



RED MANGROVES provide habitat for many species and protect coastlines.

BAY RUM TREES' leaves release an aromatic oil when pressed.

RAM HEAD on St. John's east side has a dry climate. It hosts many types of cacti.

COLONIZING THE CARIBBEAN

Waves of Indigenous peoples began migrating from South America to the Virgin Islands 2,500 years ago. About 1,000 years ago the culture known as Classic Taino began to develop on St. John. Taino built villages, fished, grew crops, and worshiped here but were likely driven out by Kalinago people from St. Croix about 1450 CE (Common Era). Spanish colonizers depopulated these groups, called Island Caribs, from the Virgin Islands.

European nations fought to control the Virgin Islands in the 1600s. Denmark claimed St. Thomas and St. John for its Danish West Indies colony, intending to grow cotton and sugar with a labor force of indentured Europeans. The supply of people willing to risk indenture in the West Indies did not meet the demand. Denmark built a fort in Ghana where slave traders held captive Africans and sold them to the colony. By the 1800s the Danes had robbed 85,000 people of their freedom by forcibly sending them to the Virgin Islands.



REBELLION

Dire conditions on St. John—hurricanes, drought, starvation, and a brutal slave code—caused enslaved people to revolt in 1733. Former nobles of the Akwamu Tribe led an attack on the Danish fort on Fortsborg Hill in Coral Bay. In two groups, the freedom seekers moved across the island.

They burned plantations where they met resistance, and controlled St. John for eight months. When they faced imminent capture by soldiers from Martinique, a French colony, some chose to avoid the punishment that awaited them and took their own lives.

RECKONING

St. John's slave economy resumed after the rebellion. Danish authorities put several reforms in place to head off future uprisings. They required enslavers to provide garden plots and seed to enslaved people and allow them to grow their own produce. In part by trading or selling their surplus, St. John's enslaved people built a separate, supply-based economy.

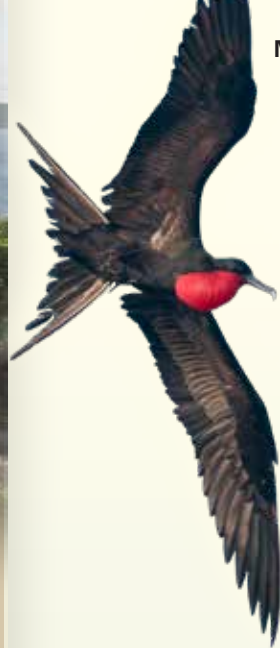
People continued to seek freedom. In the 1840s over 100 people escaped from St. John, some in plain sight of a guardhouse and patrols at Leinster Bay (now part of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom).



At ANNABERG and other colonial-era structures, blocks of brain coral are recognizable by their texture. Skilled craftspeople use traditional masonry skills to help preserve the historic structures.

From Reef to Peak

Many species that live or spend time on St. John are woven into human culture. Taino believed that bats—the Virgin Islands' only native mammals—were supernatural spirits. They carved bat images into the stone above pools at Reef Bay where, as people gathered to bathe at dusk, bats (spirits) swooped down to drink and perhaps visit.



MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD



BANANAQUIT



VELVETY FREE-TAILED BAT



GREEN-THROATED CARIB



CRESTED ANOLE



ZEBRA LONGWING



SOLDIER CRAB



SPOTLIGHT PARROTFISH



QUEEN CONCH



GREEN SEA TURTLE

Pre-Columbian

2500 to 1300 years ago Nomadic hunter-gatherers from South America enter the region and leave artifacts at Lameshur Bay on St. John (*map, other side*).

1300 to 1000 years ago Pre-Taino villages exist on major beaches in the Virgin Islands.

1000 to 500 years ago Classic Taino culture develops at Caneel Bay, Cinnamon Bay, and Reef Bay on St. John (*map, other side*).

Colonial

1600s–1700s Piracy is rampant in the Caribbean Sea.

