

Iguana iguana sanctaluciae

Saint Lucia Horned Iguana

Saint Lucia - locality-specific dry/wet-season breeding and keeper protocol.

Core profile

Large arboreal herbivore endemic to Saint Lucia; native stronghold in north-east deciduous dry forest and coastal habitat.

Active temperatures

27-31 C air; 38-42 C basking surface; measured UVI 4-6 at primary basking zone.

Breeding anchor

Saint Lucia Forestry Department identifies February-May as nesting season; native mean clutch about 23 eggs in published data.

Winter

No brumation. Reproduce a drier Dec-May phase and wetter Jun-Nov phase; keep drinking water and humid refuges year-round.

Annual keeper schedule

Month	Day	Night	Bask	UVI	Light	RH day/night	Rain / mist	Food d/wk	Seasonal management
January	27-30 C	22-24 C	38-41 C	4-6	11.5 h	55-70 / 70-80%	Light AM mist 3x/wk	6	Dry season; courtship / mating
February	27-30 C	22-24 C	38-41 C	4-6	11.8 h	50-68 / 68-78%	Light mist; offer nest	6	Nesting season begins
March	28-31 C	23-24 C	38-42 C	4-6	12.1 h	50-65 / 68-78%	Dry upper areas; moist nest	6	Gravid females / active nesting
April	28-31 C	23-25 C	38-42 C	4-6	12.4 h	55-70 / 70-82%	Light mist; deep moist nest	5-6	Main nesting / post-lay care
May	28-31 C	24-25 C	38-42 C	4-6	12.6 h	58-72 / 72-84%	Rain gradually increasing	6-7	Late nesting / recovery
June	29-31 C	24-26 C	38-42 C	4-6	12.8 h	65-80 / 80-90%	Daily AM rain/mist	7	Wet season begins; incubation
July	29-31 C	24-26 C	38-42 C	4-6	12.8 h	68-82 / 82-92%	Daily rain/mist	7	Incubation / early hatch window
August	29-31 C	24-26 C	38-42 C	4-6	12.6 h	70-85 / 84-94%	Rain/mist 1-2x/day	7	Wet season / hatchlings / growth
September	29-31 C	24-26 C	38-42 C	4-6	12.3 h	70-85 / 84-94%	Rain/mist 1-2x/day	7	Wet season / juvenile growth
October	28-31 C	24-25 C	37-41 C	4-6	12.0 h	72-88 / 85-95%	Frequent rain; ventilate	7	Wet-season recovery
November	28-30 C	23-25 C	37-41 C	4-6	11.7 h	68-84 / 82-92%	Frequent showers	6-7	Wet phase easing
December	27-30 C	22-24 C	37-41 C	4-6	11.5 h	60-75 / 75-85%	Rain reduced; AM mist	6	Drying trend / breeding onset

Reading the table: basking temperatures are surface temperatures, not enclosure air temperatures. RH targets assume excellent ventilation. This Saint Lucia cueing model is designed for the native sanctaluciae lineage; preserve locality and pedigree data.

Housing, climate and nutrition

Taxonomy and provenance

This protocol uses *Iguana iguana sanctaluciae*, the treatment retained by the Reptile Database and by the IUCN SSC Iguana Specialist Group Taxonomy Working Group pending further evidence. Breuil and colleagues instead recognize the southern Lesser Antillean lineage as *Iguana insularis*, with the Saint Lucia form as *I. insularis sanctaluciae*. Native Saint Lucia iguanas are genetically distinct and threatened by introgression with introduced iguanas, so exact pedigree and provenance should be maintained.

Natural habitat

The native stronghold is the north-east coast of Saint Lucia, particularly deciduous tropical dry forest, xeric scrub, ravines and coastal nesting areas from Grande Anse/Louvet southward. Historical assessments describe native animals in dry coastal woodland, often near streams. Captive housing should therefore be warm and seasonally drier than a rainforest-iguana setup while still providing drinking water, shade and humid retreats.

Enclosure and structure

A large, powerful arboreal iguana requiring substantial horizontal and vertical space. For one adult, about 200 x 120 x 200 cm is a practical indoor minimum starting point; larger or room-scale housing is strongly preferred. Provide heavy trunks, broad elevated shelves, visual barriers, a broad basking platform and a deep terrestrial nesting area for females.

