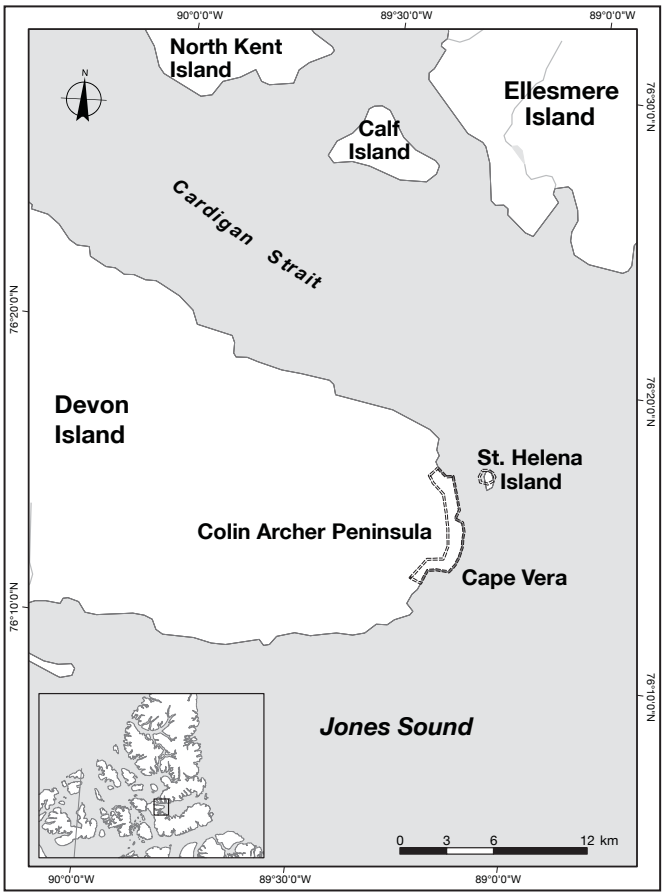
Location: 76°15'N, 89°15'W

Size: 8 km^2

Description: Cape Vera is located in western Jones Sound, on the eastern tip of the Colin Archer Peninsula, northwest Devon Island, and at the southern part of the Hell Gate–Cardigan Strait polynya. The cliffs of the Cape are separated by a scree beach coast up to 1 km in width. These cliffs are up to 300 m high and composed of Paleozoic sandstone, limestone, and dolomite (de Kemp 1999).

The strong currents moving from Norwegian Bay to Jones Sound create the nearby Hell Gate–Cardigan Strait polynya, providing open water year-round (Smith and Rigby 1981). The marine area is described in Mallory and Fontaine (2004).

Archeological sites are located on the beach below the cliffs, as well as on nearby St. Helena Island (Sverdrup 1904).



Biological value: Recent observations (2004) suggest approximately 11 000 occupied Northern Fulmar nest sites at Cape Vera, representing 6% of the Canadian population (Gaston et al. 2006). An earlier estimate was 7500 pairs of Northern Fulmars, about 3% of the Canadian population, nesting along 8 km of Cape Vera (Nettleship 1980), which was reassessed as 50 000 individuals by Hatch and Nettleship (1998). The differences in counts may be due to differences in census methodologies.

Fulmars arrive by early May, and numbers peak by about 10 May. The numbers decline until the end of May, and the colony is reoccupied by the first week of June. While in the area, fulmars concentrate at fast ice edges and later at glacier discharge sites. The young fledge in September, and the birds depart by late October.

Approximately 300 pairs of Common Eiders (*S. m. borealis*) nest at St. Helena Island (Prach et al. 1986). Glaucous Gulls, Thayer's Gulls, and Arctic Terns also nest at these sites. In 2002 and 2003, approximately 600 Atlantic Brant were observed on the beach below Cape Vera (Mallory and Gilchrist 2005).

The area, particularly the polynya, supports many other marine species, including ringed seal, bearded seal, narwhal, beluga, polar bear, and walrus (Stirling and Cleator 1981; Riewe 1992).

Sensitivities: Seabirds are heavily dependent upon ice edge habitats for feeding and resting. Accordingly, they are sensitive to disturbance or pollution of these sites.

Potential conflicts: None.

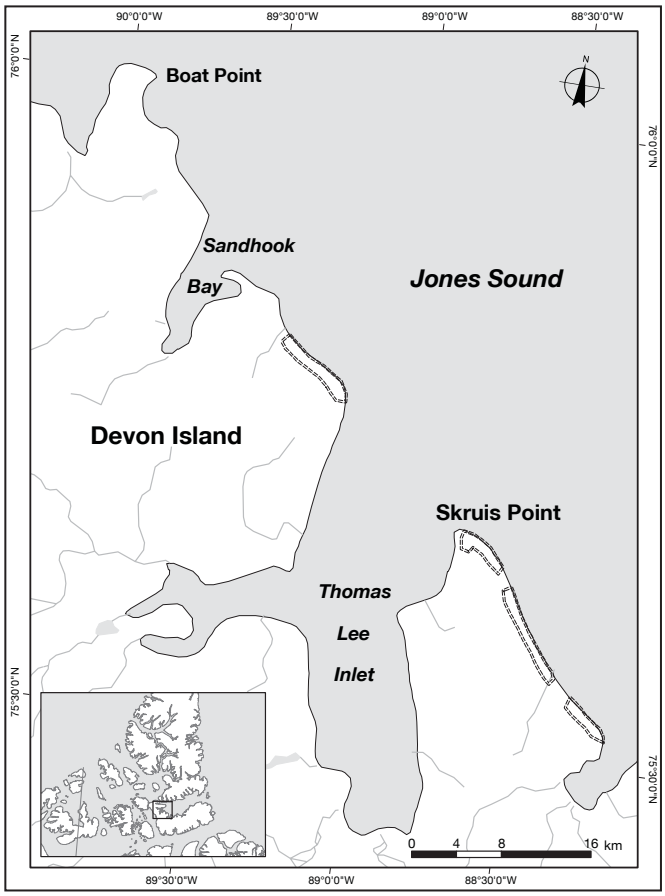
Status: Cape Vera is an International Biological Programme Site (Site 2-11; Nettleship 1980), an Important Bird Area in Canada (NU052; IBA Canada 2004), and a Key Marine Habitat Site in Nunavut (Site 3; Mallory and Fontaine 2004).

