

Recommended Annual Husbandry Schedule

Iguana iguana - Green iguana

Natural history A large, primarily arboreal tropical iguana native from southern Mexico through Central America into tropical South America. It uses riparian forest, woodland edges and other sun-exposed vegetation, often close to water.	Feeding biology Green iguanas are predominantly folivorous. Build the captive diet around calcium-rich leaves, edible weeds, browse and flowers; vegetables are secondary and fruit is a small occasional component.	Keeper priority Large climbing space, strong branches, a broad thermal gradient, measured UVB, high air exchange and reliable nest provision are essential. This programme retains the seasonal cycle supplied for the Netherlands facility.
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Month	Day / night	Basking surface	UVI	Photoperiod	Humidity day / night	Rain programme	Feeding	Seasonal management	Nest / breeding
Jan	27-28 / 20-21 C	38-40 C	3-4	11 h	55-60 / 60-65%	Mist 1x daily	5-6 days	Cool-dry phase	Peak courtship
Feb	28 / 21-22 C	39-40 C	3-4	11.25 h	60 / 65%	Mist 1-2x; 1 storm/wk	6 days	Dry-to-wet rise	Nest box; females restless
Mar	28-29 / 22-23 C	39-41 C	3-4	11.75 h	65 / 70%	Mist 2x; 1-2 storms/wk	Daily	Early wet phase	Likely oviposition
Apr	29-30 / 23-24 C	39-41 C	3-4	12.25 h	70 / 75%	Mist 2x; 2 storms/wk	Daily	Recovery rise	Post-lay recovery
May	30-31 / 24-25 C	40-42 C	3-4	12.75 h	75 / 80%	Mist 2-3x; 2-3 storms/wk	Daily	Wet-season growth	Rebuild condition
Jun	31-32 / 25-26 C	40-42 C	3-4	13 h	75-85 / 80-85%	Mist 3x; 3 storms/wk	Daily	Peak wet season	Monitor shedding
Jul	31-32 / 25-26 C	40-42 C	3-4	13 h	75-85 / 80-85%	Mist 3x; 3 storms/wk	Daily	Peak wet season	Ventilation priority
Aug	30-31 / 24-25 C	40-41 C	3-4	12.75 h	70-80 / 75-80%	Mist 2-3x; 2 storms/wk	Daily	Begin taper	Rebuild condition
Sep	29-30 / 23-24 C	39-41 C	3-4	12.25 h	65-75 / 70-75%	Mist 2x; 1-2 storms/wk	Daily	Transition drier	Check UV lamps
Oct	28-29 / 22-23 C	39-40 C	3-4	11.75 h	60-65 / 65-70%	Mist 1-2x; 1 storm/wk	6 days	Pre-breeding prep	Widen basking zone
Nov	27-28 / 21-22 C	38-40 C	3-4	11.25 h	55-60 / 60-65%	Mist 1x daily	5-6 days	Breeding begins	Monitor rivals
Dec	27 / 20-21 C	38-40 C	3-4	11 h	55-60 / 60-65%	Mist 1x daily	5 days	Cool-dry cue	Nest box standby

Operating note: the monthly temperatures, humidity, rainfall and breeding notes above preserve the supplied Netherlands indoor cycle. Confirm values with calibrated probes at animal height and on the basking surface; always provide cooler shaded escape routes.

Rainfall note: a 'storm' means a short, well-drained rain event with strong air movement, not continuous saturation. Allow leaves and branches to begin drying between events and keep the sleeping area clean and ventilated.

Practical Husbandry and Daily Management

A large arboreal herbivore requiring room-scale climbing space, measured ultraviolet light and careful seasonal monitoring.

Enclosure and structure

For a single adult, use a purpose-built walk-in enclosure or dedicated room. A practical minimum starting footprint is about **3.0 x 1.5 x 2.2 m**, with more length and height strongly preferred. The animal must be able to turn without contacting walls, climb above keeper eye level and choose several thermal positions.

Install multiple load-rated horizontal and diagonal branches wider than the animal's grip, resting shelves, visual barriers and an easy route to the basking zone. Secure every fitting against the strength of an adult. Use non-slip, cleanable surfaces and protect heaters, lamps, glazing and doors from direct contact.

Heat, light and UVB

Follow the monthly cycle, while keeping a cooler shaded zone several degrees below the listed warm-side air. Provide a broad basking surface of **38-42 C** that heats the whole trunk without burning the dorsal crest. Measure surface temperature with infrared equipment and confirm air temperature with fixed probes.

Use bright full-spectrum illumination and high-output UVB. Target approximately **UVI 3-4** at the principal basking position, with UVI below 1 in retreat areas. Verify the gradient with a Solarmeter and replace lamps by measured output rather than age alone.

Humidity, water and hygiene

Provide a large clean drinking container and daily fresh droplets on foliage. Humidity must be paired with strong ventilation. Remove food and faeces daily, disinfect contact surfaces appropriately and prevent persistently wet perches, cold damp corners and aerosol stagnation.

