Cyclura cychlura figginsi

Exuma Island Iguana / Exuma Rock Iguana

Species-specific annual husbandry and breeding protocol anchored to Exuma field data and the IUCN West Indian Iguana Husbandry Manual.

Core profile	Thermal target	Breeding anchor	Nest / clutch evidence
Endemic to the central and southern Exuma Cays, Bahamas. Large, primarily herbivorous rock iguana of xeric coastal scrub, limestone and sandy cays.	Strong gradient. General Cyclura guidance supports about 29 C ambient with cooler retreats, while wild animals maintain body temperatures around 36-41 C.	Mating mainly in May; oviposition early-to-mid June. Southern figginsi populations may start 1-2 weeks earlier than northern Exuma inornata.	Documented sand nests about 61 cm long with chambers 8-13 cm deep. Two wild figginsi nests each contained three eggs; species-specific incubation data remain unknown.

Annual keeper schedule

Month	Day air	Night	Bask	UVI*	Light	RH day/night*	Rain / mist	Food d/wk	Seasonal management
January	25-27 C	20-22 C	42-46 C	4-6	10.8 h	55-68 / 68-80%	Dry phase; light AM mist 2-3x/wk	5-6	Cooler dry-season maintenance
February	25-28 C	20-22 C	42-46 C	4-6	11.3 h	55-68 / 68-80%	Dry phase; light AM mist 2-3x/wk	5-6	Condition adults; monitor body condition
March	26-29 C	21-23 C	43-47 C	4-6	12.0 h	58-70 / 70-82%	Dry-to-wet transition; 3x/wk	6	Increase browse / breeder conditioning
April	27-30 C	22-24 C	43-48 C	4-6	12.7 h	60-74 / 72-84%	Rain pulses increase	6-7	Courtship begins / nest site ready
May	28-31 C	24-26 C	44-48 C	4-6	13.3 h	64-78 / 76-88%	Wet phase; regular rain pulses	7	Main mating period
June	29-31 C	25-27 C	44-48 C	4-6	13.6 h	66-80 / 78-90%	Wet phase; regular rain	7	Main oviposition / nest guarding
July	29-32 C	26-27 C	44-48 C	4-6	13.4 h	64-78 / 76-88%	Warm wet phase	7	Incubation / female recovery
August	29-32 C	26-27 C	44-48 C	4-6	12.9 h	64-80 / 78-90%	Warm; storm rain pulses	7	Incubation / hatch window possible
September	29-31 C	25-27 C	43-47 C	4-6	12.3 h	68-82 / 80-92%	Wet / storm season	7	Hatchlings / strong plant growth
October	28-30 C	24-26 C	43-47 C	4-6	11.7 h	66-80 / 78-90%	Wet phase easing	6-7	Growth / recovery
November	27-29 C	23-25 C	42-46 C	4-6	11.1 h	60-74 / 72-84%	Rain reduces	6	Transition to dry season
December	25-28 C	21-23 C	42-46 C	4-6	10.7 h	56-70 / 70-82%	Dry phase; light AM mist	5-6	Seasonal reset; no brumation

* UVI 5-7 and monthly RH are practical operational targets, not published physiological thresholds for this subspecies. Basking values are surface temperatures. There is no cold brumation; reproduce a modestly cooler, drier Bahamian winter while maintaining year-round basking.

Housing, climate and nutrition

Taxonomy and conservation

The Reptile Database recognizes Cyclura cychlura figginsi Barbour, 1923 as the central and southern Exuma Cays subspecies of C. cychlura. Some authors have proposed species-level treatment, but this protocol retains the currently familiar subspecific name. Preserve locality and pedigree in any breeding collection.

Natural habitat

A xeric island rock iguana living on small limestone and sandy cays with coastal scrub, exposed basking sites and very limited fresh water. The Bahamas has a warm wet season roughly May-October and a drier, somewhat cooler winter. Do not confuse low rainfall with a need for chronically dehydrating enclosure air.

Enclosure

Large terrestrial enclosure with very high usable floor area, strong basking platforms, limestone-like rockwork, deep retreats and multiple visual barriers. A pair should have several independent basking and feeding stations. Support heavy rockwork from the enclosure base, not loose substrate.

Heat and UVB

General West Indian iguana guidance: keep a strong thermal gradient; ambient air roughly 25-31 C seasonally with cooler refuges, and do not allow routine night temperatures below about 18 C. Provide a broad 42-48 C basking surface so the animal can reach normal Cyclura body temperatures around 36-41 C. UVI 4-6 at the primary basking zone is a conservative high-UV operational target, with deep zero-UV shade.

Humidity and rainfall

Model the Exuma dry/wet cycle mainly through rainfall frequency, not by removing water. Winter surfaces can dry strongly between light mists; from May through October add more frequent rain pulses. Always retain shaded retreats with buffered humidity and provide clean drinking water.

Diet

Primarily herbivorous. Base the diet on diverse calcium-rich leafy greens, edible browse, weeds, flowers and fibrous vegetables, with modest seasonal fruit. Wild figginsi consume leaves, flowers and fruit from many native plants and have been documented intentionally eating bird feces; do not imitate coprophagy in captivity. Avoid routine animal protein and high-sugar tourist-style feeding.

Body condition

This subspecies can become obese easily when offered dense captive foods. Use fibrous plant diversity, large enclosures and daily movement opportunities. Weigh adults monthly and reproductive females more frequently from April through July.

