



Dear IIF Friends and Supporters,

It's a new year, and we are shedding our old skin and tail-whipping our way to greater heights! I'm pleased to report that our 2024 year-end fundraising campaign—Tosh and Tosh to Save Iguanas—was a great success, raising nearly \$25,000 and above doubling the number of smaller donations from the previous year! Your generous donations will provide everything from tools and camping gear to DNA sampling equipment and laptops for conservation professionals working in the field on iguana projects. Our sincere thanks to all our donors!

We've also awarded three conservation grants for 2025 projects that will soon be getting underway: protecting the Olla Spiny-tailed Iguana (Cnemidophorus balzani) in Honduras; restoration of habitat and other actions to support Ricord's Rock Iguana (Cyclura ricordi) in the Dominican Republic and Haiti; and habitat restoration, nest monitoring, and community education in Guatemala for the Motagua Spiny-tailed Iguana (Cnemidophorus paterculus). In addition, IIF is excited to continue our support for the (the ongoing, long-term work in Jamaica to increase the population of Jamaican Rock Iguana (Cyclura colvini), release them in their native Hellshire Hills, safeguard their nesting sites and habitat, and engage communities in the conservation efforts.

Our grants were a bit more limited in this past (2024) cycle, but we expect to be back to our full grant-awarding capacity soon. Watch for our call for proposals this fall—we can't wait to see your project applications!

The members of our volunteer Board of Directors are critical to IIF's success, and I'm pleased to report that we welcomed two new board members: Craig Pike of the San Antonio Zoo, and our retiring co-founder, Rick Hudson, who recently retired from the Fort Worth Zoo.

Science-based conservation actions require resources, and fundraising will be a focus for us in 2025. As we travel through the year, please keep IIF in mind and consider making a donation to www.iguana.org. Pulling together, we can continue our quest to "Save the Most Endangered Lizards in the World!"

With thanks again for your support,

Arne
Arne Weisengrad, Board President

P.S. And please share this newsletter with your friends and colleagues! If they would like to receive it, they can [sign up through our website](mailto:info@iguana.org).

TOOLS AND TECH TO SAVE IGUANAS
2024 FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN RESULTS
THANKS TO THE GENEROSITY OF IGUANAS SUPPORTERS,
WE RAISED \$22,943 FROM 51 DONORS! THANK YOU!

IIF's Tosh and Tosh to Save Iguanas campaign—to raise funds for equipment, gear, and tools needed by iguana field conservationists—was a great success, including welcoming many donors who are new to IIF. We are so grateful for your valuable support, and we are excited to put these funds to good use in protecting iguanas and their habitats. Our heartfelt thanks for your contributions to saving Iguanans!



Support for the Next Phase of
Jamaican Rock Iguana Conservation



The International Iguana Foundation would like to thank the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) for again supporting our conservation efforts for the Critically Endangered [Jamaican Rock Iguana \(Cyclura carolinensis\)](https://www.iguana.org). Thanks to CEPF, we will continue protecting the biodiversity of the dry forest ecosystem of the Hellshire Hills, in the Portland Bight Protected Area, and ensuring improved management. We will focus on three components that will increase the effectiveness of the Jamaica Iguana Recovery Program within the home range of its species at the headstart facility, and across Jamaica.

- 1. Assessing the presence of invasive alien species and native species within the core iguana area, the newly constructed buffer zone, and the greater Hellshire Hills area. We will also evaluate the survival of hatchling Jamaican Iguanas through radio tracking.
- 2. Increasing the turnover rate of iguanas at the headstart facility at the Hope Zone in Kingston, so they spend less time in captivity before being released. This will allow the wild population to grow more quickly as actions to reduce threats in Hellshire proceed.
- 3. Increasing public awareness and appreciation for the Jamaican iguana and its habitat.

In addition, as we approach a major milestone of this program—reaching the 1,000th iguana reintroduced to the Hellshire Hills—we aim to update the conservation action plan for the Jamaican Iguana. We will work closely with local stakeholders and the IUCN Iguana Specialist Group to develop and publish this updated plan.

With CEPF's support, we seek to protect this flagship species, enhance the resilience of the dry forest ecosystem in which it lives, and ensure the protection of a variety of other species dependent upon this area, while raising environmental awareness throughout the island.

2025 Research Possibilities to Work with Jamaican Iguanas
Want to help conduct field research for Jamaican Iguanas? Dr. Stechu Pasachnik has her research opportunities available for students this year. These are great to build for research students looking for an intensive field research experience. All expenses will be reimbursed, including flights to and from Jamaica. For further details, see the information on our website [HERE](https://www.iguana.org).

