



# BONAIRE The REPORTER

January 14 to January 28, 2026. Year 33, Issue 1

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## Protecting nature in 2025

Ask anyone why they love Bonaire and their answer nine times out of 10 will be something to do with nature. Whether you were born here, moved here or are visiting, the thing we all stay for or return to enjoy and can't get enough of is the nature whether above or below. The island nature requires protection and since 1962 STINAPA has been the guardian. We have the Bonaire National Marine Park and four designated Ramsar (wetland) sites: Washington Slagbaai, Klein Bonaire, Lac bay and Pekelmeer (salt lake). The coral reefs, the mangroves, sea grass beds and the salt lake are all protected along with their resident animals and birds.

STINAPA Bonaire is the main overseer, but many other organizations dedicated to specific areas of interest have helped over the years. Here is an overview of 16 nature related organizations and their achievements in 2025.



### Animal Shelter Bonaire

For 265 animals from Animal Shelter Bonaire, 2025 proved to be the best year ever as they found their own forever homes. This is the highest number of adoptions ever with 64 more than 2024. The number of animals surrendered to the shelter was a bit lower, but it is still too high with 195 dogs and 129 cats.

To read more about adoptions, the sterilization program and our fundraising events in 2025 visit our page dedicated to the Animal Shelter Bonaire on page 19.



### Bonaire Donkey Protection League Foundation (BDPLF)

Our mission is to see that all of Bonaire's nature is protected as well as protecting and caring for Bonaire's Special Historic Nubian Donkeys. The current plan is to put in place a "Holistic Balanced approach" that will ensure the donkeys are protected but not removed as was stated in the 2030 Nature Plan. This removal act was implemented by those with a one sided view.

Our plan in short, is to relocate our Historic Nubian Donkeys to safe areas in the back country. Presently the donkeys are endangered by speeders and considered a nuisance by a few town residents. In an amount that is helpful and not harmful to nature and the land, the donkeys will be monitored for proper habitation and control the population if needed with a humane procedure, not harmful castration.

Our team consists of local and Dutch board members, international, professional land, herd and wildlife experts and advisors. Up till now we have personally funded all of the needed animal care, marketing, equipment and thousands of man hours. As the plan nears activation, we invite anyone interested in volunteering in the relocation and funding to please contact us at

[bdplf@hotmail.com](mailto:bdplf@hotmail.com) WhatsApp 599-785-2205. *Al Catalfumo*



### CCS (Caribbean Cetacean Society)

In 2025, *Dushi Dolphin An Nou* recorded 138 dolphin sightings, reported by more than 75 different community members, highlighting the strength of Bonaire's citizen science network. These reports led to 34 opportunities for real-time data collection through photo-identification, with Bottlenose dolphins being the most frequently observed species.

More than 50 individual dolphins have now been identified, with early results showing recurring groups returning to Bonaire's waters, including Bottlenose, Rough-toothed, and Spinner dolphins. The program was also recognized by WWF-NL, alongside the launch of the "Name a Dolphin" project, inviting the community to take part in supporting dolphin research.

*Dushi Dolphin An Nou* will continue in 2026, and the team warmly thanks everyone who reports their sightings — this program exists because of the community. Continued support makes this work possible, and any opportunity to help sustain and grow the research is deeply appreciated.

Gwen Margez-Versteegh, CCS Ambassador Bonaire

[www.ccs-ngo.com](http://www.ccs-ngo.com)

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### Dutch minister reassures islanders following Venezuelan debacle

### A small dry island can't grow its own food without water

Minister of Foreign Affairs David van Weel, who happened to be conducting an intensive four-day visit to the islands during the U.S. attack on Venezuela, has reassured people living in the Caribbean that The Hague has matters well in hand. According to the minister, Bonaire and the other islands are not in danger. "I understand those concerns, but the situation does not pose a direct threat. Not in recent months, not in recent days and not even now."

Van Weel said that before and during the American incursion the naval ship Zr.Ms. Groningen was patrolling among the ABC islands, showing the flag and providing the government with "eyes and ears in the area." The minister himself sailed from Curaçao to Bonaire and spoke on board with soldiers about their deployment.

The minister noted the islands have so far experienced little disruption or economic damage, and the number of holiday bookings is not declining. There are also no indications of a new influx of Venezuelans moving to the ABC Islands. "The current situation is back to normal." Van Weel also saw an upside to the crisis: being better prepared for calamities in the future.

An emergency debate of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs focused primarily on the legitimacy of the US attack on Venezuela and the kidnapping of Maduro, as well as the further geopolitical risks of Trump's actions.

During the debate one member suggested the former Isla refinery on Curaçao could be reopened to process the oil pumped by Venezuela, which is too heavy for most refineries. Van Weel dismissed the suggestion, saying the refinery is beyond saving. He added: "It's not our decision."

*DMR (This story was first reported by Bonaire.nu.)*

Both the Dutch and the OLB want the island to become as self-sufficient as possible, including growing much of its own food. With government encouragement, very impressive hydroponic growing operations have been established on Bonaire. However, some of them are shutting down because they cannot get enough water. They have to compete with the kunukeros, and with expensive rural homes with swimming pools, for WEB truck deliveries.

Even as the facilities for growing food have been multiplying on the island, a glaring obstacle to the agricultural aspirations of the government has been obvious. The island has little natural water. Water has to be made using energy gobbling desalination. Then the water has to be distributed from a central desalination plant to every user on the island. Agricultural users are at the end of the pipeline.

One hydroponic grower says he purchased 54 cubic meters of water from WEB, but only six meters were delivered, and then after a two month wait. He said he lost 2,400 maturing plants and has 1,100 young plants ready that he has to let die.

Some growers are unfairly blaming WEB. But neither WEB nor the owners of upscale rural properties are causing the shortage. A government failure to plan wisely has created the insufficiency. WEB is tasked with delivering water for domestic use to hundreds of kunukeros and is hard-pressed to meet that obligation. It has only three tanker trucks.

Hydroponics is a great idea for Bonaire. But enough "hydro" has to be available where the plants need it.

*DMR*

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### Police, Rangers and Coast Guard catch man spearfishing



The police reported a man was fishing illegally with a harpoon at Pink Beach on Sunday, January 4. When he came ashore, harpoon in one hand and bag of dead fish in the other, STINAPA rangers and Coast Guard personnel were waiting to take him into

custody. The Public Prosecutor's Office will determine what fine will be levied and whether any of the fish species are protected, in which case the fine will be larger. The harpoon was confiscated and will be destroyed by STINAPA. *DMR*

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#### How to Find Us

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The online version of our cover story "Discovering Washington Slagbaai sites" in issue 24 of Bonaire's favorite English language newspaper has received

**17,766 views**

# Caring for Bonaire, One Coral at a Time

Charlie and Lori Rohre have built a life on Bonaire that is grounded in care, reflection, and gratitude. To them, the island means peace. It is a place where they can learn from the past and help build a better future. It is also a place where nature speaks clearly, and where every action makes a difference.

The couple believes strongly in giving back to the communities where they live. On Bonaire, that commitment has taken many forms. They volunteer with Reef Renewal, the Animal Shelter, STI-NAPA's SCTLD antibiotic application team, and several neighborhood projects. Each effort carries the same intention. They want to support the island that has welcomed them so warmly.

Their work with Reef Renewal is especially meaningful. Together, they help clean coral nurseries, plant new nursery trees, and collect coral spawning to grow young coral colonies. These activities may seem small, but they form the foundation of long-term reef recovery. Charlie and Lori take pride in knowing they are part of something that protects Bonaire's future.

For them, caring for nature is not optional. Everything on Bonaire depends on the health of the reef. It protects the coastline. It fuels research and education. It sustains local traditions and



supports the economy. The reef is woven into the identity of the island.

By giving their time and energy, Charlie and Lori hope to remind others that nature is not separate from daily life. It is the reason life on Bonaire is possible.

Their message is simple. When we protect our environment, we protect our future.

And when we care for Bonaire, Bonaire cares for us in return.

*Nos ta biba di naturalesa.*

Photo Top left to right: Reef Renewal staff - Alex van der Last, Ernst Noyons, Francesca Viridis, Sanne Tuijten

Bottom left to right: Perri Rappaport, Lola Salvador and volunteers Lori Rohre and Charlie Rohre



- **Location: Kralendijk**
- **2 bedrooms / 2 bathrooms / storage / parking**
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# POLICE REPORT

You can contact the police via 715 8000, 911 or via the anonymous tip line 9310.

## New Years

**Dec. 31. 8:00 p.m.** The central control room received a report that fireworks were being set off near the beaches on Kaya Internashonal and E.E.G. Boulevard. This was allegedly disrupting aircraft landings. Consequently, the beaches and surrounding homes were visited to warn those present to stop setting off fireworks in the interest of flight safety.

Fireworks started a fire in the grounds of an apartment complex on Boulevard Gobernador N. Debrot. Bystanders managed to extinguish the fire themselves. On Kaya Neerlandia, a palm tree approximately three meters tall caught fire. The tree was overhanging the roof of a house, prompting the fire department to arrive and extinguish the fire. Pallets were on fire at the entrance to Suikerpalm in Belnem, but by the time firefighters arrived, the fire had already been extinguished by bystanders.

**Jan. 1. 12:10 a.m.** A fire broke out in a thicket near a house. Firefighters brought the fire under control and extinguished it. The resident was awakened by police to inform him of the situation

**3:00 a.m.** A large fire was reported in the parking lot of a supermarket on Kaya Industria. A storage area for shopping carts was completely engulfed in flames. It is suspected that unknown persons placed cardboard in the shopping carts and set them ablaze.

**4:40 p.m.** A group of about five young men in the Mamparia Kutu neighborhood were reported throwing fireworks at homes and into mailboxes. Police encountered the group, confiscated all their fireworks, sternly reprimanded them and reminded them of the dangers of their actions. They indicated that they understood the warning.

**8:45 p.m.** A group of young people in the Nieuw Amsterdam neighborhood were reported throwing fireworks at each other. Upon seeing the police, about 15 young people on fat bikes fled in different directions.

In the evening individuals were reported setting off fireworks in the parking lot of the Caribbean Netherlands Correctional Institution (JICN). The patrol made it clear to them that fireworks were prohibited at that location.

**Jan. 2. 12:45 a.m.** A fire was reported in a garbage bin under a canopy at a building on Kaya L.D. Gerharts. Upon arrival, the patrol discovered that bystanders removed large garbage container from under the roof and placed it in the middle of the parking lot. Thanks to their quick action, they prevented more damage and a larger fire. The fire department completely extinguished fire.

**Jan 6.** Police seized fireworks and a lighter after fireworks were found on four students during a bag check at a school on Kaya Frater Odulfinus and Kaya Barakuda. This was after fireworks had been thrown onto the roof of the school, causing damage.

*The general exemption granted by the Island Governor for setting off fireworks was valid until January 1, 2026, in accordance with Article 31, subsection b, of the General Police Bylaws (APK) of Bonaire. After this date, setting off fireworks without a permit is no longer permitted.*

## Property crimes

**Jan. 6. 1:05 a.m.** Patrol officers observed two scooters with their riders covering their faces. The riders ignored the police stop sign, drove into an alley and fled. The scooters were abandoned a short time later near Kaya Kòrsou, and the suspects managed to escape on foot. During a check of the scooters, police found tools. Both scooters were registered as stolen.

**Jan. 3.** A safe containing money was stolen from a school on Kaya Frater Odulfinus.

**Jan. 2.** A Pioneer car radio and a USB drive were stolen from the dashboard of the vehicle from a car parked on Kaya Gresia.

**Dec. 29.** Money was stolen from a business on Kaya Industria.

## Arrests

**Jan. 12.** 2 a.m. A fight was reported between a group of people at a restaurant on Kaya Nikiboko Noord. Upon arrival, police found a large group of people in front of the entrance. Two people had been injured by a machete during the struggle, and both were taken to the hospital. A man, 53, was arrested at the scene for assault with a weapon. The suspect's vehicle was searched, and the machete used was confiscated.

**Jan. 11.** 1:40 a.m. A man, 31, was arrested on Kaya Amsterdam for vandalism. He had been jumping in front of moving vehicles and had pelted two passing cars with stones. One

vehicle sustained damage to its windshield, the other to its left side.

**Jan. 5.** 6:35 p.m. Vandalism was reported at a facility on Kaminda Nieuw Amsterdam. At the scene, officers found a window smashed and damage to a vehicle. A girl, 16, was arrested for vandalism.

**Jan. 5.** 2:50 a.m. A man, 50, was arrested at Sorobon Beach for assault. Police confiscated bags of suspected narcotics that were found on him.

**Jan. 4.** 12:05 a.m. A man, 49, was arrested at Kaya Fidelia for assault.

**Jan. 1.** 6 p.m. A collision was reported between a pickup truck and a car at the intersection of Kaya Caribe and Kaya Amsterdam. According to bystanders, two men got out of the car and ran away immediately after the collision. A patrol officer encountered two people matching the descriptions on Kaya Amsterdam. One of the men was smoking a joint which was immediately destroyed. The other man was carrying two bags. He stated that one bag belonged to him and the other to a friend who had been left standing at the scene of the collision. Suspected narcotics were found in both bags. The men, aged 21 and 23, were for violating the BES Opium Act. The other occupants and the car in which the suspects were seated were also searched, but no further abnormalities were found. Both drivers were breathalyzed. The driver of the pickup truck was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. His driver's license was confiscated.

