GLOBAL INVASIVE SPECIES DATABASE

FULL ACCOUNT FOR: ***Iguana iguana***

Iguana iguana **System:** Terrestrial

Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family
Animalia	Chordata	Reptilia	Squamata	Iguanidae

Common name

gallina de palo (Spanish), iguane vert (French), iguane commun (French), common iguana (English), green iguana (English), iguana verde (Spanish), gr&#65533;n leguan (Swedish)

Synonym

Lacerta Igvana , Linnaeus 1758: 206
Iguana minima , Laurenti 1768
Iguana tuberculata , Laurenti 1768
Iguana coerulea , Daudin 1802
Iguana vulgaris , Link 1806
Iguana sapidissima , Merrem 1820
Iguana sapidissima , Wied 1824
Iguana squamosa , Spix 1825
Iguana viridis , Spix 1825
Iguana coerulea , Spix (*non* Daudin) 1825
Iguana emarginata , Spix 1825
Iguana lophryoides , Spix 1825
Prionodus iguana , Wagler 1828
Hypsilophus tuberculatus , Wagler 1830
Iguana tuberculata , Dumeril & Bibron 1837: 203
Hypsilophus tuberculatus , Fitzinger 1843
Iguana Hernandessi , JAN 1857 (*nomen nudum fide* Smith & Taylor 1950)
Iguana tuberculata , Boulenger 1885: 189
Iguana tuberculata , Gunther 1885: 56
Iguana tuberculata , Cope 1886: 270
Iguana iguana , Conant & Collins 1991: 95
Iguana iguana , Schwartz & Henderson 1991: 419
Iguana iguana , Liner 1994

Similar species

Summary

The green iguana (Iguana iguana) is native to tropical parts of Latin America and grows to around 1.5m in length and 4 to 5kgs in weight. It is associated with warm coastal regions, low elevations and waterways, especially where trees extend over water. It inhabits mangrove forests and saltwater habitats, but requires access to freshwater. Popular as pets throughout America and Europe, green iguana owners often do not realise the lizard's space requirements and release them into urban areas when they grow too big. I. iguana is reported as an exotic pest in Puerto Rico. It also occurs in high concentrations in urban areas of southern Florida. It consumes and defecates the fruits of invasive plants, thereby acting as a potential dispersal agent. It has been cited as the source of a number of laboratory-confirmed cases of human salmonellosis.

view this species on IUCN Red List

Species Description
Green iguana grow to around 1.5m in length and 4 to 5kgs in weight (Engeman *et al*. 2005).

Notes
In Florida the green iguana is known to be eaten by the domestic dog *Canis familiaris* (Meshaka *et al*. 2004); the yellow-crowned night-heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*) (Engeman et al 2005); the Florida burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia floridana* a species of 'Special Concern') (McKie *et al*. 2005) and the introduced raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) which eats juveniles, attacks adults and preys on nests (Smith *et al*. 2006).

Lifecycle Stages
On Key Biscayne, (Florida, USA) green iguana nest in sandy areas, often with multiple females utilising a single small area. Most hatchlings appear during July and August (Townsend *et al*. 2003).

Uses
Green iguanas make popular pets throughout America and Europe. They are known for their docile, attractive and interesting traits (Meshaka *et al*. 2004).
Throughout Central America, iguanid lizards (*I. iguana* and *Ctenosaura similis*) are captured by professional lizard hunters and sold at local markets (Fitch *et al*. 1982, in Klemens and Thorbjarnarson 1995). There is even a significant trade of lizards across borders from the Honduras and Guatemala to El Salvador. Iguanas and their eggs are used both as food and for medicinal purposes, depending on the region. In some cultures iguana eggs are believed to be aphrodisiacs (Werner 1991, in Klemens and Thorbjarnarson 1995). The green iguana has been managed on a sustained-yield basis in Panama (one of the few instances of a successful sustainable project for reptiles). The iguana's forested habitat is being protected and it provides a dependable, sustainable source of protein for rural inhabitants (Werner 1991, in Klemens and Thorbjarnarson 1995).

Habitat Description
Iguana iguana are known to show a preference for disturbed sites near standing water. In Florida they are associated with warm coastal regions free of frost. They are often found associated with waterways, such as bays, canals, ponds and ditches, and especially areas where trees extend over water. They also inhabit mangrove forests and saltwater habitats (Meshaka *et al*. 2004).

Reproduction
Attaining maturity may take three to four years but female green iguana can produce large clutches for many years (Meshaka *et al*. 2004).

