

The Virgin Islands Consortium

With Snakes Often Spotted In U.S.V.I., And Caimans Roaming The Wild, Barnes Seeks Eradication Plan From D.P.N.R.

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It wasn't too long ago that seeing a snake in the U.S. Virgin Islands was a phenomenon that would shock the entire territory. Nowadays, such sightings are no longer startling news.

And while the Caimans sightings in territory have been infrequent, the crocodilians are out in the wild, and the Department of Planning and Natural Resources have issued a warning asking residents to report immediately upon sight, as they are very dangerous.

Senator Alicia Barnes, however, believes that warnings are not enough. A former D.P.N.R. commissioner, Ms. Barnes has called on the department to furnish a plan to eradicate what she described as invasive species from the territory.

"Recently, there have been numerous stories in print, electronic, and social media concerning sightings of snakes and other unusual animals that have infiltrated our borders. In light of this, I am requesting information from the Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Division of Fish and Wildlife, regarding your action plan to address this problem and alleviate the concerns of many in our community," Ms. Barnes wrote in a letter to D.P.N.R. Commissioner Nominee Jean Pierre-Oriol.

She added, "Several of the animals of concern would appear to be "invasive" species that could have a severe adverse impact to the Virgin Islands' delicate ecosystem. Of particular concern is the red-tailed Boa. Therefore, I am requesting further information to include a comprehensive eradication plan to rid our community of these dangerous wild creatures.

"I fully recognize the significant challenges faced by your Department. However, to subdue and/or alleviate the fears of many in the community, a proactive approach to this problem is needed. As such, please provide me with the Department of Planning and Natural Resource's plan to address this matter."

Feature Image: [Man holds up a snake at the Barren Spot Mall in 2015](#). Courtesy Morgan Richardson, Jr.