**Jan. 1.** 5:55 a.m. A man, 27, was arrested on Kaya Seminole for public order disruption and public intoxication. Police received a report of a family incident. Upon arrival, the suspect was verbally and physically aggressive. Officers attempted unsuccessfully to calm him down but he refused to leave the scene. To defuse the situation, the man was placed in a police vehicle with the intention of transporting him to his residence. However, the suspect attempted to climb out of the police vehicle through the window, whereupon he was immediately arrested.

**Dec. 28.** 8 p.m. Police arrested two men, age 19 and 20, on Kaya Macario (Cai) Sint Jago for violating the BES Firearms Act. Police stopped a scooter because no one was wearing a helmet. Police noticed the suspects behaving suspiciously and decided to frisk them both. A firearm was found in the bag of one of the suspects, while the other had ammunition. Two searches were conducted in connection with this case: one at a residence on Kaya Maya and the other at Kaya Blokfluit. No items relevant to the investigation were found.

**Dec. 26.** 7:10 p.m. A man, 21, was arrested on Kaya Monica for assault and vandalism.

**Dec. 26.** 2:45 p.m. Police received a report that a woman was suspected of smuggling narcotics into the Caribbean Netherlands Correctional Institution (JICN). The woman, 27, was arrested for violating the BES Opium Act.

## Traffic accidents

*Under the policy 'botsen is blazen' ('to collide is to blow') a breath test is given drivers who have accidents.*

**Jan. 11.** 7:25 p.m. A moped and a car collided on Kaya Korona when the car turned in front of the moped and drove onto Kaya Isabella, causing the moped to collide with the car. Both the moped driver and the passenger, a child, were injured were taken to the hospital by private vehicle.

**Jan. 9.** 2:50 a.m. On Kaya International a car crashed into a fence, damaging another car. The driver was unable to exit the vehicle independently. The fire department and ambulance arrived to assist. The driver was then taken to the hospital for medical treatment. Due to the driver's condition, a breathalyzer test could not be administered.

**Jan. 8.** 6:50 a.m. A vehicle crashed into the fence of a house. The driver was ticketed because he did not possess a valid driver's license.

**Jan. 6.** 3:40 p.m. Two vehicles collided at the intersection of Kaya Italia and Kaya Gilberto F. (Betico) Croes. A driver was issued a ticket for driving without a valid driver's license. A woman, 28, was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. A breathalyzer test at the police station revealed that she had consumed alcohol, but was below the legal limit. The suspect was subsequently released.

**Between Dec. 26 and Jan. 1** police responded to six traffic accidents, three of them involving scooters. On January 1st, around 6:20 a.m. a car drove off after it collided with a scooter on Kaya Kamari. If you have any information about this hit-and-run, please contact the police.

## Driving under the influence

**From Dec. 25 to Jan. 7** police reported that 12 drivers were arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. Drivers who register a positive result on a breath test given at their vehicles are arrested and taken to the police station for a breath analysis. Drivers are legally required to submit to a breath test when requested to do so by a police officer.

Three drivers were stopped for a routine check, seven were stopped for driving recklessly and one collided with another vehicle. One driver was found parked in the middle of the road on Kaya Nikiboko Noord asleep at the wheel with the engine running. One driver attempted to hide under a vehicle when stopped by the police.

Four driver's licences were confiscated. Police banned other drivers from driving for 1-, 2-, 3-, 4-, 5- and 7- hours. This is the second time in the same month that two drivers were arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol and one of two was driving while his license was suspended. Suspected narcotics were found in three of the checks.

## Traffic, Parking and Speed Control

*The speed limit in built-up areas is 40 km/h and 60 km/h outside of them.*

**Jan. 4.** Around 9:15 p.m., a driver driving at a high speed without a front license plate ignored a police stop sign. He then drove into the yard of a house on Kaya Juruena and refused to show his documents. His car was subsequently impounded. He will still receive a fine upon retrieving his vehicle from the police station after presenting the correct documents.

**Dec. 30.** Around 7:45 p.m. a police patrol saw a car with five occupants at a restaurant on Kaya Korona with a driver who appeared very young. Police found the driver to be a 16-year-old minor. He therefore did not have a driver's license and also showed invalid insurance. The seriousness of the situation was explained to the minor and his parents at the police station. The minor stated that he had rented the vehicle for one day.

**On Jan 9 & 10 and Dec. 26 & 28** police set up traffic checks on Kaya Nikiboko Noord, Kaya Korona (twice), E.E.G. Boulevard and Julio A. Abraham Bulevar. Police checked 71 vehicles and issued 25 tickets and six warnings. Tickets were issued for driving without: valid insurance 13x, valid driver's license 7x; a seatbelt 5x. On Jan. 9. a motorcycle was confiscated because the driver failed to produce any documents. He was riding on public roads without a helmet, without a driver's license, and without insurance. He also presented an expired ID card. The motorcycle will remain at the police station until the owner can produce all the necessary documents.

*The fine for the aforementioned violations ranges from \$30 to \$225.*

## Fire

**Jan. 11.** 3:10 a.m. A fire was reported at the landfill on Kaminda Lagun. When the police and fire department arrived a Selibon employee on an excavator was already dumping sand at the entrance to the landfill to extinguish the fire.

**Jan.1.** 11:45 p.m. A car was reported on fire on Kaya Ciboney. Upon arrival police extinguished the fire with a garden hose while waiting for the fire department. After arrival, the fire department continued handling the incident. Damage to the vehicle was minimal. Police filed a report on suspicion of arson and launched an investigation.

## Public order

**Jan. 9.** Police seized fireworks, cigarettes, and six jars containing bags of unknown powder during a security check at a school on Kaya Frater Odulfinus. Two lighters, two utility knives, and a vape pen were also found among students. Parents are urged to monitor what students bring to school. Police will enforce the violations.

**Jan.1.** Around 4:40 a.m. a patrol saw that a bar/restaurant on Kaya L.D. Gerharts was still selling drinks to customers through a window. The establishment should have closed at 3:00 a.m. A report will be filed for violating the BES Licensing and Catering Act.

**Dec. 26.** Around 3:15 a.m. a patrol closed a restaurant on Kaya Libertador Simon Bolivar due to a violation of the permitted closing time. Approximately 25 people were present. The owner has been fined for violating the BES Alcohol and Catering Act.

# Letters & Opinions

The opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed by the various authors and forum participants do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints of The Bonaire Reporter.

## Couldn't fly to Bonaire January 3

Dear Editors,  
Bon Dia.

On January 3rd I went to the Albany, New York, USA airport before 3am. My flight to Miami was delayed twice and arrived late. My flight to Bonaire was delayed four times before being cancelled. I rebooked for later that day. That flight was delayed three times before being cancelled. I finally had to fly home - first to Chicago (middle of the country), then back to Albany (on the east coast) - getting home about 24 hours after I left. All this because the meglomaniac they call the US president bombed and invaded Venezuela.

I would love to try again, BUT ... I have a number of concerns. Of course there is no telling what that loose cannon might do next or when, and once again shut down all flights to the Caribbean, and particularly Bonaire. That makes any travel problematic. I do have another concern. I am wondering what the feeling is on Bonaire concerning citizens of the USA. Is there resentment or even hatred? Is there fear? Would citizens from the USA be unwelcome?

Regards, Larry M. Litwin

## "How many cruise ships is too many?" asked again



Harald Linkels, in the January 12 issue of the BES-Reporter, reported on his probe into two questions. Do people believe too many cruise ships are still docking at Bonaire? And if so, does the Public Body intend to do anything about it?

There's little question that Bonaireans are concerned with the traffic congestion caused by cruise ship arrivals, and about the degradation of the island experience for visitors and residents alike. When ABC Online Media queried some government officials whether anything was going to be done about it, different responses were offered.

Shortly after the COVID-19 crisis Hennyson Thielman (MPB), then Commissioner for Economy and Tourism introduced a Tourism Recovery Plan that included a policy to steer Bonaire toward a smaller-scale, higher-quality tourism model. His policy included limiting cruise arrivals to one ship per day. At press time, Thielman had not yet responded to ABC Online Media.

Apparently Commissioner Clark Abraham had not yet responded either. Following the installation of the current governing coalition controlled by Abraham, talk of

limiting cruise ship dockings faded away. Abraham has declared the issue is not the number of arriving ships, but the number of arriving passengers. Abraham said research needed to be done into "the island's s-called carrying capacity." He said no one had yet determined the maximum number of visitors Bonaire could accommodate without causing lasting harm to its natural environment, infrastructure, livability, or the experience of residents and tourists. The Executive body has not yet announced an intention to initiate that research.

According to Linkels, Harbour Master Flanegin responded promptly to ABC Online Media. Flanegin said the Executive Council is still working on a cruise tourism policy that would include managing their impact better by planning and scheduling arrivals. Flanegin also emphasized however that number of cruise passengers visiting the island declined by an estimated nine percent in 2025 and is likely to continue to decrease this year.

Commissioner Anthony Weber (Economy & Tourism, M21) also responded promptly and promised a substantive answer after he consults with his civil servants, who would not be back at work until January 5. DMR

# Ask Bob

Bonaire real estate advice



Hi Bob –

As you know the USA recently went into Venezuela to arrest Maduro and bring him back to America for a criminal trial. Now it seems the American President says he is going to be "running" Venezuela, at least for a while. Do I need to reconsider my plans to buy real estate on Bonaire and possibly retire to Bonaire in the future?

Mikey D., San Diego, CA

Mikey, that's a really good question and as you know I never comment about local politics or international affairs, all I can tell you is my opinion about how I think it will affect Bonaire. The first thing to keep in mind is that most of the ex-pat Venezuelans who live here, view it as a good thing right now and are hopeful about the future. It's hard to argue with that as they should know about it better than me.

In the next year or two I don't expect it to affect Bonaire in any meaningful way. The US government doesn't seem to have a plan for running the country, and so far, they have left Maduro's vice president and her associates in charge. Based on that, it doesn't look like any big changes will take place in the near future.

Over the longer term, this could become a positive thing for Bonaire. Before 1999 Bonaire was a popular vacation destination for many Venezuelans and a lot of them had second homes here, and there were a number of direct flights to Bonaire from Caracas. After 1999 a number of economic factors within the country made the cost of living higher for those who lived there and ongoing trade restrictions made it difficult to conduct business or travel between Bonaire and Venezuela.

In the event that the Venezuelan economy begins to prosper, Bonaire could benefit in the future from increased tourism from Venezuela (it's about a one hour plane ride from Caracas) as well as increased business opportunities for both countries. In addition, BOPEC could potentially start up again if the oil sales from the country increase over the new few years, as predicted.

I don't expect the events in Venezuela to change things much here on Bonaire over the next year or two, but if the Venezuelan economy starts to prosper again in the future, it should produce economic growth on Bonaire as well.

Let's hope that whatever changes to do take place, that they will improve the lives of the Venezuelan people first and foremost.

All the best, Bob

Bob Bartikoski,  
Re/Max Bonaire Broker/Owner

If you are looking to buy or sell a home on Bonaire,  
or  
if you have a real estate question for Bob,  
email him at [info@bonairehomes.com](mailto:info@bonairehomes.com).  
Bonaire: +599-717-7362.  
Toll free from US: 1-866-611-7362

# Protecting nature in 2025



## Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation Program

It was a quiet year for manta and devil ray sightings in Bonaire, with the Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation Program receiving only six confirmed sicklefin devil ray sightings. One manta ray sighting was reported by a guide, but it couldn't be confirmed as the guests did not share the video footage. Across the entire Caribbean Islands region, only fourteen manta and devil ray sightings were reported in 2025. Interestingly, four whale shark sightings were also reported around Bonaire this past year.

Although sightings were rare, presentation attendance was the highest it has ever been. We gave 45 free public presentations this year and welcomed 988 people to Manta Monday talks. More than 3,000 people have attended a talk since the presentations began in 2022. Presentations will continue in 2026—check for the schedule in *The Bonaire Reporter* and on social media [@caribbeanislandsmanta](https://www.instagram.com/caribbeanislandsmanta).

In July 2025, a publication was released that recognized the Atlantic Manta Ray (*Mobula yarae*) as a separate species of manta ray. This species is the one we see most often around Bonaire and in the Caribbean. We shared some photos with the researchers who authored this paper and are very happy to see it published! As project leader, I co-authored a scientific paper published last month on devil ray sightings in the Atlantic and Caribbean, featuring several Bonaire sightings submitted by citizen scientists.

Thank you to everyone who helped host presentations, share information, and submit sightings. We're hopeful that more mantas will be spotted (and reported) in 2026!

