

# THE COMMISSION NEWSLETTER

*Conserve nature, preserve life*



## TOP NEWS OF THE MONTH

### UPGRADES ON THE CARDS FOR EASTERN FACILITY

**THE KING GEORGE V Memorial Park** has been earmarked for further upgrades, following minor repairs that were recently completed on the eastern facility's Gazebo.

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**THE AMAZING ART of Bonsai** was one of the captivating displays at the recent Plant Nursery and Garden Centre Extravaganza. The inaugural event was held at the National Conservation Commission on Saturday, November 23rd, 2024.

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### GARDEN CENTRE HOSTS FIRST EXTRAVAGANZA

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THE NCC’S FACILITIES  
CONTACT INFORMATION

Codrington House’s PBX	536-0600
NCC’s Garden Centre	536-0641
Bath Facility	572-0691
Bathsheba Facility	536-0717
Batts Rock Facility	536-0690
Brandon’s Facility	536-0691
Browne’s Beach Facility	536-0692
Enterprise Beach Facility	536-0694
Farley Hill Park	536-0699
Folkestone Marine Park	536-0654
Hastings Facility	536-0701
King George V Memorial Park	536-0703
Oistins Bay Garden	536-0704
Pebbles Facility	536-0705
Queen’s Park	536-0706
Rockley Facility	536-0708
Silver Sands Facility	536-0709
Three Houses Park	572-0437
Worthing Facility	536-0711

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# GM'S MESSAGE

**THE DYNAMIC AND multifaceted nature of the National Conservation Commission (NCC) is a testament to pride and industry.**

This extraordinary institution embodies the pride and industrious spirit of our nation as its staff members play a crucial role in the preservation and enhancement of Barbados's natural and recreational spaces.

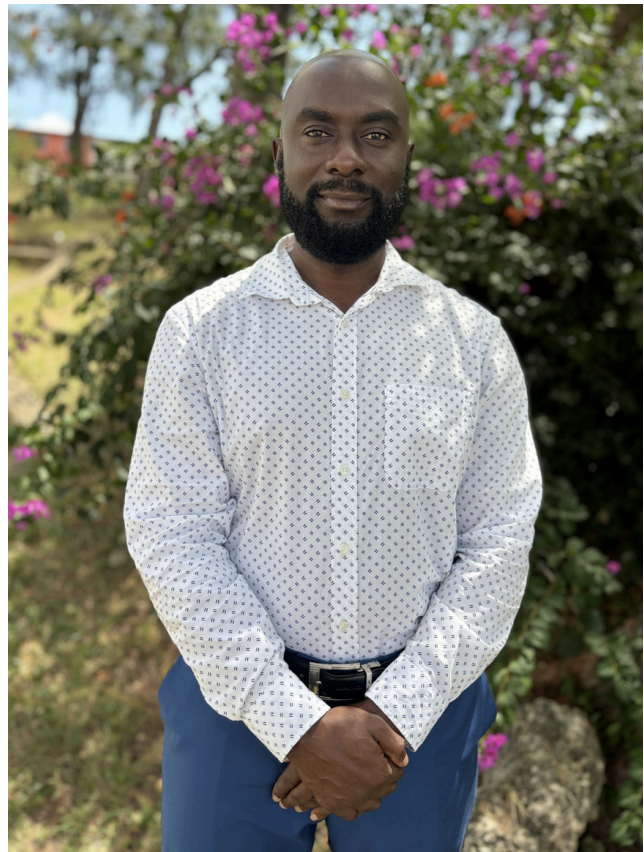
By focusing on efficient infrastructure maintenance in public parks, the NCC ensures that every Barbadian has a safe and welcoming environment to enjoy. The significance of maintaining these spaces cannot be understated, as they serve as essential outlets for relaxation, recreation, and socialization for both residents and visitors alike.

In recent years, the maintenance of infrastructure in public parks has become increasingly important.

These areas are not merely green spaces; they are vital components of our community's health and well-being.

Regular maintenance — such as clearing pathways, repairing playground equipment, and ensuring cleanliness — allows families to enjoy their time outdoors without the worry.