Diet and supplementation

Base the diet on a rotating mixture of calcium-rich leafy greens, safe weeds, browse and edible flowers. Suitable staples can include endive, escarole, dandelion, plantain, hibiscus leaves and flowers, mulberry leaves, grape leaves and prickly-pear pads where verified pesticide-free. Use vegetables for variety and fruit sparingly.

Avoid animal protein as a routine food. Limit nutritionally poor or high-oxalate ingredients and do not let one plant dominate. Offer food finely mixed so favourites cannot be selected. Adjust calcium and vitamin supplementation to diet analysis, growth, reproductive state and measured UVB; repeated high-dose D3 is unsafe.

Social management and handling

Adult males may be intensely territorial and must not share unrestricted space. Females also require escape routes and duplicate resources. Use protected contact and planned introductions; separate for biting, persistent pursuit, blocked basking access, food exclusion or declining body mass. Support the chest and pelvis during handling and never lift by the tail.

Daily keeper checks

Check	Record
Activity	Basking, climbing, alertness, grip and use of shade
Feeding	Food offered, selection, intake, water and faecal output
Condition	Weekly mass, jaw, limbs, toes, skin, abdomen and wounds
Environment	Basking surface, warm/cool air, UVI, RH and ventilation

Veterinary triggers

Seek reptile-veterinary assessment for persistent anorexia, weight loss, jaw or limb swelling, tremors, weak grip, abnormal breathing, burns, bite wounds, repeated unproductive digging, retained eggs or prolonged post-lay weakness. Quarantine and faecal screening are prudent for every new animal.

Breeding, Nesting and Evidence Review

The supplied cycle places courtship in November-January and likely laying in March; individual ultrasound, mass and behaviour should determine action.

Seasonal breeding management

Use the cooler, drier November-January phase as a reproductive cue rather than a brumation. Maintain daily heat and UVB. Increase rain, humidity and night temperatures gradually from February. Condition females before pairing and do not attempt breeding when mass, calcium status or locomotion is suboptimal.

Use visual introduction through a divider before direct contact. Supervise every introduction and separate for biting, sustained pursuit, trapping or refusal to bask and feed. Never leave two adult males together. Record head-bobbing, colour change, mounting and confirmed copulation separately.

Nest provision

Install the nest before restlessness begins. Use a private, warm, diggable container large enough for the female to enter and turn, with approximately **40-60 cm** of cohesive, slightly moist sand-soil mix. Stabilise the substrate and keep it damp enough to hold a tunnel without being wet.

Track mass, appetite, abdominal contour, digging and ultrasound findings. After laying, record clutch data, rehydrate the female and offer calcium-rich food under normal heat and UVB. Persistent digging, straining, weakness or failure to lay requires prompt imaging and reptile-veterinary assessment.

Eggs and incubation

Green iguana clutches are variable and can be large; female size and age strongly affect output. Do not use clutch size alone to judge success. Preserve egg orientation and record dimensions and mass before incubation.

Use a validated facility incubation method. A cautious working range is about **28-30 C** in evenly moist vermiculite or perlite, with no free water contacting eggs. Use a calibrated logger and record media ratio, condensation, egg mass and hatch date. Adjust only from documented outcomes.

Key references

1. Supplied facility document: Annual Indoor Cycle for Iguana iguana (Netherlands). Monthly photoperiod, temperature, basking, humidity, precipitation and breeding notes.
2. Iguana Specialist Group. Iguana iguana species account. Natural history, maturity and conservation context; accessed 22 September 2026.
3. Morales-Mavil, J.E. et al. (2007). Nest-site strategies and habitat use of green iguanas. Revista de Biología Tropical 55(2).
4. Pratt, N.C. et al. (1994). Sexual bimaturism in the green iguana. Animal Behaviour 48:1305-1315. Reproductive maturity and body-size context.

Evidence confidence

Topic	Confidence and application
Diet / arboreality	High: established natural history and managed-care consensus
Heat / UVB	High-moderate: measured gradients remain essential
Monthly cycle	Facility programme: preserve and refine from records
Breeding window	Moderate: supplied cycle plus individual monitoring
Incubation	Moderate: use the facility's validated egg protocol

How the source sheet was used

The original one-page annual cycle was retained as the operational calendar. The revision separates air temperature from basking-surface temperature, adds a measured UVI target, clarifies that rain events require drying and ventilation, and expands enclosure, nutrition, nesting and health guidance.

Record set for every breeding attempt

Individual IDs and provenance; dates of seasonal changes; weekly mass and body condition; food intake; rain events; temperature, RH and UVI checks; introductions and aggression; courtship and confirmed mating; ultrasound findings; first digging; laying date; clutch and egg measurements; incubator/media data; fertility; hatch dates; neonatal mass and post-lay recovery.

UVI beneath the optional T5 tube

Iguana iguana

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	3-4
February	3-4
March	3-4
April	3-4
May	3-4
June	3-4
July	3-4
August	3-4
September	3-4
October	3-4
November	3-4
December	3-4

Retain numbers; clarify measurement

The retained range remains a provisional captive working target. No new species-specific result was found that clearly requires a numerical change. Retaining it is not certification of an experimentally established optimum.

Evidence level: Provisional retention. 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](#).