

FRIENDS OF VIRGIN ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK IMPACT REPORT 2025




Friends of
Virgin Islands National Park



Friends of Virgin Islands National Park was founded in 1988 and is the official philanthropic partner of Virgin Islands National Park and Coral Reef National Monument. Our mission is to protect and preserve natural and cultural resources while connecting visitors to the park and the park to the community.

This annual Impact Report serves as a record our work and achievements. Everything we do depends on your generous support. Thank you for helping make a difference in this small, beautiful corner of the world.

Dear Friends

When I took the role of Friends' Executive Director four years ago, I was excited that the organization had such a strong history of meeting its mission. I had inherited a well-written 5-year strategic plan and saw opportunities for growth within each area of focus – land, sea, community and culture. Today, we are more than ever our Park's best friend.

In one of our first board meetings with Superintendent Penny Del Bene, it became clear that working towards excellence with dignity was to be our shared call to action. Over the past few years, we have worked hand in hand to connect the dots between our existing programs and our future goals. We articulated, for example, how essential volunteers are to the Park's operations, and how the Sea Turtle Program and the Trails Program are models for volunteer engagement, not just in the U.S. National Park Service, but worldwide, as we learned at the International Sea Turtle Conference last spring in Ghana.

We jointly recognized the expanded reach of the School Kids in the Park program, which now brings more than a thousand youth from St. John and St. Thomas into the Park on field trips led by local culture bearers, expert educators, and retired Park rangers.

The Friends set out to model and practice internally that which we aimed to achieve on behalf of our Park and community. Starting with the Board of Directors, we amended our by-laws, created a Young Professionals Board, and reserved a voting seat for someone under 35 years of age. We elected a Virgin Islander, and the first woman, as Board Chair, and added three new board members.

We have also made professional development part of the organization's DNA, allowing staff new opportunities to grow their skills and enrich existing programs. This commitment to professional excellence attracted Virgin Islanders looking for meaningful careers in conservation. Today, five of our nine full-time staff were born in the Virgin Islands.

As you will see in this year's reporting, Friends programs are designed to meet strategic goals and make big impacts. Our stats are impressive and we are well-poised to continue to support our Park during times of change – whether that be a catastrophic hurricane, a global pandemic, a massive government shutdown, or something else.

Here at the Friends, we are in the forever business. Every volunteer, every member, every donor is carrying the torch to pass to the next generation. This is not a sprint, or even a marathon. There is no finish line. I look forward to implementing our next strategic plan which we will share with you at our Annual Meeting in January, and continuing this work with all of you.

We have an incredibly motivated, well-trained, dedicated network of people who live, work and play in our Park and like you, care deeply about St. John. I hope as you page through our report you get a glimpse of the dedication of our staff, volunteers and partners. Many, many thanks to all of you!

Tonia Lovejoy

Tonia Lovejoy
Executive Director



Board of Directors

Friends of Virgin Islands National Park is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors consisting of community-oriented leaders who represent a variety of interests in the Virgin Islands from both the public and private sectors. Officer positions are assigned based on bylaws. The Board meets monthly, requires a seven-member quorum, and holds an annual membership meeting to fill any vacant positions and to update members on the state of the organization and the state of the park. The Friends Annual Meeting held in January, is public and open to all.

Audrey Penn, Chair
Rafe Boulon, Vice Chair
Curtis Penn, Secretary
Lani Clark, Treasurer

Tammy Donnelly	Adonis Morton
John Fuller	Miles Stair
Julice Holder	Lila Uzzell (Young Professional)
Dr. Paul Jobsis	Dr. Kim Waddell
Shikima Jones-Sprauve	

Honorary Advisory Board

Lawrence Boshulte
Adrian Davis
Cid Hamling
Andy Rutnik

Young Professionals Board

The Young Professionals Board serves to support the mission of Friends of Virgin Islands National Park and create more engagement among younger generations.

Lila Uzzell, Chair	Tommy Gibney
Ki'Janne' Alfred	Enzo Newhard
Kaitlyn Cummings	



Letter From The Park



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Virgin Islands National Park

Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument

1300 Cruz Bay Creek

St. John, VI 00830



September 24, 2025

Ms. Tonia Lovejoy
Executive Director
Friends of Virgin Islands National Park

Via Electronic Mail: tlovejoy@friendsvinp.org

Dear Tonia,

As we reflect on the many achievements of 2025, I want to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt appreciation for our invaluable partnership. The Friends' unwavering support and commitment to increased collaboration have significantly contributed to our shared vision of protecting and enhancing the natural and cultural treasures of our park, as well as fostering meaningful connections with the St. John community.

This year, we witnessed remarkable success in programs that align with our mutual goals while fostering community engagement and providing vital opportunities for our youth. I am particularly grateful for your contributions to impactful initiatives such as the Summer Youth Trail Crew, the Sea Turtle Program, and efforts to connect and engage locals and visitors with St. John's cultural heritage.

Additionally, the Beach-to-Beach Power Swim event was a fantastic community gathering, drawing an impressive 125 volunteers and nearly 350 participants! I commend The Friends for the outstanding safety programs you have implemented, such as the Learn to Swim Program, which has empowered hundreds of community members to enjoy the beauty of our waters safely. These initiatives have not only enriched our park but have also inspired the next generation to become stewards of our resources and the community as a whole.