Moreover, well-maintained parks attract tourists and promote physical activities, contributing to a healthier lifestyle. Therefore, the NCC's commitment to maintenance is paramount in creating environments that foster community engagement and recreational opportunities. One cannot overlook the unwavering dedication of employees who bring the NCC's vision to life.



**Mr. Ryan Als**  
**Acting General Manager**

## **National Conservation Commission**

Their hard work is evident in the beautifully landscaped areas that exhibit a careful blend of aesthetic appeal and ecological conservation.

These talented individuals possess a rich tapestry of skills that contribute positively to the preservation of our environment, often going above and beyond to nurture and maintain Barbados's natural beauty.

They ensure that our parks are not only enjoyable playgrounds but also vibrant habitats for local flora and fauna.

These efforts reflect a deep-seated pride for the land and a commitment to creating spaces that every Barbadian can cherish.

The pride in their work stems from a shared mission: to enhance and preserve the natural environment while providing beautiful spaces for communal enjoyment.



# Upgrades on the cards for eastern facility



***Minor repairs were completed on the King George V Memorial Park's Gazebo.***

**THE KING GEORGE V Memorial Park has been earmarked for further enhancement following minor repairs that were recently completed on the eastern facility's Gazebo.**

Sections of the structure's handrails and railings were replaced and subsequently painted, as part of the work executed on the Gazebo.

Acting General Manager of the National Conservation Commission (NCC), Ryan Als, outlined that the upgrade plans for the picturesque site also include the enhancement of the grounds, gardens and exercise area, while the floor of the Park's house will be repaired.

The facility's electrical infrastructure will also receive a boost with the installation of an electrical back-up storage unit.

Als believes this is necessary to address the wider issue of the fluctuating power supply at this facility - as well as others across the island.

He further alluded to the critical need for the NCC's electrical infrastructure to be more resilient, particularly during adverse weather.

With the recent trend of annual forecasts predicting active hurricane seasons and the potential for the development of more weather systems, Als noted that these factors have emphasized the need for the NCC's management to act with alacrity on this project.

The Commission's Electrical and Plumbing Division will execute the installation of the electrical back-up storage units at the select NCC facilities across the island.

Staff of the Building and Works Department will conduct the other aspects of the refurbishment at this eastern facility.



## Gazebo's handrails and railings highlights



The eastern facility's Gazebo will undergo further enhancement in 2025.



A closer view of the Gazebo's railings that were recently repaired.



## Garden Centre's Extravaganza was insightful



***Nolan Corbin's animated delivery enriched the Bonsai display for the patrons.***

**THE AMAZING ART of Bonsai was one of the captivating displays at the recent Plant Nursery and Garden Centre Extravaganza.**

The inaugural event, which was held at the National Conservation Commission (NCC) on Saturday, November 23rd, brought plant lovers together for an action-packed day of workshops, displays, demonstrations and plant sales.

Staff of the Plant Tissue Culture Laboratory, which includes Qusheeka Phillips and Sharon Williams, led the event's proceedings with a tissue culture demonstration.

The valuable insight provided by team prompted one participant to record pertinent information in her notepad. She also seized the opportunity to acquire greater insight during the

question and answer segment.

Despite intermittent showers of blessings, participants braved the wet conditions to catch a glimpse of Nolan Corbin's Bonsai display.

His simplification of the art of Bonsai, which is said to have originated from the culture of creating miniature natural landscapes by arranging soil, stones, moss, and plants on a tray, was well received.

Bonsai, which is often adopted as a hobby, requires patience, dedication, and attention to detail.

Caring for a bonsai tree involves regular watering, fertilizing, and pruning to maintain the desired shape and size.

Bonsai enthusiasts also enjoy creating features to enhance their tree's beauty.

Corbin briefly explained the basic styles of Bonsai before demonstrating how to prune a plant with a waterfall feature.

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# Plant propagation workshop was intriguing

The participants were appreciative of his engaging presentation, which also included some of the trees that are ideal for use such as pomegranate, tamarind, ficus and bougainvillea.

The Plant Propagation Workshop, which was facilitated by Jeff Chandler, was another highlight of the event.

