

IGUANA NEWSBRIEFS

Good Hatch

On September 10, 1990, Finca Cyclura successfully hatched twin Cuban Iguanas (*Cyclura nubila*) in a clutch of seven eggs. Twin iguanas share a single yolk sac as well as the space within the egg. Thus, they are typically smaller than their siblings, but in time, they may achieve the same size. The twins at Finca Cyclura will be raised to maturity on site. Fifteen Rhinoceros Iguanas (*Cyclura cornuta*) were also hatched from one clutch on September 20 -24, 1990, at Finca Cyclura. In September 1988, Life Fellowship Bird Sanctuary hatched twins of the Grand Cayman Blue Iguana (*Cyclura nubila lewisi*), and the twins still reside there.

DNA Studies Underway

Texas members, Ed Lewis and Denise Garcia, of Texas A&M University, have been working for several years on a DNA study of Galapagos tortoises based on blood samples collected from various individuals. This year Ed and Denise have started working on Cycluran iguanas and they have developed procedures which will distinguish among different populations. To date, they have data for *Cyclura n. nubila*, *C. n. lewisi*, *C. n. caymanensis*, and *C. c. cornuta*. The techniques may prove invaluable for establishing subspecific identities of captive individuals and resolving questions pertaining to parentage and degrees of relatedness. This information will be of vital importance in helping to maintain out-bred captive populations. We wish them the best of luck on their interesting and important work.

Blue Iguanas Hatched in California

David Blair of the Cyclura Research Center reports the successful reproduction in October of this year of the Grand Cayman Blue Iguana, *Cyclura nubila lewisi*. This is believed to be only the third institution to breed this subspecies in captivity, and it is the first time the Blue iguana has been bred in the U.S. outside of Florida. A total of five second-generation hatchlings were produced from two captive-hatched females. The eggs hatched in 74 - 77 days after being incubated at 30 C in damp vermiculite. All five hatchlings appear to be completely normal and are thriving. The Grand Cayman Blue Iguana is considered to be one of the rarest lizards on Earth, with as few as several dozen animals existing in the wild on Grand Cayman Island, British West Indies.

San Salvador Island Visited

Society Vice President, David Blair, toured the small, satellite cays of San Salvador Island in the Bahamas collecting data on the status of the San Salvador Rock Iguana (*Cyclura rileyi*). Eight days were spent on the island and vicinity searching for iguanas in the scrub and interviewing locals about the iguanas. *Cyclura r. rileyi* is a beautiful, mottled iguanid that is smaller than many other *Cyclura* species. It also has a limited distribution and is, therefore, in a rather precarious state. The next issue of the Newsletter will carry a complete report of Dave's findings.



C. Nubila September 1990 Laurel Canty