Thank you for your continued commitment to Virgin Islands National Park. Our collaborative spirit is a testament to the positive impact we can achieve when we work together. I am excited to see what we accomplish in 2026 and beyond!

Sincerely,

PENELOPE DEL
BENE

Penelope Del Bene
Superintendent

Digitally signed by PENELOPE
DEL BENE
Date: 2025.09.24 15:40:00 -04'00'



2025

BY THE NUMBERS

Fiscal year ending September 30, 2025

turtle protection

38 nests protected and monitored

3,221 hatchlings made it to sea

11 nesting beaches with 45 monitored

1 species nested hawksbill

maintained

27
miles of trails

30
historic sites

5
events

Annual Meeting,
Annual Gala, Culture
Day, Earth Day, Power
Swim

440
SEMINARS

hikes, talks,
demonstrations &
boat trips

7,977
volunteer hours

1,887 hours
contributed by **95** trained sea
turtle volunteers

5,280 hours
by **453** service camp and walkup
volunteers

810 hours
by **135** event volunteers



2025

BY THE NUMBERS

Fiscal year ending September 30, 2025

9

undergraduate
scholarships



SKIP

School Kids In The Park

62

field trips

12

classroom
presentations

1,315

students from
18 schools



learn to
swim

240 youth & adults
taught to swim

34 instructors &
lifeguards
trained or
recertified

15

learn to fish
students



summer in
the park

180 summer campers
from 4 camps

11 summer trail
crew



Marine Protection

SEA TURTLE MONITORING, PROTECTION & RESEARCH

The Friends marine resource protection priorities are focused on sea turtle protection, monitoring and research, coral reef and mangrove ecosystem health including supporting mooring maintenance, and outreach and education to schools, visitors and boaters.

CORAL REEF PROTECTION

Since 2015, the Virgin Islands National Park Sea Turtle Program, funded and managed by Friends of Virgin Islands National Park and collaborating with Virgin Islands National Park, has been coordinating sea turtle monitoring and protection efforts on

ANCHORLESS PARK

St. John. The team supported by a crew of trained volunteers documents nesting activity, promotes conservation through education and outreach, and mitigates threats to sea turtles that utilize the beaches and waters of the Virgin Islands National Park and Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument. In the 2024/25 season, 3,221 hawksbill hatchlings made it to the ocean and 38 nests were monitored.

SNORKEL APP

OCEAN WEEK

COASTAL CLEANUPS

In collaboration with the Sea Turtle Assistance and Rescue (STAR) network, twelve emergency calls documenting various injuries and physical ailments were recorded, including: suspected watercraft collision and predation, disease, and entanglement in fishing gear.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Our program was proud to attend a variety of sea turtle meetings, providing invaluable opportunities for networking and professional development including presenting posters on the programs education and outreach and ID research in Maho at the South East Regional Sea Turtle Meeting, and attending the International Sea Turtle Society Symposium.

Through our partner, CORE Foundation, a coral growing nursery has been established in park waters, and Friends continues to support, and advocate for ongoing maintenance of the parks mooring system that we helped establish.

The Friends Plan Your Snorkel App offers snorkelers the opportunity to enjoy the beauty of the marine world smartly and safely. Seasoned snorkelers and newbies can use the app to plan their snorkeling adventures within Virgin Islands National Park. The app includes maps, descriptions of all the best spots by skill level, available utilities, tips for responsible and safe snorkeling, and a marine life identification guide.

Marine Protection

Sea Turtle Research: Using photo-ID to monitor the status of fibropapillomatosis in green turtles at Maho Bay.

The Virgin Islands National Park Sea Turtle Program run by Friends of Virgin Islands National Park has been cataloging underwater photographs of sea turtles dating back to 2012 using photo-ID and facial markings to track the presence of fibropapillomatosis (FP) in green sea turtles in Maho Bay.

A paper on this work authored by Adren Anderson and Willow Melamet was published in the highly acclaimed Marine Turtle Newsletter (Issue Number 169, October 2025) that features information concerning the biology, conservation, management, legal status and survival prospects of all species of endangered and threatened sea turtles.

The paper entitled: Using photo-ID to monitor the status of fibropapillomatosis in green turtles at Maho Bay, St. John, United States Virgin Islands, discusses how facial markings are used to track sea turtles and monitor the status of FP in a foraging population in order to establish a baseline to aid in future research and management decisions.

Fibropapillomatosis (FP) is a panzootic disease affecting sea turtles worldwide, primarily green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*). This neoplastic disease presents as both external and internal tumors that can interfere with an individual's sight, ability to swim, reproduce, forage, and evade predators. The use of photographic ID (PID) has proven to be an efficient and alternative capture-mark-recapture method to evaluate the presence, absence, growth and severity of FP tumors over time.

The paper discusses the monitoring of FP tumor status using PID by assigning tumor scores to individuals, tracking growth and regression of tumors for recaptured individuals, determining the percentage of the marked population with FP, and evaluating the efficacy of this technique. In addition, a baseline was created to estimate the current status of FP tumors in the population to aid in future studies assessing tumor causation as well as management techniques for minimizing threats to this population of foraging green turtles.