Nicole Pellitier

<https://www.caribbeanislandsmanta.org>



## Clean Coast Bonaire - What did we find in 2025?

Our citizen scientists had a very busy year, collecting a total of 31,401 marine litter items in 12 surveys. This brings the total items collected since Clean Coast Bonaire started in 2018 to 274,819! In 2025, Boka Onima is showing to be the most littered site, followed closely by Te Amo Beach. Our east coast sites are primarily littered with plastic coming out of the ocean, and Te Amo has more variety reflecting the litter left behind by beachgoers such as cigarette butts, bottle caps, and paper litter.

Clean Coast does 12 cleanups per year, once a month with approximately 10 – 20 volunteers alternating the cleanups on the beaches of Te Amo, Boka Onima and Piedra Pretu. The reward is a job well done hoping to make a dent in the continually growing meso and macro plastics sized from 5 mm – 5 cm. Plus after each cleanup there are freshly baked homemade cookies.

Carolyn Caparusso

<https://www.cleancoastbonaire.org>



## Dive Friends Quarterly Cleanup

Although Dive Friends does not fit the .org status of this report on nature organizations, we thought it was important to look at the work they are doing for our nature through their quarterly underwater cleanups. The four underwater cleanups

of 2025 yielded 3,187 kgs or 7026.13 lbs of debris removed from our coral reefs at different sites on Bonaire. And surprisingly all that trash was collected by 212 divers or an average of 53 per cleanup.



Photo Julie Morgan

The cleanup schedule is out for 2026 so mark your calendars: January 24; April 18, July 25 and October 24. Check the Dive Friends Facebook page

[https://www.facebook.com/divefriendsbonaire.com](https://www.facebook.com/divefriendsbonaire)



## Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance: Our Year for Nature

Together with organizations on all six islands, Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) helped protect important nature areas on land and at sea. These include coral reefs, mangroves, forests and seagrass beds. A major step in 2025 was the launch of the Key Habitats Program. This long-term program focuses on protecting and restoring nature areas that are essential for animals, people and the climate. It brings science, funding and local action together to support nature across the islands.

Working with young people and local communities remained an important part of DCNA's work. Educational projects such as *BioNews Kids* continued, offering children a fun and easy way to learn about nature and this year's *Big Live Nature Quiz* online event brought together almost 1,500 students from all six islands to learn about nature in an engaging way.

DCNA also invested in better tools for sharing nature information. The organization produces *BioNews*, DCNA's nature news platform with a focus on research and monitoring, and supported improvements to the Dutch Caribbean Biodiversity Database (DCBD). This makes it easier for NGO's, researchers, policymakers and the public to find information about species, habitats and nature reports. Through these and many more activities, DCNA continued to raise awareness about the importance of nature and its role in everyday life on the island.

<https://www.dcnanature.org>



## Echo

This non-profit organization is dedicated to the protection of the Yellow-shouldered Amazon Parrot, in the wild, on Bonaire in the southern Caribbean. The bird has been endangered by illegal trapping and when its habitat is destroyed by deforestation. Since 1980 Echo has conducted roost counts as a barometer of the population of the birds. In the beginning the

counts were sporadic but since 2005 they are held the last Saturday of January. There is now also a mid-summer count. The next count is this January 31, see pages 14 and 15 for details. <https://www.echobonaire.org>



## Foundation Save Plantation Bolivia

Protecting nature is not only about how many trees are planted, how many animals were reported or how much trash is collected. It begins with how much land, biodiversity, and coastline are protected from irreversible development. In 2025, Foundation Save Plantation Bolivia focused on monitoring and calling attention to illegal and destructive activities that threaten the fragile ecosystems of our island. By keeping watch, speaking out, and documenting harm, we work to ensure that nature is not treated as expendable. Looking ahead to 2026, we will continue to defend what still exists—because once it is lost, no number can truly replace it.

<https://www.saveplantationbolivia.com>



## Klein Bonaire Reforestation Project

Hundreds of years ago, Klein Bonaire or Little Bonaire was lush with vegetation. As civilization came to Bonaire, the little island was purged of its greenery by grazing goats and charcoal production leaving only scrubby plants and barren flats. In 2006 a project began by Elsmarie Beukenboom to "re-green" Klein Bonaire. The project faltered for a while but was revived again by Beukenboom and STINAPA's reforestation plans for Bonaire. The project has gained great momentum in recent years.



Photo Julie Morgan

Since 2016, volunteers have planted 10,000 young indigenous trees donated by Terra Bara which include buttonwood, manzanilla, kenepa, wayaka and the Bonaire Sabal Palm.

Every Sunday approximately 12 volunteers board the boat to work in the hot sun to clear areas, to water and plant new trees. In 2025, around 600 trees were planted on the little island. A new grant was recently bestowed to fund the STINAPA project. <https://www.stinapa.org>

## Protecting nature in 2025 to page 7

*The Bonaire Reporter* Jan. 14 - Jan. 28, 2026



# Protecting nature in 2025



## Reef Renewal Bonaire

The past few years have been challenging for Bonaire's coral reefs, with back-to-back bleaching events in 2023 and 2024 and the arrival of stony coral tissue loss disease in 2023. In response, Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire (RRFB) continued to adapt their restoration strategy in 2025, focusing on new species, refining techniques, and working with the community to strengthen vulnerable coral populations.

RRFB staff and instructors from our dive shop partners outplanted a record 10,000 corals this year, bringing their total to over 74,000. Coral breeding was a major focus this year. After a difficult spawning season in 2024, our team worked with several species, including grooved brain coral, staghorn coral, and, for the first time ever on Bonaire, pillar coral. Boulder brain coral, hit especially hard by bleaching and disease, spawned successfully for the first time in two years, allowing RRFB to produce thousands of young corals.

We also hosted our largest Reefiesta yet, introducing over 100 divers and snorkelers to hands-on coral restoration, with the help of our dive shop partners and sponsors.

Looking ahead to 2026, the focus remains on adapting restoration efforts to a changing ocean, strengthening partnerships, and building a land-based nursery facility.

(These outplanted fragments of mountainous star coral (*Orbicella faveolata*) have begun to fuse together on the reef.)

<https://www.reefnewalbonaire.org>



## STCB (Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire)

2025 has been a successful year filled with many achievements. We are proud to have opened our new visitor center on the waterfront to welcome anyone who would like to learn more about the sea turtles of Bonaire.

In 2025 we confirmed a total of 148 nests. This is the highest number since we began monitoring in 2002.

STCB has collected biometric data from 404 sea turtles, seen 11,069 hatchlings safely reach the ocean, organized nine fishing line clean-up dives and held 39 STCB presentations.

None of this would have been possible without our dedicated volunteers contributing 5,835 hours. Thank you all so much!

We look forward to a beautiful and successful 2026.

<https://bonaireturtles.org>

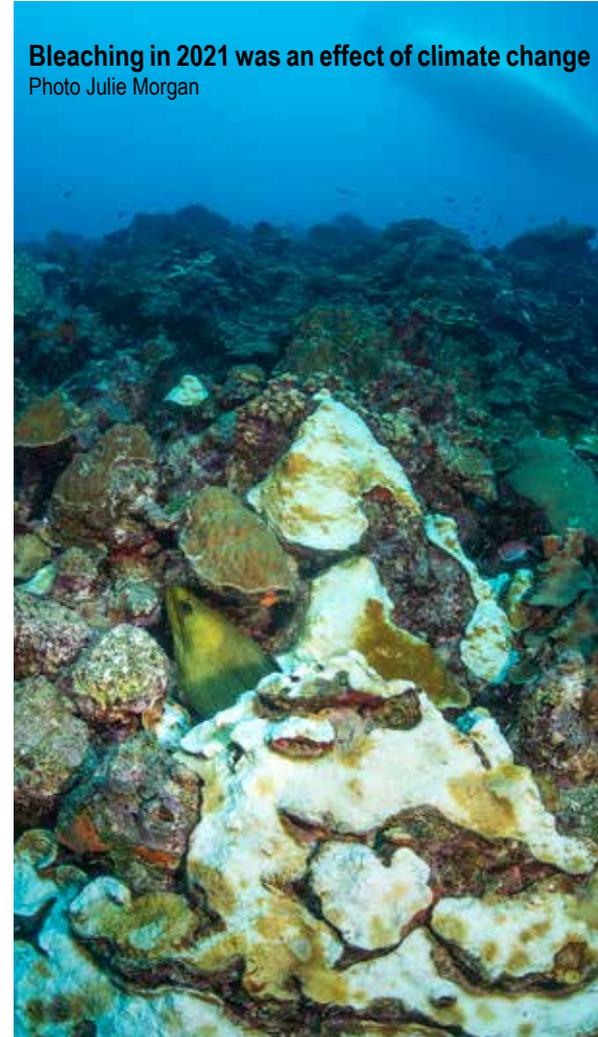


## STINAPA BONAIRE – A New Direction

With the appointment of a new director and a new temporary board, STINAPA started a new chapter in 2025. In the future, this board will be replaced by a Supervisory Board. With the introduction of the Supervisory Board, STINAPA's way of being managed will change. The Supervisory Board will focus on overseeing the organization, while the director will be responsible for daily management. The board will support and advise the director with its knowledge and experience. This marks an important step in strengthening STINAPA.

**Climate Resilience project:** STINAPA in partnership with Florida State University is investigating the effects of climate change within the Bonaire National Marine Park (BNMP) by evaluating stressors related to coral bleaching, including elevated temperatures, the prevalence of coral diseases, and pressures from recreational activities and coastal development.

**Bleaching in 2021 was an effect of climate change**  
Photo Julie Morgan



We have been collecting temperature data at over 30 sites all along Bonaire's West and East coasts at varying depths of 20m, 12, 6m, and at the sea surface. This temperature data is being compared with patterns of recreational pressure, coastal development, and water quality to develop cumulative impact maps. These maps can then be used to better understand the most vulnerable and the most resilient reef areas in the BNMP. The project aims to provide a framework for marine park monitoring and management for other Caribbean islands looking to increase reef resilience to climate change.

**Proyekto Parke Bunita:** The year 2025 was a period of learning, collaboration and progress for the Proyekto Parke Bunita. Through shared knowledge, and fieldwork, we have been observing that our park's natural vegetation is restoring.

One of the highlights of the year was the visit from Darryl Barnes of the Public Entity of Saba where we had the opportunity to show him our work and exchange knowledge. We also had the honor to welcome André van Proosdij, author of *Arnoldo's Zakflora*, together with his team to the Washington Slagbaai Park. With their visit, we confirmed that there were seedlings and saplings of rare trees growing in areas where project is in full swing. Other visits with Tera Barra helped us confirm additional seedlings and saplings of other rare tree species. Even more exciting news, we found our very first sapling of the Kibrahacha tree (*Tabebuia billbergii*) growing naturally in the park.

We are also entering the confirmation period of another large fenced area in the park. This is the period to confirm that the area is grazer free. <https://stinapabonaire.org>

STINAPA-Part 1 of 2. Part 2 in next issue.

**Protecting nature in 2025 to page 9**

## Mud, Mangroves & Maniacs:

### A Year of Hands-On Conservation in 2025

In 2025, Mangrove Maniacs continued their long-term commitment to protecting and restoring Bonaire's mangrove forests. Throughout the year, the team organized public events and educational presentations to share updates on ongoing projects, including mangrove health monitoring and studies on forest degradation. These moments were used to openly discuss what is happening in the mangroves, why it matters, and how local actions connect to the health of Bonaire's coastline



Photo Mangrove Maniacs

Princess Beatrix and Arti De Vries examine a young mangrove plant.

The Mangrove Maniacs worked closely with primary schools across the island, offering hands-on mangrove lessons that combined classroom learning with field visits. Students had the chance to step into the mangroves themselves, explore the ecosystem up close, and get their hands dirty. By connecting theory with experience, these activities helped young people understand the role mangroves play in coastal protection, water quality, and biodiversity.

The group also supported research by interns and students studying mangrove conditions and restoration techniques, helping build local knowledge and future expertise. In addition, Mangrove Maniacs continued practical fieldwork, including maintaining and restoring almost 5 km of water channels, opening 200 meters at other locations and organizing activities that invite residents and visitors to actively take part in mangrove conservation.

In 2025 several outplantings took place: with Princess Beatrix, DCNA, the Junior Rangers of Bonaire, a school program, a trial at Salina di Vlijt and two public outplantings. This resulted in over 3000 mangroves planted. Over 5600 saplings were grown in the nurseries.

On Tuesday and sometimes Thursdays we have 10 – 16 volunteers.

Through a mix of science, education, and community involvement, 2025 was another year of strengthening both the mangroves and the connection people have with them.

<https://mangrovemaniacs.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/mangrovemaniacsbonaire/>

They shield our shores  
and give young fish  
a place to grow.

We're proud of  
our mangroves.

We're part  
of nature



[naturalesabonaire.com](http://naturalesabonaire.com)



### Wild Bird Rehab

Since 2018, the Wild Bird Rehab in Bonaire has received over 2,000 American flamingos (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) for care due to injury, illness, or displacement.



Photo Wild Bird Rehab

Rehabilitation protocols included tube-feeding followed by transition to solid food, often with experienced birds placed alongside new arrivals to facilitate learning. Despite early human habituation, juveniles regained their natural wariness once integrated into groups.

