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A captive green iguana, *Iguana iguana*, emerges from the safety of its egg. Photograph: Carl Fuhri

Statement of Purpose

The International Iguana Society, Inc. is a non-profit, international organization dedicated to the preservation of the biological diversity of iguanas through habitat preservation, active conservation, research, captive breeding and the dissemination of information.

Membership Information

Iguana Times, the Journal of The International Iguana Society, is distributed quarterly to members and member organizations. Annual dues for The International Iguana Society are \$25.00 for individuals, \$35.00 for foreign memberships, and \$35.00 for organizations, which receive double copies of the journal. Additional copies are available at a cost of \$6.00 including postage.

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Members of the I.I.S. are encouraged to contribute articles, letters to the Editor, news items and announcements for publication in *Iguana Times*. General articles can deal with any aspect of iguana biology, including conservation, behavior, ecology, physiology, systematics, husbandry, or other topics. Submission of photographs to accompany articles is encouraged.

Manuscripts based on original research are solicited to communicate recent findings not only to other scientists but to the general public as well. We wish to instill in our readers a greater appreciation for scientific research and a better understanding of how it can contribute to the conservation of threatened iguana populations or the well-being of captive specimens. Research Articles will be subjected to peer review, and should be fairly general in scope (i.e., manuscripts having extremely detailed theoretical or statistical bases should be submitted to more appropriate journals). Manuscripts of any length will be considered, and must be accompanied by an abstract of corresponding length. Authors can expect rapid turnaround time for the reviews and quick publication of acceptable material. Research Articles will be cited as appearing in the Journal of the International Iguana Society, and will be forwarded to the major citation and abstract journals. Research Updates should be comparatively brief and written in non-technical language. They will not be subjected to peer review. Submission of photographs to accompany research reports is encouraged.

All manuscripts must be typed, DOUBLE-SPACED, with 1" margins, on 8½" × 11" paper, following a format like that shown in the most recent issue of the journal. Original research articles must be submitted in triplicate. If at all possible, manuscripts should be accompanied by a disk (3½" or 5¼") containing a word-processing file of the manuscript. We support most word-processing applications in DOS, Windows, and Macintosh formats. Please include file name, software name and version number on the disk; a hard copy printout is still required. Send manuscripts to the Managing Editor at P.O. Box 430671, Big Pine Key, FL 33043. Shorter articles, research updates, letters, and announcements may also be submitted via e-mail (send to LIZARD1@AOL.COM). For any contribution, please include your name, address, phone number and e-mail address.

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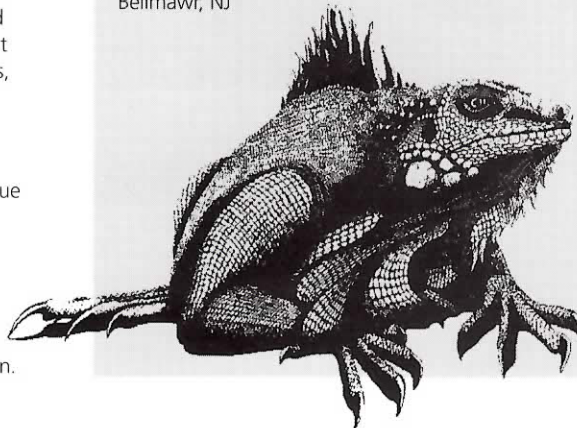
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Progress for *Cyclura rileyi cristata*

Robert W. Ehrig

Sandy Cay (a.k.a. White Cay), is a small island at the southern end of the Exuma chain in the south central Bahamas. It is the only home of the critically endangered iguana, *Cyclura rileyi cristata*. The population has always been small, but recently has declined to an estimated 200 individuals. The sex ratio of the population is highly skewed with possibly as few as ten adult females in existence. One of the reasons for the decline of the iguana was a large population of black rats, *Rattus rattus*. The rats compete with the iguanas for the food resources of the island, and are believed to be predators of both iguana eggs and young iguanas. International smuggling and a non-native raccoon are also factors in *C. rileyi cristata* decline (see I.T.6[2]).

In a four week period of April and May, 1998 the island was successfully cleared of rats under a team led by Mark Day of Fauna and Flora International. The effort was a cooperative project of the Bahamian government, the Bahamas National Trust, Fauna and Flora International, and the IUCN West Indian Iguana Specialist Group with technical help from Zeneca Agrochemicals. The removal of the rats from the island will not only benefit the iguanas but also the birds, other reptiles and most importantly the plants.

In 1997 the I.I.S. suggested to the Conservation

Unit of the Bahamian government that translocation of two pair of *C. rileyi cristata* would be the best insurance for the survival of this species.

Iguanas previously populated many islands in the Bahamas. The most inexpensive and efficient method of increasing Bahamian iguana populations is to translocate small groups of iguanas to government owned, uninhabited islands.

This method has already been successful in several cases in the Bahamas. Two small keys have been located that appear to be promising future homes for *cristata*.

Rodents are among the most destructive and widespread threats to small island ecosystems. They may be both predator and competitor at the same time. The iguanas are seed dispersers and enhance biodiversity on a small island ecosystem by their presence.



Cyclura rileyi cristata on Sandy Cay. Photograph: Carl Fuhri

The rat eradication project on Sandy Cay was accomplished using Klerat™ rodenticide. Before the project was started, an environmental risk assessment was conducted by the Government of the Bahamas. The greatest concern was for the iguanas or any of the native species on the island. To avoid exposing any non target species to the rodenticide, the wax and grain based bait was placed in fixed bait stations in 8 in. (20 cm) lengths of PVC down spout which were fitted with hardware cloth covers closed during the daylight hours. The bait stations were placed in a 20 meter grid over most of the 14.9 hectare island and several offshore sandbars. The stations were checked daily and the program continued until all signs of rat activity had ceased.

Almost 20 kilograms of bait was used during the project. After the island was considered free of rats, it was tested with chew sticks (pine treated with vegetable oil). The island is considered rodent free but will need to be tested periodically for two years.

The total cost of the project was about \$10,000 (U.S.), and is likely to be repeated in the future (*see* Booby Cay Update in this issue). The program was widely publicized in the Bahamas and appeared on local television. The program was greeted with enthusiastic responses from both the



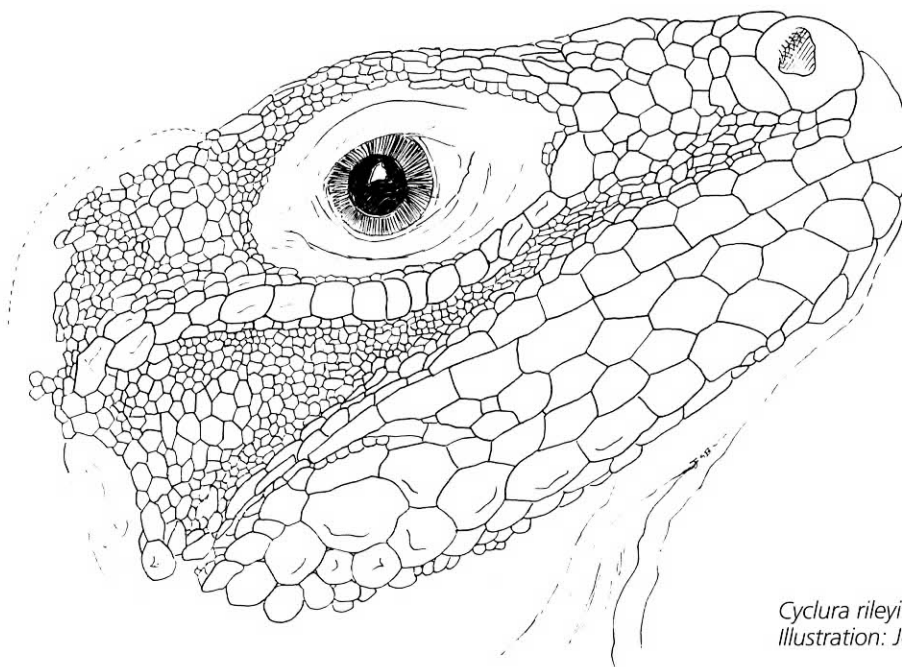
Cyclura rileyi cristata on Sandy Cay. Photograph: Carl Fuhri

public and Bahamian conservationists. It stands as an example of an international cooperation of government and conservationists making successful efforts to act quickly on behalf of critically endangered species. Special thanks to Mark Day, Sandra Buckner (acting for the Bahamas National Trust) Bill Hayes, and Ron Carter, and congratulations on the success of their efforts on this worthwhile conservation action.

