

BENEATH YOUR BOAT

AN ECOSYSTEM TEEMS WITH LIFE

A living necklace of coral reefs encircles St. John Island. It supports thousands of species that thrive in the protected waters of Virgin Islands National Park and Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument. Mangrove forests and seagrass meadows, which lie between island and reef, are living habitats too. Mangroves, seagrasses, and corals live in partnership to support diverse life, stabilize beaches, reduce erosion, and trap sediment.

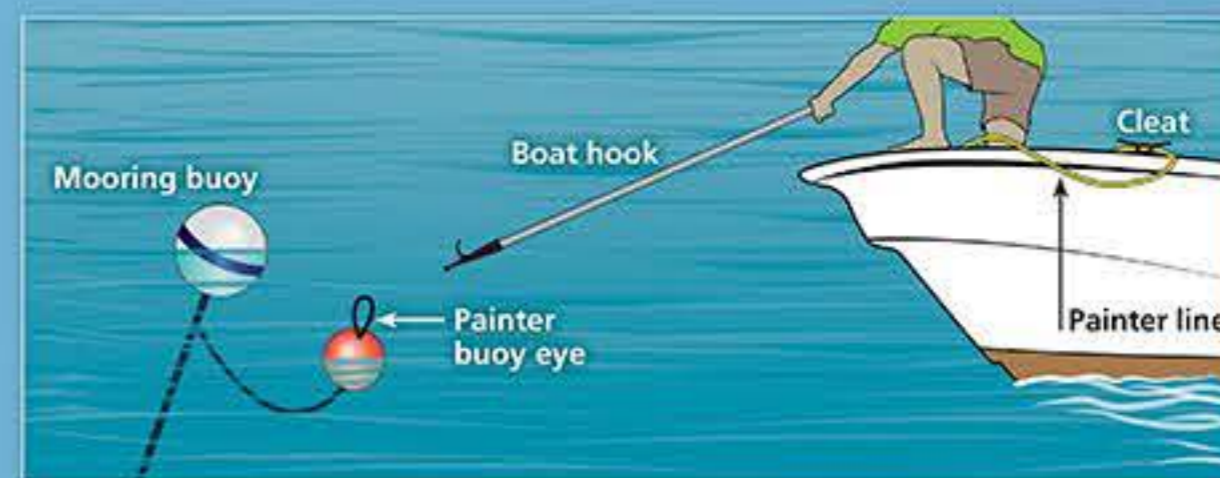
Anchors and anchor chains can break, crush, and topple corals, which can take decades to recover. They can rip up seagrasses.

Help preserve the fragile ecosystem you've come here to enjoy. Use the National Park Service mooring system, based on boat length overall (LOA). Use the map (*other side*) to find an unclaimed mooring buoy that accepts boats of your LOA. Then find a color-coded buoy to match your type of use and duration of stay.

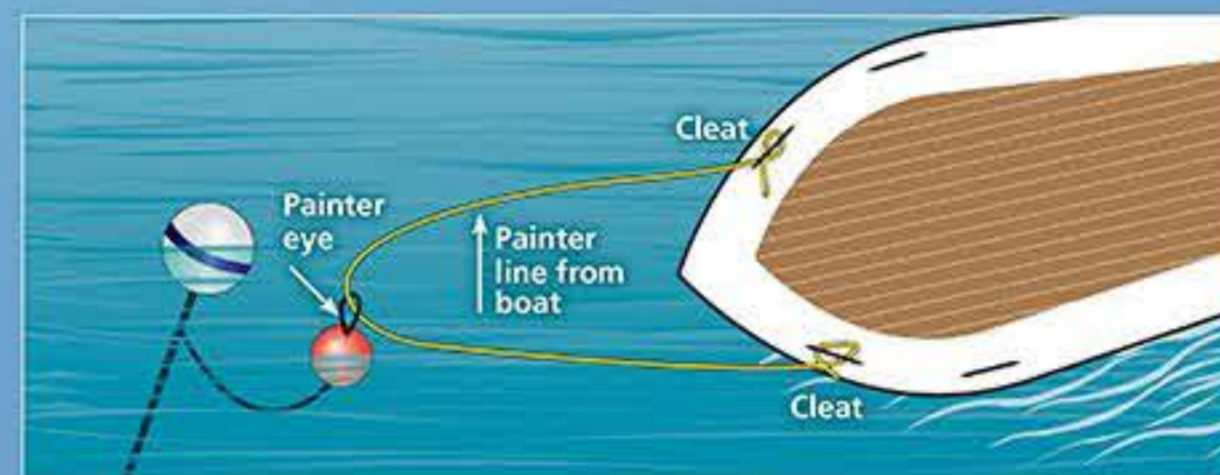


CORALS are animals that attach to the ocean floor or to skeletons of dead corals. Hard species like star coral slowly build up a reef. Reefs provides food, shelter, and breeding and nursery grounds for other species.

