

# Prehistoric Pets Care Sheet

## Green Iguanas (*Iguana iguana*)

### General Information

Green Iguanas are found throughout southern Mexico, Central America, and South America. Each locality will vary slightly in appearance, but are all still the same species. Male iguanas can reach an adult size of six feet, while females are smaller usually growing to four or five feet. Iguanas are very difficult to sex as babies and juveniles. Adult male Iguanas have larger heads, jowls and typically larger dorsal crests. The easiest way to sex adult Iguanas is the presence of enlarged femoral pores. These pores are located on the underside of the back legs, a male Iguanas pores are noticeably larger. Green Iguanas are very long lived and one can expect their pet to live ten to twenty years if properly cared for.

### Temperature and UV Lighting

Green Iguanas should be maintained at a daytime temperature of 85-95 degrees, with a basking spot reaching up to 100. Night time temperatures should be maintained between 70 -75 degrees. If your home is cooler than these temperatures at night you will need a red or other dark heat light to be used at night. Iguanas come from a humid environment and ideally humidity should be maintained from 70-80%. This level of humidity can be accomplished by misting the cage daily with water.

Green Iguanas require 10-14 hours a day of UVB light. This light enables the Iguana to produce vitamin D3. The vitamin D produced by UVB metabolizes the calcium in the lizards' diet. In general it's what makes Iguanas bones hard and without it they usually die. This process of inadequate UVB and calcium is called Metabolic Bone Disease. Also it is very important to change your UVB light every 6-8 months, after this time the light stops producing adequate UVB. If you're not sure if your UV light is still producing UVB, bring it in and we'll be happy to test the light for you.



### Calcium

Green Iguanas also require a calcium and vitamin supplement. This supplement works with the UVB light allowing the lizard to receive the proper amounts of calcium and vitamins. This should be used every day as babies and reduced to 1-2 times a week as adults. Calcium is sold in a powder form and is sprinkled on the vegetables that you feed your Iguana. You should apply a very light coating to the food items, being careful not to waste any excess powder.

### Bedding

Our recommendation for bedding is bark, coconut bark or some other type of mulch. This bedding absorbs water and helps maintain a high relative humidity.

### Food and Water

Green Iguanas are herbivores and their diet should consist of green leafy vegetables. The following vegetables should make up 80 percent of an iguanas diet: Collard greens, mustard greens, red leaf lettuce, green leaf lettuce, romaine lettuce, dandelion greens, hibiscus leaves and flowers, green onions, spinach, green beans, zucchini, and frozen mixed vegetables. Fruits should make up the remaining 20% of an Iguanas diet. Examples of ideal fruits are: Apple, bananas, strawberries, figs, peaches, mango, papaya, cantaloupe, grapes, blackberries, and blueberries. Iguanas also can be fed dry pellet foods as a supplement to the diet stated above. Iguanas are excellent swimmers and a water bowl large enough for them to completely submerge themselves is ideal.

### Cleaning and Handling

The terrarium should be cleaned as necessary. Any fecal matter or left over food should be cleaned out several times a week. The bedding should be completely changed once a month. The inside of the terrarium can be cleaned out with an appropriate reptile cage cleaner. We recommend Natural Chemistry's Healthy Habitat. Fresh clean water should always be provided. We recommend that you handle your Iguana a few times each day for up to a half an hour. This repeated handling will help your new pet get comfortable with you and its new surroundings. You can handle your Iguana for longer periods of time once it has become more accustomed to you and its new habitat. Remember never pick up your Iguana by the tail, it can break off.

[www.reptileguru.com](http://www.reptileguru.com)

**Prehistoric Pets Inc. (909) 465-6085**

"Maps courtesy of the University of Texas Libraries."