Between February 2012 and July 2024, 472 encounters revealed 95 individuals. FP was detected, or suspected, in 71 of them. In addition, from March 2020 to July 2024, a subset of 66 individuals were assigned a tumor score using a 5-tiered scoring system. Another 51 individuals were evaluated between June 2013 to July 2024, showing various trends in tumor growth and remission.



Terrestrial Conservation

TRAIL MAINTENANCE

The Trails Program, managed and funded by Friends of Virgin Islands National Park, runs annually from November through August and is essential for keeping the park accessible and safe. The program protects natural and cultural resources by maintaining all 27 miles of hiking trails and more than 30 historic sites, restoring native plant habitats, and removing trash and debris from the park.

NURSERY MANAGEMENT, NATIVE PLANT PROPAGATION & PLANTING

This year, 453 volunteers contributed 5,280 hours of service to improve Virgin Islands National Park. This included 207 service group volunteers and 246 walk-up volunteers.

COASTAL PLANTING & BEACH STABILIZATION

The walkup program provides an opportunity for community and visitors to volunteer on the trails every Tuesday and Thursday morning from November to June. Work locations are posted every Monday. Service groups stay for longer periods of time and included the American Hiking Society, Conservation Volunteers International Program, Soul Trak Outdoors, Sierra Club, Appalachian State University, and others.

HISTORIC SITE CONSERVATION

EARTH WEEK

TRASH & DEBRIS REMOVAL

The Native Plant Restoration Program continues to grow since its launch in 2019. Work included removing temporary wire cages from coastal plants, removing invasive species from the native plant landscape at the NPS Lind Point Resource Management building, and watering 40 newly planted trees at Francis Bay. Eleanor Gibney continues to serve as lead advisor on all planting projects, providing invaluable expertise to the plant team.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

OUTREACH & EDUCATION



Terrestrial Conservation

Scientific data of the *Solanum conocarpum* reserve population continues to be gathered. St. John has several federally listed endangered species on the island including *Solanum conocarpum* or Marron bacora which is endemic to the Virgin Islands and much work has been done over the past few years to protect and grow the size of the population.

The Friends Cinnamon Bay Plant Nursery established in 2021 continues to thrive as a place to raise endangered and native trees as well as an educational space to teach youth about local plants and traditional uses.

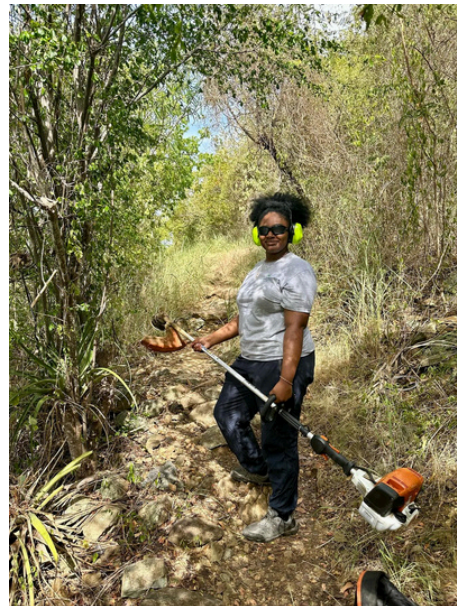
Trash and marine debris removal included the Friends staff biannual coastal cleanup at Drunk Bay and a Summer Trail Crew cleanup at Drunk Bay, as well as pickups by volunteers on the trail crew and turtle monitoring team, and volunteerism classes for students.

This year the 11 young crew members of the Summer Trail Crew worked hard clearing trails and historic sites, planted at the senior center, gained CPR skills, learned about turtles and marine ecosystems as well as the traditional uses of plants. They also had fun in and on the water. This 8 week program provides a professional job opportunity to Virgin Islands high school students (ages 15 to 18) interested in conservation.

Summer Trail Crew is an opportunity for students to gain professional experience, develop leadership skills, work outdoors as part of a team, and learn about Virgin Islands National Park. The crew works in the park on St. John under the supervision of the Friends Trails Coordinator. One of the goals of the Summer Trail Crew program is to help the participants gain an appreciation and passion for the natural world, conservation, and environmental stewardship. It is common for crew members to return for consecutive years.

Outreach and education programming included a special screening of the award-winning documentary *Out There* that tracks the path of a young filmmaker on a 10,000-mile exploration of the national parks. It is a tribute to the national parks and their history, and is also a recognition of the people that appreciate them and work to maintain their beauty.

Exploring and learning in the park is the guiding star for the iconic Guided Reef Bay Hike which ran twice a week in high season. Friends supported the interpretation team at the park to help facilitate the hike that includes a boat pickup.



Youth Education

SCHOOL KIDS IN THE PARK (SKIP)

LEARN TO SWIM

LEARN TO FISH

SUMMER CAMP PROGRAMMING

SUMMER TRAIL CREW

SCHOLARSHIP & INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

EARTH DAY

CULTURE DAY

Engaging our youth is a fundamental investment in the future of conservation and our island community. Friends of Virgin Islands National Park's Youth Education Programs aim to create a pipeline of environmental and cultural educational experiences for youth from preschool to college and beyond that encourage empathy for plant and animal life and promote environmental stewardship and community engagement!