Location: 75°40'N, 88°43'W

Size: 25 km^2

Description: Skruis Point lies midway along the north coast of Devon Island, on the southern part of Jones Sound, and is southeast of the Hell Gate–Cardigan Strait polynya. The sedimentary rock of this part of Devon Island is Paleozoic sandstone, limestone, and dolomite (de Kemp 1999). The key site lies on either side of Thomas Lee Inlet, where cliffs range up to 150 m in height.

Although the polynya to the north is open most of the year, ice usually remains in southern Jones Sound for longer, although some leads may appear in May (Smith and Rigby 1981).



Biological value: Skruis Point was reported to have Canada's largest colony of Black Guillemots, estimated at up to 10 000 pairs based on a 1973 survey (Nettleship 1974), or approximately 10% of the Canadian population. In the early 1900s, Sverdrup (1904) had reported "thousands upon thousands" of guillemots nesting near Boat Point, northwest of Skruis Point. Surveys in the mid-1980s found 1585 and 700 birds in two different years, representing at best 1% of the Canadian population (Alexander et al. 1991). Prach and Smith (1992) interpreted these differences (and the distribution of guillemots in this part of Jones Sound) as representing the influence of annual ice conditions. The typical number of birds breeding along the Skruis Point / Boat Point region clearly requires further survey work to provide a reliable estimate.

The area, and particularly the polynya, supports many other marine species, including ringed seal, bearded seal, narwhal, beluga, polar bear, and walrus (Stirling and Cleator 1981; Riewe 1992).

Sensitivities: Seabirds are heavily dependent upon ice edge habitats for feeding and resting. Accordingly, they are sensitive to disturbance or the pollution of these sites.

Potential conflicts: None.

Status: Skruis Point is an International Biological Programme Site (Site 2-17; Nettleship 1980), an Important Bird Area in Canada (NU054; IBA Canada 2004), and a Key Marine Habitat Site in Nunavut (Site 5; Mallory and Fontaine 2004).

Location: 75°50'N, 79°25'W

Size: 1642 km^2

Description: Formerly known as Coburg Island key terrestrial habitat site (Alexander et al. 1991), Nirjutiqavvik is situated in eastern Jones Sound, midway between Devon and Ellesmere islands. It includes Coburg Island and waters 10 km offshore. The island is rugged, consisting of Precambrian granitic gneiss (Douglas and MacLean 1963) and granulite-facies sedimentary and volcanic rocks (de Kemp 1999), with an ice cap pierced by peaks rising over 800 m above sea level. The coastline is heavily glaciated, and there are many prominent cliffs, especially towards the south end. Temperature differences between the ice cap and nearby open waters create the conditions for frequent and very strong winds.

Along the southern edge of the island near Cambridge Point, cliffs rise 150–300 m. Princess Charlotte Monument, a cone-shaped islet with precipitous cliffs, is located 1 km off southeast Coburg Island. An archeological site occurs north of Cape Spencer on the southwest coast.

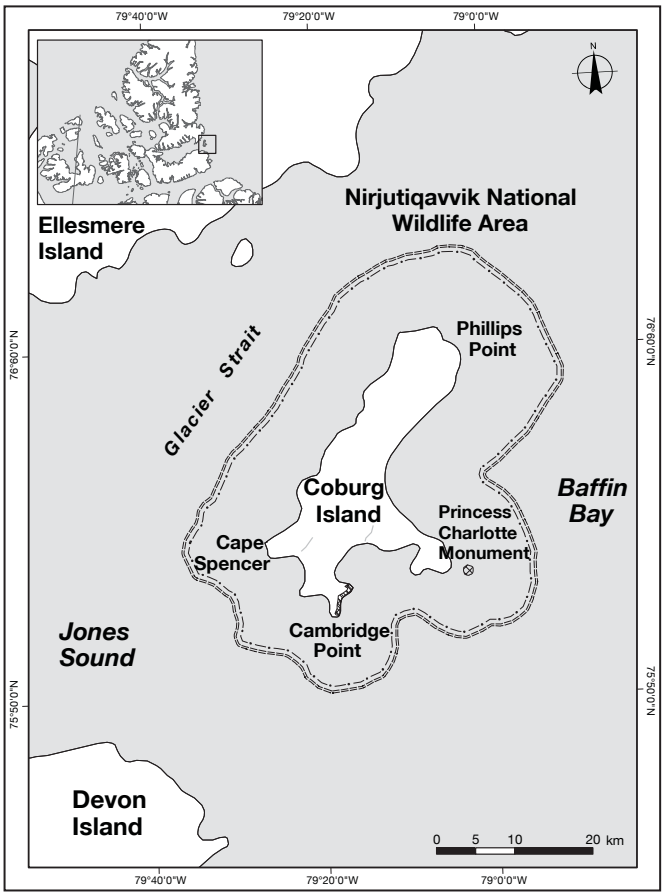
A recurrent area of open water occurs in the vicinity of Coburg Island and joins the North Water Polynya through ice breakup each year (Smith and Rigby 1981). The marine environment of eastern Jones Sound is summarized in Mallory and Fontaine (2004).

Biological value: Approximately 30 000 pairs of Black-legged Kittiwakes, representing 16% of the Canadian population, nest at Cambridge Point, Coburg Island. This is the largest colony of this species in the Canadian Arctic (Nettleship 1980). These cliffs also support 12% (160 000 pairs) of the Thick-billed Murres in Canada, the third largest Canadian colony and the largest in the high Arctic (Gaston and Hipfner 2000). An estimated 300 pairs of Northern Fulmars breed on Princess Charlotte Monument (Gaston et al. 2006).

Black Guillemots (175 pairs) and Glaucous Gulls (60–80 pairs) nest in the area (Robards et al. 2000). Bays at the south end of Coburg Island are used by moulting Common Eiders (*S. m. borealis*) and Long-tailed Ducks, and a few Common Eiders breed in the area (Robards et al. 2000). This is one of the few known breeding sites for Atlantic Puffins in the Arctic, with a colony recently estimated at 14 pairs (Robards et al. 2000).

