

## Editors' Remarks

### The Need for Collaboration

During World War II, "collaboration" came to mean something very negative: Helping the occupying Nazis administer their reign of death. In science, too, the word used to have uncomfortable implications. Scientists were expected to be loners, working by themselves in glorious isolation to reduce distraction and intellectual pollution. Today, however, the pejorative meaning of the word is becoming less and less common. In science, collaboration is now typically seen as an essential component of successful research.

What has changed is the complexity of the projects with which we are dealing and the amount of knowledge needed to address each element. For example, zoos once dealt only with housing animals. Then, zoo personnel had to learn to breed them, which required an improved understanding of nutrition and behavior. In addition, modern zoo work involves endocrinologists, who monitor and interpret hormone levels, and veterinarians, who focus on health. In the meantime, however, we've noticed that breeding animals in captivity is a hollow success, unless a natural habitat remains to which they can be returned. Enter a team of experts who study the animal in the wild and work to protect its environment. Consequently, modern zoos employ biologists of all kinds, but also rely on policy experts, lawyers, bankers, landowners, and, to make the public understand why this is all happening, a cadre of education experts. Each person is essential for a successful conservation project.

Several stories in this issue show the importance of collaboration. When the Iguana Specialist Group met (p. 278), reports from various perspectives enhanced iguana conservation. Similarly, the Horned Lizard Working Group (p. 296) brought together people from diverse disciplines. Also, one of our articles is authored by two biologists and a landscape architect (p. 272), who worked in collaboration with private landowners to prevent the arrival of invasive species on a Caribbean island.

Rather than dilute scientific expertise, as people originally feared, collaborations foster better research and conservation. Teams of experts working together toward a single goal bring a diversity of tools, experiences, and thought processes to bear on the problem, often resulting in solutions no one scientist could have conceived. We are pleased to see abundant evidence of collaboration on the pages of *Iguana*.

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