School Kids In The Park (SKIP) encourages educators to use the park as a living classroom. In all, 76 educational opportunities were facilitated, including 62 field trips, 12 in-class presentations and 2 all school events. A key objective of the program in 2024/25 was achieved with the expansion to more schools on St. Thomas. The SKIP program serviced 1,315 students on St. John and St. Thomas from 18 schools.

Friends of Virgin Islands National Park holds two all school events to foster community and share the rich cultural and natural resources found in the park. 1,030 students from St. John and St. Thomas schools attended Culture Day and Earth Day Fairs.

Culture Day for schools celebrates and promotes the rich culture of the Virgin Islands. Students were able to travel from booth to booth and interact with local culture bearers and scientists to learn about the Guiniao Taino Tribe of Virgin Islands, St. John history, Caribbean archeology, Bamboula dancing, traditional and medicinal uses of local plants, drumming, Moko Jumbie heritage, traditional food carving, local juices, and more!



Photo: Kayden Richards

Youth Education

This year's Earth Day Fair was the 16th annual fair hosted by Friends and is part of a week long celebration of conservation and community. A fun day of learning kicked off with a Litter Stomp Parade led by VI Waste Management's Litter Critter. Students marched in the parade with posters and crowns to raise awareness about protecting our planet and conserving its resources. Booths at the event this year included numerous organizations, nonprofits, federal organizations and local advocates to teach youth about conservation in the USVI. In addition, 4th grade students presented their completed Junior Ranger workbooks to the National Park Rangers, recited the Junior Rangers Oath, and were sworn in as official Junior Rangers by the National Park Service.

The Learn To Swim program is build on the belief that being able to swim is an important safety issue, as well as the pathway to a world of joy above and below the water, and a number of employment opportunities in the tourism and marine industries and in areas like marine research and conservation. 240 youth and adults attended free clinics that took place every Saturday throughout the year and every weekday during the summer.

In the Learn To Fish program, 15 students learned the basics of sustainable fishing in Virgin Islands National Park over the summer. All the necessary fishing gear was provided, and participants took home a rod and reel upon completion of the program. During the program, the junior anglers learned about the history of fishing, the laws of fishing, types, sizes and eligible "take" options, the appropriate safe sites, and proper use of fishing gear.

In all, 180 students from 4 summer camps participated in Friends programming including swimming, fishing and eco-lessons, and 11 high schoolers participated in the eight week summer job opportunity that is Summer Trail Crew.

Friends of Virgin Islands National Park awarded nine scholarships to Virgin Islands youth studying at the undergraduate level in 2024/25. The awards totaling \$42,500 fall under the auspices of the Friends' two scholarship programs: the Jeffery Matheny Scholarship and the Noble Samuel Scholarship and Internship.

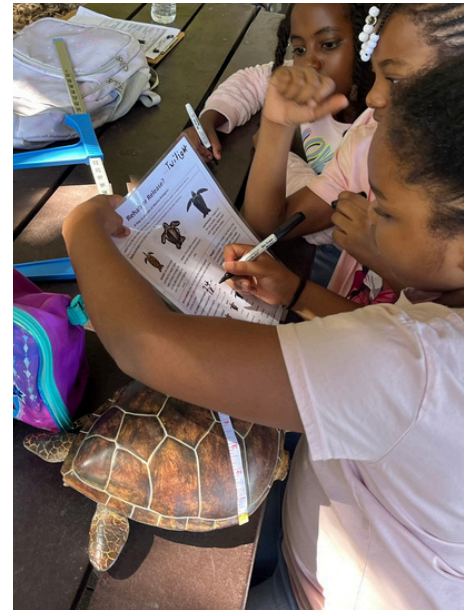


Photo: Nancy Borowick



NAME	
GRADE	

FRIENDS OF VIRGIN ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK



Culture & Community

*All hail our Virgin Islands, Emeralds of the sea, Where beaches
bright with coral sand, And trade winds bless our native land.
All hail our Virgin Islands.*



Virgin Islands March Mosaic Project

The Virgin Islands March Mosaic Project was a community project honoring Alton Adams and celebrating the Virgin Islands March with images and stories from these emerald isles.

The march is the regional anthem of the US Virgin Islands composed by Sam Williams and U.S. Virgin Island native, Alton Adams in the 1920s. It served as an unofficial regional anthem until 1963, when it was officially recognized by Legislative Act.

In all, 87 seniors, students and other community members carefully laid colorful tiles in 4 frames in celebration of Alton Adams powerful contribution to the place we call home.

Friends of Virgin Islands National Park worked with St. John School of the Arts, Adrian Senior Center, Julius E. Sprauve School, St. John Christian Academy, Giff Hill School and the Westin to complete a series of mosaic pieces designed by the creative team of Sean and Crystal D'Abbraccio of Tiny Tile Mosaics.

Culture & Community

ANNABERG CULTURAL PROGRAM

Preserving and sharing St. John's history and culture which includes archaeological sites dating back to as early as 840 BC connects people with their environment, history and culture, and is important for current and future generations.

VI MARCH MOSAIC PROJECT

Annaberg is the park's most accessible historic site and a must visit for anyone interested in understanding the island's history and heritage. On Mondays through Wednesdays St. John cultural ambassadors talk about bread making and local flavors in the old cook house, medicinal and other uses of the plants in the Annaberg gardens, and showcase craft skills that have been passed down through generations. Every year, hundreds of visitors and students learn about the important history of Annaberg and the rich culture of the people of this place.

