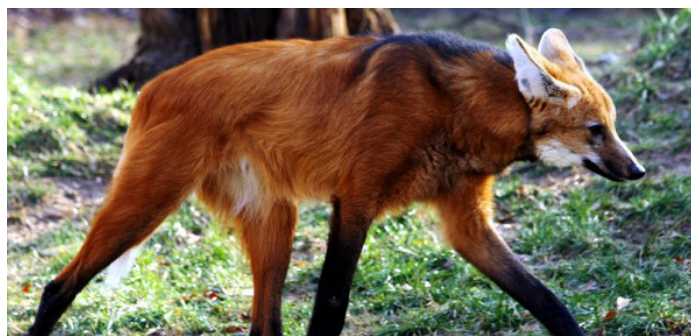
MARSH SEEDEATER
(*Sporophila palustris*)

The site is vital for a group of bird species of the genre *Sporophila*, known as “capuchinos”, among these species exist the “capuchino de pecho blanco” (*Sporophila palustris*) that is endangered.



SAFFRON-COWLED BLACKBIRD
(*Xanthopsar flavus*)

This site is one of the few areas of the country where this bird has its habitat; its important because its a vulnerable specie.



MANED WOLF
(*Chrysocyon brachyurus*)

This Ramsar site is the habitat of the maned wolf, a species considered of great importance nationally, since it is the largest canid in Uruguay.

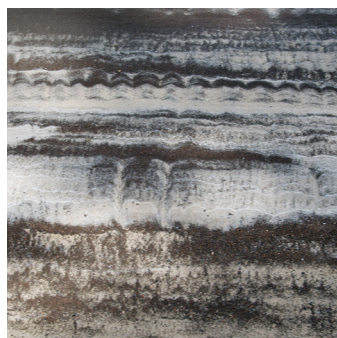


Biodiversity

The site supports 25% of all bird species found in Uruguay and is one of the few parts of the country where the saffron-cowled blackbird (*Xanthopsar flavus*) occurs, a species whose conservation status is also classified as Vulnerable.

The site is of vital importance for a group of birds in the genus *Sporophila*, some of these seedeaters being known as “capuchinos”. One of these species is the marsh seedeater (*Sporophila palustris*), which is classified as Endangered.

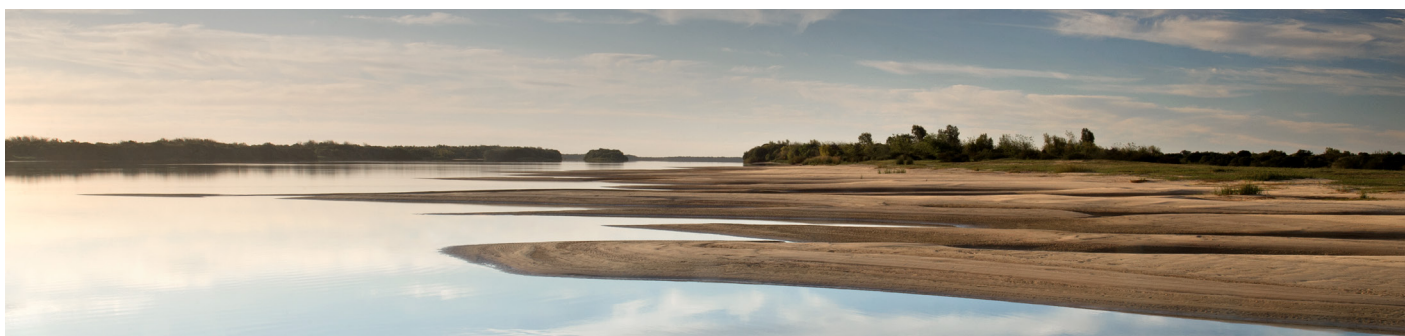
In total, the Ramsar site is home to 130 species of fish, 14 species of amphibian, 104 species of bird and 15 species of mammal. It should be noted that this site is also the habitat of the maned wolf (*Chrysocyon brachyurus*), a species considered of great importance in Uruguay.



Management and conservation

This Ramsar site is also a National Park and has a management plan, whose objective is to work alongside the local population to facilitate the rational use of the site, conserving its biodiversity and carrying out productive, sustainable activities in order to maintain the site’s ecological characteristics.

Likewise, studies have been carried out of its characterisation and it has been promoted as a pilot site for research into river wetlands and for the dissemination of sustainable productive practices.



The Ramsar Convention

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, commonly known as the Ramsar Convention, is a global inter-governmental treaty that provides the frame-work for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. It is the only global treaty to focus on one single ecosystem.