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Eastern Virgin Gorda

BVITIPA006

Country: **British Virgin Islands**
Administrative region: **Virgin Gorda (Province)**
Central co-ordinates: **18.48871 N, -64.36181 E**
Area: **2.67km²**

Qualifying IPA criteria

A(i), B(ii), C(iii)

IPA assessment rationale

The area qualified for its importance for globally threatened plants, being botanical rich and an important site for two of the nationally threatened habitats.

Site description

This TIPA is in the North Sound area of Virgin Gorda, from Lower Dog Bay to Deep Bay north towards White Bay. Elevation in this area is lower than in Central Virgin Gorda, not surpassing 200 m.

Botanical significance

Higher areas within the TIPA are home to rare and threatened plants growing in the Seasonally deciduous forest and woodland. On the hills above Bercher's Bluff and Biras' Creek there are important populations of Croton fishlockii (NT) and Machaonia woodburyana (EN), both Virgin Islands endemic shrubs which only grow on St John in the USVI and in the BVI. Biras' Hill area in the east also has a large population of Croton fishlockii. Great Hill on the western side of the TIPA is an important site for the Puerto Rican Bank endemic Maytenus cymosa (EN), which in the BVI only grows on Virgin Gorda. Four other species of high conservation importance in the BVI grow within the TIPA, the Virgin Islands endemic Galactia eggersii (NT) and the Puerto Rican Bank endemics Malpighia woodburyana (VU), Rondeletia pilosa (NT) and Psychilis macconnelliae (NT).

Habitat and geology

This TIPA is part of the second-best site nationally for the threatened Coastal shrubland habitat, found mainly along the coast and exposed southern hills, and part of fourth-best site nationally for Mangroves. The largest stretches of the threatened mangrove habitat on Virgin Gorda are in Deep Bay.

Conservation issues

Main threats to the TIPA include further urbanisation of coastal areas and hillsides causing habitat loss and fragmentation and loss of threatened plant species. The North Sound area has been identified previously as particularly vulnerable to sea level rise and storm surges and further developments inland may become a reality.

Site assessor(s)

BVI TIPAs National Team, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew - National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands - BVI Ministry of Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration

IPA criterion A species

SPECIES	QUALIFYING SUB-CRITERION	≥ 1% OF GLOBAL POPULATION	≥ 5% OF NATIONAL POPULATION	1 OF 5 BEST SITES NATIONALLY	ENTIRE GLOBAL POPULATION	SOCIO-ECONOMICALLY IMPORTANT	ABUNDANCE AT SITE
Machaonia woodburyana Acev.-Rodr.	A(i)	–	✓	–	–	–	
Maytenus cymosa Krug & Urb.	A(i)	✓	–	–	–	–	
Malpighia woodburyana Vivaldi	A(i)	–	–	–	–	–	

IPA criterion C qualifying habitats

HABITAT	QUALIFYING SUB-CRITERION	≥ 5% OF NATIONAL RESOURCE	≥ 10% OF NATIONAL RESOURCE	1 OF 5 BEST SITES NATIONALLY	AREAL COVERAGE AT SITE
Coastal Shrubland	C(iii)	–	–	✓	
Mangroves	C(iii)	–	–	✓	

General site habitats

GENERAL SITE HABITAT	PERCENT COVERAGE	IMPORTANCE

Land use types

LAND USE TYPE	PERCENT COVERAGE	IMPORTANCE

Threats

THREAT	SEVERITY	TIMING

Bibliography

The BVI TIPAs National Team 2019. **Identifying and Conserving Tropical Important Plant Areas in the British Virgin Islands (2016-2019): Final Technical Report.**