



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

DPNR PROMOTES THE CONSERVATION OF TERRITORIAL BIRDS

Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources announces updated rules to protect species of migratory birds by aligning protections of [migratory bird species](#) in the U.S. Virgin Islands with existing federal and international protections of these avian resources in accordance with the [Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 \("MBTA"\)](#), codified at 16 U.S.C. 703-712.

In recognition of the vital importance of our tropical environment and the wildlife it sustains, the Commissioner affirms that, pursuant to Title 12, Sections 37 and 53 of the Virgin Islands Code, no authorization has been issued for recreational hunting activities, including the hunting of certain bird species, within the territory. Accordingly, such activities remain unauthorized as of June 4th, 2025.

This measure reflects our strong commitment to conservation and the responsible stewardship of the Virgin Islands' natural resources. In alignment with this commitment, recreational hunting of all bird species in the territory—including those identified under 12 V.I.C. § 31, such as pigeons, doves, ducks, plovers, snipe, waterfowl, gallinules, hawks, thrushes, and yellow-legs—is currently not authorized. Additionally, in accordance with Title 12, Subchapter II, Sections 11, 12, and 16 of the Virgin Islands Code, the Department of Planning and Natural Resources will not be issuing recreational hunting licenses at this time.

Currently, DPNR issues research, culling, and nuisance "predation" wildlife permits for birds. The Commissioner reminds the public that the trapping, collecting, or possession of eggs of booby bird and parakeet bird species is also prohibited. These updated regulations conform to territorial regulations with the existing federal regulations and frameworks to better conserve protected migratory bird species within the territory. These enhanced protections are compatible with Titles 12 of the Virgin Islands Code and Rules & Regulations and the MBTA. Any violation of local or federal wildlife protections may result in enforcement actions.

Information on hunting licenses, permits, or information regarding species discussed herein may be obtained from the Division of Fish and Wildlife at dpnr.vi.gov. For questions or more information about these regulations or other wildlife regulations, please contact the Division of Fish and Wildlife at (340) 773-1082 on St. Croix and (340) 775-6762 on St. Thomas or the Division of Environmental Enforcement at (340) 773-5774 on St. Croix and (340) 774-3320 on St. Thomas or by email at DFWElectronic@usvi.onmicrosoft.com.