Outside the breeding season, the ice edges around Coburg Island support thousands of seabirds, depending on the annual patterns of ice breakup and the distribution of prey (McLaren and Renaud 1979, 1982). Seabirds occupy this area in high numbers from April through October, but some birds may overwinter.

Eastern Jones Sound is an important maternity denning and hunting area for polar bears and a summering area for most species of arctic seals, narwhal, and walruses (Stirling and Cleator 1981; Riewe 1992).



Sensitivities: Seabirds are sensitive to disturbances at their breeding cliffs and to pollution of their staging and foraging areas.

Potential conflicts: This area is of increasing importance as a tourist destination for cruise ships and small aircraft (Hall and Johnston 1995; Wakelyn 2001).

Status: This key site lies entirely within the Nirjutiqavvik National Wildlife Area, established in 1995. It is an International Biological Programme Site (Site 2-12; Nettleship 1980), an Important Bird Area in Canada (NU010; IBA Canada 2004), and part of a Key Marine Habitat Site in Nunavut (Site 6; Mallory and Fontaine 2004).

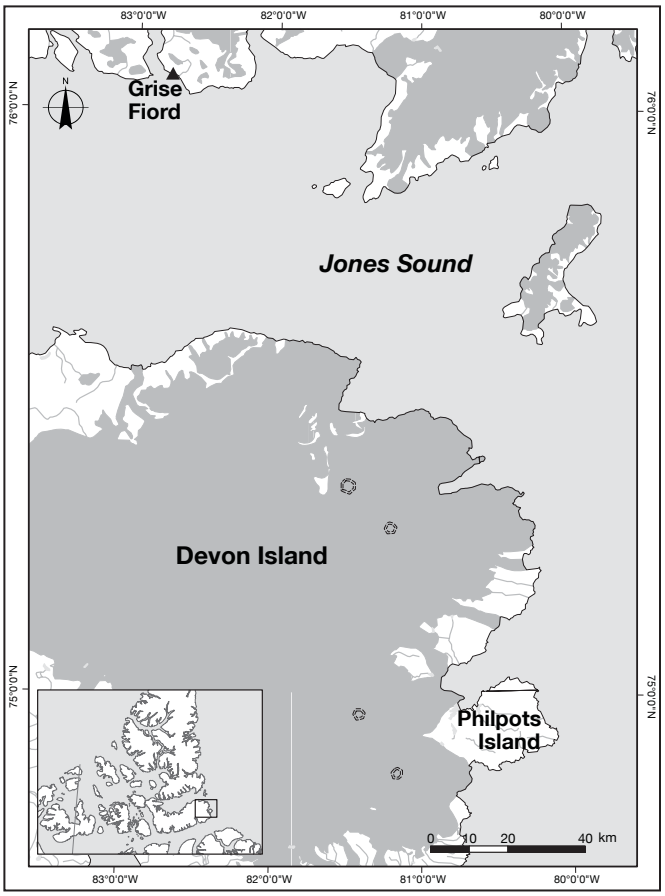
NU Site 11 – Eastern Devon Island

Location: 75°05'N, 80°50'W

Size: 4 km^2

Description: Most of the landmass in this area is covered by the Devon ice cap, which reaches a maximum elevation of 2000 m above sea level. Bedrock protrusions (nunataks), primarily cliff faces, occur within the ice cap at elevations up to 1500 m. In general, the area is underlain by metamorphic and granitic rocks of the Canadian Shield (Frisch 1983; de Kemp 1999). On Devon Island, nunataks are concentrated along major glaciers flowing out to the northern coast and in the southeastern corner of the ice cap (Frisch 1983).

Grise Fiord, the nearest community, is located on southern Ellesmere Island about 140 km northwest of this site.



Biological value: Four colonies of Ivory Gulls previously occurred within this area, three of which each comprised 1% of the known Canadian breeding population. In 1982, the four colonies supported an estimated 91 birds (Frisch 1983), although breeding was not confirmed. Surveys of all but the southernmost site yielded only six gulls in 2002 and none in 2003, and no new colonies were discovered in this region (Gilchrist and Mallory 2005). One of the colonies (previously supporting 30 birds) appears to have been colonized by Iceland and Glaucous gulls, with no Ivory Gulls now.

The Ivory Gull is a rare bird in Canada (Alvo and MacDonald 1996). In July 2005, the Birds Subcommittee of COSEWIC reviewed the most recent data and agreed that the designation of the Ivory Gull should be upgraded from Special Concern to Endangered.

Sensitivities: Ivory Gull colonies may be susceptible to disturbance during the breeding season. Aircraft or human interferences could seriously jeopardize their breeding success. Pollution in the waters of eastern Devon Island or the North Water Polynya, where the birds likely feed, could have serious negative impacts.

Potential conflicts: Hydrocarbon exploration has been proposed for western Baffin Bay (DIAND 1982). If conducted, exploratory drilling could subject feeding areas used by the Ivory Gulls to disturbance and pollution.

Status: None.

