



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

## PRESS RELEASE

5<sup>th</sup> May, 2008. For immediate release.

### **SIX BLUE IGUANAS MURDERED IN BOTANIC PARK**

Six critically endangered Grand Cayman Blue Iguanas were killed by unknown persons late on Saturday evening, in the QE II Botanic Park. The crime was discovered by volunteers with the National Trust's Blue Iguana Recovery Programme, shortly after 9am on Sunday morning.

The iguanas appeared to have massive internal injuries, as if they had been stamped on violently and repeatedly. Some were also cut and partially dismembered. Three were found dead inside their breeding pens, two had been carried out of their pens and left in the tour area outside. The body of the sixth is still missing, but entrails on the trail outside his pen are a grim sign of his fate.

Department of Environment enforcement officer Carl Edwards was on the scene almost immediately, fast followed by the Royal Cayman Islands Police who began forensic work and have commenced an investigation. Dr. Colin Wakelin from the Department of Agriculture closed a large gash in one of the surviving victims and began making arrangements for an autopsy to confirm the causes of death, which will probably take place later today.

Dead on Sunday morning were the adult breeding males "Yellow" (sponsored by Caribbean Publishers), "Pedro" (sponsored by Websters Tours), "Digger" (sponsored by Simon Hicks), and "Eldemire" (christened by Kent Eldemire). The grand matriarch of the captive facility, "Sara", was also dead. "Jessica" had been thrown out of the neighboring pen and was in shock, but still moving. Both females had been preparing to lay eggs.

The effort to save Jessica's life went on into the night, but despite specialist advice by telephone from the Wildlife Conservation Society and Dr. Wakelin's resourceful and determined attempts to stabilize her, she passed away during the night.

The persons responsible may have broken into the Park after closing hours, and found a way into the fenced-in captive breeding facility. No motive is known for this act of extreme violence against these unique and much-loved symbols of Cayman's natural heritage. Anyone with relevant information is asked to contact the Royal Cayman Islands Police.

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Blue Iguana Recovery Programme  
PO Box 10308, Grand Cayman KY1-1003  
Cayman Islands

[www.BlueIguana.ky](http://www.BlueIguana.ky)

*A programme of the National Trust for the Cayman Islands with local and international partners*

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Photographs are available from the Blue Iguana Recovery Programme – contact Fred Burton as above.

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