Our findings indicate that soft release enhances survival rates, encourages key behaviors, and is the preferred method for reintroducing juvenile flamingos into the wild. These birds stayed near the release site before joining wild flocks, with confirmed migrations to Curaçao, Aruba, and Venezuela. Flamingos released via hard release were frequently found again

## Protecting nature in 2025

in poor condition or deceased. A small number returned to the rehabilitation center on their own.

Our findings suggest that soft release not only increases survival rates but also fosters the development of essential foraging and social behaviors. It should be considered the preferred strategy for reintroducing juvenile flamingos into the wild. *Elly Albers*

<https://www.mangrovecenter.com/wild-bird-rehab>



### World Wildlife Fund – Netherlands (WWF-NL)

We begin 2026 with renewed focus on nature conservation, building on last year's achievements and momentum. Guided by collaboration and shared commitment, we continue working toward healthy ecosystems and a resilient future. Key milestones were achieved in 2025 through the dedicated work of our partner organizations in nature conservation.

**Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire and RoffaReefs** focused on coral reefs and the connected ecosystem resulting in: six new coral species were added to the Lac Bay nursery (now eight in total); 270 coral fragments are growing spread across 24 genotypes; since 2023, 38 fish egg species have been identified; course by RoffaReefs and Dive Friends Bonaire teaches participants how to recognize, observe and record fish reproduction on the reef.

**Caribbean Cetacean Society** recorded record number of humpback whales in the Dominican Republic; ABC Island expedition expanded scientific knowledge and strengthened the commitment by Curaçao government for new marine protected areas.; Dolphin Pa Ni Frontier ran expedition from Grenada to Montserrat; Dushi Dolphin An Nou continued to grow.

**Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire** reached biggest milestones: 11,069 hatchlings reached the ocean; 148 confirmed nests Biometric data from 404 turtles and 286 new turtles were tagged for monitoring program.

**Mangrove Adoption Program** highlights: 4000 juvenile mangrove trees are ready to plant; UNESCO's program Micro Mondri introduces youth to microbiology, ecology and field and lab work and Remote sending framework to map and monitor mangroves.

**ReefGrazers** project completed population surveys of reef species in BES islands: sea urchins, whelks, Caribbean king crabs and sea cucumbers; Aquaculture system set to support large scale sea urchin restocking and testing; Studied whelk's role in reef restoration and conducted whelk experiments to study behavior and impact.

**DCNA launched the Key Habitats Program** with financial support from Nationale Postcode Loterij. Framework developed for five key ecosystems across the six Dutch Caribbean islands; Long term ecological goals were finalized.

*(WWF-NL is a part of the international WWF – content from 2026 newsletter)*



**Ride for the Roses is February 1. Ride Walk or Swim for the fight against cancer. On completion of the race everyone gets a rose.**

Sign up online at [RidefortheRoses.org](https://RidefortheRoses.org)

## Make Bonaire Accessible

New Year's Resolutions - Plans and thoughts for 2026 by Ria Dokter

Almost everybody does it, but I hardly ever did. But because everybody does so, I decided to join the team of those planning ahead for 2026.

Normally, when you get older, you have fewer obligations because there is no pressure of a job. But after a long period of time, I seem to be getting involved in more projects that I find interesting and challenging.

My first plan was to become more active about accessibility in the coming year and since more and more people face accessibility challenges, I know I just need to go on and keep "fighting." There is always the factor of insecurity that crosses my path, but I think I will be able to handle that. I am very happy with the many people who help me in every way they can and that makes me very grateful.

My second plan was to get more physically active. Now, that is a big challenge, since my body decides to act in such a way that I need to adapt this plan. One thing that I look very much forward to is some form of transportation in the near future that would make me more independent. I'm sure you can that understand that I'm keeping my fingers crossed.

To make my resolutions more accessible is another thing. There is always the factor of insecurity that crosses my path, but I think I will be able to handle that. And in the meantime, there are so many wonderful people in my life who want to help and assist me.

And of course, my goal to help make Bonaire more accessible is right there. Foundation MiVaBo's biggest goal is the same and I am proud to be a part of the board of this foundation.

We closed last year with promising sessions with two Bonaire deputado's and we will start this new year with more talks. Our point of view is that the more you explain about facts of accessibility, the better everyone will understand. MiVaBo is very proud and happy with the recognition we have received for outstanding service to the Bonairean community. Recognition gives us even more enthusiasm and eagerness to go on and makes us happy to know that we are on the right path.

Personally, I would like to step up and make better incontinence materials an important goal. The material

that is now used is very bad for the environment. But it is also made with material that does not do the job as it should. And since a lot of elderly men and woman suffer from this problem, it needs to be addressed soon.

I know very well that New Year's resolutions always fail or are not worked on in the best way. But I promise you, the ones mentioned above we will work on and repeat as much as needed. We have to succeed, because it is for Bonaire, not only for a small group of citizens.

Please keep on following this column to stay informed, or maybe you could mail suggestions.

(Contact Ria at: [riadokter5@gmail.com](mailto:riadokter5@gmail.com))

I wish everyone's plans for the new year come true and you have a very special 2026.



*Ria Dokter is living happily on Bonaire, where she used to work as a director at FKPD and started Special Olympics Bonaire. She took care of her husband (R.I.P) for many years and feels that accessibility is the most important issue on our island.*

# Here they come - Bonaire's own Maskarada 2026



After a night of bringing in the new year with partying and fireworks, Bonaire honored 2026 with the Maskarada, a tradition rooted deep in the Island's culture.

The masked players perform skits invoking Bonaire's past and dance to cultural instruments played by their own band. The players are disguised so as to be unknown. Their brilliantly colored clothes are reminiscent of jesters or Mardi Gras, but the tradition is rooted in Africa and Spain.



The maskarada players entertain at Kas di Kuido.



Having grown up in Rincon, Governor John Soliano has seen many maskaradas. Here at his home, he gifts the troop of players with their first tot of rum.

First stop is always the Governor's home to receive a gift of rum and a toast. This year a new book, "The Mystery of Masks" by Giovanni Gijssbertha was presented to Governor John Soliano and others. (see page 9)

Next stop for the Maskarada is always a visit to Kas di Kuido at Mariadal and the welcoming smiles of the elderly.

For the first time Divi Flamingo Resort welcomed the Maskarada. Judging from the happy guests it is sure to become a tradition.

The players performed 10 times on January 1 and 16 on January 3 at various homes and locations across Bonaire. If you missed them this year, you will most likely have to wait till January 1, 2027.

*Story / Photos Julie Morgan*

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## Kids' book passes on the Maskarada tradition



Photo: Author Giovanni Gijsbertha gives his book to school children. Photo OLB

Author Giovanni Gijsbertha has written his second children's book 'E misterio di maskarada' (The mystery of the masks) that introduces children to maskarada through an exciting story. Maskarada, an ancient folk custom, is deeply rooted in Bonaire's culture. With his book, Gijsbertha helps pass on this tradition to new generations.

The bilingual book, written in Dutch and Papiamentu, has been distributed free of charge to all primary school students in grades 7 and 8 thanks to the project, 'Edukashon Kultural Artistiko di Kalidat' (Cultural Education Bonaire).

Author Giovanni Gijsbertha presented his children's book, 'E misterio di maskarada,' January 1, 2026 during the performance of the maskarada group at the home of Island Governor John Soleana. During the presentation, Gijsbertha presented a copy to Cliff Frans, among others, who inspired the book.

The book is available for sale at Bruna. For more information about the book email Giovanni Gijsbertha [giovannigijsbertha01@gmail.com](mailto:giovannigijsbertha01@gmail.com)

As you face the building on Kaya Grandi #56-58, the sign on your left reads "Vergunningen" (Permits) and the sign on your right reads "Toezicht & Handhaving" (Supervision and Enforcement). The Spatial Planning and Development Department (R&O) will now be located in the same building as the new Supervision and Enforcement offices. This move provides a single, shared desk where residents can access both services.

"With this relocation, we are taking a concrete step towards better and more accessible services," says Ligwino Leito, interim director of Spatial Planning & Development. "By bringing R&O and Supervision & Enforcement under one roof, we are shortening the lines of communication and making it easier for our clients to manage their affairs. We are ready to serve the Bonaire community as best as we can."

Photo Julie Morgan

## Selibon and Fire Dept have to put out another one

Security personnel at the Lagun Landfill reported smoke and flames from another fire that had spread above ground the night of Sunday, January 1. When the Caribbean Netherlands Fire Department (BKCN) arrived Selibon staff were busy with an excavator and had already begun covering the fire with sand. No water was needed. The fire likely flared up because of the wind. The firefighters remained on site to ensure the safety of the Selibon workers until the last flames were extinguished. *DMR*

## Driving with a Single License Plate? You'll get busted

The Caribbean Netherlands Police Force (KPCN) say they've noticed many motor vehicles driving around Bonaire with only a single license plate. They say that is illegal and drivers will be stopped and possibly fined. Except for mopeds and motorcycles, vehicles must have clearly visible license plates front and rear. Mopeds and motorcycles need only one license plate. It must be mounted on the rear of the vehicle and clearly visible. *DMR*

## Bonaire again ranked a 10 Best tourist destination

*USA Today's* annual rankings again list Bonaire among the 10 Best Caribbean visitor destination. Bonaire ranked seventh. Curaçao, Anguilla, and Sint-Maarten topped the list. Every year a panel of travel experts nominates destinations for the list, then the general public is invited to vote for their choices. *DMR*

## Santa Clara, the scandal that won't stay quiet

The Executive Council purchased land from Deputy Clark Abraham's immediate family. Island Council member Hennyson Thielman said the price paid exceeded the asking price. Governor Soliano commissioned EBBEN Partners to conduct an independent fact-finding investigation. "Someone close to Abraham" posted on Facebook the date, time, and location of an upcoming confidential meeting between EBBEN and James Kroon, who reportedly would reveal negative information about Abraham. The investigation may be fatally compromised. *DMR*

## National Ombudsman says illegal immigrant workers need protection

National Ombudsman Reinier van Zutphen has suggested to Minister of Asylum and Migration, David van Weel, that he should focus on "protecting and assisting people living on the island in inhumane conditions" more than on preventing illegal residence.



National Ombudsman Reinier van Zutphen

There are between 700 and 1,000 immigrants working on the island without residence permits. Van Zutphen said they are at increased risk of being exploited by their employers. They work long hours for low hourly wages, are forced to pay excessively for meager housing, have little access to medical care, and live in constant fear of deportation.

These are often Venezuelans desperately needed in the construction, hospitality, and hotel sectors. Van Zutphen says they should be given an opportunity to legalize their residency on Bonaire so they can lead a dignified life and enjoy legal protection. *DMR*

## Have some plastic in your water?

Sustainable behavior is better for your wallet, the environment, and your health. A recent study shows that people who drink bottled water on a daily basis ingested 90,000 more microplastic particles every YEAR. A review of over 140 different scientific articles showed that people generally consume between 39,000 and 52,000 microplastics per year, but regular plastic water bottle consumers have ingested significantly more. It makes sense that plastic intended for a single use is more likely to shed into the product it contains. Yet another reason to commit to swapping to reusables!

*(Clean Coast Bonaire)*

## Late Breaking News

The Hague. Parliament apparently is ready to approve the election of more BES island councilors in the 2027 election. The formality of declaring the legislation "noncontroversial" seems assured; therefore it can be passed by the interim government.

## Residents wanting R&O now go to Kaya Grandi



# Reef Glimpses

## What Color Is a Brown Chromis? by Dee Scarr

If we look into the blue water along Bonaire's reef slope, there are a few types of fish we're likely to see: creole wrasse, creole fish, and brown chromis. On the reef itself the list is quite a bit longer, but it includes bicolor damselfish, surgeonfish, fairy basslets, and brown chromis. In fact, on my last dive I realized that, no matter where I looked, I was likely to see at least a few brown chromis. They're so common that we're likely to consider them part of the reef background, and look beyond them.

But those brown chromis are not only living everywhere, their lives are open to us. They're damselfish who aren't algae-eaters, so they don't defend territories like many other damselfish – which means they don't mind us hanging around. Their main diet is described as tiny planktonic relatives of shrimp and crabs called copepods. Those brown chromis out in the blue water are picking copepods and other planktonic animals from the water, one at a time.

What about the chromis around the reef?

The brown chromis on the reef pick plankton from the water, too, but they may be learning to pluck copepods and other tiny critters from the rocks as well. And, of course, there's another reason they are sometimes hanging around the reef: reproduction.

As with sergeant-majors, the male brown chromis clears a space, often on the side of a coral rock. He invites females



"This chromis sleeps near sponges reattached to this North Pier piling." Photo Dee Scarr

to deposit their eggs there by performing a swooping up-and-down dance near his nest site. A female who accepts his invitation will zigzag just above the site, depositing eggs. He will follow her, depositing his sperm on the eggs.

