



Lone Mountain

• • • ANIMAL HOSPITAL • • •



Housing

Iguanas grow very large and at a very fast rate. Owners should invest in a larger aquarium.

Within a year most iguanas require large plywood or screen cage. Ideally, outfit a small room to house iguanas properly. Iguanas live solitary lives in the wild except for breeding and ideally should be housed individually in captivity.

Astroturf or 'Repti-carpet' makes a great lining because it is inexpensive and easily disinfected.

Natural bedding material like wood chips, bark, or compressed coconut fiber bedding can be used.

Avoid sand, gravel, dirt, crushed corn cob or kitty litter.

Large, sturdy branches and rocks can be used for decorations and climbing structures.

Live plants should be avoided because iguanas will ingest them.

Excerpts from Thomas Boyer's "Green Iguana Care," edited by Evelyn Crawford, Veterinary Assistants, and reviewed by Jacqueline Saint-Onge, DVM and Darius Starks, DVM, Lone Mountain Animal Hospital

Introduction to Green Iguanas

Description and Distribution

Large, diurnal arboreal lizard species from the humid tropical regions of the North, Central, and South America.

Sexing

Males have large femoral pores on the underside of their thighs that are usually visible at even young ages. Males have a hemipene bulge at the base of the tail, large dorsal spikes and opercula.

Size

Males can grow upwards of 6 ft long and weigh more than 8 lbs. Females reach lengths of 3-4 ft and obtain an average weight of 3-6 lbs.

Diet

Iguanas are herbivores. For young iguanas, provide a diet with 80 % vegetables and 20% iguana pellets, softened in water. Once an iguana reaches adult size or an age of two to three years, gradually reduce the pellets and increase the plant material to protect kidney function. The majority of diet should be leafy greens with a dark green color. Dark leafy greens that are rich in calcium include: collards, mustard, and turnip tops or greens, timothy hay, buffalo grass, dandelions (flowers, stems and leaves). Other vegetables and fruits can be fed, but do so sparingly. Iguanas should always have a fresh water supply large enough for them to soak entirely in.

Temperature

Basking temperature: 95 ° to 100 ° F
Ambient air temperature: 75 ° to 85 ° F
Temperatures should never fall below 75° F for extended periods.

Lighting

Requires access to ultraviolet B lighting (UVB lighting) for 12 – 16 hours per day. Change UVB bulbs every 6 months to ensure proper UVB ray emissions. Incandescent light bulbs or ceramic heat emitters of appropriate wattage can be used to maintain appropriate temperature range.

Humidity

In their native state, iguanas are usually found in close association with water. If you live in a drier climate, keep cage humid, but not wet by spraying it several times per week or use a humidifier. Recommended humidity levels are 60-80%.

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Ease of Care/ Handling

Due to their large size and attitudes to match, iguanas are not recommended for beginner reptile owners

Iguanas are not recommended as pets for children

Iguanas will use body posture and open mouth threats, such as hissing, to display when they feel threatened.

If held during these threat displays, they may try to free themselves by thrashing, wiggling, whipping their tails and using their claws to scratch

Iguanas will readily bite

Even a highly tamed and socialized iguana that is in pain, frightened, or startled may react with claws, tail or teeth

Taming Iguanas

The amount of time that goes into successful taming varies because individual iguanas vary. Some iguanas respond quickly to being handled.

By the end of the first year and with regular consistent handling, most iguanas will accept being handled

Mature male iguanas go through a 'rut' period for 2-3 months each year where they will not be amenable to handling

Taming takes patience, perseverance and an average of 6-9 months for the experienced and inexperienced tamer. However, a tame iguana is well worth the effort.



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Lone Mountain Animal Hospital is a full service facility that has been providing pets with the finest professional health care for over 20 years. We offer comprehensive examinations and consultations, along with preventive treatments, surgical & dental procedures, radiology & ultrasound, and laser surgery. We also offer an in-house laboratory to produce the fastest results possible. At Lone Mountain Animal Hospital we see dogs and cats, as well as a long list of exotics including: reptiles, birds, potbelly pigs, rodents, and more! Please visit us online at LMAH.net or call 702-645-3116 to schedule an appointment.