Participants listened attentively to numerous horticultural techniques including grafting, budding and air-layering.

Grafting and air-layering are cloning techniques that entail the use of tree stems, shrubs or herbaceous perennials, to ensure offspring plants are genetically identical to parent plants.

In grafting, the rootstock and scion are bonded (grafted) together and grow together to form a single plant.

Air layering involves wounding a plant stem and wrapping it in a damp rooting medium until new roots form.

While budding is the attachment of a scion that has been removed from a plant, to a rootstock which is cut to receive the bud. After a comprehensive step-by-step illustration by Chandler, a few participants accepted his challenge to demonstrate the knowledge they acquired during the workshop.

Individually, they skilfully executed the steps and Chandler provided with constructive feedback on completion.

Highlights of the Extravaganza were broadcasted live on The Beat 104.1 FM.

The next Extravaganza - which will be announced - promises to be even bigger and better and the NCC's management has extended an invitation to all and sundry.



***Acting Special Projects Officer, Carlos Dottin, sharing a light moment with Starcom Network's Broadcaster, Carol Toppin, during the outside broadcast.***



# EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

## Plant Nursery and Garden Centre Extravaganza



The Plant Tissue Culture Laboratory's team were on hand for the event.



One of the participants ensured that she recorded the information.



# EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

## Plant Nursery and Garden Centre Extravaganza



Sharon Williams thoroughly explained the tissue culture process.



Boston fern plant tissues were on display as part of the demonstration.



# EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

## Plant Nursery and Garden Centre Extravaganza



**Nolan Corbin left no branch nor leaf untouched during the Bonsai display.**



**The base of the bonsai was also examined as part of his presentation.**



# EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

## Plant Nursery and Garden Centre Extravaganza



One of the Bonsai plants utilized during the amazing art demonstration.



This aspect of the segment required the participants' undivided attention.



# EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

## Plant Nursery and Garden Centre Extravaganza



This participant accepted Jeff Chandler's challenge to air layer this plant.



He removed a piece of the bark and applied a hormone rooted compound.



# EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

## Plant Nursery and Garden Centre Extravaganza



A moist rooting medium was applied to the section of the plant.



The final step was securing the rooting medium with aluminium foil.



# EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

## Plant Nursery and Garden Centre Extravaganza



**Jeff Chandler was the Facilitator of the Plant Propagation Workshop.**



**Chandler's workshop also featured the correct method of repotting plants.**



# EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

## Plant Nursery and Garden Centre Extravaganza



Donna Bridgeman (right) was the lucky winner of the Receipt Raffle.



Bridgeman's prizes included a Garden Basket and a Peace Lily Plant.



# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

## Meet the NCC's Board Member, Carla Daniel



***Carla Daniel is also the Director of the Barbados Sea Turtle Project.***

**ANSWERING THE BARBADOS Sea Turtle Project's (BSTP) call for volunteers 20 years ago led to Carla Daniel's sense of justice being sparked for sea turtle conservation.**

The then undergraduate student at the University of the West Indies (UWI) Cave Hill Campus saw the post on the notice board in the Biology Department and was intrigued by the excitement it generated among her friends.

Daniel opted to apply despite her limited knowledge of the critically endangered species - the leatherback and hawksbill sea turtles.

While she described her first season working with the sea turtles as 'very unexpected', Daniel quickly discovered that they are 'extremely interesting'.

"I thought that the threats that they are facing on the island when they come here to nest was even more interesting. A sea turtle was exotic compared to lizards and other types of wildlife that I was used to and then to find out that they were facing all of these problems and they were dying on the beaches and the roads at nights, I think that really sparked my sense of justice," she averred.

Armed with this knowledge, the BSTP's Director seized the opportunity to make 'a tangible difference'.

