



GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

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DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SEASONAL CLOSURES ON THE HARVEST OF QUEEN CONCH, WHELK, MUTTON & LANE SNAPPER

Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources reminds the public of the current annual seasonal closures for Queen Conch, Whelk, Mutton and Lane Snapper, as established by as per VI code title 12, chapter 9a, sections 304 and 316 effective, March 13, 2015, and July 1, 2008, respectively. These harvest prohibitions are in place to protect the populations of these species during critical reproductive periods. This allows the conservation of fished populations and helps sustain and improve the fisheries of the Virgin Islands.

Harvesting of Queen Conch (*Aliger Gigas*) is prohibited from Sunday, June 1, 2025, through Friday October 31, 2025. The conch season will reopen on Monday, November 1, 2025, and will remain open until Midnight, May 31, 2026. Commissioner Oriol also reminds the public of the currently active seasonal closures for: Whelk/the West Indian Top Snail (*Cittarium pica*) which commenced on Tuesday, April 1, 2025, and will end Tuesday, September 30, 2025.

Mutton Snapper (*Lutjanus analis*) and Lane Snapper (*Lutjanus synagris*) which commenced on Tuesday, April 1, 2025, and will end Monday, June 30, 2025. Harvest and/or possession of these species during the periods listed above are prohibited Territory-wide.

The Commissioner would also like to inform the public of the Mutton Snapper Spawning Aggregation Seasonal Closure Area to the Southwest of St. Croix. Fishing of any kind is prohibited in this seasonal closed area between March 1st and June 30th every year. The closed area is marked by boundary points at the following locations:

A – 17°37.8'N, 64°53.0'W
B – 17°39.0'N, 64°53.0'W
C – 17°39.0'N, 64°50.5'W
D – 17°38.1'N, 64°50.5'W
A – 17°37.8'N, 64°52.5'W

“We ask for everyone’s cooperation to protect Virgin Islands resources for the present and future benefit of the people of the Virgin Islands,” said Commissioner Oriol.

For more information or questions, please contact the Division of Fish and Wildlife at DFWelectronic@usvi.onmicrosoft.com or 340-773-1082 (STX Office) or 340-775-6762 (STT Office), the Division of Environmental Enforcement at 773-5774 on St. Croix and 774-3320 on St. Thomas.