1672 Denmark claims St. Thomas for its Danish West Indies colony (*map, above*).

1718 Denmark claims St. John and adds it to the colony.

1728 Sugar and cotton farms on St. John number over 100. Most enslavers are absentees, from the Netherlands, France, and Great Britain. The economy is based on slavery.

1733 Denmark buys St. Croix from France for its Danish West Indies colony.

A small group of St. John's enslaved people revolt. The revolt begins at Coral Bay and moves across the island's north shore and interior. Most plantations are destroyed.

1755 The Danish crown takes control of its colony from the Danish West India Company.

1760s–1808 Small plantations on St. John are consolidated into larger ones like Annaberg (*photo, upper right*). The enslaved population increases.

1801–02, 1807–15 Great Britain occupies parts of the Danish West Indies in the Napoleonic Wars. It builds military forts and barracks on Hassel Island (*map, above, and other side*).

1803 Denmark bans slave trading under its flag, but illegal trading continues.

1815 British-occupied islands are returned to Denmark.

1830s Anticipating Denmark's abolition of slavery, a local law provides a stipend and property rights to some enslaved people on St. John. The intention is to give families a reason to stay.

1834 Great Britain abolishes slavery.

1834 to 1848 Many enslaved people try to make their way from Leinster Bay on St. John

(*map, other side*) to freedom on British-owned Tortola less than two miles away. At least 100 succeed. Some fail.

1848 Denmark is forced to abolish slavery owing to organized revolts.

1900s St. Johnians build a subsistence economy through coaling, raising cattle, bay rum factories, and fishing.

1920s St. John's last sugar factory on, at Reef Bay, closes.

Post-Colonial

1917 Prompted by the events of World War I, the United States buys the Danish West Indies, taking Hassel Island, where Germany has a strong business interest, as a war prize.

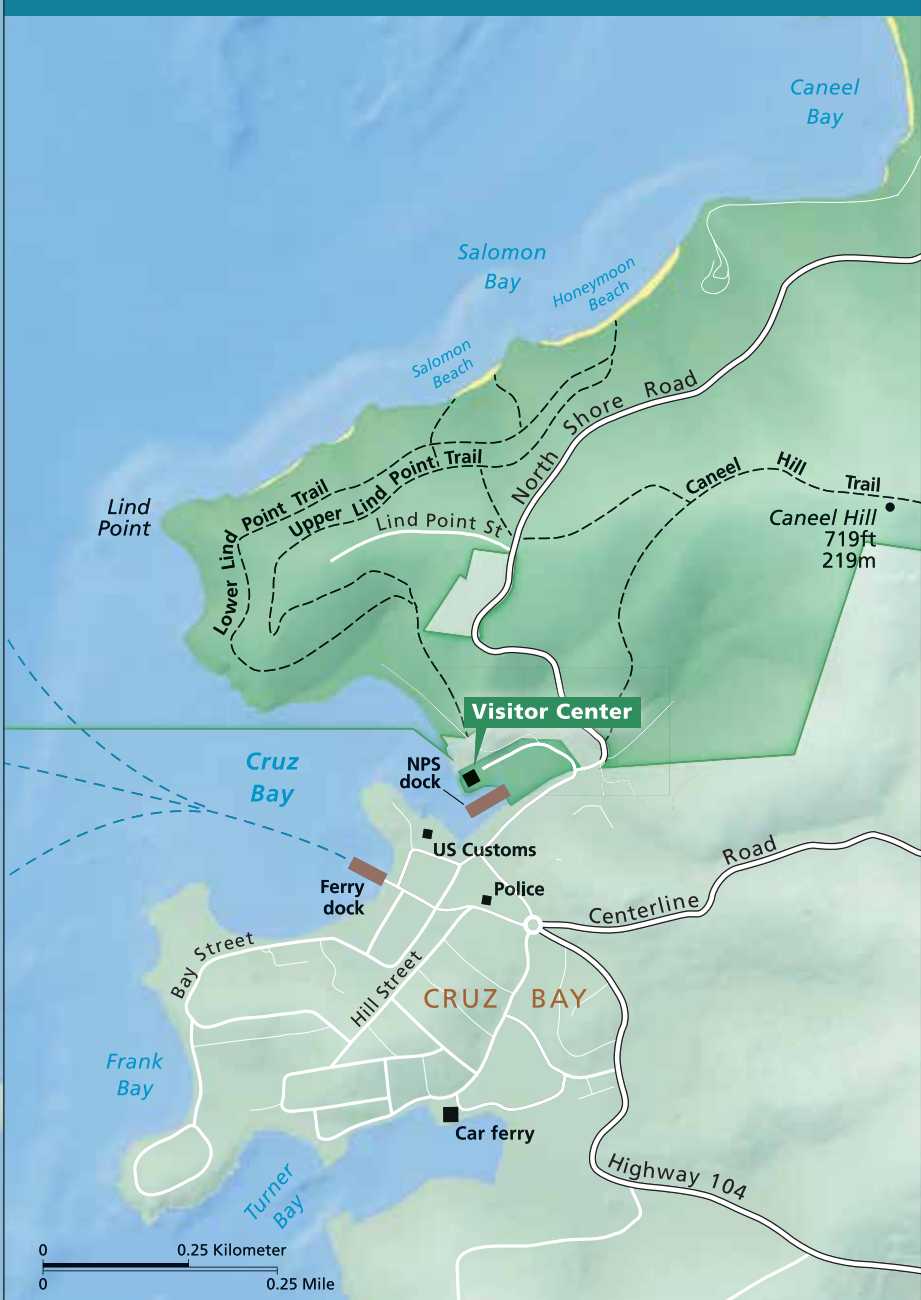
1956 Virgin Islands National Park, with 5,086 acres, is dedicated. It includes land purchased from the Creque, Marsh, Lockhart, Richard, Boulon, and Sprauve families.