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Source: Mark Day and Ron Carter



Cyclura rileyi cristata scalation rendering. Illustration: John Bendon

Booby Cay Update

Joe Wasilewski

We arrived on Booby Cay on 20 October 1998 at 0830 hours. It was a windy day and the one and a half-hour boat trip was rough. There were around two hundred flamingos on the sand flats at the SW portion of the island. As we landed, a pair of peregrine falcons flew off. Approximately twelve Australian pines, *Casuarina*, were also present. Before camp was made, a survey was initiated. It was determined that we would walk completely around the island and attempt a systematic survey of iguanas. Three size categories of iguanas were documented: *adult*, *sub-adult*, and *juvenile*. Upon initiating the survey, a fourth class was entered: *unknown*, for animals that were heard and, but not seen. The first leg of the survey took place from our landing, south to the SW tip, back north to the small interior pond

(salinity 54 ppt). We recorded 20 adults, eight sub-adults, three juveniles and one unknown. We set up camp and continued to survey, recording an additional 45 adults, 19 sub-adults, four hatchlings, and seven unknowns, for a total of 110 iguanas counted. We observed iguanas utilizing many different habitats and terrains on the island: sandy beach, rocky beach, sandy, sparse, vegetated areas, areas densely vegetated, rocky areas, and open areas.

The iguanas utilized sandy areas, and holes between rocks for their burrows. Most of the iguanas were on the ground or lying on top of the rocks, although seven animals were seen in the trees and bushes up to six feet off the ground. Salinity was measured in the large interior lake on the island and ranged from 68 to 72 ppt. During the survey,



Adult male *Cyclura carinata bartschi* on Booby Cay. Photograph: Joe Wasilewski



Hatchling *Cyclura carinata bartschi* perches on a rock on Booby Cay. Photograph: Joe Wasilewski

thirteen goats were seen on the NW side of the island. There were also several weanling rats and an adult rat, *Rattus rattus*, seen at different areas on the island. Many species of birds inhabit Booby Cay, including, but not limited to osprey, black whiskered vireo, and palm warblers. Several species of shorebirds, vireos and warblers, were observed, but have yet to be identified.

A hatchling *Cyclura carinata bartschi* was captured on the survey, measured, and released. Two adult males were captured and released on 20 October 98. The following day was spent capturing six more *Cyclura c. bartschi*, four males and two females. All animals were measured, microchipped, and had blood drawn. Anywhere from 0.5 to 2.0 ml of blood was drawn from the animals and two samples were fixed for each. The blood was taken to Nassau and placed under Eric Carey's supervision.

A sign informing people of the protected status of the Booby Cay iguanas was erected on the island during this visit.

We were unable to complete the survey of the eastern portion of Mayaguana due to time restrictions, but plan to survey that area during our next trip to Booby Cay.

The trip was an overall success, despite the bad news of the *Casuarina*, goats, and rats inhabiting the island. Measures can now be taken to guarantee removal of the injurious species, thereby ensuring survival for the *Cyclura c. bartschi*.

This program was made possible by a grant from Mr. Jerry Cole and Natures Images T-Shirts, UK.



IGUANA RESCUE

Spot, Socks, Stanly and E.T.

Wendy Townsend
Callicoon, NY

Seeing iguanas in poor captive situations causes a dilemma for people who love them. One can leave an unfortunate iguana where he is—where he may die, perhaps slowly—or one can take the lizard home. You “rescue” the iguana, give him a chance, then he’s your responsibility. You are taking a responsibility that you did, and did not choose, that isn’t really yours. You take the animal out of compassion, and maybe guilt about human exploitation of iguanas. Of course, there are other reasons—it’s fun to have iguanas: each lizard is different, wonderful to watch and hold. You feel proud of your lizards, and saving them makes you feel good. A group of iguanas is a kind of family with joys and responsibilities with which one may desire to fill up one’s life.

Because iguanas are popular, readily available pets, and are little understood, many live in poor captive situations. It’s impossible to take care of them all. Your time and resources reach their limit. You have to turn a blind eye and try not to think about it too much. And sometimes you think: If I could build a bigger house... I have kept green iguanas for 27 years, always in numbers that press my capacities. I can’t seem to not have them. They’ve all been damaged or unwanted individuals I’ve “rescued.” Following is just a bit about my current iguana family. I am neither discussing husbandry here, nor will I attempt to explain my behavioral observations—this is anecdotal.

Three iguanas is just a hair beyond the limit for our home: we live in the third bay of a restored, 100 year old barn in the northeastern United States. Space for big tropical lizards is not quite adequate; they do have plenty of heat, an excellent diet from our garden, and sunshine all summer and into November. Sometimes, they get out for brief exposure as early as February when the sunlight is quite direct.

E.T. died last winter, which meant that Spot was left with Socks. Spot, who has always had at least two females, was despondent. Using his well-being and happiness as a good excuse, I set about

getting another iguana. There were several iguanas for sale in the classifieds of the local paper, and of these one was certainly female. “How do you know you’ve got a female?” I asked. “Well, she laid eggs!” said the girl, “After we named her ‘Stanly.’”

I met the girl in the parking lot of a Ramada Inn, in Scranton, PA. It was early February. Her father had driven the car, so she could hold Stanly for the last time. They were moving soon, and she thought she should find another home for her iguana.

I went to the passenger side door of their car, and Stanly was handed to me through the window, and without pause, tucked under my sweater. Though she was a reptile, and not a mammal, Stanly warmed me in different ways. I gave the girl fifty dollars for Stanly, and she proceeded to tell me a few things about her. “Here’s her leash and harness—she gets a little unpredictable when you take her outside. Oh, she likes to be wrapped up in a towel and sit next to me while I watch T.V. That’s when she’s most calm. “Really?” I said. Stanly was an incredible bright green, and surprisingly large. I peeked at her under my sweater—she had wide-open, nervous eyes. “What have you been feeding her?” I asked. “Well, mostly romaine lettuce, spinach, carrots, zucchini, melon, grapes, and reptile vitamins.” “Have you had a Vitalite® for her?” I asked. “Oh, yes, and I took her out sun-tanning with me a lot. That’s when she got really excited—that’s when I bought the leash, because once she ran away from me and I nearly lost her!” What better testament for direct sunshine?