How to Moor Your Boat



- 1 You'll find over 200 mooring buoys, safe in winds up to 40 mph, in the bays around St. John.
- 2 Approach a mooring buoy slowly. Head into the wind or current. Pick up the eye of the small, red "painter" buoy with your boat hook.



- 3 With one end of your painter line secured to the bow, thread it through the eye. Cleave off on the other side. Do not hook the eye over your cleat (*follow diagram above*).
- 4 To leave a mooring, uncleat line; pull it through the eye; back away. You must leave your mooring when St. John Island is under a Tropical Storm Watch.



HAWKSBILL TURTLES eat sponges and other invertebrates.

SAFETY TIPS

- SWIM**, scuba dive, or snorkel with another person, never alone.
- PROTECT** yourself against sun damage. Use reef-safe sunscreen. Wear a hat and shirt.
- SQUALLS** arise suddenly, especially in winter. Remain alert.
- WATCH FOR SNORKELERS** and swimmers near boat exclusion zones and access channels.
- QUIET HOURS** in the park and park waters are after 10pm.
- NIGHTTIME** underwater boat lights are prohibited.
- SMOKING** is prohibited within 50 feet of pavilions, restrooms, and picnic tables.
- BALLOONS, METAL DETECTORS, and REMOTELY PILOTED AIRCRAFT** are prohibited.
- Deposit boater-generated **TRASH** (limit two 10-gallon bags) at Cruz Bay near the Customs Office, Maho, Francis, Saltpond, and Little Lameshur.
- BEACH / SHORELINE** is the area between the water's edge and 50 feet landward and seaward. Glass, pets, and smoking are prohibited on all beaches and shorelines.

FISHING

NO SPEARFISHING

Fishing regulations differ in park and monument waters (*see map, other side*). Spears are prohibited in both. Know where you are.

IN PARK WATERS you may fish with hand-held rod and line except in boat exclusion zones, while using moorings, and while at the NPS Finger Pier and NPS Cruz Bay Dock. Fishing is allowed on the NPS Finger Pier after 5pm. For lobster, conch, and whelk, see below.

IN MONUMENT WATERS you may cast nets for bait fish. You may also fish with hand-held rod and line for hard-nose, but only while attached to yellow fishing moorings.

Conch

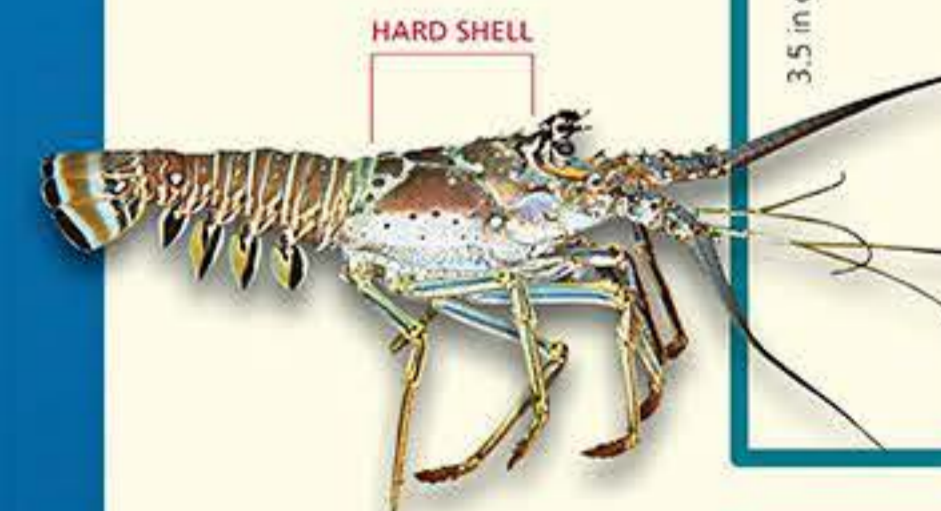
Season open November 1 to May 31. Conch must be landed in the shell. Limit two (2) per person per day.



9 in or 22.5 cm

Caribbean Spiny Lobster

May be taken at any time. Females with eggs may not be harvested. Limit two (2) per person per day.



3.5 in or 8.75 cm

Whelk

Season open October 1 to March 31. Limit one (1) gallon (in the shell) per person per day. You may not possess more than two days' limit.



2.7/16 in or 6.19 cm