"I was going onto the beach and also collecting data, which is important, but in addition to that, I was doing conservation action by saving these animals, assisting them with navigation if they appear lost or to be going in the

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## Twenty rewarding years of sea turtle conservation

wrong direction, rescuing and releasing them... that is an immediate form of gratification,” Daniel asserted. The sea turtle conservationist’s work with the ancient mariners has also shaped her life, as she previously had ‘no concrete plans’ in terms of a career choice that aligned with her Ecology and Biology studies. “When I was volunteering, I started to see the needs and tried to fill them. Over time, it expanded and became a job...

one that I wasn’t really expecting. I got to a point where I felt so involved and had already invested so much personal time, energy and sacrifice that I felt as though I couldn’t leave at that point,” she said. While Daniel is of the view that no one is irreplaceable, her commitment to the sea turtles is unwavering.

“I have worked on some other things here and there like being an Ecology Technician for a few years at UWI, I did go on to do my Master’s in birds but the sea turtle project was still part of my focus throughout all of that. Then I settled into the role at BSTP full time,” she added.

And on the cusp of her 20th anniversary with the BSTP, Daniel still finds the sea turtle rescue operations to be ‘as interesting and exciting’ as her first season.

“I really love the opportunity to make a difference in this world, especially as over those 20 years, our prognosis has just gotten grimmer and grimmer for wildlife as you are hearing more about



***Daniel’s volunteerism has led to an adventurous and fulfilling career in sea turtle conservation.***

climate change,” she disclosed.

While Daniel alluded to its impact on wildlife and biodiversity as being ‘stark’, she is optimistic that the species will continue to receive critical support and equally hopeful about their ability to adapt to the changes ‘a bit better’.

The sea turtles’ perseverance and resilience are admirable traits that contributes to Daniel’s optimism and have even served as motivation throughout her dynamic journey.

“They are very dedicated. Adult females will attempt to dig an egg chamber and will hit an obstruction, whether it is roots, buried boulders or a compact area, and they will move on, dig again and repeat. We have had turtles that dug over 20 holes, just desperately trying to find a good spot to lay their eggs. Their dedication to this biological imperative, which is to reproduce, is extremely admirable,” she disclosed.

Despite enduring severe and even life-threatening injuries, Daniel alluded to

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## Daniel's adult life has evolved around sea turtles

their remarkable ability to survive these circumstances.

"I saw a turtle in Fitts Village one time that was struck by a car, half of it was crushed, there were eggs in the road and intestines, and this turtle was still dragging itself across the road to get back to the beach. They just try to continue living in spite of what happens to them. And sometimes this is to their detriment because there are just some things that they are not able to heal from so the quality of life after is tough," she explained.

Daniel believes everyone can benefit from the invaluable lessons she has learned from the majestic creatures.

"They have taught me to persevere even when you fail the first time or first couple of times because there is still a chance of success. Overall, to mentally and spiritually have that attitude of not giving up when horrible things happen is very important," she stressed.

Striking a balance has also been important for Daniel, which she noted is 'hard when your job does not have boundaries'.

"My adult life has evolved around this concept of always being available for the sea turtles which is why I guess people can call me at any time and it is a habit I have had to break as well because I also expect people to always be working at any time and any hour. Then I recognized, this is definitely not the case, so I had to set some firm boundaries



***The sea turtles' perseverance and resilience have inspired and motivated Daniel.***

about the times I call people," she averred.

And while sea turtle conservation requires a significant amount of sacrifice, Daniel believes it has contributed to her development of responsibility.

"There is this old song and the lyrics include 'if not you then who' and this is always something that I think about... If you don't do it then who else do you expect should be willing to do it. So, I always see myself as the first stop, not something to pass onto others... similar to leading by example," she affirmed. This perspective has been more critical with the evolution of Daniel's role with the BSTP - starting as a volunteer and becoming the Project's Director.

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## Expansion of biodiversity portfolio in future plans



***Daniel is passionate about adequate beach management and public access.***

“I spend less time on the beach now but there are still emergencies and rescues. Actually, there is even more work now that is required but in spite of all of it, I really do not have any regrets. If I had to do it all over again, there are probably some things I would change, although I can’t think of any, but I am not unhappy with how my life has evolved. It is a role that is needed so somebody has to do it,” she explained.

As Daniel looks towards the future ebulliently, she is keen on expanding her biodiversity portfolio.