Location: 74°28'N, 86°50'W

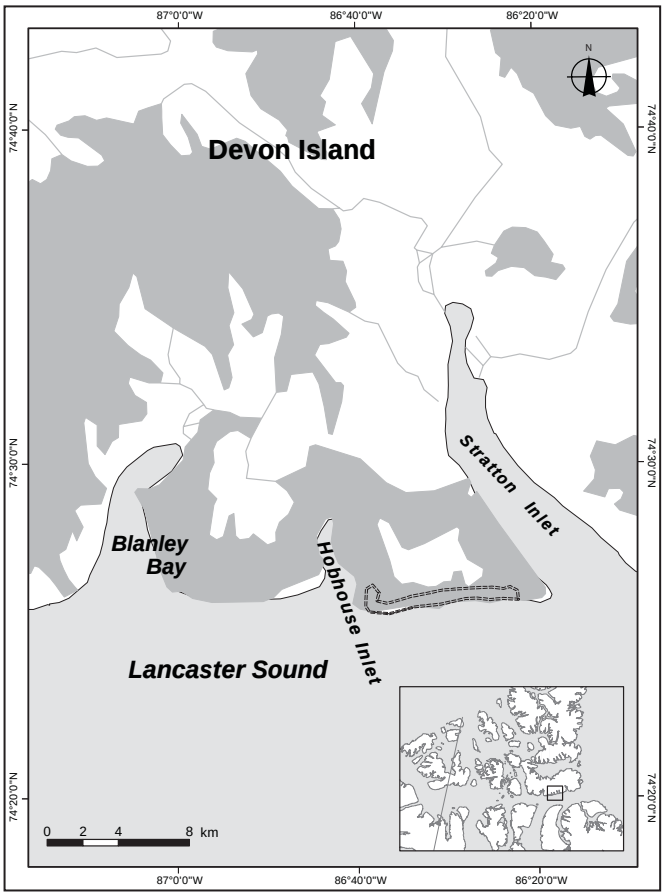
Size: 6 km^2

Description: Hobhouse Inlet is located along the southern coast of Devon Island in central Lancaster Sound. This shoreline is penetrated by numerous long fiords. The area is underlain by Precambrian anorthosite and gneiss (de Kemp 1999). Silurian limestone cliffs rise to 460 m above Lancaster Sound between Hobhouse and Stratton inlets.

There are usually 16 weeks of open water along southern Devon Island, from mid-June to mid-October (Dickins et al. 1990). The marine region of Lancaster Sound is described in Mallory and Fontaine (2004).

Biological value: Hobhouse Inlet supports one of Canada's largest Northern Fulmar colonies, variously estimated at 10 000–75 000 pairs (Nettleship 1974, 1980) or 25 000 pairs (Hatch and Nettleship 1998). There were an estimated 21 000 occupied breeding sites in 2001 (Gaston et al. 2006), corresponding to 11% of the Canadian population. Smaller numbers of Glaucous Gulls and Black Guillemots also occur here (Nettleship 1980). This marine region is occupied by seabirds generally from early May to the end of September.

The marine area around Hobhouse Inlet is also important for certain mammals, especially beluga and polar bear (Schweinsburg et al. 1982; Dickins et al. 1990). Some walrus haul-outs occur nearby, and hunters from Resolute Bay (Qausuittuq) may use this area to hunt polar bears along the landfast ice edge (Riewe 1992; Fisheries and Oceans Canada 1999).



Sensitivities: The waters along southern Devon Island are ranked as being of "high sensitivity" to effects of oil spills from early May through late October (Dickins et al. 1990). Seabirds are sensitive to disturbance at their colonies and to the pollution of offshore waters.

Potential conflicts: Lancaster Sound, Barrow Strait, and Prince Regent Inlet have potential to become marine shipping routes and areas of hydrocarbon exploration and development (DIAND 1982). This area is also of increasing importance as a tourist destination for cruise ships (Hall and Johnston 1995; Wakelyn 2001). Oil spills associated with drilling or shipping activities could endanger large numbers of seabirds and pollute their feeding areas.

Status: Hobhouse Inlet is an International Biological Programme Site (Site 2-16; Nettleship 1980), an Important Bird Area in Canada (NU060; IBA Canada 2004), and a Key Marine Habitat Site in Nunavut (Site 9; Mallory and Fontaine 2004).

Location: 74°37'N, 91°10'W

Size: 3.5 km^2

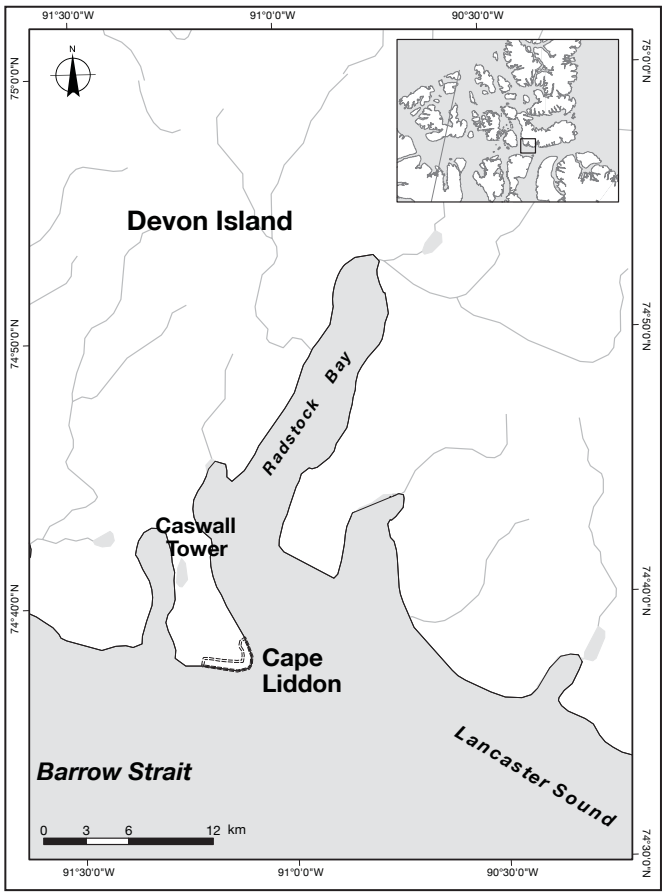
Description: Cape Liddon is a 300-m cliff consisting of Silurian limestone (de Kemp 1999) that juts into Barrow Strait on the west side of the mouth of Radstock Bay, southwest Devon Island, 110 km east of Resolute Bay.

This part of Lancaster Sound is usually ice covered by early October, and normal ice breakup around Cape Liddon occurs in late July (Dickins et al. 1990). Ice cover may remain in Radstock Bay in August (Gaston and Nettleship 1981). The marine area is described in Mallory and Fontaine (2004).

Biological value: Cape Liddon supports up to 10 000 pairs of Northern Fulmars, about 4% of the Canadian population (Hatch and Nettleship 1998), but the estimates have varied between 1000 and 10 000 pairs. Gaston et al. (2006) estimated that 9000 breeding sites were occupied in 2002 (5% of the Canadian population). Fulmars use Cape Liddon between April and early October. About 100 pairs of Black Guillemots nest around Cape Liddon.

Radstock Bay is an important feeding area where Northern Fulmars, Black-legged Kittiwakes, Thick-billed Murres, and Black Guillemots from elsewhere in Lancaster Sound (e.g., Prince Leopold Island) congregate between August and October (Bradstreet 1979; Gaston and Nettleship 1981; Fisheries and Oceans Canada 1999).

