

## December 2009 Editor's Note

**It's big, it's popular, and it's green.**

*By Russ Case*

When thinking back to animals that have given the reptilekeeping hobby a boost, I think the green iguana should belong on any list being compiled.

In recent years the bearded dragon has certainly gained in popularity, but that doesn't mean the ever-popular green iguana is down and out. This impressive lizard remains a favorite with reptilekeepers.

As has been mentioned in previous issues, you just need to know how big and, perhaps, how temperamental green iguanas can get. For instance, I once got whapped upside the head by a thick iguana tail. The whack was dealt to me by a male feeling ornery during the breeding season, a time of red alert for green iguana owners because male iguanas can be notoriously testy during this time. I don't mean to generalize, though. Some male iguanas don't display excessive territorial behavior.

When you want to own a big, impressive lizard, a green iguana is tough to beat. Aside from the breeding season, green iguanas are usually quite calm, and depending on where you live, it's not uncommon to see people outside with a large green iguana riding on their shoulders. Of course, such sightings would be most prevalent at a reptile or pet expo, but I see iguanas publicly out and about with their owners every once in a while in more standard areas. The fact that I live fairly close to the beach helps ensure this, it seems.

As a matter of fact, my last public green iguana sighting was at the beach. I observed a woman taking her lizard for a walk on a leash and harness. It was a 2-year-old that was alert and apparently very happy to be out in the sunshine. All green iguanas should be so lucky.

Green iguanas can make great lizard pets if you're prepared to meet their special care considerations.