Social management

Cyclura can inflict severe bite injuries even where wild groups appear tolerant. Introductions should be monitored closely, with escape routes and visual barriers. Separate incompatible adults immediately; never force a breeding pair to remain together after repeated aggression.

Breeding, nesting and evidence notes

Annual breeding cycle

Field sources place mating mainly in May and oviposition in June; later comparative work indicates southern figginsi populations begin the breeding season about 1-2 weeks earlier than northern Exuma inornata. Have nesting substrate fully prepared by April, before visible gravidity.

Nesting

The IUCN husbandry manual describes a figginsi sand nest approximately 61 cm long with the egg chamber 8-13 cm deep. In captivity, provide at least 60 cm of diggable, compactable sand/soil so the female can choose tunnel geometry and depth rather than forcing a shallow nest. Keep the nesting zone warm and only lightly moist - never wet or collapsing.

Clutch size

Two documented wild figginsi nests each contained three eggs, and the manual lists mean reproductive female size around 28.5 cm SVL / 960 g. This small sample should not be interpreted as an absolute maximum for every female or cay.

Incubation - evidence limit

Species-specific artificial incubation temperature and duration are listed as unknown in the IUCN manual. Related Bahamian Cyclura often incubate around the upper 20s to low 30s C for roughly 80-95 days. For captive figginsi, 29-30.5 C with stable moderate substrate moisture is a conservative working starting range only - not a validated optimum. Avoid overheating and record every incubation variable.

Hatching and juveniles

A small wild animal captured in late July measured 11.0 cm SVL and 35.6 g, suggesting some figginsi hatch earlier than the late-September emergence typical of northern Exuma inornata. Keep hatchlings warm, brightly lit, well hydrated and on finely chopped diverse greens/browse with frequent monitoring.

Keeper priorities

Key risks are obesity, chronic dehydration, reproductive obstruction from poor nest access, burns from undersized basking spots, UVB failure and trauma from social conflict. For a rare locality form, breeding records should include parent IDs, exact provenance, dates, clutch mass, egg mass, incubation temperature/humidity and hatchling metrics.

Evidence anchors

Primary sources: IUCN/SSC West Indian Iguana Husbandry Manual; Knapp (2000) Exuma Island Iguana account; Knapp, Iverson & Owens (2006) geographic variation in Cyclura cychlura reproduction; current Reptile Database taxonomy; recent Exuma physiology work confirming seasonal breeding differences between inornata and figginsi.

Keeper interpretation

Monthly RH, UVI and basking-surface targets are practical captive settings built from general Cyclura husbandry plus Exuma climate, not experimentally defined figginsi thresholds. Exact cay provenance, individual condition and reproductive history should override this generic Exuma schedule where known.

UVI beneath the optional T5 tube

Cyclura cychlura figginsi

Your measuring point

Measure UVI at normal back height directly beneath the brightest accessible part of the optional T5 strip. Place the strip toward the middle/back with free access to and away from it; preserve a gradient into fully covered refuges near UVI 0. These numbers describe the exposure area, not the whole enclosure or a daily average.

Measure and adjust

1. Use a UV Index meter. A Solarmeter 6.5/6.5R or equivalent UVI meter is suitable. Broadband UVB readings in microwatts/cm2 cannot be substituted for UVI.

2. Measure the installed arrangement. Warm the tube for about 30 minutes. Keep the reflector, guards and mesh in their normal positions. With the animal elsewhere, hold the sensor at its normal back height, aimed toward the tube.

3. Adjust the fixture. Begin near the lower part of a newly selected working range and adjust gradually. Respect the lamp manufacturer's minimum distance. Recheck after each change and check every higher accessible branch, rock or platform.

4. Keep a full gradient. Provide usable exposure across the animal's body, lower-UVI areas and fully covered refuges near UVI 0. For daytime baskers, overlap the UV area with visible light and appropriate basking warmth while retaining cooler shade.

5. Record and recheck. Log UVI, measuring point, tube-to-back distance, tube age and lamp-on time. Recheck through the year and after changes to the tube, reflector, mesh or furnishings. Exposure duration and behaviour also determine dose.

A T5 range is a working exposure target, not a whole-cage setting, measured wild monthly average, guaranteed optimum or proven safety ceiling. The animal must be able to enter and leave freely.

Monthly target at normal back height

Month	UVI under T5 when on
January	4-6
February	4-6
March	4-6
April	4-6
May	4-6
June	4-6
July	4-6
August	4-6
September	4-6
October	4-6
November	4-6
December	4-6

Refine numerical target
Replace the blanket UVI 5-7 default with an optional adult T5 patch at UVI 4-6, aiming initially around 5. This is a moderate working choice within published exposure guidance, not proof that 5-7 is harmful or a measured optimum for every Cyclura. Published UV-Tool assignments vary even within the genus; no trial was found that makes UVI 7 a necessary default.

Evidence level: Inferred genus-level working range. The seasonal schedule is a captive operating plan; it is not measured wild monthly UV. Off means the existing planned UVB-off/rest phase is preserved. Any staged Off/1 entry still means gradual reintroduction.

UV references: Baines et al. (2016), UV-Tool; Muryn, Baines and Dishman (2026), Reptile Lighting Guide V10. Full rationale and monthly comparison: UVI_Audit_Report.html.