

ST. THOMAS SOURCE

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UVI EPSCoR Seeking Volunteers for Frog Count Project

The UVI Experimental Program for the Stimulation of Competitive Research (UVI EPSCoR) VI Frog Count project is seeking participants to join in this first citizen science effort to record the frogs of the Virgin Islands. Anyone can do it. The project aims to conduct island-wide surveys of the calling frogs within a single short time window to reduce effects of weather and other variables on St. Croix, St. Thomas, St. John and the British Virgin Islands. Participants don't need to know their frogs, but they do need to know a little bit about their phones/tablets.

All volunteers have to do is:

- Go outside between 7-9 p.m. on any day during Oct. 1-15.
- Stand away from extra noise, such as traffic, TVs, talking people, music, barking dogs, etc.
- Take a two-minute recording on your mobile device, using a voice memo or other recording app. At the start of the recording, state your location and date (e.g.: "Red Hook by Salt Pond on Oct. 2").
 - No frogs calling? Don't worry. The absence of frogs is incredibly important information and needs to be recorded.
- Take a screenshot of the latitude/longitude coordinates of your location. You can find these on a compass app, or you can download a free "map coordinates" app.
- E-mail both files together to vi.frogcount@gmail.com [1].
- That's it.
- If you want to do more than one location, submit as many recordings as you like from as many different locations as you can get to during the two-week period.

All recordings will be converted to a standard audio file format to be uploaded into a bioacoustics analysis program. The calling frogs captured in each recording will be identified by species. The location coordinates will be converted into decimal degrees, and the locations for each recording will be mapped. The final product will be a map of all the locations and their associated frogs. Once all the locations are mapped, EPSCoR will go out and survey areas where we didn't get recordings. This project is part of a long term study on V.I. frog activity patterns and distribution. In the past, EPSCoR has been limited to information that could be collected from people trained to recognize frog calls and to areas those people were able to access. Using a citizen science approach coupled with sound analysis software, EPSCoR can increase the areas surveyed and decrease human error. Long term, the data will provide valuable information on the status of the frogs, the health of their ecosystems, and their response to climate change.

For more information, contact vi.frogcount@gmail.com [1].

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Links:

[1] <mailto:vi.frogcount@gmail.com>