According to Ronald E. Thresher, in *Reef Fish* (1980), "one male was observed to spawn more than 30 times in less than 45 minutes," each spawning with a different female. After spawning, the female is likely to return to the blue water. The male, like almost every other damselfish, remains at the nest to guard and care for the eggs until they hatch, which takes two to three days. We can easily observe him

guarding his eggs: his focus is very sharp, not casual as it is when he's looking for prey. His eggs are likely to hatch at night; hatchlings drift with other plankton for a week or more before they settle to the reef as young brown chromis.

An interesting fact about my two Thresher books (I also have *Reproduction in Reef Fishes*, 1984) is that the author calls them "grey chromis", which makes sense to me, since they are gray! The "brown" and "grey" chromis are the same fish, *Chromis multilineata* ("many-lined chromis") (thank goodness for the scientific names). "Brown chromis" has always seemed to me a reflection of

how the color looks on a preserved fish – which was probably the condition of the fish when the scientists described it...

A few years ago, I captured a lionfish that was about 10-12" (25-30cm) long, whose body was bulging. "Eggs?" I wondered, and looked inside the fish. I found no eggs, but I found seven adult brown chromis, all pretty fresh, in the stomach of that medium-sized lionfish!

Imagine how many lionfish we'd need for their predation to make a difference in brown chromis populations!

Scarr's accomplishments were recognized in 2000 by her inaugural membership in the Women Divers Hall of Fame (along with another Bonaire sea protector, Kalli DeMeyer). Her other honors include Captain Don's Accolade Award, as well as a NOGI Award ("the Emmy of the diving world") in the category of Distinguished Service, and the SeaSpace/PADI Environmental Diver of the Year Award in 1991. Dee was the Beneath the Sea and Boston Sea Rovers Diver of the Year in 1991 and 1993.



## Surf and Turf Pasta by Chef Corjan Hoogerheide

150 g (5.29 oz) pasta of your choice

14 colored cherry tomatoes • Olive oil • Pepper and Bonaire sea salt.

Place cherry tomatoes in an ovenproof dish and mix them with some olive oil and salt and pepper. Cook in an oven at 170° C (338° F) for about 5 minutes until the skin just starts to open.

800 g (28 oz) canned yellow tomatoes (warehouse) • 2 garlic cloves • 1/2 onion, chopped • Dash of stock • Dash of olive oil

Heat onion and garlic in oil until cooked but not colored. Add yellow tomatoes and stock and let it simmer gently. Now puree with a hand blender until smooth.

5 cm (2 in) zucchini, sliced • 1/3 red bell pepper, chopped • 1/3 green bell pepper, chopped • 1/3 fennel, in wedges • 1 stalk of celery, cut into pieces • 1/2 red onion, chopped

Fry all vegetables until almost done and season with salt and pepper. Add fried vegetables and heat through. Meanwhile, cook some pasta until al dente.



5 large shrimp tails, peeled • 100 g (3.5 oz) chicken thigh meat, sliced • Freshly ground pepper • Bonaire sea salt

Now fry chicken and shrimp until golden brown and add to sauce. Place the pasta on

a plate and spoon the yellow pasta sauce over it.

6 basil leaves • 50 g (1/2 C) Parmesan Garnish with cooked cherry tomatoes, torn basil leaves and grated Parmesan.

Yellow tomatoes are milder and sweeter in taste and less acidic than red tomatoes, which have a stronger taste with more umami.

The surf & turf combination, the combination of sea and land on a plate, originates from the English-speaking world, especially from Great Britain, Ireland and America, and became popular in the 1950s-1960s. Surf is the sea, fish, or seafood and Turf is the land, actually red meat. The contrast is in texture and taste, tender meat and the salty/sweet taste of the seafood.

Each issue Chef Corjan Hoogerheide shares a recipe for a personal dish created from Bonaire's fresh ingredients. Corjan works as a Sous Chef at "The Reef Bar" at Sorobon luxury beach resort Bonaire.



# Events, Meetings, Sports

**12 steps meeting:** Wednesdays at Kaya Cacique, Centro di bario Nort'i Saliña, Meeting starts at 7:15 p.m. till 8:30 p.m. Info: [12stepsbonaire@gmail.com](mailto:12stepsbonaire@gmail.com)

**Alcoholics Anonymous open meeting** Every Thursday, 7 - 8 p.m. International Bible Church Kaya Papago 104 in Hato (Behind Bon Bida Spa and Gym and Bon Bida apartments). All welcome, regardless of primary addiction or no addiction at all.

**Animal Shelter's Paws and Foot Prints bi-weekly dog walking group.** Every other Wednesday 8 a.m. for an hour at Seru Largu. Signup by sending a WhatsApp message to 599-701-4989 no later than 2 p.m. the day before the walk (so we know how many dogs to bring).

**Apertivo evening from 5 – 8 p.m. Fridays Rosa Cafe.** Stop in for a drink & free Italian appetizers.

**Beach Tennis Bonaire** Free. Everyone welcome. Sportpark Rudy Boezem. Open 7 a.m.-9 p.m. <https://www.facebook.com/beachtennisbonaire/>

**Bridgeclub Bonaire** organizes a bridge evening Wed. 7:30 - 10:30 p.m. All levels are welcome. Info: 795-0128 (whatsapp text), [bridgeclubbonaire@gmail.com](mailto:bridgeclubbonaire@gmail.com). <https://www.facebook.com/bridgeclubbonaire>

**Consultancy open to all immigrants and/or refugees** every Saturday 4 to 6 p.m. at Bijkerk's law office in Antriol. Call 796 2650 (abog. Bijkerk) or 787 2373 (FUIB - Union of Bonairean Immigrants).

**Divers Drink & Dance Date** Yhannis Arepas (Kaya Neerlandia, behind Budget Marine) Last Wednesday of the month. 5 - 9 p.m. <https://www.facebook.com/yhannisarepas/>

**Diver Safety.** Jason Buttenshaw third Sunday of the month 6:30 p.m. at Sugar Thief, 8 Kaya Inglaterra.

**Fish ID course. Free.** 7 p.m. at Trans World Radio (TWR) led by Carmen Toanchina. All welcome. Held last Tuesday of the month. Check: <https://www.reef.org/events/month>

**JEU De BOULES CLUB Bonaire.** ALL WELCOME. We play **PETANQUE** (the French version). Wed. & Sun. 2.30-6 p.m. Foxy Flamingo (road to Sorobon). We have spare boules (balls) for newcomers. [jeudeboulebonaire@gmail.com](mailto:jeudeboulebonaire@gmail.com) or Peter Overman, 00599 7964037

**Museum Night, Terramar museum.** Free access to galleries last Wednesday of the month. From 6 to 8 p.m., visitors are welcomed into a relaxed, friendly atmosphere where they can enjoy the galleries after hours and join a themed workshop (pay what you can).

**Narcotics Anonymous (NA) Bonaire. GET RID OF YOUR DRUG ADDICTION** Monday 19:00-20:00. Kaya Tanki Matrimonio 30. Dutch & Papiamentu. Call Wensley 700 7289 or Remco 784 1782.

**Pickleball. • Chinese Assoc. Kaminda Lac, Blue Building:** Tues. & Thurs 6-8 p.m. Sat. 3 to 5 p.m. • **Sports Hall Jorge Nicolaas, Kaya Amsterdam:** Sun. 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Members play free, non-members pay \$ 5.00 per person per day.

**Rosicrucian Order, AMORC in Bonaire** Michiel Bijkerk 796 2650, [abogado.bijkerk@gmail.com](mailto:abogado.bijkerk@gmail.com)

**Sunfish Race Days:** Barring inclement weather: BSSA Bonaire Sailing School Association Facebook.

**Tennis** Eddie's courts. Everyone (18+) is welcome. **Free Kid's Clinics at Sentro di Bario Nikiboko Tue & Fri 4-6 p.m. Sentro di Bario Nort'i Saliña, Mon & Thu 4-6 p.m.** Register: email [info@bonairetennisassociation.com](mailto:info@bonairetennisassociation.com) or app 599 782 4569. <https://bonairetennisassociation.com/events/> Mixed competition matches play Saturdays 4 to 10 p.m. on Eddie's courts.

 **Manta Monday at 7:30 p.m.** Presentations Nicole Pelletier of the Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation. Start again Jan. 26 Dive Friends Hamlet Oasis; Feb. 2 & Feb. 9- Divi Dive Pure Ocean Garden. Email: [nicole.pelletier@mantatrust.org](mailto:nicole.pelletier@mantatrust.org); [Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation facebook](https://www.facebook.com/CaribbeanIslandsMantaConservation)

 **Reef Renewal Bonaire.** Mondays 5:30 p.m. Breakfast Area – Buddy Dive Resort. Free. Learn about coral reef restoration. Questions? email: [info@reefrenewalbonaire.org](mailto:info@reefrenewalbonaire.org)

 **Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB).** Free presentations at Kaya Aruba 4E on 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month, 8 p.m. <https://www.facebook.com/bonaireturtles/>

# What's Happening

**Animal Shelter:** Mon-Fri 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Sat. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. phone/whatsapp: 701 4989 or 717 4989. Email: [animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com](mailto:animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com)

**Arts & Crafts Market in Wilhelmina Plaza. NEW open Friday 9am till 4pm** as well as for the cruise ships (schedule can be found at: <https://www.facebook.com/BonaireArtsandCraftsCruiseMarket/>)

**Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei in Rincon:** Tues.-Thurs. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Sat. 8-noon

**Library:** Mon. 12-5; Tues. to Thurs. 8-5; Fri. 8-4:30; Sat. 8-12. 715 5344. Anyone can become a member. Free for residents 0 to 18 years. Adults \$10 a year. Members can borrow ebooks online. [www.onlinebibliotheek.nl](http://www.onlinebibliotheek.nl)

**Marshe di Playa** Local market Sat. 9-1. Kaya Industria, by Warehouse Supermarket.

**Pakus di Pruga (Animal Shelter flea market. ):** Kaya Gilberto F Croes, just past Caribbean Laundry. Saturdays 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Pakus raises funds for the Animal Shelter by selling recycled and affordable clothes, furniture, books, music, housewares and more.

**Terramar Museum** Mon-Fri 9-2. Kaya J.N.E. Isla Riba 3. Admission \$10. Residents \$5. Tours \$20. Children under 12 free. +599 701 4700 <https://www.facebook.com/terramarmuseumbonaire/>

**SACA Art Center** Free entrance. Kaya Korona 74. During the day the garden is open to the public.

**STINAPA headquarters:** Mon-Fri 8-4. +599 717 8444. After hours: +599 777 8444.

**Washington Slagbaai Park:** Open Tues. - Sun. 8-5 (entry to 2:30 p.m.) \$40 (Free with Nature tag)

2026	
Last day Jan. <b>17</b>	<b>Art exhibit: True Colours. 13 artists.</b> SACA Art Center, Kaya Korona 74 Open Thurs. Fri. Sat. 2-5 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan <b>20</b>	<b>American Citizen Services.</b> 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Trans World Radio Station By appointment only: email <a href="mailto:ACSCuracao@state.gov">ACSCuracao@state.gov</a> see page 15
Wednesday, Jan <b>28</b>	<b>5th Open Bonaire Bridge Championship.</b> All welcome. Register by Friday, Jan. 23 via the bridge club's <a href="https://www.facebook.com/bridgeclubbonaire/">Facebook page</a> or email <a href="mailto:bridgeclubbonaire@gmail.com">bridgeclubbonaire@gmail.com</a>
Saturday, Jan. <b>31</b>	<b>Annual Lora Roost Count 6 to 8 a.m.</b> The first roost count of 2026. Volunteers are essential to help count Bonaire's parrots. Echo holds a training session in advance to explain the count and to determine who will go to which site during the official count. Sign up by January 20 Whatsapp +599-701-1188 (See page 15)  <b>Nos Zjilea Cultural Event</b> 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei, Rincon. Enjoy the music, dancing, crafts, amazing food and drink
Last day art exhibit	<b>Art exhibit: The Joy of Creation. Henk Roozendaal &amp; Jose Smit:</b> SACA Art Center, Kaya Korona 74 Open Thurs. Fri. Sat. 2-5 p.m.
Sunday, Feb. <b>1</b>	<b>Ride for the Roses, Fight against cancer.</b> Isidel Beach Park. Ride/Swim/Walk. <a href="https://www.ridefortheroses.org">https://www.ridefortheroses.org</a>
Saturday, Feb. <b>7</b>	<b>Open Bonaire Swimming Championships</b> All welcome. See page 15.
Friday, Feb. <b>13</b>	<b>National Reading Day</b> 9 - 9:30 a.m. Asking for volunteers to read for half an hour to all grades in primary schools. See page 15.
Last day Feb. <b>17</b>	<b>Surinamese Wedding Portraits. Terramar Museum Exhibit:</b> Do you have a Surinamese wedding photo to add? Send a scan (.jpg/.jpeg) to <a href="mailto:surinaamse.trouwportretten@gmail.com">surinaamse.trouwportretten@gmail.com</a> , with names, date, location, and a brief description.

