

The Iguana Station Working

By Aurel Heidelberg y Gilda Ordoñez



In the summer of 2005 the Iguana Research and Breeding Station caught 31 females of the endemic spiny tailed Iguana (*Ctenosaura bakeri*), also known as Swamper or Wishiwilly. They were caught at their traditional breeding sites. The females were kept in cages with a nesting box where they bury their eggs in sand. After laying their eggs the females were released in the same spot they were caught. This year 304 eggs of the caught females plus 147 eggs of 12 females of our three breeding groups were incubated. Between June and August 311 juveniles were hatched out of a total of 451 eggs with an average incubation time of 74 days. All hatchlings were measured, weighed and marked by clipping one toe for later identification. Approximately 50 % were released. The other 50% will stay at the station for one year to improve chance of survival.

En el verano del 2005 capturamos 31 hembras de la Iguana endémica (Ctenosaura bakeri), también conocida por el nombre Swamper o Wishiwilly. Fueron capturados en sitios donde tradicionalmente ponen sus huevos. Las hembras permanecieron en jaulas, donde enteraron sus huevos en un sustrato arenoso en nidos artificiales. Después de poner los huevos, las hembras fueron liberadas en el mismo lugar donde fueron capturadas. Este año 304 huevos de las hembras capturadas mas 147 huevos de 12 hembras de nuestros tres grupos de crianza fueron incubados. Entre Junio y Agosto 311 neotonos nacieron de los 452 heuvos con un promedio de tiempo de incubación de 74 días. Los recién naci-



dos fueron pesados, medidos y marcados cortando la punta de uno de sus dedos para posterior identificación. Aproximadamente 50% de los recién nacidos fueron liberados y el otro 50% permanecerá un año en la Estación para incrementar sus probabilidades de sobre vivencia.

The Ctenosaura Bakeri aka Swamper

The swamper (*ctenosaura bakeri*) is endemic to Utila and inhabits the mangrove swamps and nests on the beaches of Utila. It is believed that the swamper was forced into the swamps by larger, more aggressive *C. similis* that typically inhabits dry, rocky areas.

The average length of the males is about 76 cm (30 inches) and females reach an average of about 56 cm (22 inches). Males have longer spines on their backs and their heads are bigger. The adult Swamper light-grey to dark-grey-brown, often slightly turquoise.

The Swamper is endangered due to the decreasing of mangrove areas and hunting. It needs to be protected as their survival depends on s on the protection of beaches that are not used for tourism. The Utila iguana is protected in Honduras since 1994.

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