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IGUANAS

Lesser Antillean Iguana

Iguana delicatissima

Iguana delicatissima is a large, herbivorous iguana from the northern Lesser Antilles that grows up to 130 cm long. It is critically endangered in the wild and is kept and bred only in a few zoos and by a few private keepers. It needs a very large, tall enclosure with strong heat, UVB, a seasonal rhythm and a permanent nesting site.

Family: Iguanidae Former name: *Iguana nudicollis*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**80-130 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**20-32 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal and terrestrial**
Habitat	**Dry forest, rainforest and wetland**
Difficulty	**Expert**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**200 × 150 × 180 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**26-34 °C**
Basking spot	**38-45 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-28 °C**
Humidity	**60-80%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Plants**
Kept	**Singly or one male with several females**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**24-36 months**
Clutch size	**4-26 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1-2**
Incubation	**83-97 days** at 29-31 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
EU annex	**Annex B**
IUCN	**Critically Endangered (CR)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	An adult needs at least 3 m² of floor space, and a pair at least 4 m², for example 200 × 150 cm for one animal.
TEMPERATURE	The basking spot should be 38-45 °C all year, and the heat should cover an area larger than the largest animal, so that the whole body is warmed evenly.
HUMIDITY AND WATER	Humidity should be high all year, around 60-80 %. Mist the enclosure every morning and in summer also in the evening, more heavily in the wet season than in the dry. In large rooms a humidifier helps.
WATER AND WATER QUALITY	Provide a bowl of clean water, changed daily. The species swims well but seldom enters the water of its own accord in captivity, so a pond is not necessary. It can, however, help keep humidity up.
LIGHTING AND UVB	*Iguana delicatissima* is diurnal and needs very strong light and UVB. The basking spot should have a UV index of 5-6 for adults and 3-4 for juveniles, and there should be a gradient down to zero in the low, shaded parts.
FEEDING	*Iguana delicatissima* is herbivorous. The basic diet is a mixture of as many kinds of dark green leaves and herbs as possible all year: dandelion, plantain, clover, alfalfa, thistles, ground elder, nettles and short-cut grass.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The species is calm, and aggressive clashes are rare, but it is more sensitive to stress than *Iguana iguana*. Persistent stress can stop breeding and in the worst case kill a female.
NATIVE RANGE	Anguilla, St Martin, Sint Maarten, St Barthélemy, Caribbean Netherlands, St Kitts & Nevis, Antigua & Barbuda, Guadeloupe, Dominica and Martinique.