

The Virgin Islands Consortium

'If You Bring Your Trash, Leave With Your Trash': UVI Psychology Club Students Collect Garbage At Altona Lagoon

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Ernice Gilbert **September 30, 2019**



ST. CROIX -- Students from the UVI Psychology Club on Saturday hosted a cleanup at the Altona Lagoon in Christiansted as part of the International Coastal Clean-up Month. While the students worked on the rainy morning to collect trash at the popular spot, they were disappointed by the amount of refuse that was collected, and called on those who frequent the Lagoon to pick up after themselves.

"We found more trash than ever because people have parties here, but they have a mind to not care. They say 'oh, somebody will pick it up for me,' and it goes into the water and

animals are in danger," the Psychology Club students told the Consortium Saturday morning while sheltering from a downpour.

"They don't care about their surroundings. We found a lot of beer bottles, weed (marijuana), trash in the water. Crazy," they said.



Students of the UVI Psychology Club on St. Croix (Ernice Gilbert, VIC)

The students made it a point to stress the negative impact of littering. They spoke of damage to both the soil and water caused by garbage. Indeed, hazardous chemicals can leach out of the litter and pollute the soil and water bodies located nearby. These toxins then enter the human body via the food chain. The contaminants also stunt plant growth and cause health issues in animals living in the area. Littering can also lead to air pollution, and it can serve as a breeding ground for mosquitos, which can spread a number of viral disease.



Group Shot of the UVI Psychology Club on St. Croix (Ernice Gilbert, VIC)

The cleanup was part of a class, and students were to write a one-page paper about their experience, which, going by their conversation with the Consortium, will lay bare the disregard for the environment by those who utilize the Lagoon.

"They come with garbage bags and they still don't place the trash in the bags," the students said.

Asked what message they would like to relay to the community, the students were blunt: "If you bring your trash, go with your trash. Be mindful of the environment because you don't leave your house like that, so why would you leave outside like this?"

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