



BLUE IGUANA RECOVERY PROGRAM
GRAND CAYMAN, CAYMAN ISLANDS, BRITISH WEST INDIES

PRESS RELEASE: 14th May, 2008

As the police investigation into the slaughter of seven Grand Cayman Blue Iguanas moves into its second week, the National Trust and the Blue Iguana Recovery Programme are taking stock of the situation and looking to the future. “A review of funds received and pledged over the last week are testament to an extraordinary outpouring of community support in the wake of the disaster” said BIRP Director Fred Burton. “This is still happening – we’re being notified of donations and suggestions to raise additional support, almost continuously.”

Cayman Crimestoppers has just released a reward poster, with donations towards the reward actually received by the National Trust standing at CI\$ 7,210 by Monday afternoon, out of a total of over \$16,000 pledged. DMS triggered the cascade of donations with a \$5,000 pledge and extensive radio coverage. All donors to date have generously agreed that if the reward remains unclaimed, the funds will be directed to benefit other aspects of the Blue Iguana Recovery Programme.

Contributions and pledges have also been received specifically towards the cost of increasing security at the Blue Iguana captive facility. In particular, Walkers has pledged to underwrite costs of a security system, and Sagicor also made a donation for this purpose, early this week. Three independent security providers have reviewed the facility in the last week, and the preferred solution will be selected by the Trust and the BIRP later this week.

The Blue Iguana Recovery Programme has also received substantial unrestricted donations over the last week. With the cost of the security systems yet to be determined, and income from Blue Iguana tours inevitably disrupted by the crime, many donors preferred to allow the BIRP to direct their funds to wherever the need proved greatest. Greenlight Re granted the programme \$20,000 over the weekend, while a team of over 50 community volunteers led by Sarah Agnolin and Kurt Christian raised an astonishing \$12,903 in cash donations from the public, over three days stationed in Hurleys Grand Harbour and Fosters at the Strand.

In addition to purely financial support, both Government agencies and the private sector are contributing in other ways. The Departments of Agriculture and Environment are placing considerable resources in support of the RCIP investigation, and to help the surviving injured Blue Iguanas along with St. Matthew’s Veterinary School and Island Veterinary Services. Ocean Frontiers is providing free accommodation for International Reptile Conservation Foundation personnel who came to assist during the crisis. Several other local businesses, schools, and associations are adding their weight to the effort, either in fundraising or other suggestions for assistance.

Meanwhile, the first eggs of the year are being laid by the surviving captive Blue Iguana breeders, turning the programme staff’s thoughts toward a brighter future. Volunteers from the Ritz Carlton Ambassadors of the Environment have been helping BIRP Head Warden John Marotta, in excavating the nests.

Blue Iguana Recovery Programme

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