

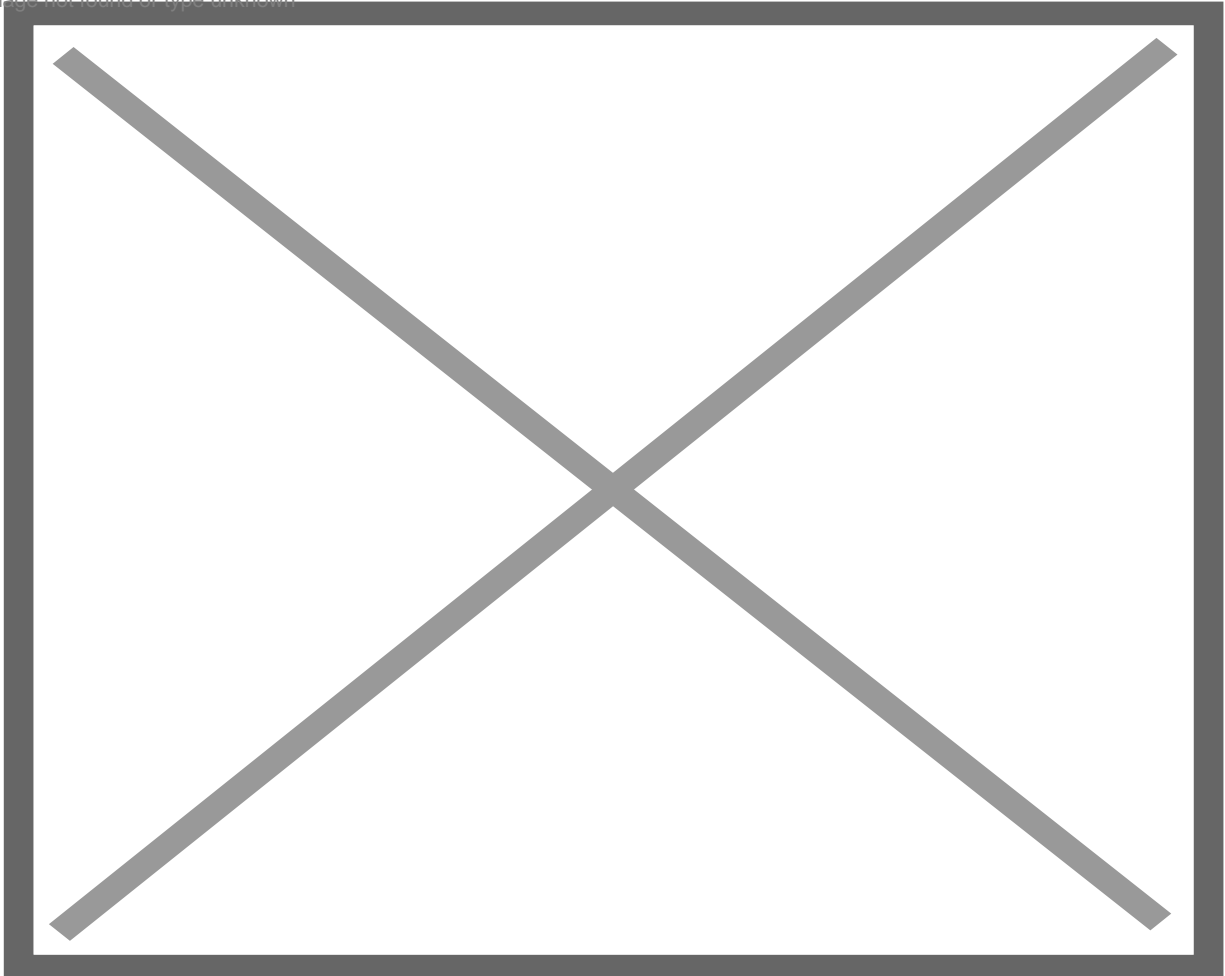
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USVI Experiencing 'Unusual Die-Off' of Sea Urchins'; DPNR Asking Public to Report Cases

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The V.I. Dept. of Planning and Natural Resources said Wednesday the territory is experiencing an unusual die-off event of Long Spined Sea Urchins.

"This is particularly concerning because in the early 1980's over 90 percent of the natural populations of these urchins were killed by a disease and researchers are worried that this could be a new emergence of disease," D.P.N.R. said. "These urchins are vital to the health of our coral reefs because they eat the algae that try and smother coral reef colonies."

D.P.N.R. said it needs help from the public to report any dying/dead urchins around the territory. Science Direct has a detailed history of Sea Urchins [here](#).