1962 Over 5,600 acres of adjacent offshore land are added to Virgin Islands National Park.

2001 Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument, with over 12,000 acres, is dedicated.

Background: VIEW OF ST. JOHN from St. Thomas

Lind Point



ST. JOHN is home to Virgin Islands National Park and Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument. It is the least developed of the US Virgin Islands and can be reached only by boat. Most visitors arrive at Cyril E. King Airport on St. Thomas and then take a ferry to St. John. Ferries connect St. John and St. Thomas to the British Virgin Islands. You must have a passport to visit the British Virgin Islands.

You can experience the park and St. John through safari bus/taxi tours; snorkeling, scuba-diving, kayaking, and paddleboarding excursions; hiking; visiting historic sugar plantations; attending park programs; or snorkeling the underwater trail—or you can simply enjoy a day at the beach. Reserve your accommodations before you travel.

When you arrive at Cruz Bay on St. John, you can walk to the **NPS Visitor Center**. It is open weekdays and closed weekends, Thanksgiving Day, December 25, and July 4. Stop here for information, restrooms, publications, exhibits, programs, and a bookstore. Staff can help you plan activities into your visit. Some park programs require advance registration.

BOATING AND FISHING Ask at the visitor center for the **Virgin Islands Mariners Guide** and observe regulations published there and on the website. Be aware that all boats are limited to 30 nights in park and monument waters in a 12-month period. Peak season is December through April. Vessel moorings in the monument are for day use only.

Explore the **SUBMERGED LANDS** around St. John by kayak, paddleboard, or charter vessel. Snorkel the bays of Hurricane Hole, where rare mangroves create nurseries for young marine animals. You'll find brilliantly colored corals, sponges, cushion sea stars, and healthy sea-grass beds.

HIKING trails offer easy walks and difficult climbs, and range from well-maintained to brushy. You can purchase trail guides at the visitor center. On guided hikes to Reef Bay valley (five hours) you'll pass petroglyphs (rock carvings) and the remains of St. John's last active sugar mill. In winter Francis Bay Trail offers opportunities to observe some of nearly 160 species of resident and neotropical birds, including the white-cheeked pintail duck and mangrove cuckoo. Stay on trails.