## 2026 Cruise Ship Schedule

DATE	TIME	CRUISE SHIP	PIER
Wed. January 14	0900-2300	CARNIVAL MAGIC 3646 guests	South
Thurs. January 15	0800-2000	COSTA PACIFICA 3780 guests	North
Fri. January 16	0700-2000	MARELLA DISCOVERY 2074 guests	North
Sat. January 17	0500-1400	NORWEGIAN SKY 2480 guests	South
Sun. January 18	0615-1800	VENTURA 3597 guests	North
Mon. January 19	0730-2300	HEBRIDEAN SKY 120 guests	North
	0800-1800	AIDAPERLA 3286 guests	South
Tues. January 20	0700-1800	SERENADE OF THE SEAS 2500 guests	North
	0900-1900	MAJESTIC PRINCESS 4450 guests	South
Wed. January 21	0800-2200	CARNIVAL HORIZON 4683 guests	South
Thurs. January 22	0700-1900	EVIRIMA 298 guests	South
Fri. January 23	0800-2200	CARNIVAL CONQUEST 3783 guests	North
Tues. January 27	0600-1900	CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE 2886 guests	South
Wed. January 28	0700-1800	SERENADE OF THE SEAS 2500 guests	South
Thur. January 29	0500-1400	NORWEGIAN EPIC 5186 guests	South
	0900-2300	EXPLORA II 996 guests	North
Fri. January 30	0700-2100	SILVER SHADOW 388 guests	North
	1030-2200	WIND SURF 312 guests	South
Sat. January 31	0630-1900	NAUTICA 777 guests	South
	0700-1900	EVIRIMA 298 guests	North

**Sobremesa Kas di Arte** View or buy art from Bonaire's local artists. Tue-Fri 2 - 5 p.m. Sat 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Abraham Boulevard 10. **For those who love to make art themselves:**

- Every Sat 11 - 2. Open Art Studio. \$5 to use our space and materials but no guidance. 12+
- Every Wed 7 - 9 p.m. Art Club. \$20 for all materials and professional help is available! Work on your own art project (2D). 16+ Whatsapp +599 700 7115 • email: [sobremesabonaire@gmail.com](mailto:sobremesabonaire@gmail.com)

**Sunday, Feb. 1. Join us all**

Ride for the **ROSES**

## You can help keep Bonaire clean

Saturdays	<b>One Hour Cleanup Power.</b> Weekly coastal clean up every Sat. 9 – 10 a.m. Location on FB: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/OneHourCleanupPower/">https://www.facebook.com/OneHourCleanupPower/</a>
Sun. January 11	<b>Clean Coast Bonaire.</b> 4-6 p.m. Boka Onima. Donate your time. Work as a citizen scientist to collect marine litter & data. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=clean%20coast%20bonaire">https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=clean%20coast%20bonaire</a>
Saturday, January 17	<b>STCB Fishing line clean-up at North Pier</b> Meet at Dive Inn before 9 a.m. dive time for the briefing and a free tank. Bring your C-Card, Marine Park tag, shears/line cutter and mesh bag. Email <a href="mailto:cepa@bonaireturtles.org">cepa@bonaireturtles.org</a> to join.
Saturday, January 24	<b>Quarterly Clean up Dive, Dive Friends.</b> Held January, April, July and October. Everyone is welcome. If you don't dive, you can snorkel; if you don't snorkel, you can help out on shore. <a href="https://www.divefriendsbonaire.com/eco-activities/quarterly-clean-up-dives/">https://www.divefriendsbonaire.com/eco-activities/quarterly-clean-up-dives/</a>



## Lora Roost count January 31

In 1980, when Bonaire began monitoring its parrot population, there were about 400 Lora aka Yellow-shouldered Amazons on the Island. In 2005 the Lora roost count became an annual event, held the end of January. More recently Echo, a non-profit conservation foundation, established a second annual count at fewer sites. The mid-year count is conducted in late summer to monitor where the loras are roosting during the dry part of the year after their breeding season.

From 2017 to 2023 the January roost totals fluctuated between 770 in 2017 and 1779, a high recorded in 2022.

Echo tells us, "Parrots are notoriously hard to count, which is why the roost count is done simultaneously on one day, between set times with volunteers only counting Loras that they observe flying from the site to reduce double counting."

Volunteers are essential to help count Bonaire's parrots. Each of the multiple observation stations needs two volunteers. Sign up by January 20 Whatsapp +599-701-1188.

**Photo: A volunteer at the crack of dawn to take part in the July 2024 roost count.** Photo via Echo Facebook.

## Register by ...

### STCB: Photo contest 1 of 4

**A day in the life of a sea turtle.** Show us the moments that capture sea turtles daily routines.

- Take or select a photo that fits the theme
- Submit your entry through our Google Form: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScHi67geCghZ6inW9jnyEb78Mmi71dklrYljcjfQQQfDdfQ/viewform?usp=header>
- Deadline: February 15, 2026

The winning photo will be displayed in the STCB Visitor Center and featured on our social channels. At the end of the year, all winning photos will be auctioned to support sea turtle conservation on Bonaire. *Floor van Schalkwijk, STCB*

### 5th Open Bonairean Bridge Championships Event Wednesday, January 28. Register by January 23.

The tournament is open to players of all levels and promises to be another sporty and fun meeting for bridge enthusiasts on the island and beyond. Register via the bridge club's [Facebook page](#) or email [bridgeclubbonaire@gmail.com](mailto:bridgeclubbonaire@gmail.com)

### Open Bonaire Swim Championships Event Saturday, February 7. Register by end of January.

This open and accessible swimming event takes place in the Floating Pool at Parke Tului. Both recreational swimmers and experienced club swimmers can participate, as can residents of Bonaire and visitors to the island. Swimmers with disabilities are also welcome.

Swimmers will compete in different age categories, with boys and men starting separately from girls and women. The program includes multiple distances, including breaststroke, freestyle and butterfly. For participants of Special Olympics and FKPD, customized components are included. The event will conclude with a joint relay, where fun and cooperation are central.

You can register via [this form](#), also found on [Aquatics Federation Bonaire Facebook page](#).

## Volunteer readers wanted for Reading Day

Another National Reading Day will be held on Friday, February 13, from 9 to 9:30 a.m.

With more than 100 volunteers, we will be reading for half an hour to all grades in primary schools. We will read in Papiamentu in grades 1 through 4 and in Dutch in grades 5 through 8.

Early volunteers can indicate their preference for a school, class, or language. Other volunteers will be placed in available classes. For beginner volunteers, we are organizing a workshop in the week before Reading Day.

Please let us know soon if you would like to participate again.

Darly Janga and Paul Ruijs,  
Reading and Writing Foundation Bonaire  
Email: [lezenenschrijvenbonaire@gmail.com](mailto:lezenenschrijvenbonaire@gmail.com)

## Church Services

### Roman Catholic Churches Bonaire

- **Parish La Birgen di Coromoto (ANTRIOL):** Holy Masses: Mon-6:30 a.m.; Tues & Thur -7:30 p.m. Sat-6 p.m. (English) / 7:30 p.m.; Sun-7 a.m. / 10 a.m. / 6 p.m.
- **Parish San Bernardo (PLAYA):** Holy Masses: M. W. F. Sat-7 p.m. Sun-9 a.m./7 p.m.
- **Parish Luis Beltran (RINCON):** Holy Masses: Tu. W.Th. Sat-7 p.m. Sun-7 a.m./10 a.m.

### International Bible Church of Bonaire (HATO):

Kaya Papago 104. Sun: Worship Service & Children's Church 9 a.m. Sunday School 10:45 a.m. Services in English.

### United Protestant Congregation

- **(KRALENDIJK), Plaza Wilhelmina:** Sun 10 a.m. Services in Dutch
- **(RINCON) Kaya C. D. Crestian:** Sun 8 a.m. Services in Papiamentu/Dutch

## Funds Available

### The Appeltjes van Oranje (Orange Funds)

are awarded annually to three social organizations in the Netherlands and the Caribbean that contribute to a connected society. The winners will receive a bronze statuette and € 25,000. The prize money can be freely used within the purpose of the winning initiative.

The 2026 prize is dedicated to 'Breaking Poverty Together.' Social initiatives that focus on the sustainable prevention and reduction of poverty and debt can register until February 22. Find the criteria and application procedures at <https://www.oranjefonds.nl/criteria-submissions-appeltjes-van-oranje-2026>

## Public Service Events

**American Citizen Services.** The Consular Officer of the United States Consulate General Curaçao will be in Bonaire for American Citizen Services (ACS). **Date:** January 20, 2026 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon **Location:** Trans World Radio Station, 64 Kaya Gob. N. Debrot. **By appointment only.** Email [ACSCuracao@state.gov](mailto:ACSCuracao@state.gov). **Available Services:** U.S. passport applications • Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) applications • Notarizing documents After requesting an appointment, you will receive instructions on how to prepare for your requested service. To avoid delays, please read the instructions carefully. CASH AND PERSONAL CHECKS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED.

**BSN** The BSN is your unique, personal number. Get it now to take care of government business online in the future. Your BSN can be requested from the Census Office. Proof of identity required (ID. card, passport or driving licence.)

**Turn in unused licence plates.** To avoid being charged 2026 taxes turn in unused plates to the Finance department at Kaya Industria Pariba 28. Proof of identity required. Someone else can hand in the plates with a Power of Attorney and a copy of the owner's ID. If the plate has been lost or stolen, bring the police report. For questions about motor vehicle tax, residents can contact: [belasting-olb@bonaigov.com](mailto:belasting-olb@bonaigov.com) | 717 5330 – extension 53

**Sexual Health Clinic** Anonymous and by appointment. Phone or WhatsApp nurses at +599 790-7373. Also locations of condom vending machines can be found on the Public Entity Bonaire website via (<https://bonaigov.com/inwoners/condoom-automaat>).

Sign up by sending us a message FB/Instagram or [sobremesabonaire@gmail.com](mailto:sobremesabonaire@gmail.com)

## KIDS WORKSHOP

### INK-WATER-SALT-WIND

A workshop with lots of room for experiment using colored ink, water, salt and wind

Location: Sobremesa - Abraham Boulevard 10  
Date & time: **Saturday Jan 17: 2-3:30 pm**  
Ages: 8-12 years  
Cost: \$10  
Teacher: Sandra Bosman

*Sobremesa*  
KAS D. 2015  
[www.sobremesa-bonaire.com](http://www.sobremesa-bonaire.com)

# Creating Optimal Health

Staying sane in an insane world

by Irene da Cunda Costa

Staying sane in a “crazy world” isn’t about ignoring reality; it’s about protecting your mind while living in it. Here are 10 grounded, practical principles that help people stay steady without becoming numb or cynical.

**1. Control what you can.** Release what you can’t. Your time, attention, reactions, habits, and values are yours. Global madness, other people’s behavior, and most systems are not.

Sanity comes from clear boundaries, not from winning arguments with reality. Ask yourself “what is actually under my control today? My actions, my attention, my words, my effort, my feelings.

**2. Be informed, not immersed.** Staying aware is healthy. Doom-scrolling is not. Set limits on news and social media—especially outrage-based content. Too much exposure trains your nervous system to live in crisis mode.

**3. Choose depth over noise.** Crazy worlds are loud. Sanity lives in depth. Read long-form books, have real conversations, build skills, create things. Depth slows the mind and restores perspective. One moment of depth can be enough.

**4. Don’t let extremes set the standard for “normal.”** Violent or reckless people are visible, not representative. Most humans are quietly trying to survive, love someone and get through the day. Don’t let the loudest 5% define your view of humanity. Don’t assume humanity is crazy just because of a few voices.

**5. Keep your body regulated.** A dysregulated body creates a panicked mind. Sleep, walk, breathe deeply, lift something heavy, eat decently. These aren’t self-help clichés, they’re neurobiological stabilizers. This can be one of the most important aspects to stay sane and is pretty much up to oneself.

**6. Cultivate a small circle of sane people.** You don’t need many, just a few people with whom you can disagree without hating, laugh without cruelty and think together without panicking. Human connection is the strongest antidote to collective insanity.

**7. Practice “calm defiance.”** You don’t have to comply with madness to survive it. Being calm, kind, thoughtful and deliberate in a chaotic environment is a quiet form of rebellion—and it keeps your identity intact. Respond but do not react, what is the difference? Responding calmly and deliberately is different than reacting pulled by emotions.

**8. Act locally, meaningfully.** Trying to fix the entire world will break you. Improving your immediate environment—your work, home, relationships, neighborhood—restores agency and sanity.

**9. Keep a sense of humor (especially dark humor).** Laughter doesn’t deny reality, it metabolizes it. If you can still laugh at absurdity without becoming cruel, you’re doing better than you think.

**10. Stay true to your values.** A sane person in an insane world will sometimes feel crazy, that’s normal. What matters is not blending in with chaos, nor numbing yourself to it, but remaining anchored: thoughtful, grounded, human.

Think “I don’t need to fix the world. I just need to stay human in it.”