When I got Stanly home, I found hard deposits in her thighs, hidden by her ample flesh. These went away in about two months. Since the day she arrived, she has eaten massive quantities. Now, a year later, Stanly’s SVL has increased two inches. Her bright green skin is more patterned; her youthful, pale gold eyes are striking, and wild, like a Velociraptor in *Jurassic Park*. I tend to wonder about the T.V. watching, wrapped in a towel. Stanley does not tolerate a towel around her after

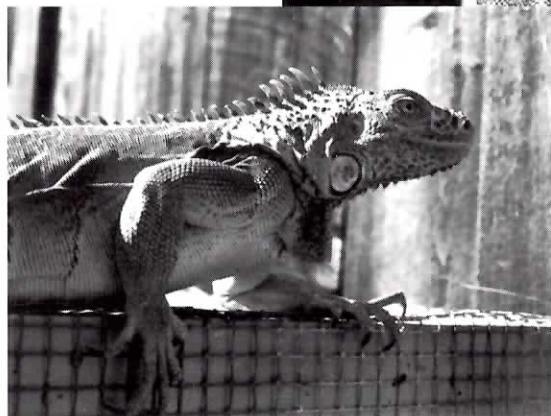
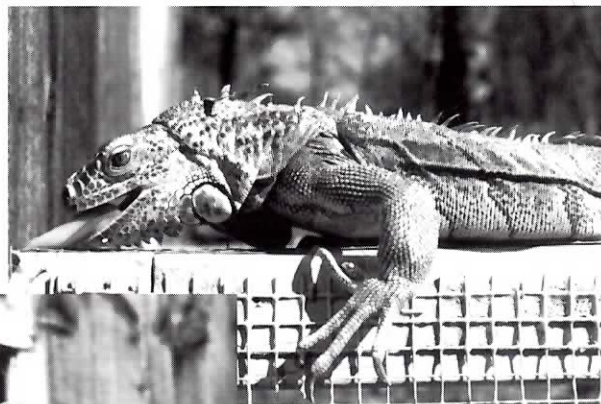
her bath as Spot and Socks do. In fact, I figured out it was the towel hanging near the bathtub that made her fly into hysterics. I moved the towel out of sight, and no more hysterics. She is less nervous these days, but she's not the kind of girl to bring to an educational presentation for children.

That's where Spot comes in. He is a gentle, reliable iguana. Many, many children have put their hands and fingers on every inch of his head and body. He sits patiently in my hands, eyes open and alert, long enough for me to say a few words, and for about thirty kids to have their turn touching him. Then it's time for part two of the Spot show: he begins to struggle just a bit when he wants to get down, walk around some, assess territory, climb up on something—or someone tall (me)—and assert himself with his series of head-bobs: “Any and all females watching, I'm the best—come here. Any males—the females are mine, and so is what I'm sitting on.”

Spot was comfortable with people at an early age. He accepts us as incidental beings. He puts up with a lot of hugging and kissing, and doesn't usually shut his eyes to block it out: exchanges with people are part of the routine. He has always been more interested in what iguanas are doing, and is so driven in his interaction with other iguanas that

their company seems vitally important to him. Spot is a handsome, stately iguana. Words scarcely describe his presence, he is just remarkable. I have known and cared for him for sixteen years.

Socks and Spot are a pair: they mate each autumn, and there's digging and digging and digging and—no eggs. Socks reabsorbs them—good for her! She is about two thirds Stanly's size, and I doubt she'll grow much. Socks was another rescue. When I got her, three of four limbs had suffered injuries that went unnoticed. To one who has seen damaged iguanas this is evident. To the touch it is more obvious for the joints feel misshapen and fused. Socks' left rear leg cannot extend fully. She's a funny girl—whenever approached, she stiffens with eyes shut tight and dewlap extended. She doesn't relax until she's picked up, or left alone. Once out and about, she's calm and approachable. Sometimes Socks and



Left to right: Stanly, Spot, and Socks. Photographs: Wendy Townsend

Stanly bicker, they have their push-leaning matches, they charge each other and hiss. Other times they lie on top of one another basking peacefully. Often, Spot is underneath both of them, apparently content. I remember when Spot came home to our barn after being away a while. He was shaky, and unsure of his new surroundings. Socks did not take her eyes off him. She attended him, never moving more than a few inches away, and always with some part of her draped over some part of him. She tongue-flicked him constantly. It was as if she wanted to ensure his comfort and health so he would be a good mate. Once he settled in and was himself, much of Socks' attention returned to her own interests—like getting back out to the flower bed, or just plain getting somewhere. Socks likes to explore and go—taste this, nibble that—dig here, bask there. She walks circles in the yard, round and round, in her private explorations, having a good time. She's the only one who will sometimes climb the screen door of the cage and make a real racket wanting out. Spot likes going out for sunshine to forage, and have a look around. But predictably, after 15–20 minutes, he walks briskly, with determination back to the barn entrance to watch his territory—their cage. If all three iguanas are near the open cage door, Spot corrals the other two, bobbing his head vigorously. Socks would gladly spend her days outside, and likely wouldn't stray very far if left alone. Stanly cannot walk about the yard freely, as she would take off for the woods in a second. She feels secure in their cage, and is agreeable to returning to it. Has she ever known anything else?

So—that's a little bit about Spot, Socks, and Stanly. They have it pretty good, I guess.

I believe what keeps them vital is each other. One day soon, we will build a new space for iguanas where one can enter and be among them, rather than looking in at them. I think that's the best way to get to know "pet" iguanas.

I'd like to add some words about E.T. She was 11 years old, and laid 7 clutches of eggs during her life.

I had not seen an iguana, still living, as horribly damaged as E.T. Her face remains a vivid image to me. She arrived in a pillowcase, and when I pulled it away from her head, I was amazed. This was a bright-eyed, energetic iguana with a collapsed bottom jaw. There was the broken bone jutting out under her skin. What was it like for the iguana when that happened? What was it like to eat with only half of a mouth? To watch E.T. go after a meal was moving. She looked like a starving animal trying to get some food down. The mixed salads I prepared for the iguanas were good for her, since I could form little rolls or peaks of the stuff which she could get her mouth around. E.T. hated having a dirty mouth, and she couldn't clean it the way other iguanas do. I would put her



E.T. Note the extreme "overbite" due to the broken lower jaw. The broken bone juts out under the skin, seen just above the subtympnic plate. *Photograph: Wendy Townsend*


in the bathtub and clean the exposed roof of her mouth. When she died, I was relieved of a lot of hand-feeding and work. I miss her.

Following are excerpts from a record of E.T.'s activities as reported to me by caretakers of the animal learning center at a facility for disabled persons: "...E.T.'s the mascot of the animal room—we love her. She needs extra attention, but she's no shrinking violet. She is a busy, energetic iguana. When she first arrived, weary from Spot and loaded with eggs, she still had an activity level that earned her free range of the room. A large water basin and hiding box with overhead heat lamp were offered as a designated area. She chose her own place, and her things were moved there. For two weeks she drank volumes of water, ate almost nothing, and searched for a nesting site. She tucked her eggs under plants around the sandy play area, and not in the nest box of soil and moss provided..." After egg-laying, E.T. was moved to a large cage with branches and plants.

Her collapsed jaw left her needing help with meals. The caretakers work with human beings who need help eating, and learned to feed E.T. She has taught them her preferences for who may feed her or be present while she dines. There are two Facility employees she dislikes: one can't get near her cage, the other can't even enter the room. When either of these humans comes into E.T.'S

field of vision (the entire room) her behavior includes halting of activity, glaring with widened eyes, backing down and away, and loud hissing. The human who can't approach her cage has an exaggerated limp. The one who really gets her going is kind of gruff and says "They eat those things down in the jungle!" He doesn't much feel like getting near her either... E.T. is very watchful of human activity, less watchful of the other iguanas.

During the nest-search, E.T. tore her forearm on a baseboard heater. Her wound grew swollen with an abscess, adding to her thinness and her parrot-mouth so she looked like a mess limping around on three legs. She could really be a lot of work. E.T. has always been the kind of beast who could find a way to get into a little trouble. She's the type who would go over and claw at an electrical outlet while the other lizards were busy with more normal iguana activity. For E.T., only life in a vacuum would be completely safe.