Nutrition
In their native range green iguana are known to be herbivorous through their lifespan, however, juvenlies have been reported to maybe, be omnivorous (Savage 2002). Analysis of stomach contents of 18 green iguana by Townsend *et al*. (2005) as part of an ongoing study on the exotic herpetofauna and its management in Florida, discovered the remains of an arboreal snail *Drymaeus multilineatus* in two specimens, one with accompanying plant material (suggesting that they could have been ingested accidentally with plant material on which the snails were aestivating) and the other without (suggesting that they could have ingested the snails intentionally).

General Impacts
Competition and hybridization between *Iguana iguana* and the Lesser Antilles iguana, the 'Vulnerable 'VU' (*Iguana delicatissima*), are mentioned as the main causes of the virtual disappearance of the Lesser Antilles iguana from Iles des Saintes, Guadeloupe, in the second half of the 20th century (Breuil and Sastre, 1993). On Martinique, the green iguana which is larger and more opportunistic in its food choices than the endemic *I. delicatissima* may be a strong competitor for the latter (Breuil, 2002). Green iguana may compete for resources with the 'Critically Endangered (CR)' endemic Cayman island ground iguana (see *Cyclura lewisi* in IUCN Red List of Threatened Species) on Grand Cayman, if their ranges overlap in the future (Burton, 2003).
While there are reports of juvenile green iguana being predated on by the Florida burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia floridana* a species of 'Special Concern'); there are concerns that adult green iguana may venture into burrows of the owl and forage on eggs and hatchlings (McKie *et al*. 2005). In their native range green iguana are known to be herbivorous through their lifespan, however, juveniles have been reported to maybe, be omnivorous (Savage 2002). Analysis of stomach contents of 18 green iguanas by Townsend *et al*. (2005) as part of an ongoing study on the exotic herpetofauna and its management in Florida, discovered the remains of an arboreal snail *Drymaeus multilineatus* in two specimens, one with accompanying plant material (suggesting that they could have been ingested accidentally with plant material on which the snails were aestivating) and the other without (suggesting that they could have ingested the snails intentionally). The authors of this study point out that while *D. multilineatus* is widespread and in no immediate danger, increased numbers of green iguana could potentially impact on tree snails with restricted distributions, whose native range overlap with that of the green iguana.
Green iguana are reported to be posing a collision hazard on airport runways in Puerto Rico (Engeman *et al*. 2005).
The keeping of reptiles as pets has been cited as the source of a number of laboratory-confirmed cases of human *salmonellosis* associated with exposure to exotic pets including iguanas (Woodward *et al*. 1997).

Pathway
Tens of thousands of baby green iguanas are introduced into the state of Florida from Latin America for the pet trade every year (Meshaka *et al*. 2004). In 1995 over 1.14 million *Iguana iguana* were imported into the United States, representi

Principal source:

Compiler: IUCN SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group
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ALIEN RANGE

[1] ANGUILLA
[1] FIJI
[1] ISRAEL
[1] PUERTO RICO
[2] SAINT MARTIN (FRENCH PART)
[1] UNITED STATES
[1] CAYMAN ISLANDS
[5] GUADELOUPE
[1] MARTINIQUE
[1] SAINT LUCIA
[1] TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

Red List assessed species 3: CR = 1; EN = 2;

Brachylophus fasciatus **EN**
Cyclura lewisi **CR**
Iguana delicatissima **EN**

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28 references found for **Iguana iguana**

Managment information

IUCN/SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG)., 2010. A Compilation of Information Sources for Conservation Managers.
Summary: This compilation of information sources can be sorted on keywords for example: Baits & Lures, Non Target Species, Eradication, Monitoring, Risk Assessment, Weeds, Herbicides etc. This compilation is at present in Excel format, this will be web-enabled as a searchable database shortly. This version of the database has been developed by the IUCN SSC ISSG as part of an Overseas Territories Environmental Programme funded project XOT603 in partnership with the Cayman Islands Government - Department of Environment. The compilation is a work under progress, the ISSG will manage, maintain and enhance the database with current and newly published information, reports, journal articles etc.

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Summary: Roughly 5,000 species of animals and 28,000 species of plants are protected by CITES against over-exploitation through international trade. They are listed in the three CITES Appendices. The species are grouped in the Appendices according to how threatened they are by international trade. They include some whole groups, such as primates, cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises), sea turtles, parrots, corals, cacti and orchids. But in some cases only a subspecies or geographically separate population of a species (for example the population of just one country) is listed. To find more details of the CITES species, you can search the CITES-listed species database hosted by UNEP-WCMC.
CITES species database is available from: http://www.cites.org/
This page is available from:
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