



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Pride!

Endemic Blue Iguana unveiled as Official Mascot of the Cayman Islands Regiment

19th May 2022 – On 8th May 2022, the **National Trust for the Cayman Islands (NTCI)** and the **Blue Iguana Conservation programme (BIC)** celebrated their **2nd International Blue Iguana Day** with an event at the BIC facility located at the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park, sponsored by ***Ambassadors of the Environment***- The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman. The Honorable Sabrina Turner, MP, Minister for Health, Wellness & Home Affairs was in attendance to officially welcome everyone and start the day's celebrations. This awareness day was created in 2021 to draw attention to the Grand Cayman endemic Blue Iguana and the conservation efforts that have protected, and continue to protect, this iconic species.

One of the key points of the day was the special unveiling of ***Lissy***, a 2-year-old juvenile Blue Iguana that has been selected as the Official Mascot of the Cayman Islands Regiment. This is an exceptional milestone for BIC and the NTCI are very proud of this partnership. The Cayman Islands Regiment held a naming contest throughout all schools to choose a name for their Mascot.

The Regiment's first Official Mascot was named ***Lissy*** by Roberta Scott from Cayman International School. The name ***Lissy***, which was inspired by the name of Queen Elizabeth II's new cocker spaniel, is particularly apt during the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. ***Lissy*** is two years old and therefore the same age as the Regiment itself.

BIC Operations Manager Luke Harding said: "This was a historic day in the story of the effort to conserve the Blue Iguanas. The honour of a Blue Iguana being chosen as the Cayman Islands Regiment's Mascot helps to ensure the Blue Iguana's place as an important flagship species here on the Cayman Islands and cements its national significance on a world stage and for future generations."

"The Cayman Islands Regiment (CI Regiment) is incredibly proud to be able to partner with the National Trust for the Cayman Islands and the Blue Iguana Conservation programme in announcing that the Regiment's Official Mascot will be a Blue Iguana.

"The CI Regiment looks forward to being able to continue to develop a long-lasting relationship with the National Trust which was started when the Regiment provided support following Tropical Storm Grace.



“Our thanks to the whole team at the National Trust and the Blue Iguana Conservation programme for all of their fantastic work,” said Lieutenant Colonel Simon Watson.

“With the heritage and culture of the Cayman Islands being an important source of pride for the Cayman Islands Regiment we are very pleased to announce that our Official Mascot is one of Cayman’s iconic flagship species. Cayman’s largest land animal, the Blue Iguana, is not only a unique and striking species but also an important conservation success story. Thanks to the work of Blue Iguana Conservation programme and the National Trust, their numbers, which once plummeted to under 30 individuals, have now seen a dramatic increase with over 1,000 individuals released into the wild from the breeding programme. With our Regimental Crest emblazoned with the Silver Thatch Palm leaf and our new Mascot, the Cayman Islands Regiment is committed to continuing our support of both BIC and the National Trust in their conservation efforts.” stated Lieutenant Nathan Dack

In addition to the unveiling of **Lissy** as the Official Mascot of the CI Regiment, Blue Iguana Conservation held a graduation ceremony for 15 of their **Blue Iguana Guardians** who have been fully trained to assist with the vital work of the Blue Iguana Conservation team. This Blue Iguana Guardians programme is proudly sponsored by Ogier.

Luke Harding explained, “Our Blue Iguana Guardians programme is at the heart of our conservation efforts. Engaging and involving the community is the best way we can ensure we meet our ambitious target to safeguard this species. We therefore take great pride in training and developing people of all ages to support our work”.

Overall, the family-friendly event was very well attended. The activity stations were enjoyed by all ages, including many that became a ‘**Blue Iguana Scientist**’ for the day and played iguana-related games.

ENDS



MEDIA CONTACT

Annick Jackman / Executive Director
National Trust for the Cayman Islands
Tel: 345 927 6766 Email: director@nationaltrust.org.ky

About the National Trust for the Cayman Islands

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands is a non-governmental organization whose mandate under the National Trust Law (2010 Revision) includes the preservation of the historic, natural and maritime heritage of the Cayman Islands for present and future generations.

About the Blue Iguana Conservation Programme

The Blue Iguana Recovery Programme began in 1990 with only 30 dedicated blue iguanas and the primary goal to restore the wild population to 1,000 blue iguanas, encouraging viable population in the long-term. Having met its primary goal in 2018, the initiative formally transitioned to Blue Iguana Conservation in 2019 with a new focus of sustainably conserving the native species of Grand Cayman.

About the National Trust's Environmental Programme

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands' environmental programme was founded on the concept that the protection of native plants and animals is best achieved by protecting the natural areas in which they depend.

About the National Trust Conservation Programme

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands' conservation programme strives to protect Cayman's native species and the habitats in which they live, and includes the endemic blue iguana of Grand Cayman, the Sister Islands rock iguana and Cayman's native bat species.

About the National Trust Historic Preservation Programme

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands introduced the launching of its *Historic Preservation Fund* at its Annual General Meeting in September 2021 for the purpose of inviting increased support of its continuing



efforts to encourage the preservation and protection of historic homes and buildings for present and future generations of the Cayman Islands.