In a two year chapter of E.T.'s life she adjusted to changes of home, gravity, injury, and more people. She grew two inches in length, and gained weight to match her growth. Her skin became lustrous and the scar on her arm became hard to see. She was hungry and busy as ever. Whatever her life's experiences, E.T.'s character remained strong and adaptive. 

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Meet the Board...

For those I.I.S. members curious about "who we are," the following is a brief introduction to the 1998 I.I.S. Board of Directors, most of whom also help get each issue of *Iguana Times* to your mailbox.



1998 I.I.S. Board of Directors: Seated (left to right): Joe Wasilewski and AJ Gutman with friend. Standing (left to right): Michael Ripca, Robert W. Ehrig, Chuck Knapp, and Carl Fuhri. Photograph by Janet Fuhri.

Joe Wasilewski, I.I.S.'s new President, was born and raised in Chicago, IL. He moved to Miami, FL in 1973 and went to work for Bill Haast at the Miami Serpentarium where he was introduced to *Cyclura* residing at the tourist attraction. Since then his fascination with these incredible creatures has grown a great deal.

Joe received his B.S. degree in Biology from Florida International University in Miami, and became director of Natural Selections in 1981. His travels and studies have taken him through the Everglades, Central America, and the Caribbean. The subjects of his biological studies include American crocodiles, alligators, diamondback terrapins, rattlesnakes, as well as non-reptiles such as the everglades mink, osprey and southern bald eagle.

Joe is dedicated to bringing the plight of many species of animals to the attention of the general public. He reaches out in a big way, and is

now consulting with major television productions such as *National Geographic Explorer*, *CNN*, *The Today Show*, and *Bill Nye the Science Guy...* just to name a few.

AJ Gutman, Recording and Correspondence Secretary, and Membership Coordinator, has a background in both Computer Science and Classical Literature. She prefers, however, to call herself an existentialist zookeeper, operating the Connecticut Iguana Sanctuary in West Hartford where she lives with her emergency physician husband, Michael, and sons, Joshua and Elijah.

AJ joined the I.I.S. in 1995 upon receiving her first green iguana as a gift from her sons. Since that first little iguana who refused to thrive, AJ has acquired a fair degree of expertise in nutrition and indoor habitat design, as well as the physiological and psychological aspects of iguana rehabilitation.

She often lectures on these subjects, as well as on endangered iguanas and the conservation work of the I.I.S.

As Membership Coordinator, AJ manages the I.I.S. membership database, as well as coordinating mailings of *Iguana Times*, and other promotions. A native Canadian, she tries her best to keep her colleagues from abusing the English language with her editorial suggestions for *Iguana Times*.

Michael Ripca, Director, and Production Coordinator of *Iguana Times*. Mike is a graphic designer, and Macintosh computer consultant, who has a heavy interest in lizards, particularly iguanas. He works for the American College of Physicians in Philadelphia as their Electronic Prepress Specialist in the Graphic Services department.

After joining the I.I.S. in March 1992, he and his wife, Janet (an advertising designer), offered to redesign *Iguana Times* and take over the duties of layout, design, typesetting, and print coordination. Since then, they have also added some editorial, advertising and promotions assistance, and Web site design to the list as well. They live in Drexel Hill, PA with their daughter, Olivia.

Robert W. Ehrig, Founder and Vice President of the I.I.S., and Managing Editor of *Iguana Times*, was born in the 1950s in South Philadelphia, and saw his first dinosaur at the Pennsylvania Academy of Natural Sciences at the age of four. After moving to rural Pennsylvania, he discovered the woods, and rarely came out. He bought his first iguana at age ten.

In 1970, Bob spent time in Hawaii discovering the Tropics—things were never quite the same for him after that. He traveled to Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Yucatan, Mexico, and Belize, before visiting Florida for the first time in 1972.

He spent most of the '70's traveling between the Florida Keys and Pennsylvania, working as an operating room technician and bartending. He moved to Big Pine Key permanently in 1978. There Bob established Finca Cyclura to breed rhinoceros iguanas, which became the largest producer of that species in the U.S. He has had 12 years of successful, continuous breeding to-date. He founded Native Landscape, a native plant nursery and tree-planting business, which operated from 1980 to 1989.

Throughout the 1980s and early '90's, he traveled to Costa Rica and the Caribbean many times, and became involved with iguanas in the Bahamas.

In addition, he worked for the Florida Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy, and as a biological consultant. In 1989, he started the Invasive Exotic Vegetation Control Program for the National Key Deer Refuge, and in August 1990, founded the International Iguana Society Inc. with the help of some of the most renowned iguana biologists of that time.

In 1995, Bob established The Red Creek Biological Reserve with his wife, Marcie and long-time friend, Richard Moyroud. Adjacent to the Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary in the Stann Creek District in Belize, it now stands at 605 acres of prime wildlife habitat in an important corridor in one of the most diverse ecosystems still in existence in the world.

Chuck Knapp, Director, has an undergraduate background in Zoology. His biological interests have predominantly been aquatic vertebrates and ecosystems. He became interested (read: obsessed) in iguanas while working at the John G. Shedd Aquarium. At the Aquarium he worked with two species of rock iguana, *Cyclura nubila caymanensis* and *C. n. lewisi*. His fascination for the iguanas influenced him to initiate and implement annual field surveys of *Cyclura cyclura figginsii* using the Aquarium's research vessel and public participation.

He is currently employed part-time by the Aquarium while earning his Master's degree in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation at the University of Florida. His Master's work involves studying the population dynamics of an introduced colony of *C. c. inornata* in the Exumas, Bahamas.

Carl Fuhri, Treasurer of the I.I.S., has been turning rocks and beating the bushes looking for reptiles for over fifty years. In 1986 he moved to South Florida with his family and shortly thereafter joined the newly formed Everglades Herpetological Society. At that time his interest was mainly in snakes. In 1989 he bought his first iguana. It has been a love affair ever since.

Carl now breeds *Iguana iguana*, *Cyclura nubila*, *Cyclura cornuta* and several other species of Australian lizards with his wife, Janet, at Dragon's Glade in Bonita Springs. Carl is an amateur herpetoculturist, who enjoys using vacation time to assist scientists with iguana research in the Caribbean. He has been a member of the International Iguana Society since the first year of its inception.

OBITUARY

Captain Ron Harrod

1943–1998

Captain Ron Harrod died on 9 April, 1998 along the Myaca River, Florida with his sons at his side. He died after a short, but devastating bout of cancer. He was 55 years old.

Ron was a strong supporter and a charter member of the International Iguana Society.

Ron will be remembered as a great photographer, contributing many excellent photographs of numerous iguana species for *Iguana Times*. He was the captain of the 38 ft. trawler, *Essence*, which was used by the I.I.S. as a research vessel in the Exuma Island chain in the Bahamas from April to August, 1993. Due to Ron's generosity, a survey of many populations of the Exuma Island iguana, *Cyclura cyclura figginsii*, was performed. The first census of *Cyclura rileyi nuchalis*, in the Exumas, was also accomplished. Vegetation surveys of numerous islands throughout the Exumas and Bahamas were initiated.

Richard Montanucci, Robert Ehrig, Richard Moyroud, Chuck Knapp, Tina Henize, and Linda Aurenhammer were transported around various iguana habitats in the Bahamas by Captain Ron. He was also a former Delta Airlines pilot.

Ron Harrod, our friend, will be missed.

Robert Ehrig

The International Iguana Society is deeply saddened by the passing of Ron Harrod. Ron was a long-time member and friend of the Society. He volunteered his photographic skills, with many of his photographs appearing in the earlier issues of *Iguana Times*. Ron also graciously volunteered the use of his boat *Essence* to conduct iguana surveys in the Exumas.

