

# Agave snout Weevil - *Scyphophorus acupunctatus*

- Most destructive pest of *Agave* in the World
- Destroys up to 70% of commercial crops, costing millions of dollars in damage to global agro-industries including tequila, mezcal, perfume, henequen, nardo, pulque, and fibre manufacturing
- Native to Mexico and southern USA; spread widely wherever *Agave* are grown
- Weevil introduced to BVI in about 1990.
- *Agave missionum* endemic to the Puerto Rican Bank and a key stone species
- Plant is threatened throughout BVI



# Survey for *Agave missionum* & Agave snout weevil



- I joined the VI National Trust and Kew Gardens in 2017 to survey the plant and beetle in Anegada, Tortola and Prickly Pear Island and Great Tobago

# *Agave missionum*

The great majority of the agaves have been killed by the weevil before they can flower - no recruitment and plants face extirpation



# Impact

- Catastrophic decline in numbers (90%) of Agave plants during the last decade
- Potential impact to biodiversity
- Tradition of Agave 'Christmas trees' lost



- Anegada iguana *Cyclura pinguis*
- Critically Endangered



# Invasive Species having an Environmental Impact

- Lobate Lac Scale (*Paratachardina pseudolobata*) - Polyphagous pest, 300+ hosts, from Asia found on critically endangered endemic plants
- Croton scale (*Phalacrocooccus howertoni*) - Polyphagous pest from Neotropical region. Extremely polyphagous, kills susceptible species
- Cactus moth (*Cactoblastis cactorum*)

