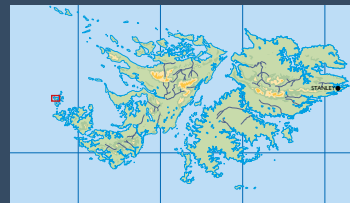


LANDSEND BLUFF, NEW ISLAND

Information sheet



Falklands Conservation own and manage a number of offshore islands and mainland sites across the Falkland Islands. FC strive to manage these national assets to conserve and enhance them for future generation of Islanders.

Island Summary

Landsend Bluff is formed by two large sea-stacks separated from the north-west point of New Island and each other by two narrow bisecting chasms. Black-browed albatross nest on the cliffs whilst South American fur seals occupy the lower ledges. However since the stacks are completely inaccessible except by helicopter, management is limited to ensuring that there are no additional introductions or impacts to the sites through the management of the adjacent New Island coastline.

Ecology

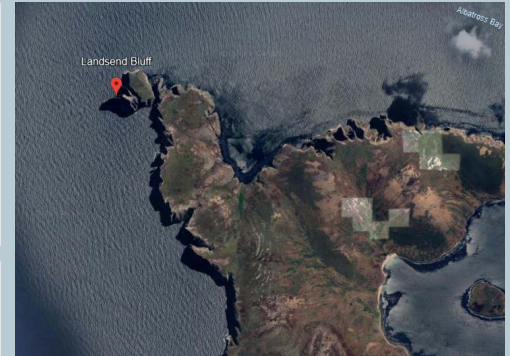
Physical

The spectacular cliff scenery of Landsend Bluff is formed by the powerful South Atlantic as it comes up against the medium to coarse-grained feldspathic sandstones of the West Falkland Port Stephen Formation, laid down in the Devonian 400 million years ago. The rock worn down by the sea forms steep cliffs with many horizontal broken ledges that fall vertically over 80m from cliff top to sea level. The sheer verticality of the cliffs and tussac slopes means that the two stacks are completely inaccessible. The inner stack, separated by no more than 30m from New Island, is larger with a vegetated top plateau of c. 7ha completely ringed by cliffs, whilst the outer stack is a narrow knife edge ridge in a loose W-shape.

Habitat Value

Only the inner stack has significant vegetation on the upper slopes and plateau top. Tussac covers the upper plateau fringe and falls down the broken rock slopes, towards the centre and east an area of shorter grass heath is present. Given the inaccessibility it is assumed that the habitats will be predominantly formed of native species.

Given the proximity to New Island and the climbing ability of Ships rats it is assumed that rats will be present on the inner stack given available food resources from tussac, seabirds and pinnipeds. However, given the verticality and lack of suitable foraging habitat on the outer stack rodent presence may not be sustainable.



Landsend Bluff (51.6913° S & 61.3275° W) is part of the New Island Group located in the south-west of the Falkland Islands archipelago

Relevant Legislation and Policy

Statutory

None

Non-statutory

Important Bird Area (IBA): Landsend Bluff is a component part of the New Island Group IBA (IBA FK11). Even without survey the occurrence of key Cobb's wren, striated caracara, tussacbird, thin-billed prion, black-browed albatross and seabird aggregations on Landsend Bluff contribute to the designation

Key Biodiversity Area (KBA): Landsend Bluff is part of the New Island Group Priority KBA (FKL-11). Trigger species follow that of the IBA designation.

IMAGES Landsend bluff; black-browed albatross (inset).



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Species Diversity

Remote survey of the stacks has been limited to aerial photography from FIGAS and visually by telescope from adjacent New Island. A definitive list of species occurrence is not available.

Black-browed albatross nest on the cliff ledges and upper broken slopes and are counted as part of the periodic island-wide census. Tussacbird persists in the assumed presence of rats likely due to available nesting sites on the cliffs inaccessible to rat predation. Striated caracara have been observed and likely breeding. Only tussac grass is obvious and is dominant on the cliff slopes and

upper fringe. An area of shorter grass and possibly some cushion plants would appear to occur in the centre of the inner stack. Given lack of grazing disturbance to create broken ground it is assumed that native species will dominate, however introductions from New Island of common non-natives such as sheep's sorrel, groundsel or Yorkshire fog cannot be ruled out.

South American fur seal breed at the northern end of the gulch separating Landsend East Bluff from New Island, on both sides of the gulch. On the New Island side they breed in an area of coastal rock fall, on Landsend Bluff they ascend on cliff ledges above the sea but breeding is unconfirmed.

Key Threats and Management

No known landing has occurred on Landsend Bluff and thus impacts should be limited to indirect human impacts due to the introduction of non-native plants and rodents on New Island that may have dispersed to the stacks.

Natural fire events are an ongoing threat within the Falkland Islands especially if soils continue to dry due to ongoing climate change.

However since the stacks cannot be accessed there is no mitigation or response that can be mounted.

A system of visitor guidance is in place for New Island that includes strict biosecurity protocols to ensure there are no further inadvertent introductions. This will reduce the risk of onward spread to Landsend Bluff. Landsend Bluff should be included within any New Island restoration campaign.

Notable birds, plants, marine mammals & habitats of Landsend Bluff, New Island

Tussacbird	Endemic <i>Near Threatened</i>	South American fur seal	Breeding
Striated caracara	Breeding <i>Near Threatened</i>	Tussac habitat	Good
Black-browed albatross	Breeding <i>Least Concern</i>		

Citation Falklands Conservation (2022).
Landsend Bluff (New Island Group) Management Plan 2022.

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IMAGE Striated caracara.

