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DPNR Offering Free Kayak Tours to Salt River's Bioluminescent Bay

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Bioluminescence By. GETTY IMAGES

The Department of Planning and Natural Resources is inviting the public to join in the opportunity to enjoy St. Croix's natural resources by participating in free kayak tours in the mangrove habitats and bioluminescent bay of Salt River on St. Croix. These kayak tours are funded through the Division of Fish and Wildlife as part of its mission to encourage all people within the Virgin Islands to enjoy and learn about the islands' beautiful natural resources.

Salt River Bay is located on the north side of St. Croix and contains some of the largest remaining mangrove habitats on St. Croix, which is critical habitat as roosting and feeding sites for shore birds and as a nursery for many juvenile marine fishes. Salt River Bay is also home to the most

popular bioluminescent bay in the U.S. Virgin Islands. At night the water glows from the bioluminescence created by small dinoflagellates and other marine organisms such as comb jellies and fire worms. Bio bays are extremely rare and there are only seven or so that are known to occur year-round throughout the Caribbean.

In addition to the wildlife, the area around Salt River contains historical and cultural significance for early indigenous people of St. Croix and is home to the Salt River Bay National Historic Park and Ecological Preserve managed by the National Park Service.

Guided kayak tours will be provided at no cost to any current residents of the U.S. Virgin Islands. For safety concerns, children under the age of 8 will not be able to participate and minors (ages 8-17) must be accompanied by an adult. There will be a limit of 10 people per reservation and each person may apply for a free tour only once.

To offer similar programs in the future and to better serve the public, all participants will be required to fill out a brief survey upon the completion of their trip.

To book your kayak tour, contact Bush Tribe Eco Adventures (340-277 2503, bushtribeusvi@gmail.com) and mention promo code “DFW KAYAK 2021”.

For any questions regarding this program, contact DPNR's Division of Fish and Wildlife office in St. Croix (340-773-1082, x2203).

Be sure to keep an eye out for future opportunities for residents of the U.S. Virgin Islands to be able to participate in outdoor recreational and educational experiences funded by the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Fish and Wildlife.