

Blue iguana killed at Botanic Park by dog



*Inky, the blue iguana, killed by a roaming dog
Saturday 20 June 2015*

(CNS): The Blue Iguana Recovery Programme is reeling from yet another loss after Inky, one of the Queen Elizabeth Botanic Park's star iguanas, was killed by a stray dog this weekend. A large adult male, Inky is said to be one of the most photographed of the BIRP animals that lives at the park in Frank Sound. The death of another iconic iguana, the second this month, has devastated staff and researchers are urging the community to address the problem of roaming dogs.

Inky, who was often seen near the visitors' centre, was reportedly attacked Sunday morning. He was rushed to Island Vets by the BIRP staff but the veterinarians there were unable to save him.

A spokesperson for the programme told CNS that the issue of pet owners not taking care of their animals is one of the biggest threats to the survival of a species that has been saved from the brink of extinction but is still very vulnerable.

"The loss of yet another blue iguana at the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park on Sunday, to a roaming dog, demonstrates the immediate need for more responsible pet ownership in the Cayman Islands," said the park director, John Lawrus. "Inky", who was sponsored by Blue Dragon Tattoos, was also referred to as "Kinky", he said.



Inky, the blue iguana

"He was a true ambassador for the Blue Iguana Recovery Programme, as he greeted most arriving visitors to the Botanic Park in the parking area and visitor centre. He is probably the most photographed blue iguana and was always asked for by returning visitors. It is sad day and big loss for the Blue Iguana Recovery Programme and the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park," he added.

The devastating news comes just as legislators have voted to commit several hundred thousand dollars to the BIRP and the continued development of related conservation research and the wilderness centre in the

Salina area in East End, where they are being released into the wild. But the threat from feral dogs and pets that are not properly controlled continues to put the entire programme in jeopardy after the incredible and world-famous work undertaken by Fred Burton, the director of the project, to conserve Cayman's indigenous and beautiful blue iguana.

Combined with disappearing habitat and challenges to the programmes resources, the additional threat of dogs killing the iguanas is now taking a serious toll.

Subscribe

If you enjoyed this article, subscribe to receive more just like it.



Follow

CNS

on

Twitter



Share

on

Google

Plus