



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ground Breaking News: New Home for Blue Iguana Conservation!

11 August 2026 – The National Trust for the Cayman Islands is thrilled to announce the groundbreaking of a new Blue Iguana Conservation office and laboratory, marking an exciting milestone for the Blue Iguana Conservation Programme, which has been dedicated to protecting this iconic species for the past 36 years. The ceremony took place on Monday, 10 August 2026, at the Blue Iguana Conservation facility within the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park. The new building celebrates the inextricable connection between Cayman's natural and built heritage.

Designed as a replica of a traditional Caymanian home once belonging to the Roland Bodden family, the 1,200-square-foot building will include a laboratory for Blue Iguana medical examinations, data collection and research, incubators, an education room, and a collections room to house our herbarium, insect collection, and artefacts from recent archaeological digs. This dedicated space will enable the team to provide the highest standard of care for Cayman's endangered Blue Iguanas while strengthening the programme's ongoing research and conservation work.

The new facilities will also enhance the Blue Iguana Conservation Programme's "living classroom" experience for school groups, interns, and veterinary students. The National Trust is proud to offer a unique and practical learning opportunity for students pursuing studies in both conservation and veterinary fields with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to work with an endangered species found only in Grand Cayman.

Executive Director of the National Trust, Frank Roulstone, gave opening remarks, followed by a prayer by Pastor Alson Ebanks. Her Excellency the Governor, Jane Owen, officially commenced the groundbreaking, joined by key supporters and stakeholders. "As Patron of the National Trust for the Cayman Islands, I am delighted to be part of this significant milestone. The groundbreaking of the new Blue Iguana Conservation facility marks an important step forward for one of Cayman's most iconic species and reflects our shared commitment to protecting our unique natural heritage." said H.E. The Governor Jane Owen.

Among the attendees were representatives from Wheaton Precious Metals International, the headline sponsor of the new building. Thanks to the generosity of Wheaton Precious Metals and the support of other private donors, the National Trust can now begin construction of this much-needed infrastructure.



Additional guests included building contractor Fred Whittaker, who will bring the vision to life; Dr Samantha Shields of St. Matthew's University; Gina Petrie of the Department of Environment; and members of the National Trust Council and staff.

The National Trust is especially proud to begin this new chapter at such a meaningful time. Just last week, Governor Jane Owen, Premier André Ebanks, and representatives from Wheaton Precious Metals International visited the National Trust's Dart Park office to welcome the first Blue Iguana hatchlings of the season. The hatchlings are currently being cared for in the nursery at the Blue Iguana Conservation facility and, once construction is complete, the incubators will be relocated to their new home in the dedicated laboratory.

This groundbreaking ceremony symbolizes more than just the start of construction; it heralds a promising future for Blue Iguana conservation, providing the facilities, resources, and educational opportunities needed to protect this uniquely Caymanian species for generations to come.



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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.