I became friends with Ron during a two week cruise down the Exuma chain in search of *Cyclura cyclura figginsii*. We, along with fellow IIS member Tina Henize, were conducting surveys of *C. c. figginsii* populations along the route to Great Exuma. It was my first trip to the Exumas and had a strong impact on the rest of my professional and academic career.

Ron's 38 foot Choy Lee trawler, *Essence* was our home and mode of transport down the island chain. During times of travel and relaxation aboard the boat, Ron taught us about photographic history, birds, navigation, and nautical knots. He was a regular "jack of all trades." To this day, I remember his teachings and I can still tie his knots. Ron was avid with his movie camera and documented every aspect of the trip. I still remember him getting somewhat agitated when Tina and I captured our only *C. c. figginsii* and released him before he had a chance to shoot video. It was very important for him to document all aspects of island life.

Ron will be missed, but I am sure that the people that knew him will always remember him. I know I will.

Chuck Knapp





**Green
iguana
head.**
*10 October,
1992*



**Male Grand Cayman
blue iguana.**
10 October, 1992
3 year-old male,
Cyclura nubila lewisi.



First moments of life. September, 1991
Hatchling Cuban iguana, *Cyclura nubila*. First published on cover of *Iguana Times*, Vol. 1, No. 4.



Rhino hatching. 10 October, 1992
Second day in the life of a rhinoceros iguana, *Cyclura cornuta*. Cover of *Iguana Times*, Vol. 1, No. 6.



Exhausted hatchling. 10 October, 1992
Hatchling rhino rests after struggling to free itself from egg.



Fighting back. 10 October, 1992
Hatchling rhino defends itself shortly after birth.

All photography by Ron Harrod at Finca Cyclura Reserve, 1991–1992.

NEWS OF THE SOCIETY

Iguanas on the Web

The International Iguana Society is proud to announce that it has a new site on the World Wide Web. We're very excited about this new venture. The site has been successful in drawing a steady flow of new members, as well as selling back issues of *Iguana Times* and t-shirts.

The Society has known for a while that it needed more exposure, and that the Internet was one of the best resources—it just took a while to get it off the ground.

The creation of a Web site was a hot topic at the I.I.S. Board of Directors' meeting this year in Bonita Springs, Florida. After the meeting, Board member and graphic designer, Mike Ripca, decided to dive in and take crack at it. Designing

Web pages was something he had wanted to try for a long time, but could never find the time. The meeting gave him the motivation he needed to *make* the time for it. The fact that Mike has a rather large archive of electronic artwork to draw upon, from designing and producing *Iguana Times* for the last six years, certainly helped.

If you haven't visited yet, you can find us at www.members.home.net/iis/IISHomePage.html.

The site is constantly growing and changing (one of the many benefits of Web design). If you have an idea for a new page or section, or even if you spot a typo, or come across a dead link on the site, please feel free to e-mail Mike and let him know (Lizard1@aol.com). If you happen to be a


Web designer or programmer and have any comments or suggestions, Mike would love to hear from you.

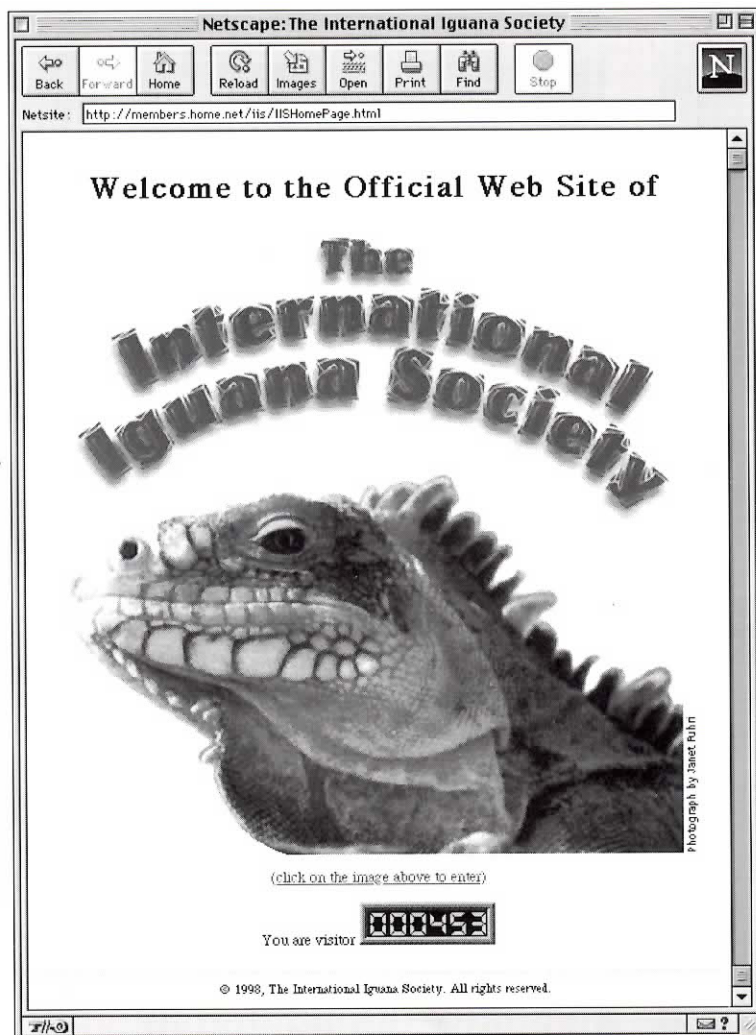
Some sections we plan to add or expand upon in the future are:

Family Iguanidae: this new section will include a color-coded world map showing the locations of all species of iguanas. This map will have links to pages with photographs and full descriptions of each iguana, including current endangered status, estimated populations, and much more.

Iguana Rescue: this new section will contain information about the efforts of individuals and iguana rescue groups around the world, with links to related Web sites.

Iguana Care Sheet: we plan to expand this existing section very soon with more detailed information.

We would like to express our thanks to Melissa Kaplan, John Iverson, and Bill Hayes who made a valiant attempt at creating a Web site for us a few years ago. We'd also like to thank Manny Lorenzo for maintaining a few I.I.S. Web pages on his Good Green Fun site. 



LIZARD LETTERS

June 15, 1998

The Honorable Bob Miller
Governor of Nevada
State Capitol Bldg.
Carson City, NV 89701

Dear Governor Miller,

I am writing to you to express my deep concerns about the commercial trade in live reptiles allowed by the state of Nevada. I was recently asked to review proposed CITES II listings for several species of desert lizards. Included with the review material were the commercial harvest numbers for Nevada lizards and snakes for the years 1986 to the first half of 1995. The numbers collected for some popular, pet-trade species, such as collared lizards, desert iguanas, desert horned lizards ("horned toads") and chuckwallas, are staggering. I have attached a copy of the commercial report with my letter.

The trade in Nevada reptiles raises both ethical and ecological concerns. Some species are especially vulnerable to depletion from large-scale collecting because of their life history characteristics (slow to mature, long adult life, and low recruitment levels) and/or the ease with which they are collected. Therefore, it is quite likely that current levels of harvest are not sustainable for some of the listed species. Moreover, scientific studies were not carried out beforehand to determine what level of harvest could be tolerated by each species, nor did the Nevada Division of Wildlife (NDW) establish bag limits, age/gender restrictions, or limited seasons for commercial take. Thus, the current trade is essentially an unregulated enterprise, and without scientific basis.

The NDW advocates the "consumptive uses" of wildlife, but it can be argued that the commercial trade in live reptiles is more than consumption; it is grossly wasteful, resulting in high levels of mortality, and placing species in jeopardy. We should question not only the ethics, but also the wisdom (from the standpoint of conservation principles and sustainable economy) of allowing this trade to proceed unregulated. Wildlife is for the enjoyment of everyone, but many people will be denied the opportunity to study, photograph, or simply observe these creatures in nature if commercial dealers continue their activities unabated. In an era of heightened environmental awareness and concern for protecting biodiversity, the trade in wild-caught Nevada reptiles is senseless, deplorable and anachronistic.

