

# An Invasive Species

The green iguana (*Iguana iguana*) is a large lizard not native to Florida.

Florida's subtropical climate has allowed these iguanas to thrive and reproduce in regions of the state where they have been introduced into the wild.

Iguanas can be a nuisance to homeowners by damaging landscape plants or gardens, leaving droppings in yards and pools, or causing property damage by digging burrows.



Photo by FWC

**For more information: [MyFWC.com/iguana](http://MyFWC.com/iguana)**

# Green Iguana Biology in Florida

## Large, nonnative and invasive lizard

- Native to Central and South America
- Can grow over 5 feet in length
- Terrestrial, arboreal, and semi-aquatic
- Active during daylight hours



Photo by FWC

## Breeds October-December

- Nesting occurs December-February
- Females can lay 20-70 eggs per year
- Hatchlings emerge March-August

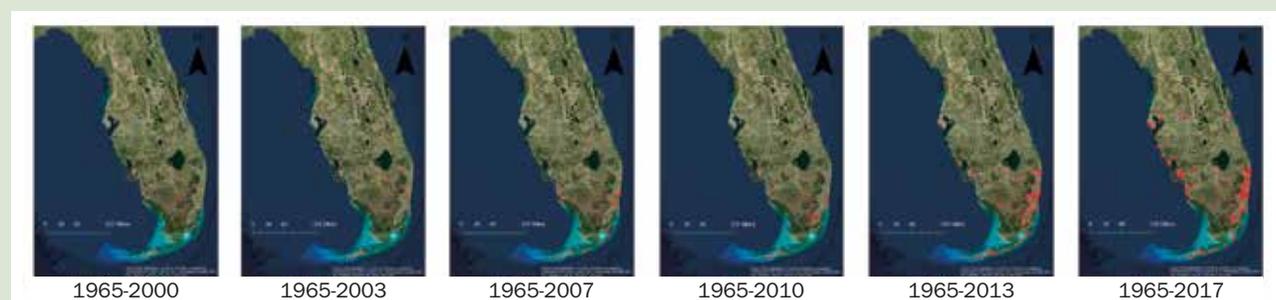
## Generalist herbivores

- Eat grasses, flowers, leaves, and fruits
- May eat insects, snails, eggs or carrion



Photo by FWC

## Green iguana sightings since 1965



# Prevention

Iguanas eat many types of fruits, vegetables, and leafy greens and will also consume pet food. Help prevent iguanas from being attracted to your property by minimizing food attractants.

Feed pets indoors or clean up any food left outside after pets finish eating.



Remove fruit that has fallen from trees or other plants, including palm fruit.

Never feed iguanas. Intentional feeding can encourage iguanas and other wildlife to visit your property.



# Exclusion

Exclusion methods physically block iguanas from portions of your property.

Install sheet metal around trees about 18 inches from tree base to prevent climbing.



Photo by FWC

Protect valuable plants with cages or screen enclosures.

Trim overhanging branches near buildings to remove unintentional “bridges.”



Install electric or wire fence barriers to prevent digging.

# Deterrents

Deterrents are used to drive iguanas away from your property.

Harass iguanas with water hoses or use motion-activated sprinklers or water scarecrows.



Photo by FWC



Startle iguanas with loud noises or by playing the radio or music.

Scare iguanas by hanging CDs near sea walls or on trees or plants you want to protect. Change the positions of the CDs often so iguanas do not become accustomed to their light reflections.



Photo by FWC

# Habitat Modification

You can invest in a longer-term solution by modifying your property to create a habitat that is less inviting to iguanas.

Remove protective cover such as dense thickets, rock piles, and landscape debris.



Provide nesting areas near sea walls using mulch or sand piles to prevent digging activity. Destroy eggs by sealing in plastic bags and disposing in the trash.

Remove vegetation that iguanas love to eat and replace with iguana-resistant plants.



Citrus, pentas, and crotons



Tough, thick leaved plants



Flowering plants (hibiscus, orchids, roses, nasturtiums, impatiens)



Garden vegetables (kale, broccoli, collards, sorrel, beets, lettuces)



# Regulatory Status

Iguanas are a nonnative species in Florida and are not protected, except by animal welfare laws.

- People may remove and kill iguanas on private property year-round with landowner permission.
- The public may lethally take all nonnative reptiles on 25 public lands year-round without a permit or hunting license.



Photo by FWC

Green iguanas are a regulated species.

- Personal possession is only allowed under a Conditional/Prohibited/Nonnative species permit (CSP) for individuals who had a pet iguana prior to July 1, 2020.
- A CSP is required to publicly exhibit iguanas.
- Commercial sale is limited to qualifying permitted entities.

# Capture Methods

## Allowed

- ✓ Capturing iguanas by hand
- ✓ Using nets, noose poles, snares, or cage traps



Photo by FWC



## Prohibited

- ✗ Setting leg-hold or body gripping steel traps
- ✗ Using gasoline, smoke, poisons, or other chemicals to drive iguanas or otherwise cause them to move



# Traps and Bait

Choose large, raccoon-sized box traps for use with iguanas.