The waters around Cape Liddon are also important for marine mammals, notably beluga and polar bear (Schweinsburg et al. 1982; Dickins et al. 1990; Riewe 1992; Fisheries and Oceans Canada 1999). There are walrus haul-outs, and this is an important hunting area for the community of Resolute Bay (Qausuittuq), particularly for polar bears (Fisheries and Oceans Canada 1999). The southern shore of Devon Island (within 400 m of the tide line) is an important beluga migration route.



Sensitivities: The waters around Cape Liddon are considered to be of "moderate sensitivity" for oil spills, and Radstock Bay is of "high sensitivity" for oil spills (Dickins et al. 1990).

Potential conflicts: Lancaster Sound, Barrow Strait, and Prince Regent Inlet have potential to become marine shipping routes and areas of hydrocarbon exploration and development (DIAND 1982). This area is also of increasing importance as a tourist destination for cruise ships (Hall and Johnston 1995; Wakelyn 2001). Oil spills associated with drilling or shipping activities could endanger large numbers of seabirds and pollute their feeding areas.

Status: Cape Liddon is an International Biological Programme Site (Site 2-15; Nettleship 1980), an Important Bird Area in Canada (NU059; IBA Canada 2004), and a Key Marine Habitat Site in Nunavut (Site 8; Mallory and Fontaine 2004).

Location: 74°49'N, 96°21'W

Size: 1 km^2

Description: Browne Island is located in western Barrow Strait about 12 km southwest of Cornwallis Island and is less than 50 km away from Resolute Bay (Qausuittuq). The southeastern coast has a narrow, gravel beach that lies below steep cliffs that are 200 m high. The plateau slopes to the north, and raised beaches of sand and gravel abound. Browne Island is often ice locked until August (Dickins et al. 1990), with open water available for only 5 weeks on average (Mallory and Fontaine 2004).

Biological value: In 1974, Browne Island supported a colony of approximately 2000 pairs of Black-legged Kittiwakes, or approximately 1% of the Canadian population. In 2003, 1692 birds were observed on nests (M.L. Mallory, unpubl. data). However, in 1975, only 500 pairs were present, perhaps related to a late ice year (Alliston et al. 1976). Further studies are needed to assess the effects of ice on annual patterns of colony occupation.

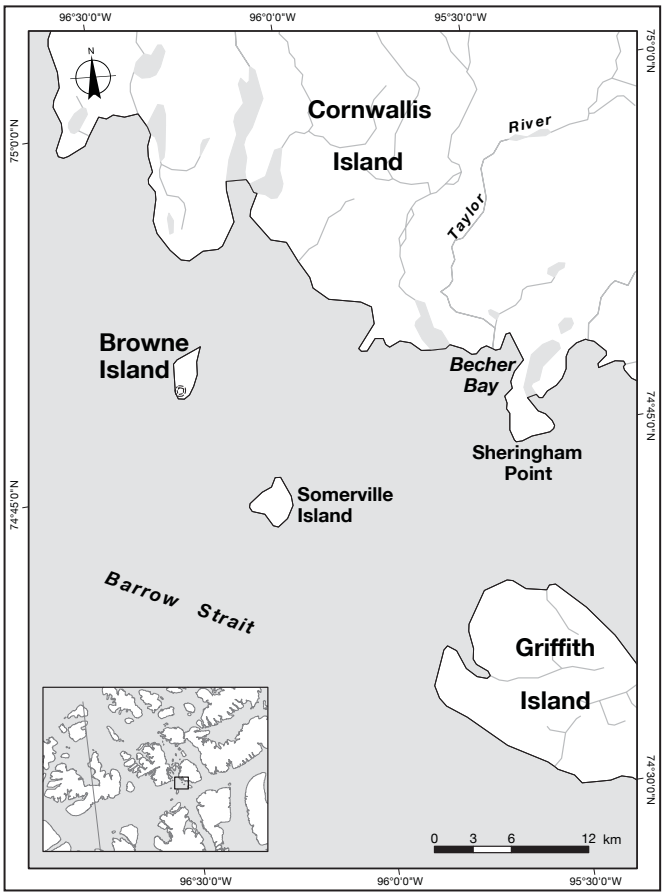
Thayer's Gulls and Glaucous Gulls nest on the island in small numbers (Alliston et al. 1976); seven Glaucous Gull nests were occupied in a small colony on the northeast part of the island in 2003 (M.L. Mallory, unpubl. data). Kittiwakes use the area between mid-May and late September.

The most abundant marine mammals in the area are ringed seals and polar bears (Dickins et al. 1990; Riewe 1992).

Sensitivities: The waters around Browne Island are considered to be "moderately sensitive" to risk of oil spills from May through early October (Dickins et al. 1990). Seabirds are sensitive to disturbance at their colonies and to the pollution of offshore waters.

Potential conflicts: None.

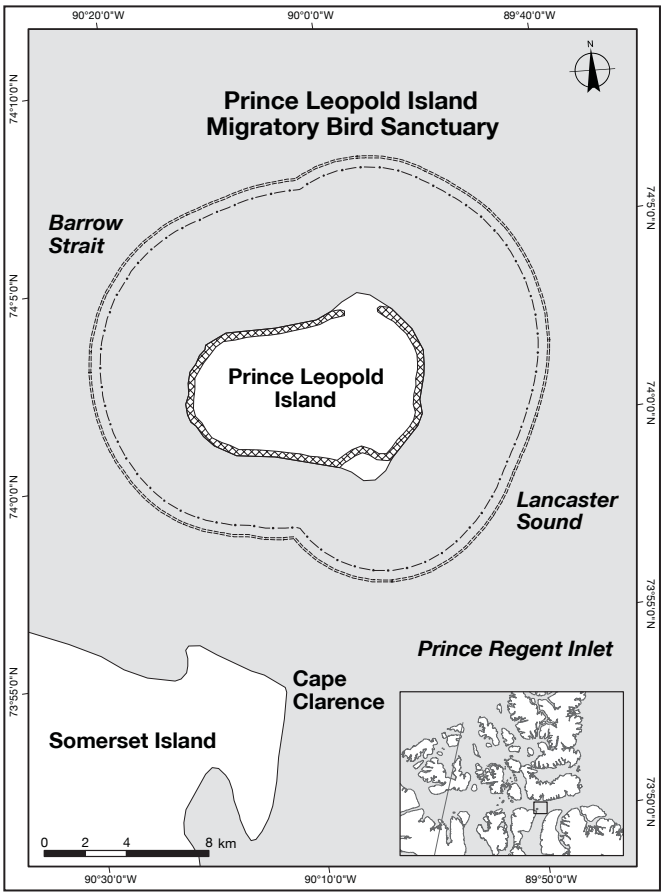
Status: Browne Island is a Key Marine Habitat Site in Nunavut (Site 7; Mallory and Fontaine 2004).



