

THE BIG IGUANA CONTEST

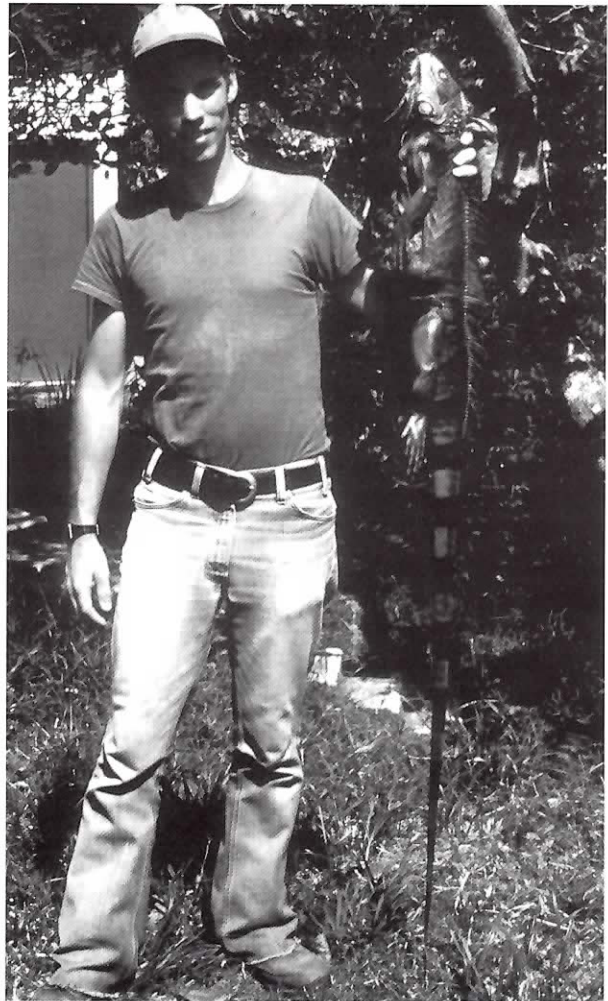
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Dear Ms. Gutman,

I enjoyed your ditty on large iguanas and thought I would submit a photo taken of Brian Bock and a large male iguana he encountered in Panama. I would let him speak for himself in this case, but he is in Colombia and is presumably unaware of your request for photos. Naturally this photograph, which was taken around 1982, does not have the requested yard stick, but Brian is about 6'1" tall, which you can verify by contacting him (should that become vital, try vpaez@epm.net.co). As you know, Brian has published a number of important papers on the genetics and biology of the green iguana. I've appended a list of the ones that I know about. Have fun with your contest!

Cheers,
Gordon Rodda



There were some interesting responses to the Really Big Iguana Contest and I was amazed by the wealth of stories that readers shared with me.

There were many tales of iguanas that are heavier than Asimov and even a few that are longer but there was only one entrant who could come up with any evidence. The winning photo was submitted by Dr. Gordon Rodda and shows a Colombian iguana held by scientist Brian Bock, a man who is 6' 1" tall.

On a sad note, my favorite entrant in the contest wasn't a particularly large animal, but she was a very beautiful and much loved one and I had the privilege of meeting her personally before she passed away. On behalf of the IIS, I would like to extend our condolences to long-time member, Dr. Timothy Durkins, on the death of his 6 year-old Rhinoceros iguana, Sukieman Barbudie. Her death, according to Dr. Nicola Melliar-Smith who performed the necropsy, was due to widespread infection of the liver which

affected all of the internal organs. Please see the Bark Alert in the Iguana Newsbriefs.

One email correspondent from Maryland claimed to have a 6'6" male green iguana but he didn't send me a picture. And then there is the legendary PeeWee who had once belonged to Jayme Gordon. Jayme claimed that PeeWee was 6'11", but every time the story was told, PeeWee seemed to get even longer and, again, there were no pictures. The fishiest story came from a fellow at a New York animal shelter who claimed to have once owned an iguana that weighed 25 lbs. and was 14' long. Any lizard that long and weighing that little would have been a toothpick! It only proves the original premise of my story, that people are exceptionally poor at estimating the length of iguanas.

Dr. Rodda will receive one of our terrific new International Iguana Society T-shirts. Congratulations, Gordon!