Heat, basking and UVB

Maintain daytime air around 27-31 C through most of the year, nights around 22-26 C and a broad basking surface around 38-42 C. Provide strong full-spectrum lighting. A measured UVI around 4-6 at the main basking zone is a practical captive target, with multiple shaded retreats below UVI 1. Never heat the entire enclosure to basking temperature.

Humidity, rainfall and seasonality

Saint Lucia is tropical but strongly seasonal in rainfall: the broad dry season is December-May and the wet season June-November. Reproduce this mainly by changing rainfall/misting frequency, not by creating a cold season. Upper branches should dry between sprays in the dry phase, while fresh water and a humid retreat remain available. In the wet phase, increase rain/mist but maintain vigorous airflow.

Diet

Adults should be overwhelmingly herbivorous. Base the diet on diverse calcium-rich leafy greens, safe browse, leaves and flowers, fibrous vegetables and a smaller seasonal fruit component. Rotate plant families and provide coarse browse for normal gut function. Avoid routine animal protein and avoid over-conditioning breeding adults.

Breeding, nesting and evidence notes

Breeding cycle

Current Saint Lucia Forestry Department guidance identifies February-May as the nesting season for the native Saint Lucia iguana. A practical captive sequence is to build condition during November-December, allow courtship/mating mainly December-February, have deep nest sites ready by January, and expect gravid females and laying from February through May. Incubation and hatchling emergence then overlap the transition into the wetter season.

Nesting and clutch size

Wild females use soft sandy coastal nesting sites and tunnel into the substrate. Provide a secluded, compactable sandy-soil nesting area at least about 45-60 cm deep with several moisture/depth choices. The original 2019 taxonomic study reported a mean clutch size of about 23 eggs from 14 native Saint Lucia clutches, substantially below the mean of introduced Central American iguanas sampled on the island.

Incubation

Peer-reviewed incubation trials specific to *sanctaluciae* remain limited, so use general green-iguana incubation data as a cautious baseline rather than claiming a locality-specific optimum. A starting range around 28.5-30 C with stable but not waterlogged moisture and good gas exchange is reasonable. General *Iguana iguana* incubation commonly falls around 90-120 days, but record exact duration, temperature and moisture from your own lineage and refine the protocol from proven outcomes.

Social management and conservation warning

Adult males can become highly territorial in reproductive condition and should not be housed together. Even pairs need enough room and visual structure for the female to escape the male. Do not mix conservation-value *sanctaluciae* with iguanas of uncertain provenance; hybridization with introduced *Iguana* lineages is a major threat on Saint Lucia. Monitor females closely for dystocia and all adults for rostral trauma, burns, dehydration, obesity and renal/metabolic disease.

Evidence anchors

- Reptile Database (accessed 2 Oct 2026): recognizes *Iguana iguana sanctaluciae* for Saint Lucia; the Reptile Database notes the alternative *Iguana insularis sanctaluciae* treatment used by Breuil and colleagues.
- Saint Lucia Ministry of Agriculture / Forestry Department (2026): identifies February-May as the Saint Lucia iguana nesting season and confirms use of soft sandy beach areas for nesting.
- Breuil et al. 2019, Zootaxa 4608:201-232: formally described *I. i. sanctaluciae*; adults have vertical black body/tail bars and a black dewlap. The paper reports a mean of 23 eggs from 14 native Saint Lucia clutches and documents the threat from introduced iguana hybridization.
- Saint Lucia biodiversity and land-use assessments: the remaining native population is concentrated in north-east deciduous tropical dry forest/coastal habitat; Grande Anse and Louvet are important nesting areas and ravines/streams form important habitat structure.
- Saint Lucia climate analyses: tropical climate with a broad dry season December-May and wet season June-November; temperatures remain warm year-round. Seasonal husbandry should therefore change rainfall more than temperature.
- General *Iguana iguana* incubation and nutritional principles are used only where *sanctaluciae*-specific experimental data are absent. Preserve detailed breeding records from this lineage and revise temperatures/moisture from proven outcomes.

Review date: 2 October 2026. This protocol follows the current Reptile Database / IUCN SSC Iguana Specialist Group subspecies treatment while explicitly noting the alternative *Iguana insularis sanctaluciae* classification.

UVI beneath the optional T5 tube

Iguana iguana sanctaluciaae

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

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](#).