



## INTRODUCED SPECIES

# Black Spiny-tailed Iguana (*Ctenosaura similis*) on New Providence Island, The Bahamas

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At about 0900 h on 17 August 2018, the author received information from Ms. Laureen Aban-Hailey about an iguana in one of the storage rooms at the Green Parrots Bar and Grill on East Bay Street, Nassau (25°4'35.88"N, 77°19'42.46"W). The author immediately retrieved the animal, which the staff said had been brought in by a visitor who most likely came in by yacht. No other information was given.

The iguana was a juvenile (Fig. 1) and was retrieved unharmed from inside the wall of the storage room, where it was wedged. I took morphometric information and photographs, which were sent to Dr. Chuck Knapp, Dr. John Iverson, Dr. Chris Pellechia, and Sandy Buckner, all of whom confirmed it to be a Black Spiny-tailed Iguana (*Ctenosaura similis*). The iguana was taken to Ardastra Gardens Zoo in Nassau.

The Black-Spiny tailed Iguana is native to Mexico and Central America (Krysko et al. 2003), but was introduced into southwestern Florida about 30 years ago (Krysko et al. 2003; Engeman et al. 2011) and has since spread to other parts of Florida. The species was first reported in The Bahamas in

March 1992 by Nick Wardle on Stirrup Cay in the Berry Island Archipelago, where it was said to have been intentionally introduced by a worker on the Cay (Sandra Buckner, pers. comm.). Since then, the species has proliferated on the Cay and is listed as an invasive species. I cannot say if the individual caught at the Green Parrots Bar and Grill was a stowaway that a visitor found on their yacht or a “pet” that escaped or was released. To my knowledge, this is the first record of a Black Spiny-tailed Iguana on New Providence.

### Acknowledgements

I thank the Green Parrots Bar and Grill for calling The Bahamas National Trust regarding the iguana and Sandra Buckner for her invaluable historical contributions and meticulous note taking on amphibians and reptiles in The Bahamas. I also thank Shannan Yates for assisting with the collection of morphometric information on the iguana, Lynn Gape for the use of her camera, and Bonnie Young of the Ardastra Gardens and Zoo for housing the specimen.



**Fig. 1.** A juvenile Black Spiny-tailed Iguana (*Ctenosaura similis*), the first record of the species from New Providence Island, Commonwealth of the Bahamas. Photograph by the author.

### Literature Cited

- Engeman, R., E. Jacobson, M.L. Avery, and W.E. Meshaka. 2011. The aggressive invasion of exotic reptiles in Florida with a focus on prominent species: A review. *Current Zoology* 57: 599–612.
- Krysko, K., F. King, K. Enge, and A. Reppas. 2003. Distribution of the Introduced Black Spiny-tailed Iguana (*Ctenosaura similis*) on the southwestern coast of Florida. *Florida Scientist* 66: 141–146.