

Suitable pets?: Green iguana



Where do they come from?

Green iguanas come from the Caribbean and Central and South America – over 3,000 miles away. It is hard to look after iguanas properly – here are some of the things people who want to have a green iguana as a pet need to think about.

What type of place do they need to live in?

Iguanas come from hot countries. They need a big place to live called a vivarium. An adult iguana's vivarium needs to be about the size of a small bedroom. It will need to be cleaned out once a week. They need lots of branches to climb on and plants and rocks to hide behind.

Did you know?

Adult iguanas can grow up to one-and-a-half metres long. They can live for 15 years.

Light

- They need special lights that mimic daylight.
- The lights in the vivarium need to be turned on and off at different times so the iguana has day and night times.

Heat

They also need a special spotlight to provide hot and cool areas to stay warm. You need to put a thermostat in the vivarium to make sure it is the right temperature.

Moisture

Iguanas in the wild tend to live near water. The air in the vivarium needs to be sprayed with water to keep the air moist. The tank should have a hygrometer to check how much moisture there is in the air.

What do they eat?

Iguanas eat salad leaves, flowers, fruits and vegetables. Apples, kiwi fruit, turnip greens, dandelions, cabbage and green beans are just some of the different things they need. Adults need to be fed every day and need fresh water all the time.

Do they like to be stroked?

Iguanas are wild animals. Even if an iguana has been a pet all its life it may still not like to be touched by humans. Iguanas need to be handled very carefully. Wash your hands afterwards.