



TROPIC NEWS

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

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FISHERIES IN CRISIS

The record - almost word for word - of the 2-day fisheries conference held at the Virgin Isle Hotel in September, 1987, is ready for distribution.

Approximately 100 copies of the 147 page book have been set aside for sale to the public at a cost of \$20.00 per copy. They will be sold on a first come - first serve basis, and may be obtained by writing; Division of Fish & Wildlife, P.O. Box 101 Estate Nazareth, St. Thomas, U.S.V.I. 00802.

The proceeds will be used by the Division for various research projects.

ENVIRONMENTAL MUSEUM

The Department of Planning & Natural Resources is studying ways to develop an environmental museum. Through exhibits, it will be used to raise the public's understanding of the natural resources of the Virgin Islands, how they function and what we can do to protect and enhance them. It is hoped that a series of exhibits will be produced by the Department and other local and federal agencies and organizations.

BEACH SEINES ARE ILLEGAL

The practise of hauling seines into shallow water or onto beaches is illegal in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Seines with mesh less than 1-1/4" stretch are illegal. If you have information on such activity, please contact: Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Bureau of Environmental Enforcement 774-320.

BONT TICK ERADICATION

The Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study is presently conducting the wildlife surveillance component of the Tropical Bont tick Pilot Eradication Project on Antigua, West Indies. The eradication program has been organized by the U.S. Agency for International Development in order to develop the information needed to formulate the policies, strategies, and operating procedures required to eradicate the Tropical Bont tick from the Caribbean. The Tropical Bont tick, is a vector of heartwater, a severe livestock disease and a threat to wild and domestic ruminants in the Western Hemisphere. Although an exotic from Africa, this tick species has become well established in the Caribbean since its introduction into Guadelope in 1830 and can presently be found on at least 16 islands.

Since the cattle egret is a host for the immature stages of the Bont tick, a field project has begun to determine the extent of the cattle egrets movements in the Lesser Antilles. Individual birds have been captured, banded, and released with one wing dyed. Different colors on the wing represent different islands.

If cattle egrets with one colored wing are sighted please call the Division of Fish and Wildlife (775-6762), Dave Nellis or Cheri Amrani, with the following information; what color the bird's wing had been dyed, the date the bird was sighted, the location of the sighting, and if the leg bands were seen.

This information was supplied by the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study.

DOLPHINS SAVES MARLIN

The following is an actual account of an unusual dolphin-marlin-fisherman encounter reported by Erik Miles as witnessed by Matthew Mahaffey of 5-7 Estate Nazareth, St. Thomas, U.S.V.I. 00802. Matthew Mahaffey was at the time, the first mate of the sports fishing vessel "No Problem", which was the boat involved in the incident.

On June 23, 1989 the Sport-Fishing boat "No Problem" went to the North drop about 20 miles to the North of St. Thomas U.S.V.I. At around 2:30 we hooked into about a 400 pound Blue Marlin on the 100 fathom line. About two minutes later dolphin (the mammals) started appearing from both sides of the boat. They jumped over and under the line with the marlin on, and kept moving in for a closer look at the line, it seemed. As we tried to back down on the marlin, about twenty dolphins lined up across the back transom and would not let us back up. Meanwhile, the rest of the dolphins kept swimming and jumping all around the boat. They continued this for about a half an hour until the distracted angler gave slack in the line and pulled the hook, causing us to loose the marlin. As soon as this happened all the dolphin disappeared.

EXPORT OF BAITFISH IS ILLEGAL

Regulation signed by Governor Farrelly on June 6, 1989 states that the export or wanton waste of baitfishes is prohibited. This includes: BLUE FRY - Jenkinsia species WHITE FRY - Anchoa species SPRAT - Haerangula species. If you have information on such activity, please contact: Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Bureau of Environmental Enforcement 774-3320.

WANTON WASTE IS ILLEGAL

Regulation signed by Governor Farrelly on June 6, 1989 states that wanton waste occurs when a fisherman knowingly catches and retains more fish than he can reasonable use, sell, barter, trade, or store.

Discarding fry on a beach or fishes into a bay are examples of wanton waste.

If you have information on such activity, please contact: Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Bureau of Environmental Enforcement 774-3320.