

IGUANA NEWSBRIEFS

Grand Cayman Island Visited

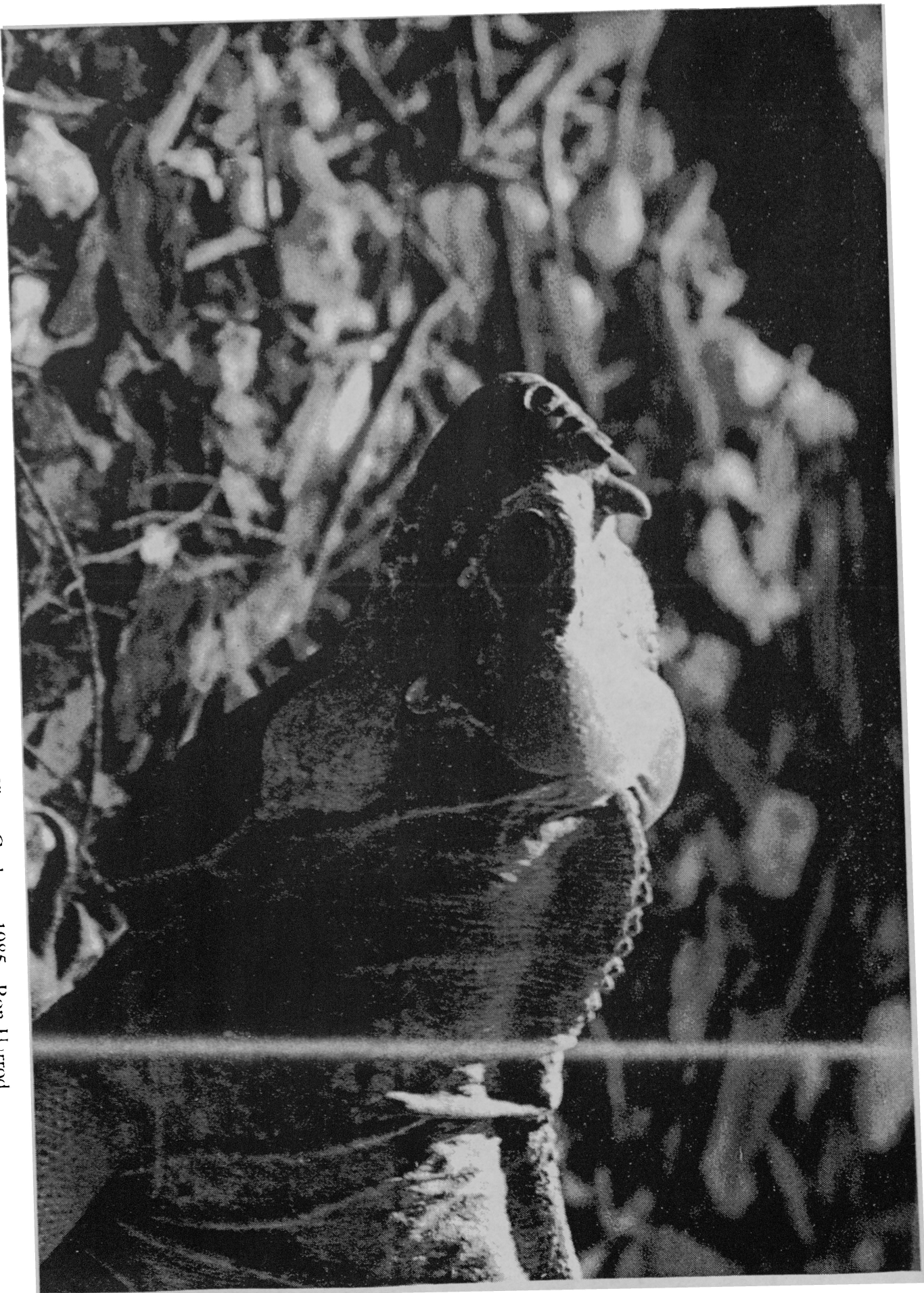
I.I.S. President, Robert Ehrig, visited the West Indian island of Grand Cayman from April 8 through 11, 1991. The east end of the island is the last remaining habitat of the Grand Cayman Blue Iguana, *Cyclura nubila lewisi*. The National Trust of the Cayman Islands, which is dedicated to the protection of the natural heritage of the islands, has a successful captive breeding program for *Cyclura nubila lewisi*. The National Trust has plans to expand this program in 1992, and eventually intends to release captive-bred iguanas into the 635 acre Salina Reserve. Bob was able to survey the northern sector of the Trust's reserve and found a large number of known iguana food plants. While on the island, Bob examined six of the seven wild-caught *C. n. lewisi* at the Trust's breeding facility, recording scale counts and color characteristics of the animals. I.I.S. is looking forward to a long-term collaboration with the National Trust in solving various problems associated with the re-establishment of this strikingly beautiful iguana within its former range. More details about this will appear in the next issue of the newsletter.

Not for the Pot

We salute Darwin Porter, author of Frommers Bermuda and the Bahamas for correcting misinformation contained in previous issues of this quality travel guide. Instead of discussing the Bahamian Iguanas (Genus *Cyclura*) in "The Flora and Fauna" section, their only mention was in "The Food and Drink" section. Here it was stated that "Many Bahamians...consider iguana a delicacy -- that is, if they can catch one." Society vice-president, David Blair, sent a cordial letter to Mr. Porter and his publisher informing them of the protected status of Bahamian Iguanas, all of which are considered threatened or endangered. The penalty for capturing or killing an iguana in the Bahamas is up to a \$300 fine and 6 months imprisonment. In response to this letter, Mr. Porter has rewritten several sections in the current 1991 guide, removing mention of the iguanas from the "Food and Drink" section and placing them into the "Flora and Fauna" section where they rightfully belong. He has included several additional, informative paragraphs about the iguanas which will serve to educate his readers as to the current status of this unique part of the Bahamian natural history. Thousands of people use this guide every year and this is a good example of what I.I.S. members can accomplish with very little effort. Well done, Mr. Porter!

Point of Clarification

The captive-hatched *Cyclura nubila lewisi* reported by David Blair in the first issue of the newsletter may be of hybrid origin between *C. n. caymanensis* and *C. n. lewisi*. More information will be reported about these lizards when the question of their genetic background is resolved.



"Joannie", a female Rhinoceros Iguana, *Cyclura cornuta*, at Finca Cyclura. 1985. Ron H irrod photo.