

to succession or land use which in turn affects such major scavengers as the land and hermit crab, pearly-eyed thrasher, etc.

The immediate extirpation of the mongoose on St. John Island is indicated, and the following recommendations are made:

1. For historical purposes, define the basis relationships of the mongoose on St. John Island with the present biotic communities there, appraising, from time to time, the effects of the removal of the mongoose. Conduct a major biological study of the mongoose, rats, and mice on some other island in the Virgin Island group, incorporating the scientific information and material derived from the extirpation project on St. John Island. All material should be saved from St. John.

2. Extirpate the mongoose by 1) shooting with .410 and .22 (silencer) guns and by 2) live-trapping at critically placed feeding stations.

3. After total extirpation or reduction in numbers of mongooses to a negative level of importance as a predator, reintroduce the three species of snakes now presumably extirpated from the island but still living on the adjacent cays and islands. These snakes, which formerly were indigenous on St. John Island and adapted to the community ecology on the island, will replace the mongoose as predatory species.

4. Establish strict laws on St. John Island on introduction and possession of exotics (plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, and fishes).

Exotic rats, mice, and other kinds of mammals: Rats and mice have been living on St. John Island since the arrival of Whitemen. These rodents are generally distributed throughout the island and around areas of human habitation. They are most abundant among rock outcrops (not those associated with sea cliffs) where the deep fissures and cracks offer retreats for nesting and escape from larger predators such as the mongoose, cat, and dog. Snakes would be the most effective natural control of these rodents. Control by man at this time is not