CULTURE DAY

MEETING OF THE CHIEFS

HISTORIC SITE CONSERVATION

Friends helped facilitate a gathering of indigenous Caribbean leaders who met here on St. John and visited significant cultural heritage sites in Virgin Islands National Park including traveling to the Taino petroglyph site in Reef Bay. The group included leaders from the Kalinago Nation of Dominica, and the Guainia Taino of Boriken. Together the chiefs signed a Declaration of Unity at Cinnamon Bay for all to witness and honor.

COMMUNITY FIELD TRIPS

OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Sharing the rich cultural heritage of St. John through demonstrations of skills and crafts that have been passed on through generations is central to Friends seminar programs like Cinnamon Campground Chats, visitor outreach, and youth programming including School Kids In The Park (SKIP) and Culture Day for schools.



Photo: Kayden Richards

Events & Visitor Outreach

SEMINARS & HIKES

Connecting visitors to the park and the park to the community underpins Friends events and seminar planning and scheduling. Events run from November to June and aim to educate and connect visitors and residents with the park, with some serving as fundraising opportunities in support of our programs.

CINNAMON CAMPGROUND CHATS

ANNABERG PROGRAM

Last season, Friends hosted five events and some 440 seminars, hikes, demonstrations, volunteer opportunities, and boat trips. A daily calendar and information on all our events and activities are posted on social media and on the Friends website.

YP TALK SERIES

OUT THERE DOCUMENTARY SCREENING

Opportunities for visitors to explore, learn and experience the gifts of Virgin Islands National Park can be found in the Cinnamon Campground Chats evening seminars, the Annaberg Cultural Program demonstrations, the YP Talk Series from the Friends Young Professionals Board, the Ranger-led Reef Bay Hike, and Sea Turtle Boat Seminars.

ANNUAL MEETING

Education is woven into the all our programs and outreach to encourage responsible visitation and boating features in marketing, print and communications activity.

ANNUAL GALA

VILLAS FOR THE PARK

Key fundraising events included the Villas For The Park Auction, the Annual Gala, and Joe Kessler's Beach To Beach Power Swim. The success of these events is dependent, in particular, on the generosity and support of the local business community that donates thousands of dollars of goods and services—it takes an island.

JOE KESSLER'S BEACH TO BEACH POWER SWIM

CULTURE DAY

EARTH DAY

OCEAN WEEK

VISITOR EDUCATION, VOLUNTEERISM & OUTREACH



Photo: Andre Miguel Goolishian Hernandez

YP TALK SERIES


JEFF MILLER TALKS OCEAN SWIMMING

Friends of the Park's Young Professionals Board presents marine biologist and ocean swimmer, Jeff Miller. Entitled *Just Keep Swimming!*, Jeff's talk will include lessons learned crossing the Drake Channel from the BVI to St. John, circumnavigating the island, and swimming in Joe Kessler's Beach To Beach Power Swim every year since the first event 22 years ago. This is your chance to learn what it takes to be a distance open water swimmer and get some tips from a Power Swim GOAT!

- THURSDAY, May 22, 2025
- 6pm - 7pm
- NPS Lind Point Building, St. John

Shuttle available from the National Park Visitor Center in Cruz Bay at 5:30pm

www.friendsvinp.org



Friends Of Virgin Islands National Park

ANNUAL MEETING

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 2025
11AM to 2PM
RAINTREE CAFE
CINNAMON BAY BEACH & CAMPGROUND
ALL ARE WELCOME!

Speakers

Ki'Janne Alfred
Friends Young Professionals Board Member

Penelope Del Bene
Superintendent, Virgin Islands National Park

Tonia Lovejoy
Executive Director, Friends

Question & Answer Session

Lunch will be served

Please register on our website so we can determine space, shuttle bus, and refreshment requirements - www.friendsvinp.org



FRIENDS OF THE PARK EVENTS JANUARY 2025

FRIENDS ANNUAL MEETING
Raintree Cafe, Cinnamon
Saturday, January 25 | 11am to 2pm

ANNABERG CULTURAL DEMONSTRATIONS
every Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday | 10am to 2pm

CINNAMON CAMPGROUND CHATS
Raintree Cafe, Cinnamon Campground | 6pm to 7pm

- Monday: Sea Turtle Talk
- Tuesday: Traditional Arts & Crafts
- Wednesday: Music of the Caribbean
- Thursday: Birds Of St. John
- Friday: Coral Reef Ecosystems

MAHO SEA TURTLE INFO TABLE
Maho Bay Beach | every Tuesday | 9am to 11am

UNIQUE SEA TURTLE SNORKELING & BOAT EXCURSION
second Friday | Jan 10 | departs STT and STJ
book online at www.friendsvinp.org

FRANCIS BAY BIRD WALK
every Friday at 7:30am

VOLUNTEER TRAIL CREW
every Tuesday & Thursday
locations posted on Mondays on social media

LEARN TO SWIM CLASSES
every Saturday | Cinnamon | 9:30am

LEARN. EXPLORE. VOLUNTEER.

