CLAIMS

1. A sputtering target containing a metal and an oxide, wherein:

the contained metal becomes a nonmagnetic metal including an hcp structure if the entirety of the contained metal is made into a single metal, the lattice constant "a" of the hcp structure included in the nonmagnetic metal being 2.59 Å or more and 2.72 Å or less;

the contained metal includes 4at% or more of metallic Ru relative to the whole amount of the contained metal;

the sputtering target contains 20 vol% or more and 50 vol% or less of the oxide relative to the entire sputtering target, the melting point of the contained oxide being 1700°C or more; and

the hardness of the sputtering target is 926 or more by the Vickers hardness HV10.

2. The sputtering target according to claim 1, further containing: at least one metal selected from the group consisting of Nb, Ta, W, Ti, Pt, Mo, V, Mn, Fe, and Ni in a total amount of more than 0 at% and 31 at% or less relative to the whole amount of the metal contained in the sputtering target.

3. The sputtering target according to claim 1, further containing: at least one metal selected from the group consisting of Co and Cr in a total amount of more than 0 at% and less than 55 at% relative to the whole amount of the metal contained in the sputtering target.

4. The sputtering target according to claim 1, further containing: two or more metals selected from the group consisting of metallic Co, metallic Cr, and metallic Pt, wherein the metallic Ru is contained in an amount of 20at% or more and less than 100at%, the metallic Co is contained in an amount of 0at% or more and less than 55at%, the metallic Cr is contained in an amount of 0at% or more and less than 55at%, and the metallic Pt is contained in an amount of 0at% or more and 31at% or less relative to the whole amount of the metal contained in the sputtering target.

5. The sputtering target according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the oxide is an oxide of at least one element selected from the group consisting of Si, Ta, Co, Mn, Ti, Cr, Mg, Al, Y, Zr, and Hf.

6. The sputtering target according to any one of claims 1 to 4,5, wherein the sputtering target is used for forming a buffer layer between a Ru underlayer and a magnetic recording layer.