

LIZARD LETTERS

Dear Editor:

I was glad to see *Iguana delicatissima* get good play in your last issue. However, several points need fine tuning.

To the Fuhris: give up on Saba — that island is populated by *Iguana iguana*. My old paper, cited below, is still available, cheap, from the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA 02138. It provides island-by-island data on species presence, although many of the populations of 30 years ago are now sadly depleted, or even extirpated. Mark Day, and his colleagues from UK, have done extensive field work on *delicatissima*, but if their results have been published, they have not sent me reprints.

To David Warner: Iguana classification is not as straightforward as you claim. In fact, I understand that a very recent paper, based on molecular biology, totally demolishes Frost and Etheridge's scheme, but I have not seen this work yet: Macey *et al.*, 1997. *Journal of Molecular Evolution* 44:660-674. Many biologists do not accept the Frost and Etheridge split (e.g., Hedges 1996). Sites, *et al.*, in their Figure 5C, present a much more reasonable phylogeny than the one shown in Figure 3. About 20 percent of *Iguana delicatissima* have toe combs, so that characteristic does not define *Cyclura*.

And to Richard Gibson: Young *I. delicatissima* are vigorous predators, feeding almost exclusively on insects and small animals of many sorts, including other lizards. This species remains omnivorous and a facultative carnivore throughout life under natural conditions. Try feeding your hatchlings cockroaches, and follow the lead of Win and Laura as described by Janet Fuhri (IT 6(3): 54) for adults: meat weekly.

References

- Hedges, S.B. 1996. The origin of West Indian amphibians and reptiles. *SSAR Contributions to Herpetology* 12: 95-128.
Lazell, J. 1973. The lizard genus *Iguana* in the Lesser Antilles. *Bulletin of the Museum of Comparative Zoology* 145(1): 1-28.

Carry on!

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Dear Mr. Ehrig:

This is written pursuant to your request for confirmation of the erection of the Iguana Society signs on Green Cay, San Salvador, Bahamas.

These two signs, one in English and one in French, were erected by Vincent Vogeli, Neil Storr, and Lloyd Jones, all employees of the Bahamian Field Station, on July 31, 1997. Enclosed you will find a photograph showing the signs, as well as several iguanas.

I am sending additional photographs to Sandra Buckner at the Bahamas National Trust, Nassau, Bahamas, for their records.

We were pleased to undertake this project for you, and if we can be of any further assistance in the future, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Kathy D. Gerace
Secretary
BFS Board of Directors
Bahamian Field Station
Center for the Study of Archaeology, Biology, Geology,
and Marine Science



This is the home of the
San Salvador Rock Iguana
Cyclura rileyi rileyi

One of the world's rarest lizards,
it is found nowhere else on earth.
The iguanas are protected by
Bahamian and International law.
It is illegal to harm or harass them
in any way.

Please protect them!

Report any violations to the
Commissioner's office.

Sign donated by the International Iguana Society

Signs were paid for by a collection made at the I.I.S. Conference on San Salvador in 1995 and by the I.I.S.