Location: 74°02'N, 90°00'W

Size: 324 km^2

Description: Prince Leopold Island is situated in western Lancaster Sound at the junction of Prince Regent Inlet and Barrow Strait, approximately 13 km north of Cape Clarence, Somerset Island. The island is surrounded by imposing vertical cliffs composed of Silurian sandstone and limestone, up to 265 m above sea level (de Kemp 1999). Extensive scree slopes are located below the north and south cliffs, and 1-km-long gravel spits extend from the northeast and southeast corners of the island (Gaston and Nettleship 1981). Sparse vegetation occurs around the island (Woo and Zoltai 1977). Unlike some of the other sedimentary rock of high Arctic seabird colonies, the rock at Prince Leopold Island fractures in flat slabs, creating numerous nesting sites. The ice-free period around Prince Leopold Island lasts about 11 weeks in the east and eight weeks in the west, but varies annually (Dickins et al. 1990). The rich marine environment around this site is described in Mallory and Fontaine (2004).



Biological value: Prince Leopold Island may be the most important multispecies seabird breeding site in the Canadian Arctic. The cliffs on the island support breeding Thick-billed Murres (86 000 pairs, Gaston and Hipfner 2000; estimated 100 000 pairs in 2003, A.J. Gaston, unpubl. data), Black-legged Kittiwakes (29 000 pairs), Northern Fulmars (62 000 pairs, Hatch and Nettleship 1998), and Black Guillemots (4000 pairs). These numbers represent 6%, 16%, 26%, and 5% of the Canadian populations of these species, respectively. Gaston et al. (2006) recently revised the fulmar estimate to 22 000 occupied breeding sites, or 11% of the Canadian population. Nesting occurs almost everywhere around the island, with murres concentrated on the east and northeast, fulmars around most of the island, kittiwakes on the north, and guillemots along the western stretches.

The island also supports 200 pairs of Glaucous Gulls (Nettleship 1980), although a more recent estimate (2002) puts the number of gull pairs at 75 (A.J. Gaston, pers. commun.). Nearby Cape Clarence also supports another 20 pairs of Glaucous Gulls and 200 pairs of Black Guillemots. This marine region is occupied by seabirds generally from early May to the end of September.

Prince Leopold Island has been an important site for seabird research (Gaston and Nettleship 1981; Hatch and Nettleship 1998; Gaston and Hipfner 2000; Gaston et al. 2005) and is an important site for ongoing seabird monitoring.

In addition to various seabirds, the Prince Leopold Island vicinity is also important for marine mammals, including beluga, bowhead whale, narwhal, walrus, ringed seal, bearded seal, and polar bear (Dickins et al. 1990; Riewe 1992; Fisheries and Oceans Canada 1999). The area is used by hunters from Resolute Bay (Qausuittuq).

Sensitivities: The waters to the east of Prince Leopold Island are considered to be "highly sensitive" to oil spills, whereas those to the west of the island are of "moderate sensitivity" with regard to oil spills (Dickins et al. 1990). Seabirds are sensitive to disturbance at their colonies and to the pollution of offshore waters.

Potential conflicts: Lancaster Sound, Barrow Strait, and Prince Regent Inlet have potential to become marine shipping routes and areas of hydrocarbon exploration and development (DIAND 1982) and are of increasing importance as tourist destinations for cruise ships and small aircraft (Hall and Johnston 1995; Wakelyn 2001). Changes in ship traffic may affect ice breakup patterns (Fisheries and Oceans Canada 1999). Prince Leopold Island is one of the most disturbed seabird colonies in Arctic Canada (Chardine and Mendenhall 1998). Oil spills associated with drilling or shipping activities could endanger large numbers of seabirds and pollute their feeding areas.

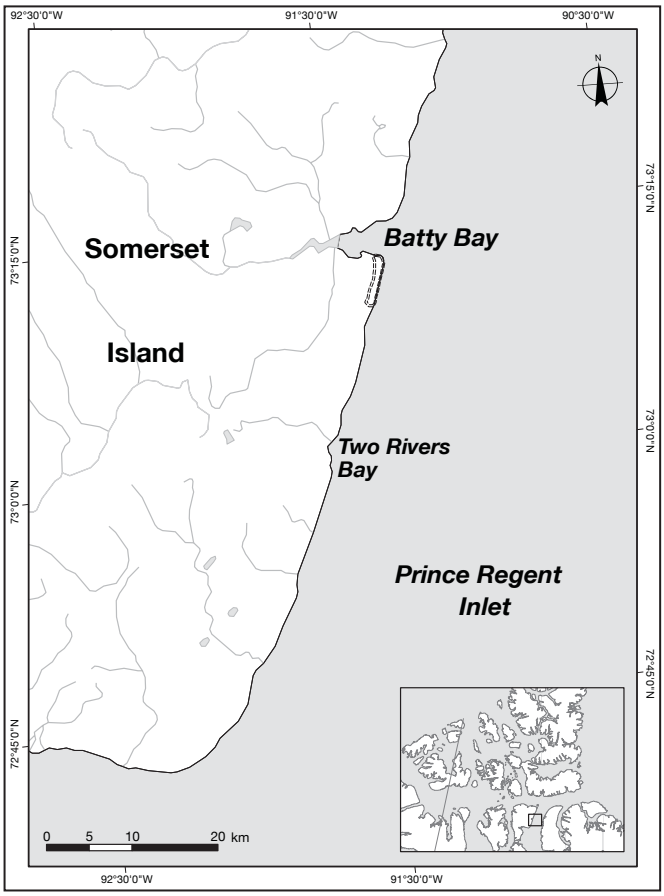
Status: This key site lies within the Prince Leopold Island Migratory Bird Sanctuary, designated in 1995, and includes waters 5 km offshore from the high tide line. It is an International Biological Programme Site (Site 1-5; Nettleship 1980), an Important Bird Area in Canada (NU006; IBA Canada 2004), a UNESCO World Heritage Site (UNESCO 2005), and a Key Marine Habitat Site in Nunavut (Site 11; Mallory and Fontaine 2004).