IIF Grants Awarded for 2025



Guatemala * Motagua Spiny-tailed Iguana (Cnemidophorus paterculus) * IUCN Red List: Endangered * \$25,000 grant awarded for habitat restoration and population monitoring

Project Description: The Heloceras Natural Reserve in the Motagua Valley, Guatemala protects one of the last remaining tropical dry forests in the country, which is home to the endemic and endangered [Motagua Spiny-tailed Iguana \(Cnemidophorus paterculus\)](https://www.iguana.org). Research from 2024 indicates a lack of quality nesting sites, leaving many iguanas and their eggs vulnerable to predators and accidental damage from vehicles driving through these areas. Our project aims to enhance nesting availability and restore habitat across three protected areas: Heloceras Natural Reserve, Nela Dorado Municipal Park, and La de China Municipal Park. Together, these areas represent a significant portion of the species' range and harbor a considerable population that requires urgent protection. We will use camera traps to assess the use of existing nesting grounds, and we will conduct four large-scale surveys that will locate and/or map previously identified nesting sites to provide safe egg laying areas. Habitat restoration efforts will include planting 4,000 trees around the iguana's natural areas on these sites, which will provide food and shelter for the iguanas and other species in the long term.



Dominican Republic/Haiti * Ricord's Rock Iguana (Cyclura ricordi) and Hispaniolan Rhinoceros Iguana (Cyclura cornuta) * IUCN Red List: Endangered * \$9,000 grant awarded to Grupo Jaques for population monitoring, habitat restoration, and education outreach

Project Description: Our project aims to ensure the long-term survival of the Endangered [Ricord's Rock Iguana \(Cyclura ricordi\)](https://www.iguana.org) and Rhinoceros Iguana ([Cyclura cornuta](https://www.iguana.org)) in their native range. Hispaniolan's two extraordinary iguana species are now only found in small areas of the Dominican Republic and Haiti, and they face a variety of significant threats. Our project will establish management to both iguanas in the areas, restore and monitor habitats, and institute long-term education and awareness programs. Project components include: (1) restoration of 100 hectares of degraded *C. ricordi* habitat in two locations, including climate change by planting each species near their 1,000 hectares (2) monitoring and patrolling of the wild area where *C. ricordi* is found in Pedernales, the southern shore of Lake Enriquillo, and Arca 3 Reserve; (3) nest monitoring in Pedernales and Arca 3 Reserve; (4) increasing awareness about both Hispaniolan Iguanas and their habitats through education in schools, outreach to the general public, and community engagement; and (5) increasing awareness regarding iguana habitat destruction due to tourism development.



Olla (Honduras, Bay Islands) * Spiny-tailed Iguana or Swamp Iguana (Cnemidophorus balzani) * IUCN Red List: Critically Endangered * \$20,000 grant awarded to Kanabka Olla Research and Conservation Facility for invasive species control, population monitoring, outreach, and advocacy

Project Description: The Critically Endangered [Olla Spiny-tailed Iguana \(Cnemidophorus balzani\)](https://www.iguana.org) is affectionately called the "Swampie" because it is commonly found in the wetland swamps along the beaches of Olla Island, Honduras. The only place they are found. These beautiful and successful iguanas are great swimmers and agile climbers, navigating through thick dense mangrove thickets along the shore. Unfortunately, their population is in decline, largely due to the introduction of invasive predators people have introduced to the island, like raccoons, dogs, cats, and pigs. Our project seeks to implement an effective strategy to remove invasive species from Olla Island, in alignment with the IUCN Action Plan (2020-2025). The primary goals include preventing further declines of the Swampie populations and reducing habitat degradation by removing raccoons, in particular, because they eat iguana eggs, juveniles, and adults, and cause other damage to the Olla ecosystem. Through comprehensive monitoring, targeted removal efforts, and community engagement, the project seeks to create a comprehensive model for invasive species management that supports the recovery of the Olla Spiny-tailed Iguana population while balancing ecological conditions on the island. In our first second year and phase I of the plan, Kanabka will continue to deploy a multi-faceted approach and integrated methodology to improve the efficiency of eradication efforts and generate scientific information for future operations.



Help Us Save Endangered Iguanans!
Your donation to the International Iguana Foundation will help support iguana conservation where it is needed most. Thank you!

Donate Today

