

FOCUS ON CONSERVATION

The Guatemalan Black Iguana: Critically Endangered



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The Guatemalan Black Iguana (*Ctenosaura palearis*), with a distribution limited to the Motagua Valley of Guatemala, is categorized as “Critically Endangered” on the IUCN Red List. The actual number remaining in the wild is unknown. The IRCF, in partnership with Zootropic and Zoo Atlanta, has established “Project Paelearis” in order to develop and implement a recovery action plan for this species. Given that its distribution coincides with that of the Guatemalan Beaded Lizard (*Heloderma horridum charlesbogerti*), many of the concerns about *Ctenosaura palearis* can be addressed in the recovery plan for “Project Heloderma.” Specifically, *C. palearis* can be included in current environmental education programs for local communities, where citizens have hunted this reptile for food. The proposed captive-breeding facility for the Beaded Lizard also can be used to breed *C. palearis* for return to the wild.

Funding is urgently needed to provide equipment for investigations of distribution, behavior, general ecology, and reproductive biology of the species, as well as for educational programs, construction of the breeding facility, and for the purchase of land intended for the establishment of a conservation reserve for both species. For more information on the Guatemalan Black Iguana and to make donations, please see www.IRCF.org/paelearis.