Visit our website for more information
www.friendsvinp.org

CINNAMON CAMPGROUND CHATS

SEA TURTLE TALK
Monday | 6PM to 7PM | Cinnamon Raintree Cafe

TRADITIONAL ARTS & CRAFTS
Tuesday | 6PM to 7PM | Cinnamon Raintree Cafe

MUSIC OF THE CARIBBEAN
Wednesday | 6PM to 7PM | Cinnamon Raintree Cafe

BIRDS OF ST. JOHN
Thursday | 6PM to 7PM | Cinnamon Raintree Cafe

CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEMS
Friday | 6PM to 7PM | Cinnamon Raintree Cafe

PLAN YOUR VISIT, FIND EVENTS, VOLUNTEER, DONATE AT
WWW.FRIENDSVINP.ORG



Friends of Virgin Islands National Park
This project is in partnership with the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI) through funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

Joe Kessler's BEACH TO BEACH POWER SWIM

REGISTER TODAY TO SWIM IN JOE KESSLER'S BEACH TO BEACH POWER SWIM

SUNDAY, MAY 25, 2025

REGISTRATION CLOSES WHEN CAPACITY IS REACHED

WWW.FRIENDSVINP.ORG/POWER-SWIM

Friends of Virgin Islands National Park



OUT THERE
A NATIONAL PARKS STORY

Friends of Virgin Islands National Park & St. John Film Society invite you to a screening of this award-winning documentary and a conversation with Director, Brendan Hall

Saturday, February 22, 2025
5:30pm to 8pm
at St. John School of The Arts
Tickets: \$25 | Refreshments Included

Purchase tickets at www.friendsvinp.org or via this QR code

A FILM BY BRENDAN HALL CO-CREATED BY ANTHONY BLAKE

A FROM CREATIVE PRODUCTION PRODUCED BY GRAHAM RAUVOGEL AND SANDRA TAN

EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY GERRY OHNSTROM, WEA NICHOLS AND HELENE ESTEVES



FRIENDS OF THE PARK EVENTS MAY 2025

JOE KESSLER'S BEACH TO BEACH POWER SWIM
Sunday, May 25
Practice swim | Sunday, May 4

UNIQUE SEA TURTLE SNORKELING & BOAT EXCURSION
Friday May 9 | departs STT and STJ | Book online

CINNAMON CAMPGROUND CHATS
Raintree Cafe, Cinnamon Campground | 6pm to 7pm

- Monday: Sea Turtle Talk
- Tuesday: Traditional Arts & Crafts
- Wednesday: Music of the Caribbean
- Thursday: Birds Of St. John
- Friday: Coral Reef Ecosystems

ANNABERG CULTURAL DEMONSTRATIONS
Every Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday | 10am to 2pm

MAHO SEA TURTLE INFO TABLE
Maho Bay Beach | every Tuesday | 9am to 11am

FRANCIS BAY BIRD WALK
Every Friday at 7:30am

VOLUNTEER TRAIL CREW
Every Tuesday & Thursday
Locations posted on Mondays on social media

LEARN TO SWIM CLASSES
Every Saturday | Cinnamon | 9:30am

Visit our website for more information
www.friendsvinp.org

LEARN. EXPLORE. VOLUNTEER.



YP TALK SERIES


ELEANOR GIBNEY TALKS LAND USE ON ST. JOHN

Friends of the Park's Young Professionals Board presents local expert and horticulturist, Eleanor Gibney talking about land use through the years on St. John.

- THURSDAY, March 6, 2025
- 6pm - 7pm
- NPS Lind Point Building, St. John

Shuttle available from the National Park Visitor Center in Cruz Bay at 5:30pm

www.friendsvinp.org



Friends of Virgin Islands National Park

PLAN YOUR SNORKEL APP

Your guide to exploring the underwater beauty of Virgin Islands National Park

- snorkel maps
- amenities
- fish identification

Get the FREE app at
www.friendsvinp.org/snorkeling



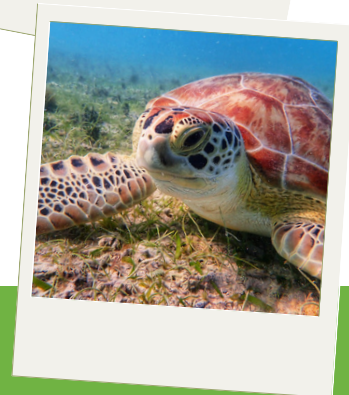



EXPLORE RESPONSIBLY

WELCOME TO VIRGIN ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK

Experience the breathtaking beauty of St. John. Make your stay both enjoyable and sustainable by following these helpful tips:

- **Leave No Trace.** Take only memorable photos and leave the place better than you found it.
- **Respect Wildlife.** Keep your distance and avoid feeding or touching turtles, donkeys, fish, birds, and other animals.
- **Stay On Trails.** Protect the park's ecosystems and historic sites by sticking to marked paths.
- **Stand Only On Sand.** Coral are fragile creatures that damage easily and can sting.
- **Use Reef Safe Mineral Sunscreen.** Sunscreens with active chemicals damage reefs and are banned in the Virgin Islands.
- **Pack In, Pack Out.** Use reusable containers, avoid single use plastic, and take all trash with you.
- **Educate Yourself.** Learn about the rich history, culture, and natural wonders of the Virgin Islands.



VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR THINGS TO DO
WWW.FRIENDSVINP.ORG

FRIENDS OF VIRGIN ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK IS THE PHILANTHROPIC PARTNER OF THE PARK

This advertisement is generously sponsored by 340 Real Estate Co.

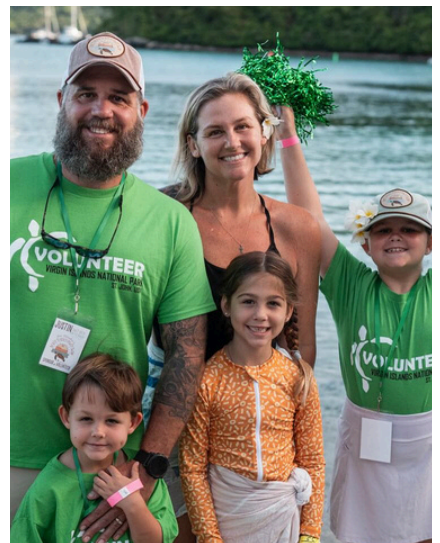


Outreach to encourage responsible visitation is woven into seminars and education programs as well as in marketing, print and communications activity. This advertisement generously sponsored by 340 Real Estate Co appeared in VisitVI magazine.

Volunteer Program

The Friends organization is the little engine that could thanks to the help of hundreds of volunteers. From our volunteer Board of Executives who lend their guidance and experience to organization strategy and operations, to the volunteers who get up early to patrol our beaches during sea turtle nesting season, and the service groups and individuals who help clear trails and plant trees on our shores, we are blessed by a community that cares. Important fundraising and community events like our Annual Gala and Joe Kessler's Beach To Beach Power Swim are only possible with the help of volunteers.

This year 683 volunteers contributed an impressive 7,977 hours in support of our programs and events. If you see someone out and about with a volunteer shirt on, please thank them.



Advocacy & Vision

FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

As the philanthropic partner of Virgin Islands National Park, Friends of Virgin Islands National Park recognizes it serves the public as both a vehicle and a voice to stand up for the preservation and protection of the natural and cultural resources found in Virgin Islands National Park and Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument.

VISITOR USE STUDY

NEXT GENERATION RANGER

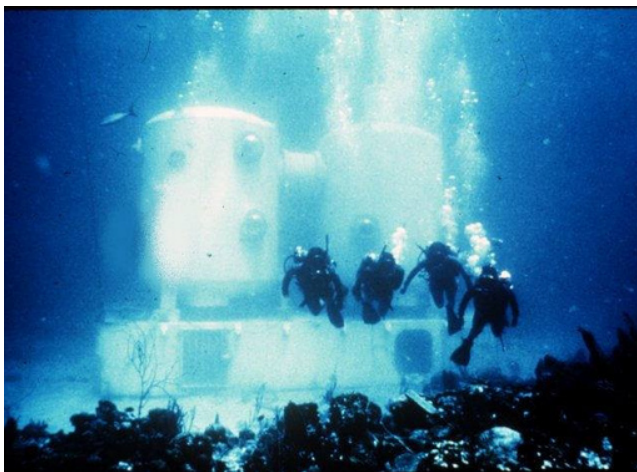
In developing our Five Year Strategic Plan (2025-2030) the Friends considered its role in a partnership where it inspires philanthropy that enables the park to meet challenges without financial compromise and makes the park competitive for federal funding that requires a match. Because of this interconnectedness of partnership, thought leadership and financial support, the park can be nimbler and more dynamic as it faces 21st century challenges.

TEKTITE DOCUMENTARY

In order to aid in making informed management decisions relative to resource allocation, visitation impacts, and natural and cultural resource protection, Friends of Virgin Islands National Park, in cooperation with Virgin Islands National Park, is conducting a Visitor Use Study in 2026. The results will be used to measure and characterize visitation to the park on roads, parking spaces, beaches, and moorings.

Beyond legacy programs, projects in the coming year include working with the park on their Next Generation Ranger Program. This initiative aims to provide a pipeline of conservation job opportunities available to island youth like our Summer Trail Crew and our scholarship students.

The Tektite project that took place in Lameshur Bay in 1969 and 1970 was the USA's first nationally sponsored scientists-in-the-sea scheme. A cooperative government-industry-university effort it involved teams residing below the waves for around 60 days. It is a story worth telling and Friends is sponsoring the development of a documentary on the project.



Thank you

**OUR DONORS, MEMBERS, SPONSORS
AND VOLUNTEERS FOR SHARING OUR
LOVE FOR THIS PLACE AND FOR MAKING
THIS WONDERFUL YEAR POSSIBLE!**



WAYS TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

Donate

Donate today! Your support makes a difference in this small corner of our beautiful world and helps continue all of our programs.

Giving options include one-time donations and recurring monthly or annual gifts. If your employer has a matching charitable contribution program, please bear us in mind.

Donations are accepted online via our website at www.friendsVINP.org or checks can be mailed to
Friends of Virgin Islands National Park,
P.O. Box 811,
St. John, VI 00831

Please contact our Development Officer, Ki'Janne Alfred at kalfred@friendsvinp.org or (340) 779-4940 if you are interested in starting a conversation about a multi-year pledge or endowment.