*Irene is passionate about health, neurosciences and personal growth. Originally from Uruguay, she is an Integrative Psychotherapist (PNIE), Life*

*Coach (ICF), Master in Nutrition(IUSC) and Yoga Instructor.*

# A Garden? Just Do It!

Leaving the rainy season

by Angliet, Nature Lover



**Bougainvillea.** Reddish trinitaria can be brewed as tea and is very healthy. The reddish color signals that it contains a good amount of antioxidant . Photo Julie Morgan

**My garden friends and I are disappointed.** There has been very little rain, and it looks like the rainy season is coming to an end. Hopefully some showers will still fall, but if not, begin to prepare plants that you want to save and collect their seeds. The dry high winds will start soon and that phenomenon together with the drought dries the sensitive plants. Create a spot where the plants are protected against the wind and the hot sun. Remove weeds and grass before they produce seeds otherwise your yard will be covered with weeds and grass as soon as it does rain. And trim the trees as they need a new year “detox.” Give them a good “hair cut.” Especially the old dry parts and sick with pies pies (white fly) need to be removed. The plants will feel relieved of all their burdens.

This is a good opportunity to clean the yard too. Old stuff, broken things that are not even good enough for a second life , can go to Selibon. But if you have stuff you don’t want that is still good, place them in front of your yard with “Gratis” sign and someone else might be happy with it.

**How we can survive if air and boat traffic to Bonaire is blocked?** We hear this concern on Bonaire these days. We already experienced this during Covid, yet it can happen again from other causes.

When there was hardly any fresh food in the supermarkets last week due to a block on international flights, it was a good time for us to realize once again that we need to engage in urban agriculture. We need to plant our own veggies and fruits. It’s also good to know more about eating plants that grow wild on the island.

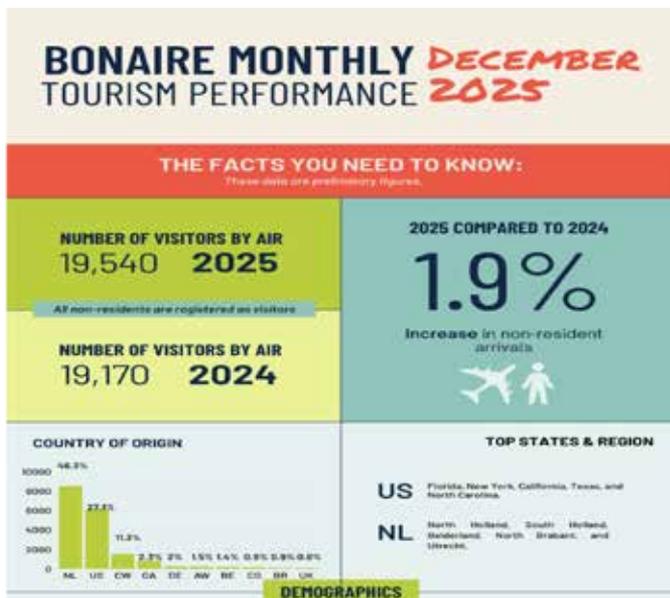
Here are some easy and fast-growing veggies to plant on Bonaire: Paksoi, amsoi, tajeblad, kalaloe, spinach, parsley, plantain, yuca, sweet potato, bembé, some cacti, rooi beet, wandu beans, kouseband, Bonaire cucumber, okra, wild bitter melon, peppers and pumpkin.

Leaves and fruits of certain fruit trees are also good to use in teas or beverages or eat as a vegetable: papaya leaves , noni leaves ( not too much) , tamarind fruit, the leaves of sweet potato, the white blossoms of plantain plant, young leaves of the pumpkin plant , all are good in soup and to wok.

For a cup of tea you can try: leaves of the mango tree, papaya, tamarind, sour-sop, guyaba, lemon, passion fruit , mandarin, flowers of moringa, bougainvillea, passion fruit, tamarind, dry lemon skin for tea, dry fiber of coconut and yerby hole. Don’t forget the herbs that grow here such as yerby hole and other basil types, lemon grass, Mexican mint, lipia alba, ginger, sea grass.

Also the skin of certain plants like pumpkin is good to consume to wok or to make tea. So it’s important to have a garden and have some knowledge about plants. You never know.....

*Angliet Baidjoe grew up in the Surinam jungle, moved to the Netherlands as a teen, and trained as a teacher, then in Alternative Healing. Everywhere she has lived, she has planted a garden and grown her own food.*



Find TCB’s full report in our online issue, page 23. <https://bonairereporter.com>

The online version of our story  
“Tourist tax kiosks make travelling to Bonaire easier”  
in issue 25, 2025 of Bonaire’s favorite English language  
newspaper has received  
46,238 views



As we welcome the New Year, the world seems to be topsy turvy as every day seems to bring new issues, problems and crises, many of them environmental and storm related. A number of my past students from Sustainability, Environmental Management and Ocean Environments courses have reached out with great concern. My advice has been to keep working to right wrongs, to support both local and national environmental efforts and educational and research institutions that are environmental leaders. They are doing vital research and training the future cadre of naturalists, environmental scientists, writers, photographers, activists and others who daily work to study and protect the Blue Planet and tell its dynamic stories.

There is a lot of Blue Hope as we enter 2026; the number of well managed Marine Protected Areas continues to increase. And around the world, strong scientific research in the field and in the laboratory is expanding our understanding of environmental concerns and their solutions and management.

Institutions such as the New England Aquarium (NEAq) is a world leader in studying the endangered North Atlantic

Right Whale, in rescuing and rehabilitating hundreds of cold stunned ocean turtles every year and in providing engaging and educational programming to over one million visitors annually. NEAq also sponsors the Marine Conservation Action Fund, supporting small environmental organizations around the globe. Other accredited aquariums and zoos the world over have unique programs. Check out ones near you or when you travel.

The Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution is the world's largest private ocean research organization. For 95 years it has been pioneering ocean exploration from the atmosphere and surface of the sea to the deep ocean while training the next generation of ocean scientists. The institute also provides the public with a dynamic and comprehensive website ([whoi.edu](http://whoi.edu)) showing their ongoing research and a series of online/Zoom Webinars through their 'Ocean Encounters' programs, all posted for viewing. This is a dynamic and free educational resource.

Colleges by the dozens are offering environmental courses, degrees and programs, many of them online as well as on campus. Harvard University's Extension School pioneered the offering of online

environment courses way back in 1997. The Harvard Museum of Natural History offers a day long "I Love Science" program each February and hosts a number of natural history clubs that have meetings open to the public. Check out what is going on at your local or regional museum and college.

There is Blue Hope in the thousands of small environmental groups around the world that are doing critical work studying and supporting local and regional environments, providing students with opportunities and engaging and educating the public and government officials. They depend upon memberships and donations to continue their efforts.

Similarly important are the many newspapers, newsletters, podcasts, blogs and more that "get the word out" about environmental issues. Globally, the Economist magazine is a leader. Bonaire is fortunate to have its turtle protection and coral aquaculture groups, its mangrove, landfill, donkey and Boliva groups, the Klein Bonaire restoration efforts, a strong local press, the Bonaire National Marine Park and the Washington Slagbaai National Park. Make an effort to support these local programs in

the coming year.

Of special note, the National Geographic Society has been and remains a leader in sponsoring and supporting environmental projects and journalism, the latter in both print and digital formats. They continue to bring the world to you.

It is critical to let politicians, local and national, know that you value the environment and want strong regulation, enforcement and research to help protect both land and sea.



*George Buckley has been coming to Bonaire since 1976, working with Captain Don ( who called him CLAM for his work with mollusks), Hendrik Wuyts and others on environmental and educational projects and films. He has led over 100 study groups to Bonaire with many of his students returning often. Semiretired from decades of teaching Environmental Management and leading an active graduate program in Sustainability, he now works with many environmental groups and as an environmental consultant.*

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# Pets of the Week

Animal Shelter Bonaire, Kaminda Lagun 26A. Mon. - Fri. 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. Sat. 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Call/What's App 701-4989 [animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com](mailto:animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com)



**Sushi**

**Meet Sushi.** Sushi is a little over one year old and has been at Animal Shelter Bonaire for the past five months. She's a super sweet, happy girl who absolutely lives for cuddles. But don't let her calm moments fool you, Sushi is full of energy and LOVES to run and play! When she's not zooming around, you'll find her having the time of her life with her best buddy, Tofu. Playtime is serious business for this girl!

Sushi is curious, eager to learn, and would love nothing more than to explore the world together with you. Walks, adventures, games, and quality time? Count her in! She's on the lookout for a forever home where she can grow, learn, and share all her love.

Could you be her perfect match? Come meet Sushi at Animal Shelter Bonaire.

Story / Photo: Marissa Lamers

**This is Chanel.** She is now our longest resident of already four years! She was found as a kitten in an empty house, and her mom was nowhere to be found. Chanel really honors her name, because she is truly a classy lady. She will let you know when you can pet her, and sit on your lap. And sometimes she just likes to be left alone. Chanel always likes company, she is always near and just likes to watch you. We added a photo of how she was when she came in four years ago, and of how stylish she is now. (and maybe a bit judgy, but with a name like that we can't blame her). Chanel does well with other cats because she has never known any other life but a shelter life. She deserves the best home as she is just the sweetest girl and it is really about time she can shine like the diamond she is.

Story / Photo: Bo Attevelt



**Chanel**

## Animal Shelter Bonaire is looking for new board members

Animal Shelter Bonaire is seeking new board members. Each year, the organization cares for hundreds of dogs and cats on Bonaire, and the demand for help continues to grow. To ensure this important work can continue in a sustainable and professional way, the board is being expanded.

Animal Shelter Bonaire consists of several connected initiatives that together form one organization. The animal shelter itself, the secondhand store Pakus di Pruga, and the Animal Shelter Bonaire Cruise Market stand all support the same mission. This combina-

tion allows the organization to provide hands on animal care while also generating essential funding to keep operations running.

Every day, a small and dedicated team of staff works to provide shelter, medical care, sterilization and adoption support for dogs and cats in need. In addition, the organization relies heavily on volunteers. The board itself is also made up entirely of volunteers who contribute their time and expertise alongside their own professional commitments.

To continue building a strong and future

proof organization, Animal Shelter Bonaire is looking for board members with a big heart for animals. The board welcomes people who enjoy thinking strategically and want to actively contribute their skills and experience. Relevant areas include communication, event organization, fundraising, website and social media, proposal and grant writing, and facilities management.

The board meets once a month. The role is flexible and offers the opportunity to make a direct and meaningful impact on the lives of dogs and cats on Bonaire.

More information about the board member role can be found at <https://www.animalshelterbonaire.com/opportunities/board-member/>

### About Animal Shelter Bonaire

*Animal Shelter Bonaire is a non-profit organization dedicated to the welfare of dogs and cats on Bonaire through shelter, medical care, sterilization, adoption and sustainable fundraising initiatives.*

## Animal Shelter Bonaire

### Looking Back on 2025: Our Highlights

2025 was a truly special year for our animal shelter. The year with the highest number of adoptions ever! We are proud to share our highlights:

#### Adoptions

In 2025, 265 animals found a loving forever home, 64 more than last year. We are incredibly happy that so many animals found their forever homes this past year, and we hope even more will do so in the year ahead.

#### Animals Brought In

A total of 324 animals were taken in, including 195 dogs and 129 cats. Although slightly fewer than last year, this number remains far too high. We urge people to think carefully before getting a pet and to have their animals sterilized to prevent unwanted litters from ending up at the shelter.

#### Free sterilization Program

In 2025, through our sterilization Program, we helped 663 dogs and cats. All costs were fully covered by our own funds, totaling \$25,818. While this represents a significant investment, sterilization remains the most effective way to prevent future animal suffering. It is encouraging to see how many people are

finding and using this program.

We would like to sincerely thank veterinarians Fulco de Vries and Flamingo Island Veterinary Center for their valued cooperation and dedication to our Program.

In 2026, we are committed to continuing and expanding this program, with the goal of even more sterilizations. For this, we hope to receive additional support, including from OLB, as sterilization remains the foundation of sustainable animal welfare on Bonaire.

#### Pakus di Pruga & Cruise Market Booth

Our second-hand shop, Pakus di Pruga, and our booth at the cruise market have also generated significant income this year. Both initiatives are run entirely by volunteers, and we want to thank everyone involved for their time, energy, and dedication, without them, this would not be possible.

#### Charity Event at Bina

The charity event at Bina was a huge success, raising \$22,325. We are so grateful for everyone who donated and for the many businesses that contributed services and products to support our cause.



#### Markets

At the animal shelter, we held two markets, our August Market and the Christmas Market, raising a total of \$2,701. The success encourages us to continue: the next market is already planned for March 29, 2026 (Easter Market), with more to follow. These events bring people together and strengthen our sense of community.

#### Meant to be Bonaire

Thanks to the generous support of Meant To Be Bonaire, we now have enough kennels to safely transport adopted cats and dogs to the Netherlands, a major step forward for 2026.

#### Stichting DierenLot

Once again we received incredible support from Stichting Dierenlot this year, including three shipments of food and essential supplies, which greatly helped Animal Shelter Bonaire.

Together, we continue working toward a better future for animal welfare on Bonaire, with more adoptions and even more sterilizations. Thank you everyone for all the support in 2025, we hope to count on you in 2026!