“In 2022, the BSTP registered a charity called Wild Isle Trust and this [Trust] now manages the BSTP programme. The idea behind Wild Isle Trust is that we have had great success with the BSTP and the sea turtle conservation programme, but the sea turtles aren’t the only species on the island in need of assistance,”

“The idea is that the Trust will eventually expand to other programmes and do other projects in addition to sea turtles and kind of fill some of the vacant niches available in species and habitat conservation on the island. I am really excited about that because I am generally interested in wildlife and nature,” she posited.

Daniel believes that the protection of the sea turtle population is ‘really important’. “Protecting the intrinsic character of our island, which is one that is lush and green, is also very important. There are so many roles that our ecosystem plays in the quality of life in Barbados, not just the aesthetics,” the avid reader stated.

While she acknowledges that all of her loves are connected to the environment, Daniel is also keen on making further contributions that will positively impact Barbados’ green and blue economy.



# CONSERVATION CHRONICLES

## Ten ways you can support sea turtle conservation

These tips were prepared in collaboration with the Barbados Sea Turtle Project.



### Join the Barbados Sea Turtle Project

The Barbados Sea Turtle Project (BSTP) accepts volunteers and interns. Application forms are available from February 1st and the two in-take periods are May and August. Volunteering with the BSTP is one of the ideal ways to give back to Barbados and to help conserve the sea turtle population.

### Donate to the Barbados Sea Turtle Project

The BSTP welcomes donations to support its sea turtle conservation activities on the ground. Details of the process can be found on the Project's social media platforms.

Facebook: Barbados Sea Turtle Project

Instagram: @barbadosseaturtle



### Properly Dispose of Litter

Members of the public are encouraged to ensure that all of trash generated during their beach visits are fully removed from the beach or placed in a designated garbage receptacle.

### No bonfires or open flames on beaches

Bonfires cook/damage sea turtles' eggs and baby turtles. The burning of palettes on the beaches is also discouraged as this method causes staples, screws and nails to remain in the sand. These materials can be hazardous to humans and sea turtles.



### Avoid driving on beaches

Most beaches have demarcated parking areas. In the absence of such, persons should avoid driving and parking on the sand, as sea turtle nests and baby sea turtles are often in the sand.

### *Did you know?*

As of 1998, the Government of Barbados enacted a total moratorium on all sea turtle harvesting. It is illegal to catch any species of sea turtle, or possess any turtle product (i.e. meat, shell, eggs) in Barbados. Penalties include fines up to \$50,000.00 Barbados dollars and/or two years in jail.



# CONSERVATION CHRONICLES

## Ten ways you can support sea turtle conservation

These tips were prepared in collaboration with the Barbados Sea Turtle Project.



### Call the Barbados Sea Turtle Project's Hotline

The BSTP has a 24-hour hotline (230-0142) and members of the public are encouraged to call the Project's team to execute rescue efforts or to keep them abreast of their sea turtles observations/concerns. Your call can make a huge difference.

### Flatten sandcastles before leaving the beach

Parents and guardians are encouraged to ensure that their child/children/wards flatten their sandcastles before they leave the beach. This is to prevent baby sea turtles from becoming trapped in them or the adult sea turtles flipping over them while navigating the beach.



### Fill holes dug before leaving the beach

If holes are dug during your beach visit, please ensure that they are refilled before you leave. This is to prevent baby sea turtles from becoming trapped within the holes. Holes should also be dug below the high water mark and not at the back of the beach, as sea turtles nest may be within this vicinity.

### Remove dog poop from the beach

Dog poop contains bacteria that can be harmful to humans. This bacteria causes severe itching when it comes into contact with skin. Please scoop your dog's poop from the beach and properly dispose of it.



### Install sea turtle friendly lights

If you're the owner of a beachfront property, please consider installing sea turtle friendly lights. Lights are one of the biggest threats to sea turtle hatchlings and adults. They can cause disorientation and lead the sea turtles in land, which often results in severe difficulty or death.

### *Did you know?*

Most hawksbill turtles in Barbados nest during the peak season between mid-May through mid to late October. However, nesting has been documented in every month of the year. The nesting season for leatherback turtles in Barbados is between February and July.



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## National Conservation Commission