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**Blue Iguana Conservation Launches New Citizen Science Mobile Application**

**5th October 2022** – Blue Iguana Conservation (BIC), managed by the **National Trust for the Cayman Islands (NTCI)** is excited to officially launch '*E-guana*' - its brand-new **Citizen Science Mobile App**.

The NTCI is calling on and inviting the general public and visitors to the Islands to download this new, free, mobile application and use it to submit pictures of any iguanas seen on any of our three islands, whether alive or deceased. This vital data will help inform the NTCI of iguana locations to help monitor populations of endemic Rock Iguanas, endemic Blue Iguanas and manage in real time responses to reports of invasive species, such as green iguanas.

BIC Programme Manager, Luke Harding said, "We are delighted to be able to launch this exciting app and encourage everyone who is either residing on, or visiting, these incredible Cayman Islands to do their bit to help us manage our endangered iguana species. The data submitted will be vital to increase our knowledge and understanding of where the iguanas are or prefer to be. The more information that we can gather from our general public, the better informed we will be to help protect Grand Cayman's Blue Iguanas and the Sister Islands' Rock Iguana species and deal with threats such as invasive species, development and road infrastructure."

National Trust Chairperson, Melanie Carmichael said, "It is wonderful to see technology and science working together to help educate and monitor these rare and endangered species. Such small actions can manifest big impacts and each person gets the opportunity to be involved. The National Trust are very grateful for the institutions and donors sponsoring this work and I can't wait to see what will be discovered."

The mobile app was developed in partnership with Jay Mehta, Netclues and funded via private donations and a Darwin Plus grant. The app is free to download from the App Store (iOS) or Google Play (Android) and is very easy to use.

Collected data will only be used for scientific purposes pertaining to any of the three iguana species found on our Islands: Grand Cayman's Blue Iguanas, Sister Islands' (Cayman Brac and Little Cayman) Rock Iguanas or the invasive green iguanas. The NTCI encourages users to submit sightings, with photographs of the iguana



wherever possible, so that more information can be gleaned about the location of iguanas and their threats, [in particular to Cayman’s endemic species,] which will be highly valuable to the research.

“We encourage everyone across all three islands to download this app and join us in building a picture of what is out there. Whether you see iguanas on your land, on the road or when you are roaming around the islands, please do submit sightings through *E-guana* and that important data will be added to our system. We live in a world where many people are connected to their phones, giving us a unique opportunity to utilize social trends to help further science and conservation efforts. Please do download ‘*E-guana*’ and encourage everyone you know to use it as well,” says Luke Harding, BIC Programme Manager.

For more information of the *E-guana* mobile application, please visit [@blueiguanaconservation](#) on Facebook and Instagram. For the *E-guana How-To Guide*, visit [www.nationaltrust.org.ky](http://www.nationaltrust.org.ky) or contact [bic@nationaltrust.org.ky](mailto:bic@nationaltrust.org.ky) For more information about Netclues visit [www.netclues.ky](http://www.netclues.ky)

**ENDS**

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#### **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 the Blue Iguana Conservation Programme 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.