

# Green iguana

Call Biosecurity Queensland immediately on **13 25 23** if you see this species



## Green iguana (*Iguana iguana*)

- It is illegal to import, keep, breed or sell any type of iguana, including green or common iguana.
- Iguanas are not native to Australia and have the potential to become a pest if they escape or are released into the wild.
- Iguanas can carry salmonella and exotic diseases that could harm our native reptiles.
- While the potential impact of iguanas on agriculture in Queensland is difficult to predict, they are known to eat mangoes, tomatoes, bananas, lychees and a range of vegetables.
- Early detection helps protect Queensland's natural environment.

### Description

The green iguana, also known as the common iguana, is the most commonly kept species of iguana. It is a popular pet in the United States (where it has escaped to form feral populations). The green iguana is native to an extensive area of tropical America. It can grow up to 2 m from head to tail. Green iguanas usually weigh 4–6 kg but can reach 9 kg. Distinctive features include a prominent hanging dewlap under the throat (larger in males), dorsal crest of robust dermal spines running from neck to tail, a set of large scales on each side of the head, membrane-covered tympanum (hearing structure) and a long, tapering, variably ringed tail. Colour is variable across its native range—including green to grey-green, bluish-green with bold black markings, lavender, black, reddish to orange. The whip-like tail can deliver a painful blow.

### Pest risk

The green iguana is a prohibited invasive animal under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. Prohibited species must be reported immediately to Biosecurity Queensland on **13 25 23**.

They can compete with native species such as eastern water dragons for resources. They can overgraze native flora, spread weed seed and can injure people with tail slaps, bites and scratches.

### What should I do?

If you think you have seen an green iguana, report it immediately to Biosecurity Queensland on **13 25 23**. Until an authorised officer contacts you, please take reasonable and practical steps to prevent the green iguana from escaping.

### Further information

Further information is available from your local government office, or by contacting Biosecurity Queensland on **13 25 23** or visit our website at [biosecurity.qld.gov.au](http://biosecurity.qld.gov.au).

