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Green Iguana



Adequate temperature		
	Hot spot	Cold spot
Day temperature	30-36 °C	27 °C
Night temperature	25 °C	24 °C

Main Features :

The green iguana is an arboreal species that likes to climb, to bask in the sun and to bathe. An adult iguana can reach 150 to 200 cm and can live up to 15 years! He is one of the reptiles who is able to perform autotomy: that is, he has the ability to cut his tail if he is in danger. This feature allows the animal to flee at the same time if a predator catches it by the tail or distracts the tail by abandoning its tail, to create a diversion to escape. The tail thus lost can push back, but it is important to know that it will not look as beautiful as originally. It is not recommended to keep several iguanas in captivity that cohabit, because it is a very territorial animal that can easily become aggressive towards its congeners. The male can be differentiated from the female by the following characteristics: usually larger, presence of prominent femoral pores, presence of a bulge near the tail (hemi penis) and more developed secondary sexual organs (crest, dewlap and thorns).

Captivity:

The habitat of the green iguana must be at least 3 to 4 times its size and must have a lid, a heating system and a lighting system emitting ultraviolet rays. As mentioned above, the iguana likes to climb! It is therefore necessary to provide several strong branches where he can climb at will. The degree of humidity (70-80%) and the temperature (see the table above) must be carefully monitored to preserve the health of your iguana. To maintain the proper temperature, a heating mat, out of reach of the animal can be used as well as a heat lamp not accessible for the latter. The carpet must be installed under the terrarium in order to avoid any direct contact. If the animal has access to the heating source, the risk of burns is very high. A reptile does not feel the heat on his skin, it is only once it is too late that he feels the wound. The green iguana must have a UVA-UVB lamp in its habitat! This lamp is essential to his good health because it provides a source of calcium that is normally provided by the sun during his tanning sessions. This lamp should work 10-12h per day and be changed every 6 months to maintain its effectiveness! At night this lamp should be off, unlike the heat lamp that must work all day. In order to better control the time of exposure to UV light and to maintain an adequate temperature, it is strongly recommended to obtain a timer. The ideal is to get a thermostat that will regulate the temperature and a hygrometer to monitor the degree of humidity, but it is important to make sure that it always works, even after several years! For the substrate (bottom mat), a grass mat will do the job because it is easy to clean. It is good to have 2-3, to alternate during the interview to be able to do a better cleaning of the carpet. A gravel or sand substrate is not recommended because of the risk of the animal ingesting this product, which can cause intestinal blockage.



Food :

The iguana's food needs have been the subject of much scientific research for several years, which leads us to adapt our recommendations. The iguana is essentially vegetarian at all stages of its growth. Studies have shown that excess animal protein could lead to severe kidney failure that could lead to death of the animal. A large quantity of vegetables and fruits are therefore recommended for an iguana (see table of fruits and vegetables). Leafy plants such as: romaine lettuce, leaf lettuce, kale, dandelion leaves, etc. must represent 80% of its vegetables. The other 20% is supplemented by various plants and fruits. Commercial diets have not been proven and should not exceed 1/5 of his diet. It is recommended to vary its diet for its well-being even if your animal does not make your life easier by being capricious by nature. The green iguana is especially sensitive to developing a calcium deficiency, which is why it is important to supplement its food in calcium powder and multivitamins 1 to 2 times per week in the adult specimen.



Frequent health problems:

- **Metabolic Bone Disease:** The lizard may suffer from anorexia, tremor, swelling around the bones, lethargy or bone malformations due to old fractures.
- **Infections:** Infections can occur in the mouth (stomatitis), on the skin (bacterial or fungal) or in the form of abscess. This condition is often the cause of poor nutrition, excess moisture or poor hygiene.
- **Parasites:** A reptile can sometimes catch parasites in many ways, such as having been outside, being in a boarding house or pet shop or coming from their live food (mice, insects, etc.). If the animal is not treated following the appearance of parasites, it could become anemic and die. Parasites feed on your pet's blood, where they can find the nutrients they need for survival.
- **Moult problem:** A reptile moults several times a year. The moult consists of a change of skin. The animal grows up and the scales become too tight on it. He develops new scales and the old ones have to leave. A moult problem occurs when the degree of humidity is not adequate. If your pet has difficulty moulting, do not pull on the molt. Give it a bath of lukewarm water instead.
- **Cloacal Prolapse:** A cloacal prolapse is an externalization of part of the digestive system of your reptile. It is therefore possible to see part of the intestine of your reptile out its cloaca (opening that connects the anus and the reproductive system).

As with all animals, it is recommended to perform an examination after purchasing a new reptile. An annual checkup helps prevent any health problems that may occur and thus save the life of your pet. In doubt, a visit to the veterinarian is required! A reptile, whatever it is, will hide its symptoms so as not to become an easy prey for predators (humans). At the slightest change in behavior, contact your veterinarian.