Location: 73°14'N, 91°25'W

Size: 5.5 km^2

Description: Batty Bay is a 10-km-long inlet on the eastern side of Somerset Island, which drains into Prince Regent Inlet. It is 5 km wide at its mouth, with tidal flats on the north and south coasts. The Silurian limestone cliffs (de Kemp 1999) around Batty Bay rise to 305 m, with extensive scree slopes.

Ice movement results in a major lead along the western side of Prince Regent Inlet as early as January and persisting into May (Smith and Rigby 1981), meaning that open water is available close to Batty Bay quite early in the year. The marine area around Batty Bay is described in Mallory and Fontaine (2004).



Biological value: In 1975, 2000 pairs of Black-legged Kittiwakes, or about 1% of the Canadian population, nested at Batty Bay. However, in 1974, only 350 pairs were present. Attendance at the colony is probably influenced by ice conditions in Prince Regent Inlet (Alliston et al. 1976). The size and consistency of use for this colony need to be reassessed to determine if the colony usually supports 1% of the Canadian population of kittiwakes.

Migrating King Eiders and Common Eiders (*S. m. borealis*) may stage along the east coast of Somerset Island in significant numbers (McLaren and Alliston 1985). This marine region is an important migratory corridor for beluga and is also used by walrus and polar bear (Sergeant and Hay 1979; Riewe 1992).

Sensitivities: Seabirds are sensitive to disturbance at their colonies and to the pollution of offshore waters.

Potential conflicts: Lancaster Sound, Barrow Strait, and Prince Regent Inlet have potential to become marine shipping routes and areas of hydrocarbon exploration and development (DIAND 1982). Oil spills associated with drilling or shipping activities could endanger large numbers of seabirds and pollute their feeding areas.

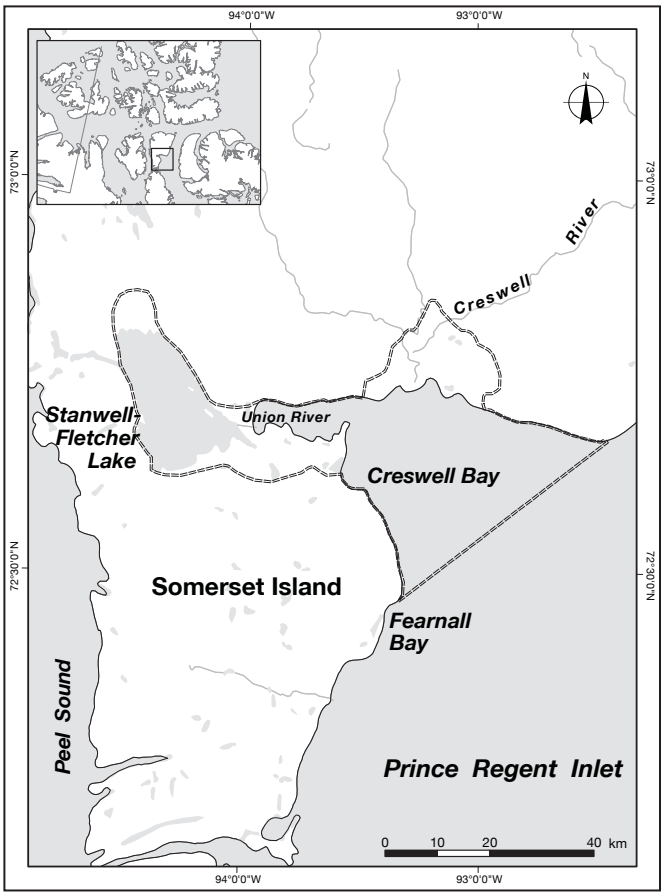
Status: Batty Bay is a Key Marine Habitat Site in Nunavut (Site 14; Mallory and Fontaine 2004).

Location: 72°45'N, 93°40'W

Size: 3.5 km^2

Description: Creswell Bay is midway along the east side of Somerset Island and opens into Prince Regent Inlet. A barren limestone plateau comprises much of Somerset Island, but lowlands extend around Creswell Bay and Stanwell-Fletcher Lake. Extensive tidal flats occur on the bay's north shore, with low limestone hills and ridges on the south shore. The Union River drains Stanwell-Fletcher Lake through a low, rocky area. There are well-vegetated (sedge-dominated) thermokarst areas immediately north of Creswell River and north of Stanwell-Fletcher Lake.

Archeological relics are abundant at Creswell Bay, attesting to the area's productivity and biological diversity.



Biological value: The lowlands around Creswell Bay and Stanwell-Fletcher Lake support a higher abundance and diversity of shorebirds than any other site north of 70°N (Alliston et al. 1976; Latour et al. 2005). Thirteen species have been observed in the area, and 11 are known to breed. Surveys conducted in 1995 and 1997 estimated a density of 35 shorebirds/km^2 for the area's most productive lowlands (Latour et al. 2005). In these areas alone (440 km^2), there were an estimated 6700 White-rumped Sandpipers (2% of Canada's population), 3600 Red Phalaropes (0.4%), and 900 Buff-breasted Sandpipers (6% of the Canadian population) (Latour et al. 2005). Buff-breasted Sandpipers are listed by CWS as a species of high concern (Donaldson et al. 2000). Other breeding shorebird species include Black-bellied Plover, American Golden-Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Baird's Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Sanderling, and Red Knot. Later in the summer, local birds and shorebirds from elsewhere gather to feed on benthic amphipods in the mudflats along the north shore of the bay. Maximum daily counts were 12 000 shorebirds during aircraft surveys (Alliston et al. 1976) and 6400 White-rumped Sandpipers and 1400 Sanderlings during ground surveys (Latour et al. 2005). These numbers, however, do not take into account the turnover of birds during the migration period and the value of this site to a larger number of individuals.

