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IGUANAS

Green Iguana

Iguana iguana

Iguana iguana is one of the largest lizards in the Americas: an arboreal herbivore that grows to 2 m in length and weighs several kilos. It is diurnal, lives near water and eats leaves, flowers and fruit. As an adult it needs a room rather than an enclosure, strong heat, strong UVB and a diet entirely free of animal protein, and it lives for 15-20 years.

Family: Iguanidae Former name: *Iguana coerulea; Iguana emarginata; Iguana lophryoides; Iguana melanoderma; Iguana minima; Iguana sapidissima*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**120-200 cm** total length incl. tail
Weight	**1,000-8,000 g**
Lifespan	**15-20 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal and semi-aquatic**
Habitat	**Dry forest, rainforest and wetland**
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**250 × 150 × 200 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**26-32 °C**
Basking spot	**40-50 °C**
Temperature, night	**22-27 °C**
Humidity	**60-80%**
Water	**Water section**
UVB	**Essential** Ferguson zone 3
Diet	**Plants**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Sexually mature	**24-60 months**
Clutch size	**10-70 eggs**
Clutches per year	**1**
Incubation	**70-120 days** at 29-32 °C

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
EU annex	**Annex B**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

An adult needs an enclosure or a whole room of at least 250 × 150 × 200 cm (length × width × height). Larger is always better.

TEMPERATURE

The air in the enclosure should be kept at 26-32 °C by day, with a warmer zone under the basking spot and a cooler one at the other end.

HUMIDITY AND WATER

The humidity should be 60-80 % by day and may rise towards 100 % at night. Mist the enclosure and the branches morning and evening so there are droplets to drink from, or use a drip or fogging system.

WATER AND WATER QUALITY

The animal must always have access to fresh water in a container large enough for it to lie in. The species drinks, bathes and often defecates in the water, so the container is cleaned and filled with fresh water every day.

LIGHTING AND UVB

Iguana iguana is diurnal and needs strong UVB all day to produce D3 and absorb calcium. Use powerful UVB tubes (T5 HO) or metal halide lamps that give Ferguson zone 3, that is, a UV index of around 3-4 at the basking spot.

FEEDING

Iguana iguana is a herbivore, and the diet must be entirely free of animal protein: no insects, cat or dog food, eggs or meat.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Young animals are handled briefly and calmly every day, but adults are strong and can cause serious injury. The tail can lash like a whip, the claws scratch deeply and the teeth can cut the skin open.

NATIVE RANGE

Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil, Trinidad & Tobago, Grenada, St Lucia, St Vincent & the Grenadines, Montserrat, Aruba, Curaçao and Caribbean Netherlands.