



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Renowned biologist Ian Redmond to visit the Cayman Islands

3rd May 2024 – The National Trust for the Cayman Islands is hosting renowned wildlife biologist and conservationist Ian Redmond for a series of events and talks in the Cayman Islands next week.

Redmond, who is Head of Conservation for Ecoflix, is best known for his work with mountain gorillas, studying with Dian Fossey in Rwanda and introducing David Attenborough to the gorillas in the 1970s. When the award-winning film '*Gorillas in the Mist*' was made, it was Redmond who taught actress Sigourney Weaver how to grunt like a gorilla. Since then, he has advised or appeared in more than 100 nature documentary films for the BBC, National Geographic, Discovery and other channels.

During his visit to the Cayman Islands, Redmond will tour schools in each district of Grand Cayman to talk about conservation, and the importance of protecting our biodiversity.

Redmond will join the National Trust at their Blue Iguana Family Fun Day taking place on Sunday 5 May from 10am to 4pm at the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park, sponsored by The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman, and Ambassadors of the Environment. Redmond will give a talk and tour the Blue Iguana Conservation facility where there are more than 200 blue iguanas of varying ages and sizes.

Blue iguanas are Cayman's largest native land animal and once numbered in their tens of thousands. By 2001, the blues were nearing extinction with fewer than 30 left in the wild. The Blue Iguana Conservation programme was launched in 1990 by Fred Burton as a captive breeding programme and has released more than 1,200 blue iguanas back into the wild, downgrading the species from IUCN's critically endangered list to the red list.

On International Blue Iguana Day on 8 May, Redmond will attend a screening of local documentary '*Saving the Blues*' at Andiamo, at The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman and join the panel for a Q&A session afterwards. This is a free event, open to the public, and starts at



6:30pm. This event is kindly sponsored by The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman and Ambassadors of the Environment.

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands has graciously been supported by our generous benefactors who are members of the National Trust and have made Ian Redmond's visit possible and provided accommodation for his stay.

National Trust Chairman of the Board Melanie Carmichael said, "There are few names in conservation as well-known and respected as Ian Redmond. We hope his visit is educational and also inspires others to support the work of the National Trust in conserving Cayman's flora and fauna for future generations."

To learn more about Cayman's endemic blue iguanas, visit the Blue Iguana Conservation facility, open daily 10am to 4pm. Admission is included in the purchase of tickets for the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park. Guided tours with a BIC warden can be booked by emailing tours@nationaltrust.ky.

The Blue Iguana Family Fun Day takes place on Sunday 5 May from 10am to 4pm. Tickets cost \$10 for adults and \$5 for children.

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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.