Large numbers of Greater Snow Geese are present in late summer. In 1974, 2700 moulting geese were counted, representing 2% of the Canadian population at that time. Since then, the Greater Snow Goose population has grown considerably, but the number of geese that currently use Creswell Bay is unknown.

King Eiders nest in the area (50–90 pairs in 1975). Over 7000 eiders staged along the coast in 1975 (>2% of the Canadian population). The thermokarst area along the Creswell River was used by 450–700 pairs of nesting Long-tailed Ducks, and 4800 moulted in Creswell Bay later in the season (Alliston et al. 1976).

Large numbers of Northern Fulmars and Black-legged Kittiwakes forage in Creswell Bay, and Peregrine Falcons nest in the area (Alliston et al. 1976; P.B. Latour, pers. obs.).

Muskoxen routinely use the lowlands north of Creswell Bay (Russell et al. 1979). Beluga whales calve in Creswell Bay, and small numbers of narwhals and bowhead whales are present during the summer. Creswell Bay is a summer retreat and a possible denning area for polar bears (Stirling et al. 1979).

Sensitivities: Disruption of natural drainage patterns and the melting of permafrost could alter the thermokarst lowland habitats. Nesting and moulting birds are sensitive to disturbance. Shorebirds, seaducks, and seabirds are sensitive to pollution in Creswell Bay.

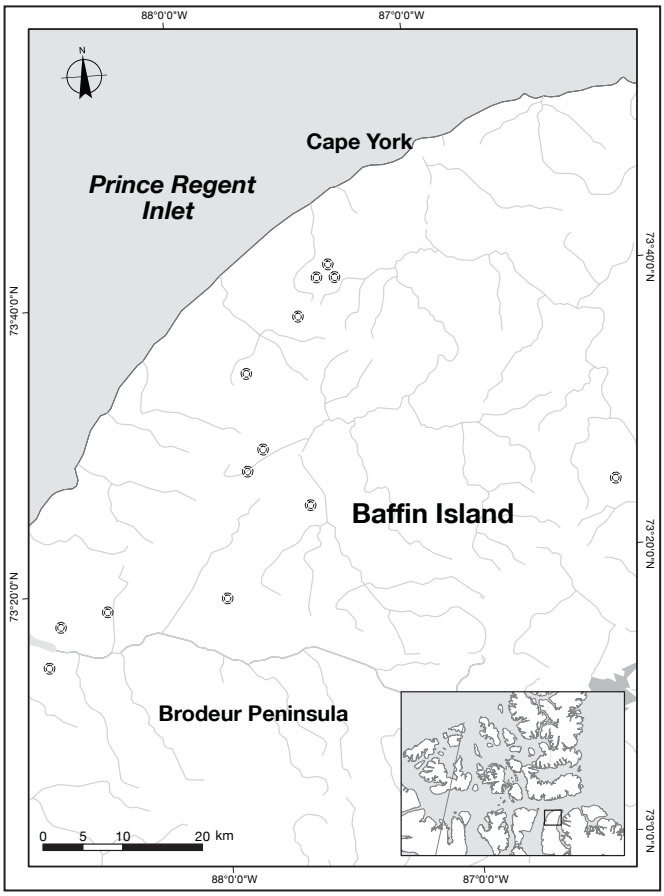
Potential conflicts: Lancaster Sound, Barrow Strait, and Prince Regent Inlet have potential as marine shipping routes (DIAND 1982). Mineral exploration has occurred in the area. Creswell Bay is a popular destination for tourists wishing to view wildlife and fish at the Union River. Increased and unregulated tourism may lead to disturbance to nesting and staging birds, as well as damage to sensitive habitat.

Status: This key site is an Important Bird Area in Canada (NU062; IBA Canada 2004).

Location: 73°37'N, 87°45'W

Size: 12 km^2

Description: This site consists of a large portion of the plateau on the northwestern Brodeur Peninsula, northern Baffin Island, about 150 km northwest of Arctic Bay. The peninsula is an area of limestone-rubble plateaus that are extensively intersected by ravines (Thomas and MacDonald 1987) and is composed of Silurian sandstone, limestone, and dolomite (de Kemp 1999). Most of the area is devoid of vegetation.



Biological value: The Brodeur Peninsula is a nesting area for the Ivory Gull, a rare bird in Canada (Thomas and MacDonald 1987; Alvo and MacDonald 1996). These colonies were found by Inuit many generations ago, and some were rediscovered in the early 1980s (Reed and Dupuis 1983). In the 1980s, between 560 and 580 adults were distributed among 10 colonies, which ranged in size from 12 to 180 birds. Hence, this area provided habitat for 23–24% of the known national Ivory Gull breeding population. Local Inuit knowledge suggested that declines had occurred in the number of Ivory Gulls near Arctic Bay (Mallory et al. 2003). In 2001–2003, helicopter surveys over these 10 former colonies found no breeding birds, but three new colonies were located farther inland, supporting about 90 birds (Gilchrist and Mallory 2005). It is not known whether these represent birds that moved inland from the former colonies or were colonies that existed previously, but outside of the former survey range (Thomas and MacDonald 1987). The number of breeding pairs likely fluctuates between years. These colonies represent about 20% of the estimated number of Ivory Gulls still breeding in Canada.

In July 2005, the Birds Subcommittee of COSEWIC reviewed the most recent data and agreed that the designation of the Ivory Gull should be upgraded from Special Concern to Endangered.

Sensitivities: Ivory Gull colonies may be susceptible to disturbance during the breeding season. Aircraft or human interferences could seriously jeopardize their breeding success. Pollution in the waters of Lancaster Sound and Admiralty Inlet, where the birds likely feed, could have serious negative impacts.

Potential conflicts: Lancaster Sound, Barrow Strait, and Prince Regent Inlet have potential to become marine shipping routes and areas of hydrocarbon exploration and development (DIAND 1982). Drilling activities and an increase in air or marine traffic could subject feeding and nesting areas to disturbance and pollution. As of 2003, two areas of diamond exploration were located within 5 km of extirpated or active Ivory Gull colonies.

Status: None.