


ROATÁN ISLAND SPINY-TAILED IGUANA

IIS member Karen S. Mora reports recent sightings of the Roatán Island Spiny-Tailed Iguana, *Ctenosaura oedirhina* on the island of Roatán and its satellite islands. Roatán is the largest, at 25 miles long, of the Bay Islands off the coast of Honduras. The Spiny-Tailed Iguanas of Roatán were long considered to be *Ctenosaura bakeri* which is the Spiny-Tailed Iguana found on Utila Island. Utila Island is located 20 miles west of Roatán. In 1987, de Queiroz pointed out the distinctiveness of the Roatán iguana and described them as *Ctenosaura oedirhina* (de Queiroz, 1987).

The Roatán iguana is considered a rare spiny-tailed iguana and is still subject to hunting. *Ctenosaura oedirhina* is a medium size spiny-tailed iguana with males being larger and probably reaching 2 feet in total length. Karen Mora described them as light brown to dusty grayish tan with dark

brown or black mottled stripe across the neck and striped all the way down the back to the tail. The blunt head is covered with bumps. The Roatán iguana inhabit low scrub forest and beach vegetation. They can be observed feeding on seagrape and the fruits of the scrub vegetation. Karen observed iguanas on small private cays, and recommends Coco View Dive Resort as an excellent place to observe *Ctenosaura oedirhina*. The resort has large areas of black boulders where the iguanas reside. The iguanas are also protected at Coco View Dive Resort, making observation easy. 

Literature cited

de Queiroz, Kevin. 1987. A New Spiny-Tailed Iguana From Honduras, With Comments On Relationships Within *Ctenosaura* (Squamata: Iguania). *Copeia* 1987 (4): 892-902.

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