

The Virgin Islands Consortium

National Park Service's 'Saving The Native St. Croix Ground Lizard' Talk Happens On Thursday

Community Center / **Published On October 07, 2015 11:57 AM /**

Staff **October 07, 2015**



ST. CROIX -- The National Park Service (NPS) is inviting the community to come out on Thursday to meet Nicole Angeli, a PhD candidate at Texas A&M University, and hear her talk on St. Croix Ground Lizards, according to a press release NPS issued on Monday.

Learn about the ongoing efforts to quantify the colonization of Buck Island by the St. Croix ground lizard. Nicole will also describe her work to identify sites here where lizards could be repatriated.

In 2008, after 40 years of preparatory habitat restoration, critically endangered St. Croix ground lizards found a new home on the Buck Island Reef National Monument. Invasive

mongoose management began on Buck Island in the 1960s and resulted in mongoose eradication by 2001. An invasive plant management program that began in 2004 has resulted in the control of invasive plants by over 80 percent on the island.

As a result of these actions, the lizard population has grown 24-fold on Buck Island, according to the release, and locally-born animals now use all of the habitats available. Thanks to habitat restoration efforts and ongoing breakthroughs in science, the island remains a lizard paradise, the release further stated.

The St. Croix Ground Lizard project has been profiled locally and in academic outlets internationally. A forthcoming children's book by Nicole Angeli and Jennifer Keats, called "Saving St. Croix Ground Lizards," will be published by Arbordale Press in 2017.

Nicole received a Master's of Science in Conservation Biology and Sustainable Development at the University of Maryland and her Bachelor's degree at Johns Hopkins University. Her research integrates spatial modeling and animal physiology to understand why some species persist while others decline.

The lecture will be held from 5:30-6:30 p.m. in the Danish West India & Guinea Company Warehouse/Slave Market Building. The NPS' parking lot will be 'free' and open for this event until 7:00 p.m. Friends of the National Parks of St. Croix will meet from 4:30-5:30 p.m. before the lecture in the same location.