Photo by FWC

Choose ripe, brightly colored non-citrus fruits to use as bait.



Strawberries, bananas, mangos, watermelon, grapes, raspberries



Lemons, limes, oranges, grapefruit



Set traps during the day when iguanas are active and close traps at night to prevent capturing non-target animals.

Check traps at least once every 24 hours (required by law).



# How to Set a Live Trap

- Lift and hold **door lock** up.
- Continue holding **door lock** up while pressing **door lock frame** down against door.
- Keep pressing **door lock frame** against door while lifting door up (**door lock** can be released during this step).
- While holding door up, rotate **trigger lock** to keep door open.
- Place bait behind **trigger plate**.

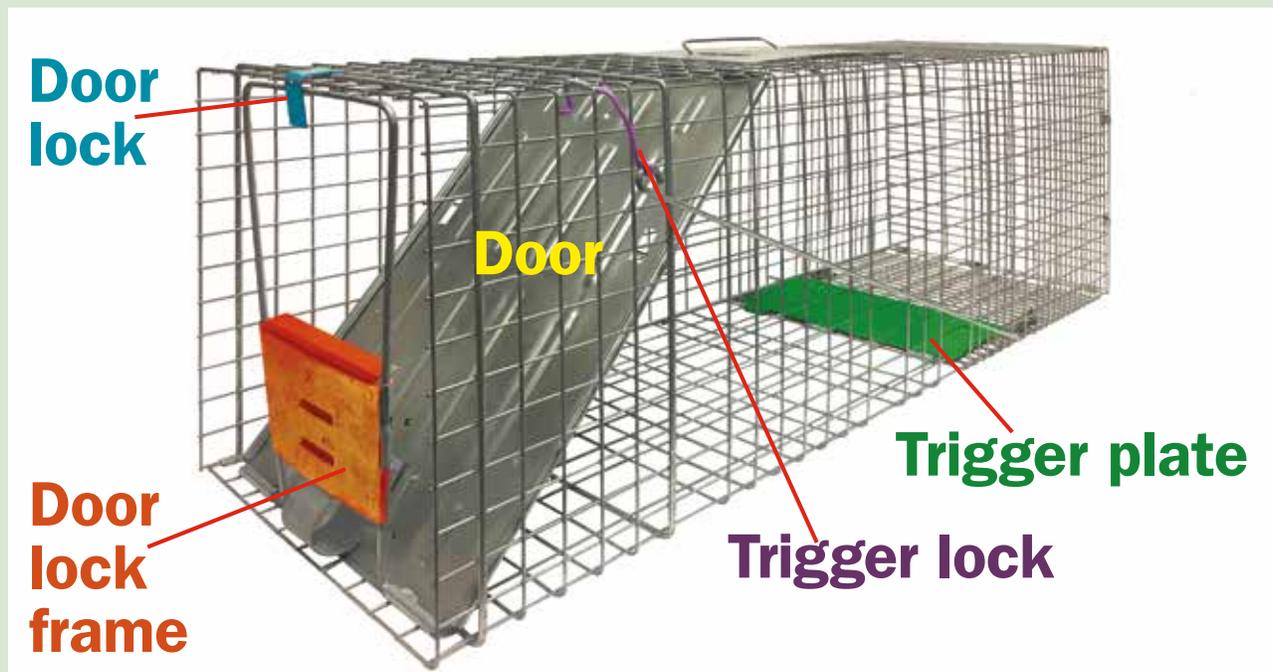


Photo by FWC



Photo by FWC

- Make sure trap will close completely by pressing **trigger plate** to test the trap.
- Trap door may not close if pressure on **trigger lock** is too heavy or trap door is blocked.

# Where to Place Traps

Place traps next to structures where iguanas have been seen, such as trees, fences, walls, and shrubs, etc.).



Photo by FWC



Photo by FWC

Camouflage traps by placing debris such as leaves, dirt, sticks, etc. on the bottom of the trap cage to mimic natural conditions.

Cover traps with palm fronds, plywood, or other woody debris to help provide shade.



Photo by FWC



Photo by FWC

Never place traps in direct sunlight.

# Captured Wildlife

You may kill iguanas trapped on your property.

- Live transport of iguanas is not allowed without a permit.
- If you are not capable of safely removing iguanas from your property, please seek assistance from a professional nuisance wildlife trapper.



Photo by FWC

Carefully release non-target animals (raccoons, armadillos, opossums, etc.) from traps.

- Block trap entrance with sticks or vegetation.
- Use a small stick or similar object to hold door open.
- Move away from trap and let animal leave on its own. **BE CAREFUL** – animals can bite from inside the trap!



Photo by FWC



Photo by FWC

# Additional Regulations

It is **illegal** to relocate or introduce nonnative species in Florida.



Photo by FWC



Captured iguanas must be humanely killed.

There are no laws that dictate how iguanas should be killed, except for anti-cruelty laws.



Additionally, no poisons are registered or legal for use on iguanas or any reptiles in Florida by state rule.