



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**

## SEASONAL FISHING CLOSURES ANNOUNCED BY DPNR

Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) reminds the public of the **annual 3-month seasonal closure** for the following snapper species:

- **Black Snapper** (*Apsilus dentatus*)
- **Silk Snapper** (*Lutjanus vivanus*)
- **Vermillion Snapper** (*Rhomboplites aurorubens*)
- **Blackfin Snapper** (*Lutjanus buccanella*)

As mandated by 50 CFR 622.435(A)(1)(iii) and Virgin Islands Rules and Regulations (V.I.R.R.), Title 12, Chapter 9A §§316-13 & 316-14, the harvest and possession of these species is prohibited in:

- Federal waters surrounding the U.S. Virgin Islands
- Territorial waters of the St. Thomas and St. John district

This closure is in effect from Wednesday, October 1, 2025, through Wednesday, December 31, 2025.

These seasonal restrictions are critical for protecting fish populations during their reproductive periods, helping to ensure the long-term sustainability of Virgin Islands fisheries.

Additionally, the seasonal closure for Whelk (West Indian Top Snail, *Cittarium pica*), which began on April 1, 2025, has ended as of September 30, 2025. Whelk may now be legally harvested in territorial waters.

### Important Reminders for Whelk Harvesting:

- A recreational fishing license is required under V.I.R.R. Title 12-002-000, Subchapter 106.
- The daily recreational bag limit is 24 whelk per person.

- Each whelk must have a minimum shell diameter of 2 7/16 inches at its widest point.
- Harvesting more than 24 whelk per day requires a commercial fishing license.
- Licenses can be obtained online at: <https://www.gooutdoorsusvi.com>

“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, please contact:

- **Division of Fish and Wildlife**
  - St. Croix: 340-773-1082
  - St. Thomas: 340-775-6762
- **Division of Environmental Enforcement**
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