

Care & Information Sheet

Iguana

Includes red and green



Iguanas can become tame with daily handling. They will bob their head as a means of communication and a healthy iguana will sneeze to rid their bodies of excess salts. Iguanas come in different color variations such as red and green and some young iguanas are bright green, which help camouflage their bodies in the green leaves of the rainforest. They start life as six-inch hatchlings but the average adult size is 4-6 feet and with proper care and nutrition they can live 15 or more years. Never grab iguanas by their tails as they may detach their tail if grabbed from behind. Males may become territorial.

Habitat

- Appropriate size tank with a secure cover. As the iguana grows, a larger habitat will be required. The iguana should be able to freely turn and move around in the habitat. Also provide a hiding area and plenty of branches for basking.
- Maintain 70-90% humidity by misting daily.
- Temperature gradient (100°F for the warm end and 70°F for the cool end) Radiant heat is recommended. Use an incandescent light or ceramic heater as a primary heat source.
- Lighting – UVB rays with full spectrum lighting for 10-12 hours a day is required. An incandescent bulb can be used for the basking area during daylight hours only. A ceramic heater can be used at all hours.
- Use a pellet or mulch-type substrate. Iguanas may eat their substrate, if they do, switch to something safe to eat, like paper or an edible substrate.
- Clean the tank at least once a week. Place iguana in a secure habitat, scrub tank and furnishings with a 3% bleach solution, rinse thoroughly with water, removing all smell of bleach, dry tank and furnishings and add clean substrate.

Food & Water

- Feed the following mix: 70% Dark leafy greens: collard greens, spinach and mustard greens; 20% Bulk Vegetables: cabbage, carrots, green beans, peas, broccoli and zucchini (avoid iceberg lettuce as it has no nutritional value); 10% Fruit: mango, papaya, banana, strawberries and melon.
- Feed once a day. Food should be chopped or shredded, into small chunks and discarded if not consumed in 24 hours.
- Sprinkle food with calcium daily and a multi-vitamin/mineral supplement once or twice a week.
- Clean, fresh, filtered, chlorine-free water changed daily.

Grooming and Hygiene

- Trim your iguana's claws as needed.
- Iguanas regularly shed their skin so be sure the humidity is at an appropriate level to allow for proper shedding. To facilitate shedding, bathe in a large container that allows the iguana to immerse its entire body or provide a shed box, which is essentially a hide box with damp sphagnum moss that will aid in the shedding process.

Supplies

Habitat with Screen Lid	Full Spectrum Fluorescent Light	Thermometer
Substrate	Incandescent Light or Ceramic Heater	Humidity Gauge
Hiding Area & Basking Logs	Under Tank Heater	Misting Bottle
Water & Food Bowls	Vitamin & Mineral Supplement	Book about Iguanas

Health

Because iguanas are potential carriers of Salmonella and infectious diseases, always wash your hands before and after handling your iguana and or the habitat contents to help prevent the potential spread of disease.

You should consult with an exotic animal veterinarian if you observe any of the following conditions.

- Kidney Disease - Weight loss, lethargy, swollen abdomen, neck, or eyes, and frequent drinking or urinating. Main cause is dehydration. If left untreated, can be fatal.
- Metabolic Bone/Vitamin Deficiency- Inability to absorb calcium due to insufficient UVB light. If untreated, can lead to a disorder characterized by deformities, softened bones, swollen limbs and lethargy. Provide ample UVB lighting
- Respiratory Disease - Labored breathing and mucus in the mouth or nose. Can be caused by a habitat that is too cold or damp. Ensure habitat is appropriately warm.

For information regarding iguanas and disease, contact the Center for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets>

NOTE: The information contained in this document is for general reference only. Please consult a veterinarian for medical advice and concerns.

Sources: Iguanas for Dummies by Melissa Kaplan