CAMPING within the park is allowed only at Cinnamon Bay Beach and Campground on St. John. Reservations are recommended. Accessible overnight camping units and facilities are available. You'll find a restaurant and food truck near the beach. A camp store has cold drinks, snacks, groceries, and supplies. You can rent water sports equipment and beach wheelchairs by the day. Seasonal closures occur; call 340-714-7144 or visit www.cinnamonbayvi.com for more information.

Follow **LOCAL CUSTOMS** and laws. Greet others with a cheerful "Good day." Respect private property and do not trespass. When you leave the beach, wear a T-shirt or other coverup. Parking is limited—take a taxi or safari bus to your destination. Before crossing a road, look

both ways—vehicles drive on the left side. Use caution on narrow mountain roads.

The Virgin Islands are in the **ATLANTIC TIME ZONE**. In winter the time is one hour later than eastern standard time. In summer, when the United States is on daylight saving time, the time is the same.

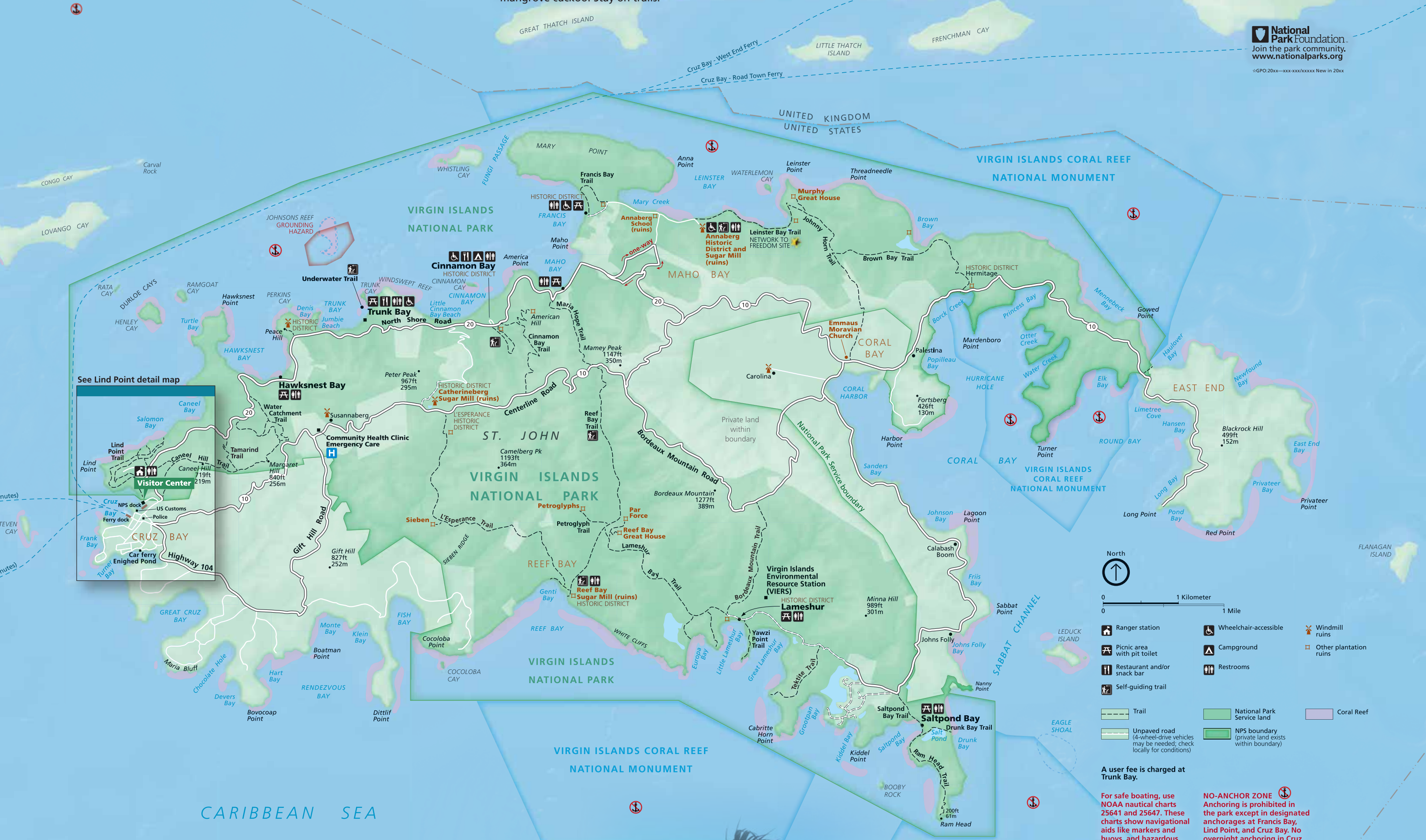
ACCESSIBILITY We strive to make facilities, services, and programs accessible to all. For information go to the visitor center, ask a ranger, call, or check the park website.

