

# EXOTIC LIZARD IDENTIFICATION

## Spiny-tailed Iguana

**Habitat:** Great diggers, burrowers and baskers. They are found around ruins, stone walls, rocky open slopes and branches of large trees along the open borders of the forests. More terrestrial than arboreal (tree-dwelling), they can run in a bipedal fashion.

**Coloration:** Predominantly black but the dorsal surface may show black bands on a greyish background. Most have black mottling on their backs. The color may also lighten after basking in the sunlight with yellowish and orange markings becoming evident along the sides. Juveniles tend to be olive-green becoming tan and then finally greyish as they grow.

**Other Features:** Adult males have well developed dorsal crests (although the spines are much shorter than those of a mature green iguana); females lack obvious crests. The lizards have tails ringed with rows of sharp, curved spines, hence the name spiny-tailed iguana.



## Green Iguana

**Habitat:** Lives in trees, usually near water. You can spot them on the branches that hang above a pond, lake, canal or river. They will sun themselves on grassy slopes, sea walls, tree trunks and limbs. They are excellent climbers and swimmers. They build burrows which can weaken waterside structures like embankments, cement seawalls and docks.

**Coloration:** Despite its name, green iguanas may be brown, gray, black or dark green. The males turn orange when they are mating. Babies and juveniles are bright green, and adults have black bands on their sides and tails.

**Other Features:** Dorsal crest of dermal spines that runs from the mid neck to the tail base. The crest is larger on males. Green iguanas also have a large rounded scale on each jowl and a baggy dewlap hanging from the neck which they wag when mating or defending their territory. Their tails are long and tapering.