#### A Special Thanks to All Volunteers

Finally, we want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our volunteers and employees. Your dedication, hard work, and care make everything we do possible. From running the shelter and programs to organizing events and markets. We could not achieve any of this without you.

**On to 2026!**

Story / Photo: Marissa Lamers

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**ELECTRICITY RATES AS OF JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup> 2026**



**Connections up till 3\*200 Ampere or up till 76.10 kVA**

CATEGORY	CONNECTION CAPACITY	AMOUNT kVA (1) COMPUTING CAPACITY	FIXED USAGE RATE USD/MONTH (2)			VARIABLE USAGE RATE USD/kWh (3)		
			Gross (7)	Discount (4)	Net	Gross (7)	Discount (4)	Net
<b>Post-paid</b>	1*25 Ampere	3.10	51.33	3.53	<b>47.80</b>	0.3868	-	<b>0.3868</b>
	3*25 Ampere	4.40	72.85	25.05	<b>47.80</b>	0.3868	-	<b>0.3868</b>
	3*35 Ampere	4.40	72.85	25.05	<b>47.80</b>	0.3868	-	<b>0.3868</b>
	3*50 Ampere	11.40	188.75	64.92	<b>123.83</b>	0.3868	-	<b>0.3868</b>
	3*63 Ampere	19.20	317.90	55.23	<b>262.67</b>	0.3868	-	<b>0.3868</b>
	3*80 Ampere	30.40	503.34	87.44	<b>415.90</b>	0.3868	-	<b>0.3868</b>
	3*100 Ampere	38.10	630.82	78.03	<b>552.79</b>	0.3868	-	<b>0.3868</b>
	3*125 Ampere	47.60	788.12	58.10	<b>730.02</b>	0.3868	-	<b>0.3868</b>
	3*160 Ampere	60.90	1,008.33	23.91	<b>984.42</b>	0.3868	-	<b>0.3868</b>
	3*200 Ampere	76.10	1,259.99	29.87	<b>1,230.12</b>	0.3868	-	<b>0.3868</b>
	3*80 Ampere (380 Volt)	52.50	869.25	20.61	<b>848.64</b>	0.3868	-	<b>0.3868</b>
	3*100 Ampere (380 Volt)	65.70	1,087.80	25.79	<b>1,062.01</b>	0.3868	-	<b>0.3868</b>
<b>Pre-paid (Pagabon) (5)</b>	n/a	n/a	n.a	n.a	<b>n.a</b>	0.7365	0.1303	<b>0.6062</b>

**Explanation:**

- 1) For the categories 1\*25 Ampere to 3\*63 Ampere, fixed values have been determined for the calculation of the fixed usage fee. The standard values for 3\*25 and 3\*35 Ampere are aligned. For the categories 3\*80 Ampere and higher, the values are calculated on the basis of the formula: ( Ampere \* 220 Volt \* 1.73 ) / 1,000 (and thus equal to the technical capacity);
- 2) The level of the fixed usage rate per month depends on the size of the connection capacity and is charged per connection. This tariff is intended to cover the costs for the network;
- 3) The variable rate is charged for the actual consumption (kWh);
- 4) The discount is equal to the tariff subsidy by the Ministry of Climate and Green Growth;
- 5) The Pagabon rate is the rate for electricity per kWh supplied on a pre-paid basis and which includes the costs for transport (the fixed usage rate) and the production of electricity (the variable usage rate). are discounted into one variable rate. For new applications from April 1st, 2018, Pagabon is possible for connections up to 3\*35 Ampere;
- 6) For example connection 3 \* 500 Ampere at 220 Volt: (500 \* 220 \* 1.73) / 1000 = 190.30 kVA;
- 7) The gross rates are equal to the maximum rates as determined by the Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM);
- 8) The basic rate applies to connections with a maximum length of 25 meters. A contribution based on pre-calculated project costs applies for additional lengths > 25 meters.

**Connections Larger than 3\*200 Ampere or kVA > 76.10**

CATEGORY	CONNECTION CAPACITY	AMOUNT kVA (1)	FIXED USAGE RATE USD/MONTH PER kVA (2)			VARIABLE USAGE RATE USD/kWh (3)		
			Gross (7)	Discount (4)	Net	Gross (7)	Discount (4)	Net
<b>Post-paid</b>	> 3*200 Ampere	According to formula (^)	16.56	-	<b>16.56</b>	0.3868	-	<b>0.3868</b>

(^ ) ( Ampere \* Voltage \* 1.73 ) / 1.000 = amount kVA (6)

**Connection Rates**

CATEGORY	CONNECTION CAPACITY	AMOUNT	RATE PER STANDARD CONNECTION (8)	RATE PER RECONNECTION
	t/m 3*35 Ampere	t/m 14 kVA	<b>1,853.15</b>	<b>40.00</b>

The above mentioned rates are visible on the invoices from the consumption period with a start date for consumption in January 2026. For customers based on Pagabon, the new rates are immediately visible from January 1, 2026.



## DRINKING WATER RATES AS OF JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup> 2026



CATEGORY	CONNECTION CAPACITY	VAST FIXED USAGE RATE (1) USD PER MONTH			VARIABLE USAGE RATE (2) USD PER M <sup>3</sup>		
		Gross rate (5)	Discount (3)	Net rate	Gross rate (5)	Discount (3)	Net rate
<b>Per connection</b>	1/2"	55.61	44.01	<b>11.60</b>	4.475	-	<b>4.475</b>
	3/4"	125.12	-	<b>125.12</b>	4.475	-	<b>4.475</b>
	1"	222.43	-	<b>222.43</b>	4.475	-	<b>4.475</b>
	1 1/4"	347.55	-	<b>347.55</b>	4.475	-	<b>4.475</b>
	2"	889.74	-	<b>889.74</b>	4.475	-	<b>4.475</b>
	4"	3,558.95	-	<b>3,558.95</b>	4.475	-	<b>4.475</b>
<b>Per water truck (4)</b>	na	na	na	<b>na</b>	12.863	7.486	<b>5.377</b>

### CONNECTION RATES

CATEGORY	CONNECTION CAPACITY	RATE PER STANDARD CONNECTION (USD) (6)	RATE PER RECONNECTION (USD)
<b>Per connection</b>	1/2"	<b>1,261.69</b>	<b>40.00</b>

**Explanation:**

- 1) The height of the fixed usage rate per month depends on the volume of the connection capacity (diameter of the connection line) and will be charged per connection. This rate is intended to cover the costs for the network;
- 2) The variable usage rate will be charged for the actual use (m<sup>3</sup>);
- 3) The discount is equal to the tariff subsidy by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management (I&W). Subsidies can only be granted on the basis of the law to reduce the fixed rate of use and to reduce the rate for delivery with the water truck;
- 4) The rate per water truck concerns the rate for drinking water per m<sup>3</sup> that will be delivered by truck and in which the costs for transportation and drinking water are discounted. This delivery has to be paid up front;
- 5) The gross rates are equal to the maximum rates set by the Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM);
- 6) The basic rate applies to connections with a maximum length of 25 meters. For excess length > 25 meters, a contribution based on pre-calculated project costs applies.

The above mentioned rates are visible on the invoices with a start date for consumption in January 2026. For the water truck customers, the new rates are immediately visible from January 1<sup>st</sup> 2026.



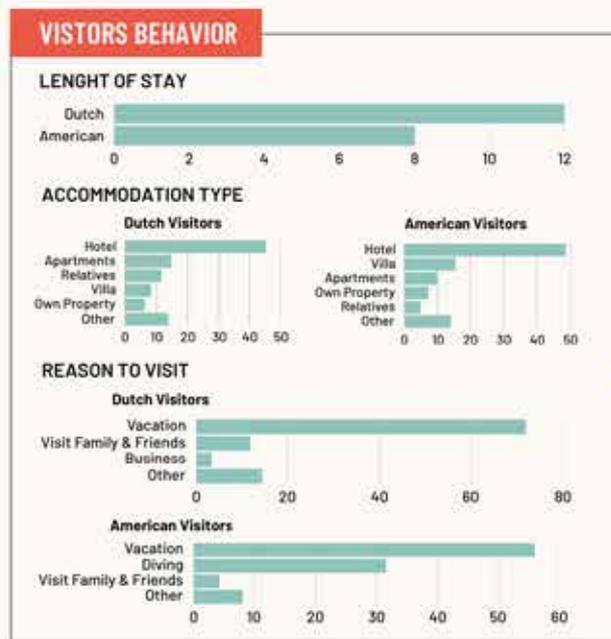
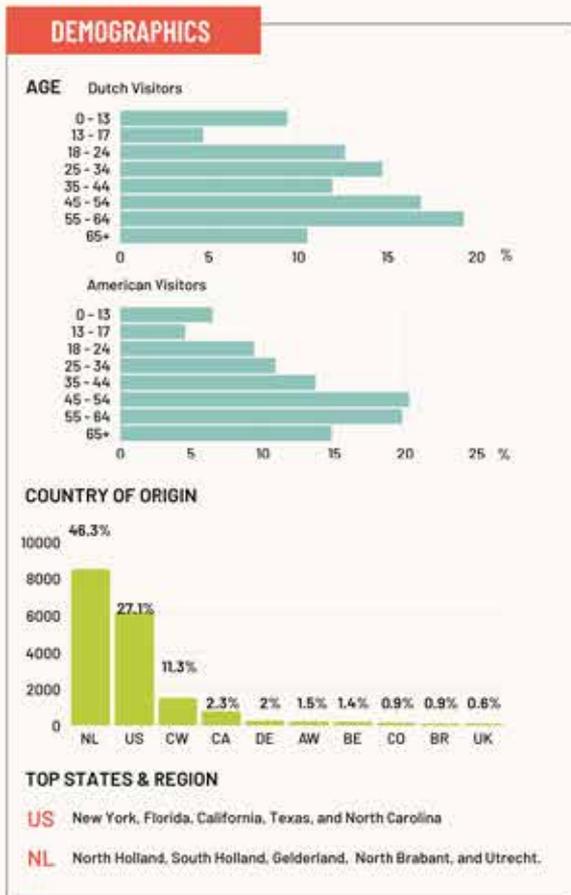


## FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Winter 2025/2026  
starting October 1st

DESTINATION	AIRLINE	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	DETAILS
NEW YORK JFK	jetBlue						✓		Last flight on January 3, 2026
MIAMI	American Airlines	✓		✓		✓	✓*		DAILY Dec. 17, 2025 - Jan. 5, 2026 *Saturdays 2 daily flights (seasonal)
ATLANTA	DELTA			✓*			✓	✓*	*Starting Dec. 20th, seasonal flights
NEW YORK NEWARK	UNITED						✓		Starting Nov. 1st
HOUSTON	UNITED							✓	Arrival on Saturdays
TORONTO	WESTJET			✓					Starting Dec. 9th - Arrivals on Tue.
AMSTERDAM	KLM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓*	✓	✓*	*Fri. & Sun. 2 daily flights - Dec.19, 2025 - Mar. 15 2026
AMSTERDAM	TUI	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		Wed   Thu   Fri direct from AMS
AMSTERDAM	corendon.		✓*					✓	*Starting Oct. 14th - till Oct. 8 on Wednesdays
SANTO DOMINGO SDQ	SKYhigh Dominicana					✓			
CURACAO   SINT MAARTEN	WINAIR	✓		✓		✓			Arrivals on Sun   Tue   Thu
CURACAO   ARUBA	DIVIDIVI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
CURACAO   ARUBA	ZAir	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Please note this schedule is subject to change without prior notice.



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### DECEMBER 2025



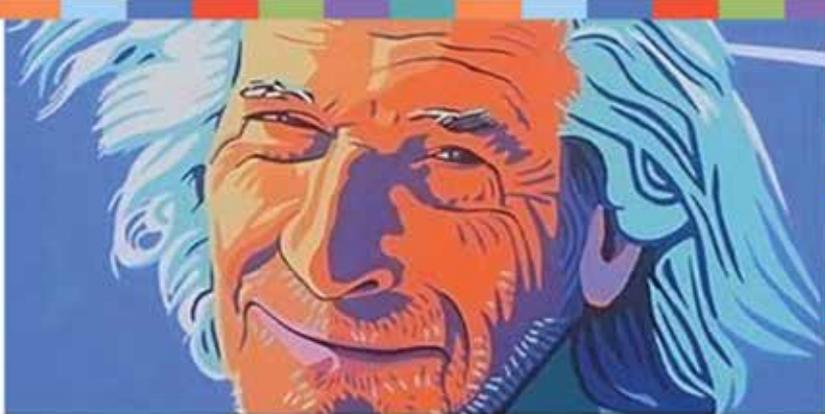
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These data are preliminary figures for the month of December 2025.

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## The Artists

- .....
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- Eric Cremers
- Wilco Harbers
- Dillon Rannou
- Jozee Tjoa
- Sylvia Ayoka
- Delno Tromp
- Lize van de Ven
- Ghislaine Monte
- Leslie Tucker
- Ilan Originals
- Zajamara
- Debora Davidson Descelles
- .....