

IRCF ON THE MOVE

Michigan Members Represent IRCF at Chicago's Reptile Fest

The IRCF was represented at the Chicago Herpetological Society's largest public event of the year, Reptile Fest, by several Michigan members. Fest is an educational family event that draws thousands of spectators over the course of the weekend. CHS has helped to raise awareness of endangered reptiles and been supportive of IRCF-sponsored conservation projects for many years.



STEPHANIE BEISER

Michigan IRCF members (from left) include Chris Niezgucki, Jane Billette, Dr. Jen Periat, Karen Niezgucki, and Stephanie Beiser.



STEPHANIE BEISER

A young attendee takes a moment to read the IRCF informational posters.



STEPHANIE BEISER

Jane Billette and her eight-year-old Blue Iguana hybrid, Azul.

IRCF materials were incorporated into the "Iguana Squad" display, which is always a star attraction. Several species of *Cyclura* and *Ctenosaura* were on hand to represent the various endangered members of their genera. Many people were



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unaware of the critical status of some of these species, and were especially moved by a photo of the Blue Iguana Slugger and the story of his death by feral dogs.

CaribSea Donates Over \$7,000 Toward IRCF-Supported Programs

CaribSea, a leading manufacturer of tropical aquarium products, has integrated conservation into the marketing strategy for its new reptile division, Blue Iguana Products. The new products feature the name and image of the Grand Cayman Blue Iguana, helping raise awareness of the plight of one of the IRCF's core initiatives, the Blue Iguana Recovery Program. Additionally, CaribSea has created marketing campaigns to raise money for other IRCF-supported programs, including Project Heloderma and Project Palearis. The "Buy your own Discount" Program, for example, encourages CaribSea customers to donate money to the IRCF. The customer receives substantial discounts on CaribSea products, and CaribSea matches funds donated by its customers. To date, over \$7,000 has been raised.

CaribSea also is undertaking the innovative "Survivor Program" to raise awareness and funds for the American Cancer Society and the Blue Iguana Recovery Program. Featuring Sabrina K. Carpenter, an office manager at CaribSea and a cancer survivor, the program features a poster of Sabrina and her artfully crafted Blue Iguana tattoo. The poster is available to individuals who donate \$25 or more to either the American Cancer

Society or the IRCF in care of the Blue Iguana Program. "I am a cancer survivor and, much like the Grand Cayman Blue Iguana, we are both endangered species. Survival is a team effort. People's donations and volunteerism can make a difference," says Sabrina on her motivation for both the tattoo and the program.

For more information about these programs, CaribSea and its Blue Iguana line of products, or simply to see a great example of how conservation can be successfully incorporated into a "go-to-market" strategy, visit CaribSea's website at www.carib-sea.com.

Meeting of Project Heloderma and Project Palearis Partners

A meeting was held on 4 April 2007 in Las Vegas, Nevada for the partners engaged in projects Heloderma and Palearis for the preservation of the Guatemalan Beaded Lizard and the Guatemalan Black Iguana, respectively. In attendance were John Binns (IRCF), Luis Alvarado (Zootropic), and Brad Lock (Zoo Atlanta). Discussions addressed the acquisition of land in



DANIEL ARRIANO

This female Guatemalan Black Iguana (*Ctenosaura palearis*) was the first female to be located and remains under observation by Project Palearis staff.

Guatemala for the proposed reserve and breeding facility; funds are in hand and final arrangements are being made. Initial ideas for the construction of the breeding facility were put forward as were plans for the upcoming field season. Project Palearis received a boost with a new donation of \$1,000 from the IRCF. Further funding is being sought for Project Heloderma.

Update from Guatemala

Daniel Ariano of Zootropic has sent photos and observations from his recent



DANIEL ARIANO

The research site in the Motagua Valley, normally green during January and February, is parched and brown, with temperatures reaching 45 °C.

trip to the Motagua Valley of Guatemala. Beaded Lizards continue their hibernation in the same shelters. They will be taken from their shelters soon for health checks and to have transmitters replaced. Individual *Ctenosaura palearis* under observations also are due for health checks. This year is one of the hottest years ever in the Motagua Valley, with recorded temperatures as high as 45 °C (113 °F) during January and February (usually a cold period). The predictions

are that this is going to be a dry year with a high probability of no rainfall at all.

Sand Dune Lizard

The IRCF is sponsoring conservation work in Argentina for the endangered Sand Dune Lizard, *Liolaemus multimaculatus* (see article on p. 66). Principal investigator, Federico Kacoliris, who is conducting his doctoral research on these lizards, reports that Sand Dune Lizards are beginning to wind down their activity during the months of April and May in anticipation of their winter brumation during June through August.

Based on field data collected to date on the Sand Dune Lizards and the vegetation in their natural habitat, the gov-



FEDERICO KACOLIRIS

An adult Sand Dune Lizard, *Liolaemus multimaculatus*.

ernment of Buenos Aires Province is enacting legislation to create a new Coastal Dunes Reserve, a critical first step toward conservation of the species. Data also have been used to develop an educational campaign aimed at the residents of several coastal cities within the species' distribution.

Equipment donated by the IRCF is crucial for carrying out studies slated for

the upcoming year. The goal of the program is to produce a long-term conservation and management plan for *Liolaemus multimaculatus* and its habitat.

Volunteers Sought for Team Blue 2007

The IRCF staff has been busy constructing a robust online volunteer section to facilitate signup for this year's Team Blue activities in support of the Blue Iguana Recovery Program. Opportunities are available for people with all levels of physical ability, from providing care for the Blues at the captive breeding facility in the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park, to performing fieldwork in the Salina Reserve, and participating in a population census for Sister Isles Iguanas on Little Cayman Island. Check out www.ircf.org/volunteer.html and sign up for the experience of a lifetime.



Volunteers can sign up at the IRCF web site for volunteer opportunities on Grand Cayman or Little Cayman, Cayman Islands.

Connecticut Iguana Sanctuary in Need of Support

For the past ten years, the Connecticut Iguana Sanctuary has been rehabilitating and placing reptiles and providing shelter for many others that are elderly or disabled. In order to continue providing such services to the public, the Sanctuary is very much in need of financial support. For further information and opportunities to sponsor rehabilitated animals and long-term residents, please see www.reptilecare.com/ctiguana.htm or contact AJ Gutman at AJ@IRCF.org.