More Information
Virgin Islands National Park
Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument
1300 Cruz Bay Creek
St. John, VI 00830
www.nps.gov/viis
www.nps.gov/vicr
Follow us on social media.
Use the official NPS App to guide your visit.

Virgin Islands National Park and Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument are two of over 400 parks in the National Park System. Learn more at www.nps.gov.

National Park Foundation
Join the park community.
www.nationalparks.org

©GPO 2014—xxx-xxx/xxxxx New in 2014



Hassel Island



Hassel Island is south of Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas Island (not shown on this map).

SAFETY If you sunburn easily, stay in the shade or indoors between 10 am and 2 pm. Wear a hat, sunglasses, and protective clothing, like a rash guard. Use reef-safe sunscreen. • Some plants are toxic or poisonous and cause rashes and illness. Do not touch or taste any unfamiliar plants. • Feral donkeys bite and kick. Do not feed or approach them. Feeding any wildlife, including birds, mongoose, crabs, and fish, is prohibited. • Pets must be leashed and attended at all times. They are not allowed on beaches or in the campground. Service animals are allowed. • Large, shore-breaking waves that occur in winter on the north shore are dangerous. Use caution when entering or leaving the water if surf is high.

Body surfing is not recommended. Never swim, snorkel, or scuba dive alone. Do not stand on reefs or touch or scrape coral and other marine life. Scuba divers and snorkelers must fly a diver's flag when outside boat exclusion areas to warn boats to keep a distance of 100 feet. Scuba diving is prohibited in designated boat channels and shipping lanes, and near docks. Personal watercraft and waterskiing are prohibited in park and monument waters. • Smoking, fires, and glass bottles are not allowed on any beach or shoreline. • Virgin Islands law prohibits public nudity. • Defacing, breaking, or removing historical or natural features—including rocks, corals, shells, and sand—on the island or in the

water is prohibited. • Do not climb on old walls and structures. They crumble easily and can cause serious injury • Lock valuables in your vehicle or take them with you. • It is illegal to litter in park waters or on land. • Amplified music above 60 decibels is not allowed in the park. • Remotely piloted aircraft like drones are prohibited in the park. • For firearms and other regulations check the park website, www.nps.gov/viis.

Emergencies call 911 by landline or call 340-776-9110 from a cellphone

TYRE PALMS are used for roof thatch, brooms, and fish traps.
© CAROLINE ROGERS

VISIT OTHER NATIONAL PARKS IN THE US VIRGIN ISLANDS

• Christiansted National Historic Site on St. Croix, for colonial architecture, 340-773-1460, www.nps.gov/chri

• Buck Island Reef National Monument, for snorkeling, glass-bottom boat tours, and hiking, 340-773-1460, www.nps.gov/buis

• Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve on St. Croix, for the site where Columbus' crew made landfall, 340-773-1460, www.nps.gov/sari

ELKHORN CORAL
© CAROLINE ROGERS

For safe boating, use NOAA nautical charts 25641 and 25647. These charts show navigational aids like markers and buoys, and hazardous areas in detail. Do not use this map for navigation.

NO-ANCHOR ZONE Anchoring is prohibited in the park except in designated anchorages at Francis Bay, Lind Point, and Cruz Bay. No overnight anchoring in Cruz Bay. No anchoring is allowed in the monument. Over 200 mooring buoys have been installed in the bays around St. John.