The commercialization of reptiles in Nevada has also created law enforcement problems for the adjoining states of Arizona, California, and Utah where commercial collecting is prohibited. As the numbers of reptiles decline in southern Nevada (where about 30 dealers now operate), the temptation increases to make illegal forays into the adjoining states to obtain animals. Desert iguanas, collared lizards, horned lizards and chuckwallas in the northern Mojave Desert of California look like Nevada animals and are therefore easily "laundered" through Nevada dealers. Several cases have already come to light where color phases of species known to occur only in California or Arizona (e.g. red-back or red-tail color phases of chuckwallas) were claimed by unscrupulous collectors to originate from Nevada, whereas clearly they did not.

While I believe that people should be allowed to keep native reptiles as pets, there are other ways to provide them with animals which minimize the impact on natural populations, namely, commercial captive breeding, or by issuing state permits to allow individuals to collect their own pet lizard or snake. Commercial breeders of reptiles could provide many of the desired kinds for the pet industry, but unfortunately they cannot compete with dealers supplying cheap, wild-caught specimens from Nevada. The reptiles coming out of Nevada are usually sold in volume to national retail pet store chains. The vast majority of these reptiles are never purchased by individuals, but die a slow death from starvation or disease in an air-conditioned store. I have observed this scenario time and again.

In my view, commercialization of Nevada reptiles is an unethical and potentially detrimental activity that must come to an end. The Nevada Division of Wildlife should adopt collecting regulations similar to those of Arizona and California. Such regulations, for the most part, do not deny people the right to keep native reptiles as pets, but they ensure that wildlife, as a renewable resource, will be used wisely so that future generations of Americans can enjoy them. I hope that you share my views and that you will encourage the Nevada Division of Wildlife, through its Board of Wildlife Commissioners, to make appropriate changes in their regulations that will safeguard America's wildlife heritage. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Richard R. Montanucci
Associate Professor of Biology

Commercial Collection of Reptiles in Nevada* 1986-1995

Common Name	Scientific Name	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995**	Total
Desert Iguana	<i>Dipsosaurus dorsalis</i>	619	1473	1705	1629	2337	9158
Chuckwalla	<i>Sauromalus obesus</i>	113	482	303	1351	1337	3805

* Based on Monthly Commercial Collection Reports prepared by permitted collectors and provided to the Nevada Division of Wildlife.

**January-June 1995

LIZARD LETTERS

June 13, 1998

Dear Editors,

Issues of *Iguana Times* continue to be excellent. The natural history articles, research papers, and observational studies of wild iguana behavior are all very fine. Of special interest are the "Youth in Science" articles which give hope for the future of education and conservation. And of course, the photographs are fantastic!

One of my favorite pieces is the one about Tee Beau (Vol. 4, #1): "Living with Tee Beau: Sharing Your Life and Home with a 26-year-old Rhino Iguana." Another favorite is John Bendon's story about Pinkie, from "Lizard Letters" (Vol. 3, #1?): "The Beast of Andros—My Two Years Cohabitation with a Cycluran iguana." Both pieces are engaging, and a great pleasure to read. With beautiful detail, they show the character of individual, captive iguanas, and of particular importance they show what the iguanas mean to their keepers: Tee Beau's keeper Monty says "I don't believe that I could have accomplished what I have without the companionship of a half-hateful iguana named Tee Beau." And Bendon writes of his "Caribbean friend" Pinkie "...I feel that however much I did for him, he gave me much more than I ever gave him." These pieces each get the reader caring about the iguanas partly by showing their charming—if moody—behavior; their unique and endearing "lizardly ways." They reveal a rapport between human and iguana. I showed the story of Pinkie to a friend who remarked "I never thought of an iguana as a pet you could love." While that may be a sappy statement to a Ph.D. in iguanine biology, there are a lot of people who aren't Ph.D.s; who aren't going to appreciate iguanas as objects of study. Perhaps instead they could be encouraged to view iguanas as equally worthy of affection—and so, protection—as pandas, lions, whales, bluebirds, baby seals, dolphins, zebras.

On that note, I propose that *Iguana Times* editors consider delegating a regular feature for "anecdotes": observational/experiential "true stories" of living with pet iguanas—greens, chuckawallas, *Cyclurus* spp., etc. That way, the science articles and papers can be separated from the anecdotes. I bet a lot of iguana keepers would send in very readable, moving stories about their beloved pets. (Ouch!) If space is limited, the features could be kept to 500 words or less, and include one "snapshot."

Thanks—and thanks again for *Iguana Times*

Sincerely,
Wendy Townsend

IGUANA NEWSBRIEFS

Delicatissima Stamps Issued on Anguilla

Anguilla's sparse wildlife (fauna) population has been expanded in recent years with the re-emergence of the illusive *Iguana delicatissima*.

The Island's appointed custodian of its Marine, fauna, flora, and historical heritage, the Anguilla National Trust, has spearheaded a thrust to ensure the propagation of the iguana.

It is in promotion of this interest that the Anguilla General Post Office has issued a set of four postage stamps to assist in making the public aware of the importance of protecting this endangered reptile.

The stamp issue endorsed by the "World Wildlife Fund for Nature" (WWF) depicts the *Iguana delicatissima* in four environment settings and the artist's interpretation of the subject is strikingly realistic.

Iguanas were historically abundant on every island from Anguilla to Martinique. Over the years this situation has changed dramatically due to loss of forest, hunting for food and as well the impact of predators such as dogs, mongoose, cats, and grazers like goats who compete for food and damage the forest.

As a result of these pressures, the Lesser Antillean iguanas are threatened with extinction across their range and many islands such as St. Kitts, Nevis and Antigua no longer have iguanas.

On Anguilla the small iguana population inhabits a relatively small section of the northern coast living in rock crevices. The reptiles

feed mainly on shrubs such as Chink, Cattle Tongue, Mutton Polly, Antigua Balsam and White Cedar.

To enhance the chances for juvenile survival, the Anguilla National Trust is considering captive breeding of the *Iguana delicatissima*, a move which would significantly help to ensure the survival of this endangered species.



Source: <http://web.ai/stamps/iguana.html>

IGUANA NEWSBRIEFS

October 30, 1998

Cyclura Iguana Smuggling Indictments

Thomas E. Scott, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, Lois J. Schiffer, Assistant Attorney General for the Environment and Natural Resources Division of the U.S. Department of Justice and Jorge Picon, Resident Agent in Charge for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Miami, announced that a federal Grand Jury sitting in Miami has returned an 11 count indictment charging Dwayne D. Cunningham, 41 of Pembroke Pines, and Patricia E. Cunningham, 35 and Robert A. Lawracy, 32, both of West Palm Beach, Florida with illegally trafficking in reptiles protected under domestic and international [law] in violation of the Lacey Act (the Federal anti-wildlife trafficking statute) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA), as well as charging the defendants with conspiracy and smuggling. Each of the ten felony charges in the indictment are punishable by up to 5 years in jail and up to a \$250,000 fine, while the single misdemeanor, the ESA violation, is punishable by up to a year in jail and a \$100,000 fine. Dwayne Cunningham is named in seven felony charges and a single misdemeanor; Patricia Cunningham faces four felony charges and a single misdemeanor; and Robert Lawracy faces four felony charges. Lawracy surrendered to federal authorities today. According to statements in Court, arrest warrants are pending against the remaining two defendants.