Stock Donations

With markets at record highs, a gift of appreciated stock to Friends of Virgin Islands National Park is a smart way to give. You'll avoid capital gains taxes and help protect our natural beauty, cultural heritage, and educational programs. It's a powerful way to turn growth into good.

To make a gift of stock to the Friends, contact your broker to initiate a transfer and request a charitable gift transfer or a stock transfer form.

Friends brokerage information:
Friends of VI Schwab Account #: 1790-9256
Account Title/Registration: Friends of VI National Park/Charity Nonprofit
Name of Receiving Institution: Charles Schwab
DTC number: 0164
Contact name at Charitable Organization: Tonia Lovejoy
Telephone number: (340) 779-4940
Mailing Address: PO Box 811, St. John, USVI 00831

Please contact our custodian, Antolino & Associates, Christian Hertl at CHertl@antolino.com for assistance.

Friends of Virgin Islands National Park is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and contributions, including donations and membership dues, are tax deductible.



Friends of Virgin Islands National Park has a Candid Platinum Seal of Transparency through GuideStar Charity Check.



Donate online at www.friendsvinp.org

WAYS TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

Gifts In Will

Planned giving is an opportunity to leave a legacy on St. John for future generations. Legacy or gift-in-will giving offers numerous benefits, both to the donor and the recipient organization. By including a charitable gift in your will, you ensure a lasting impact that extends beyond your lifetime, supporting the causes you care about for future generations.

This type of planned giving allows individuals to make significant contributions without affecting their current financial situation, offering peace of mind and personal satisfaction. Additionally, legacy giving can provide tax benefits, reducing the burden on your estate and potentially increasing the inheritance for your loved ones. Ultimately, it is a meaningful way to create a lasting legacy and make a difference in the world.



In Memoriam Gifting

Gifts and donations in memoriam offer a meaningful way to honor a loved one while contributing to a cause they cherished. These contributions can provide lasting benefits by supporting important projects and initiatives, such as conservation efforts, scholarships, or community programs. They not only serve as a tribute to the individual's passions but also create opportunities for positive change and development within the community. Moreover, memorial donations often inspire others to give, fostering a spirit of generosity and remembrance. This act of giving can bring comfort to grieving families, knowing their loved one's legacy continues to make a difference.



A Legacy of Love For The Kesslers

Our heartfelt thank you to the friends and family of Joe and Cristina Kessler who have collectively donated \$7,243.81.

Joe and Cristina shared their deep appreciation for Virgin Islands National Park through their extraordinary work and volunteerism with the Friends. Their legacy will live on in the programs and projects they inspired or created for many years to come!



Donate online at www.friendsvinp.org



WAYS TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT



Become A Member

Be a Friend! Since its establishment in 1988 our Friends organization has worked to help protect natural and cultural resources, engage and educate island youth, and connect visitors and community with the Park. As a Member, you become a part of a special community that makes it all possible.

Membership dues can be paid online annually a year at a time, or as a recurring annual payment. Per annum, individual dues are \$30, family dues are \$50, and business dues are \$100. Your membership dues support numerous projects and programs to further our mission to help protect this beautiful corner of the world.

Please feel free to contact our Membership Manager, Jennifer Stone at jstone@friendsvinp.org or 340-779-4940 with any questions.

Adopt A Turtle

Adopt A Turtle is an opportunity to support the Sea Turtle Program specifically. These adoptions are symbolic. They provide an opportunity to support sea turtle protection in Virgin Islands National Park and make wonderful gifts for grandchildren, children, family and friends.

Adoption options include adopting a hawksbill, a green, a leatherback, and a nest of hatchlings. On request, adoptions come with an adoption certificate that can be made out to a child, family member or friend and a cool species card.

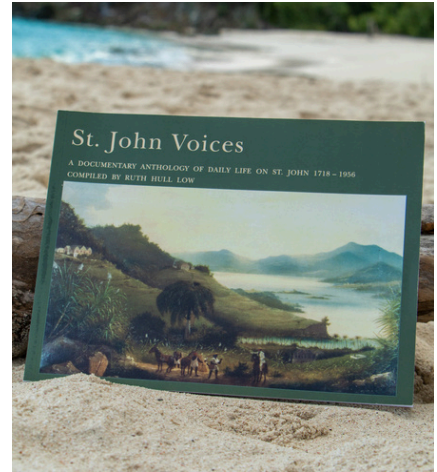
Should you choose to adopt a Nest of Hatchlings, you will receive an adoption certificate (don't forget to include the name of the person you want on the certificate in the special notes section at checkout) as well as a general nesting fact sheet and update emails when the nest has been laid and when it has hatched. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn about the nesting cycle and share in the excitement of baby hatchlings heading out to the ocean!



Become a member at www.friendsvinp.org

WAYS TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

Shop The Park Store



Proceeds from sales of Virgin Islands National Park merchandise and more support our programs.

Shop online on our website or stop by the National Park Visitor Center and Park Store in Cruz Bay which is open Monday to Thursday from 8:15am to 4pm and on Friday from 8:15am to 1:30pm. We look forward to welcoming you!

Shop online at www.friendsvinp.org





Get involved!

**“Every individual matters.
Every individual has a role to play.
Every individual makes a
difference.”**

Dr. Jane Goodall



LEARN. EXPLORE. VOLUNTEER.



www.friendsvinp.org