

Beef Island and the Channel

BVITIPA002



Country: **British Virgin Islands**

Administrative region: **Beef Island (Province)**

Central co-ordinates: **18.44211 N, -64.52583 E**

Area: **4.1km²**

Qualifying IPA criteria

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

IPA assessment rationale

This TIPA has three of the nationally threatened terrestrial habitats (Coastal shrubland, Mangroves and Dry salt flats), is botanically rich and contains two globally threatened species and a Puerto Rican Bank Range Restricted Endemic species.

Site description

This TIPA encompasses all of Beef Island and the north-eastern mangroves of Tortola from Harris Pond to the outskirts of Chapel Hill.

Botanical significance

The TIPA is also a botanically rich site with a total of eight species of high conservation importance. Mount Alma is the highest point and has important populations of the globally threatened Puerto Rican Bank endemics *Agave missionum* (VU) and *Malpighia woodburyana* (VU). This is also one of the few sites in the BVI where the naturally occurring and Range Restricted Endemic (RRE) bromeliad *Tillandsia x lineatispica* occurs.

Habitat and geology

Beef Island has the third largest area (0.5%) of Dry salt flats in the

BVI after Anegada and Tortola. Along the coast of Beef Island, extending along the channel, is the second-best site for Mangroves nationally, with all four of the mangrove species present. Beef Island alone has 7.8% of all the Mangroves habitat in the BVI. Coastal shrubland and boulder fields are common in the lower areas, transitioning to Seasonally deciduous forest and woodland towards the uplands.

Conservation issues

Threats to this TIPA include habitat loss and disturbance from potential urban development and airport expansion, invasive pests (i.e. agave snout weevil), impacts on the wetland ecosystem by filling ponds and removal of mangroves. Natural disasters are also a risk, as seen by the large mangrove die off which occurred in the area after Hurricane Irma in 2017.

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 |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Agave missionum</i> Trel. | A(i) | – | – | ✓ | – | – | |
| <i>Malpighia woodburyana</i> Vivaldi | A(i) | – | – | ✓ | – | – | |
| <i>Tillandsia × lineatispica</i> Mez | A(iv) | – | ✓ | – | – | – | |

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 |
|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Mangroves | C(iii) | – | – | | |
| Dry Salt Flats | C(iii) | – | – | | |

General site habitats

| GENERAL SITE HABITAT | PERCENT COVERAGE | IMPORTANCE |
|----------------------|------------------|------------|
|----------------------|------------------|------------|

Land use types

| LAND USE TYPE | PERCENT COVERAGE | IMPORTANCE |
|---------------|------------------|------------|
|---------------|------------------|------------|

Threats

| THREAT | SEVERITY | TIMING |
|--------|----------|--------|
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Bibliography

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