

HONDURAN ENVIRONMENTALIST KILLED

Environmentalist Blanca Janeth Kawas Fernandez was shot and killed in a drive-by shooting in the northern coastal city of Tela. Kawas, 48, was shot twice in the head on February 6, 1994, as she sat in her living room. Honduran police believe it was a paid assassination.

Kawas was president of the private Foundation for the Protection of Punta Sal, Lancetilla, and Texihault. Police suggested her death may have been related to the group's advocacy of greater protection of Tela National Park, a 61,750 acre refuge for Honduran iguanas and an amazing assemblage of other biodiversity.

Source: Miami Herald Wire Service

HUMANE OFFICER'S 'KISS' SAVES IGUANA

It wasn't a prince in disguise, but a Humane Society officer says she has no regrets about puckering up to save a boy's pet iguana. Officer Tori Matthews performed mouth-to-mouth resuscitation after the iguana, which had been scared up into a tree by a dog, tumbled into a swimming pool and sank. Matthews grabbed her net and dived into the water, emerging with the pet.

"Now that I look back on it, it was a pretty ugly animal to be kissing," remarked Matthews, but "the last

thing I wanted to do was tell this little boy that his iguana had died."

Source: The Associated Press

EARLY FATHERHOOD

Marcie Ehrig reports the 1994 summer births of 123 green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*) at Finca Cyclura, Big Pine Key, Florida. The hatching of four clutches occurred between June 26 and July 23. Clutches were laid on April 12 (42 eggs), April 14 (20 eggs), April 22 (25 eggs), and May 14 (43 eggs). An infertile clutch was laid on May 9. The April 14 clutch was fathered by a nineteen-month-old male who had bred with a six-year-old female. Both were born at Finca Cyclura.

The young male resides in a 25 x 20 ft (8 x 6.5 m) enclosure with two female green iguanas, and two male and four female rhinoceros iguanas (*Cyclura cornuta*). Brutus II, the father, was raised entirely out of doors on a 100% vegetarian diet! He is the youngest breeding of his species recorded at Finca Cyclura. He continued trying to pursue his career of fatherhood in January and February, 1995, and more fertile eggs are expected in April 1995.

Source: Marcie Ehrig, Finca Cyclura

NEW TREATMENT OF METABOLIC BONE DISEASE

Dr. Douglas Mader, D.V.M., has developed a relatively new and effective therapy for treatment of metabolic bone disease in iguanas. This affliction, exceedingly common among pet green iguanas, results from an improper diet and/or lack of full-spectrum lighting. These calcium- and vitamin D3-deficient iguanas exhibit rubbery and misshapen lower jaws, swollen limbs and loss of appetite. Their weakened bones are subject to fractures. Many die without prompt treatment.

The new treatment involves administration of calcitonin-salmon, a synthetic hormone designed for use in humans with post-menopausal osteoporosis, hypercalcemia, and other calcium disorders. The drug helps to rebuild bone more quickly in afflicted iguanas.

Source: Reptiles 1(3):68-72

I.I.S. IN THE NEWS

What's the hottest trend in pets? Iguanas, of course! With their recent surge in popularity, iguanas are increasingly the focus of headlines across the country. As a consequence, I.I.S. and/or its officers have been described or quoted in recent publications including Audubon magazine, The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, The Daily Advance (Elizabeth City, North

Carolina) and Herp News Today.

Unfortunately, much of the publicity over iguanas has been less than beneficial to the green iguana, the species most in demand in the pet trade. With imports to the United States exceeding 700,000 per year, the pressure on wild populations has become an issue of concern. Furthermore, a high percentage of these lizards are believed to die within the first year.

"People who don't know how to take care of iguanas are selling them to people who don't know how to take care of iguanas," commented I.I.S. President Bob Ehrig, as quoted in The Daily Advance. "If dogs were treated as badly as iguanas," added Ehrig, "it wouldn't be allowed."

On the more positive side, the December issue of Iguana Times was reproduced to accompany a cover story on I.I.S. in the April issue of Herp News Today. The feature described recent changes in the editorial staff and provided readers with the address and membership rates of the Society. New membership inquiries were quickly received as a consequence of the free publicity.