According to the indictment, from 1992 through December 1997, the defendants engaged in

trafficking reptile species that originated on various West Indies islands and that are protected under an international treaty known as CITES, the Convention On International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora, which is implemented in the United States through the Endangered Species Act. Several species of *Cyclura* (Ground Iguanas), including the Exuma Island Rock Iguana and the Virgin Island Rock Iguana and Red-footed Tortoises, are alleged to have been smuggled into the United States aboard cruise ships touring the Caribbean and the Bahamas that employed Dwayne Cunningham and Lawracy. The species of *Cyclura* listed in the indictment, are species currently threatened with extinction, and listed on Appendix I of CITES, the highest level of protection available under the treaty. According to the allegations in the indictment, the defendants held none of the required documents for the species they imported, possessed and sold.

The indictment further alleges that in an effort to conceal the smuggling of Exuma Island Rock Iguanas, the Cunninghams procured from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service a permit for the captive breeding of species listed under the Endangered Species Act to create the impression their sale of these reptiles stemmed from a viable domestic breeding program rather than smuggling of wild-caught animals. Moreover, the indictment also charges that in furtherance of the conspiracy to trade in smuggled Caribbean reptiles, Dwayne Cunningham and Lawracy stole mature red footed tortoises in 1995 from the Curacao Zoo and smuggled them to

the United States.

A second part of the indictment centers on the smuggling of highly protected Madagascan Tree Boas, Madagascan Ground Boas, Radiated Tortoises and Spider Tortoises, from Madagascar into Germany, and ultimately into Florida. The Cunninghams are alleged in the indictment to have been couriers, purchasers and sellers of these reptiles. Other members of this smuggling ring, including several German citizens, have already been the subject of indictments in the Middle District of Florida.

Mr. Scott commended the work of Special Agent Chip Bepko of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service for his work on the case.

The United States was represented in this matter by Thomas Watts-Fitzgerald, Chief of the Environmental Crimes Section at the U.S. Attorney's Office and Peter J. Murtha, Senior Trial Attorney, United States Department of Justice, Wildlife and Marine Resources

Green Iguanas Float Into Biological History

The journal *Nature* recently published the first clear-cut evidence of iguanas naturally colonizing a new oceanic island. Fifteen green iguanas were documented arriving on the Lesser Antilles island of Anguilla. The iguanas landed on Anguilla in October 1995 on a clump of trees and vegetation that floated 200 miles from the island of Guadelupe. Hurricane Luis tracked near Guadelupe in September 1995 and probably caused trees with iguanas in them to wash into the sea. Strong ocean

currents moved the vegetation raft into the open sea and a month or so later onto the Anguilla shoreland. While iguanas rafting and dispersing to a new island home is generally accepted by most biologists, this recent incident is clear proof that rafting is a viable means of transportation for iguanas. Iguanas are excellent organisms for this mode of transportation. They are able to survive long periods without fresh water and would be able to eat many species of plants on these rafts. This is often cited as how iguanas colonized remote islands such as Fiji.

Dr. Ellen J. Censky is lead author of the paper and director of the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History. Dr. Censky and Dr. Judy Dudley and Karim Hodge interviewed witnesses of the iguana landing and tracked and monitored the dispersal of the iguanas. The arrival of 15 animals was verified. Anguilla is also home to a small population of *Iguana delicatissima*. Though the arriving green iguanas were weak and dehydrated, they survived. In March researchers found an apparently gravid female green iguana which signaled a successful colonization of a new species.

It seems likely that the iguanas have established themselves on Anguilla. This could prove problematic for the *Iguana delicatissima* which have a lower reproductive output and have been out competed by *Iguana iguana* on other islands.

The two species may also hybridize.

Rafting is a major explanation for the distribution of animals on islands in the Caribbean and elsewhere. Over the millions of years

IGUANA NEWSBRIEFS

there have been many storms capable of producing similar events and transporting many species to new islands. Reptiles are excellent candidates for this type of dispersal because of their ability to survive long trips under harsh conditions.

Source: New York Times

U.S. Reptile Dealer Faces Wildlife Smuggling and Conspiracy Charges

A 5-year investigation by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service special agents of illegal international trade in reptiles resulted in the August 6 arrest of Tommy Edward Crutchfield. Crutchfield, a U.S. reptile dealer, is charged with wildlife smuggling, conspiracy, and money laundering. He is the 18th person charged to date in this wide-reaching case involving wildlife trafficking that spans six continents.

Crutchfield was apprehended by Federal authorities in Miami as he returned to the United States after being expelled from Belize. The former Florida businessman has spent the last 5 months in jail in Belize fighting that country's February 28 expulsion order. He now faces U.S. charges based on his alleged involvement in a major international reptile smuggling ring.

Last October, a Federal grand jury in Orlando, Florida, returned a multi-count indictment against Crutchfield, his wife, two former employees, and two other individuals based on the Service's ongoing scrutiny of the highly lucrative black market reptile trade. The indictment alleges that the six

were part of an international smuggling ring that is believed to have brought hundreds of rare and endangered snakes and tortoises out of Madagascar into Germany. From there, the animals, worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, were smuggled into the United States and Canada where they were sold to wildlife dealers and private collectors. Protected reptiles from Australia, Indonesia, and various South American and Caribbean countries were also traded.

The smuggled reptiles, which were typically concealed in suitcases and transported aboard commercial airline flights, include highly prized Madagascar tree and ground boas, radiated tortoises, and spider tortoises—species that occur naturally only in Madagascar, an island off the southeastern coast of Africa. These animals, and the other reptiles allegedly smuggled, purchased, and sold, are protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)—a global agreement that regulates world wildlife trade.

Crutchfield, who was named in all 10 counts of the indictment returned by the grand jury in October, is charged with multiple offenses of smuggling, violations of the Lacey Act (a Federal statute that allows the United States to prosecute individuals for violating international wildlife protection laws, including CITES), conspiracy, and money laundering.

If found guilty, Crutchfield could be sentenced to up to 5 years in prison and fined as much as \$250,000 on each smuggling and Lacey

Act count. Conviction on the money laundering charges could result in prison terms of up to 20 years and penalties as high as \$500,000 per count.

Crutchfield, formerly the president of Tom Crutchfield's Reptile Enterprises, Inc., located in Lake Panasoffkee, Florida, was generally considered one of the largest reptile importer/exporters in the United States before he left the country in the spring of 1997. He was on supervised release following completion of a 5-month prison sentence for a 1995 conviction for smuggling endangered Fiji Island iguanas when he fled to Belize after being notified by the Justice Department that he was under investigation. He also faces potential penalties for violating the supervised release.

The reptile investigation has already produced significant results, according to Service law enforcement officials. In addition to the charges against Crutchfield and his associates, four individuals from Germany, South Africa, Canada, and Japan have been arrested and successfully prosecuted in the United States. Of these, German citizen Wolfgang Michael Kloe received the stiffest sentence—a \$10,000 fine and 46-month prison term—after pleading guilty to six counts including conspiracy, smuggling, money laundering, attempted escape, and Lacey Act violations. Three other Germans charged in the case remain at large.

The Service's investigation of the illegal reptile trade has also led to charges in the United States against three Florida residents and a European for dealing in reptiles. One of the Florida residents, Matthew Lerer,

was sentenced June 25 to 6 months electronically monitored home detention, 100 hours of community service, and 3 years' probation. Friedrich Karl Artur Postma of The Netherlands, who was stopped at Orlando International Airport last August when he tried to smuggle in 13 radiated tortoises stuffed inside 5 socks, was sentenced to 1 year in jail and a \$3,000 fine.

In addition to these charges in the U.S., authorities in Germany and Canada have taken legal action against two Germans, a South African, and a Canadian for their involvement in illegal reptile trade.

"As the world's largest importer of wildlife, the United States has a special responsibility to prevent the illegal exploitation of all imperiled species," Clark said. "The record of indictments, arrests, and prosecutions for reptile smuggling from the past 2 years shows that the Service, the Department of Justice, and many of our international counterparts are committed to finding and stopping those who try to profit from protected wildlife. I would like to thank law enforcement authorities in Canada, Germany, The Netherlands, and now Belize for their assistance in and support of this investigation.

This case should send a clear message to those who traffic in rare and endangered reptiles that profiteering at the expense of wildlife will not be tolerated by the United States or by the world community."

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish and wildlife and their habitats

IGUANA NEWSBRIEFS

for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service's nearly 93 million acres include 514 national wildlife refuges, 78 ecological services field stations, 66 national fish hatcheries, 50 wildlife coordination areas, and 38 wetland management districts with waterfowl production areas.

The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, administers the Endangered Species Act, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes Federal excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state wildlife agencies. This program is a cornerstone of the Nation's wildlife management efforts, funding fish and wildlife restoration, boating access, hunter education, shooting ranges, and related projects across America. -FWS-

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Law Enforcement requested that I notify CITES-L readers that a press release has been issued (Aug. 7, 1998) regarding the arrest of U.S. reptile dealer Tommy Edward Crutchfield (dba: Tom Crutchfield Reptile Enterprises; Lake Panasoffkee, Florida). Mr. Crutchfield was recently expelled from Belize and arrested as he returned to the United States on August 6, 1998. According to the press release, Mr. Crutchfield stood indicted since October 1997 in relation to his alleged involvement in a major international live reptile smuggling ring. Mr. Crutchfield is currently jailed, awaiting further legal

proceedings in the United States.

The press release also makes note of the recent sentencing of Florida resident Matthew Lerer, and Dutch citizen Karl Artur "Eddy" Postma (dba: Sauria Holland), in relation to their illegal activities involving the live reptile trade. Two German citizens, one South African, and one Canadian citizen have also been prosecuted for their involvement in this case by their respective governments, and the U.S. government has arrested and prosecuted four individuals from Germany, South Africa, Canada and Japan.

The USFWS press release can be found on the Service's Internet Website at <www.fws.gov>.

Please contact Sandra Cleva (703) 358-1949 or Mitch Snow (202) 208-5634 if you have questions regarding the press release. I can be contacted for general questions related to CITES implementation or other similar issues.

Thank you.

Bruce J. Weissgold, CITES Policy Specialist U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Management Authority 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 700 Arlington, Virginia 22203 Tel: (703) 358-1917 Fax: (703) 358-2298 E-mail: Bruce_Weissgold@mail.fws.gov

More Jamaican Iguanas Released

On 14 February 1998 a third group of Jamaican iguanas (*Cyclura collei*) was released into the Hellshire Hills of southeastern Jamaica as part of an ongoing effort to reestablish this species in its native habitat. The Hellshire Hills ecosystem supports the remnant population of this critically endangered iguana and provides the only two nesting areas known to exist. Rediscovered in 1990, the Jamaican iguana has been the subject of an intensive recovery program supported largely through the efforts of the AZA Limd TAG and participating U.S. zoos. To date, nearly 20 more have contributed resources to this important project.

These recent six releases bring to 14 the total number of iguanas released since 1996; an additional six will be released in June 1998. The iguanas are collected as hatchlings and then headstarted for five to six years at the Hope Zoo in Kingston until large enough to avoid predation by the introduced mongoose. The field project, which also entails protection of nesting sites, predator control and monitoring of released iguanas and the wild population, is currently being funded, in part, by two AZA Conservation Endowment Fund (CEF) grants.

The recent releases were coordinated by staff from the Fort Worth Zoo and involved personnel from the University of West Indies, Hope Zoo, Natural Resources Conservation Authority, and the Indianapolis and Sedgwick County Zoos. The iguanas were fitted with radio

transmitters and will be monitored for movements and survival over the next six months. All previous releases are believed to still survive indicating that headstarted iguanas are excellent candidates for restocking/repatriation efforts.

Source: Rick Hudson, Chair, Lizard Advisory Group Rock Iguana SSP Coordinator Fort Worth Zoo

Navassa Island Iguana NOT rediscovered!

Despite rumors to the contrary, the Navassa island rhinoceros iguana, *Cyclura cornuta onchiopis* has NOT been rediscovered.

In August, a research group organized by the Center for Marine Conservation spent two weeks at Navassa Island. The 5.2 sq. kilometer (3 sq. mile) island lies 35 miles southwest of the SW tip of Haiti, between Cuba and Hispaniola. The isolated island was mined for deposits of guano in the last century, which at that time was used as a fertilizer ingredient. The lower elevations were cleared, but most of the island between 120-270 ft was not disturbed. The iguana was last seen alive around the turn of the century. Mike Smith searched the island for the iguana, the endemic boa, and curlytail lizard. None of these species were found.

The island is a US possession, which Haiti has tried to recently claim.

Source: Mike Smith, Center for Marine Conservation

I.I.S. Bookstore

Photograph courtesy of Jayme Gordon



As a service to our members, a limited number of publications will be distributed through the I.I.S. Bookstore. The following publications are now available:

Green Iguana, The Ultimate Owner's Manual, by James W. Hatfield. 1996. **\$28.00** (including postage); **\$35.00** (nonmembers). Covers just about everything from birth to death of an iguana. 600+ pp. Limited quantities.

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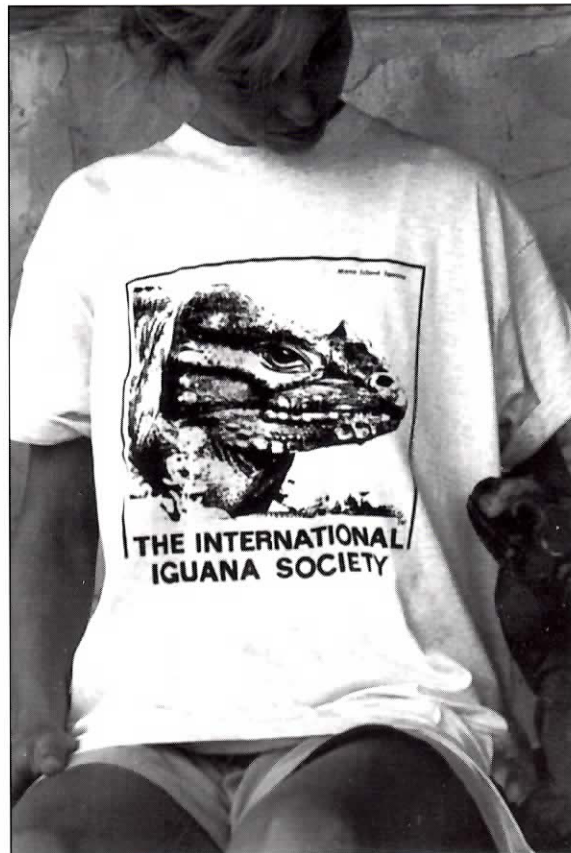
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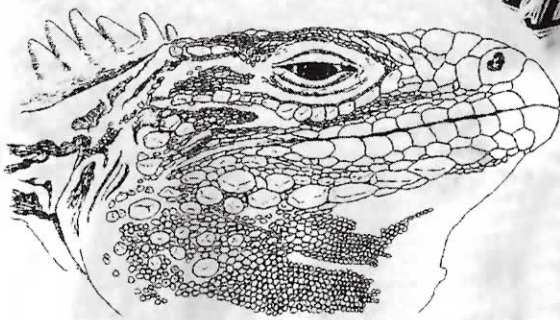
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On Booby Cay, Bahamas, goats, rats, and *Casuarina* continue to threaten *Cyclura carinata bartschi*'s environment. Photograph: Joe Wasilewski