

## If you see a Crocodile

- **Remain calm.** If you are in a swamp or river, chances are it will go away. However for your own safety stay clear of the area.
- **Stay clear of rivers and swamps** during the breeding season from March to August.

If a crocodile is seen in a residential area, or near to places people use regularly **stay clear of it.**

**Call NEPA or the police. Other numbers to call are Hope Zoo (927-1085); Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society (957-3735 or 957-3491).**

**Remember if you see a crocodile, leave it alone and it will leave you alone.**

## The Jamaican Boa



The Boa's oval, scaled body has yellow and black colouration with its tail predominantly black. Its head is small and tapered. This animal may be found throughout the island, mainly in cool remote areas (wetlands, Hellshire Hills and dry scrub forest of the south coast). The Boa feeds on birds, rats, bats and other small animals and a variety of eggs. Destruction of its habitat occurs through deforestation and development, predation by dogs, feral cats and the mongoose; which feeds on the young. It reproduces by laying live

offspring and is active at night. The Jamaican Boa is the largest of eight species. It is rare and non-poisonous.

The Jamaican Iguana, the American Crocodile and the Jamaican Boa, are protected by law under the Wild Life Protection Act. Therefore, they should not be hunted, captured, killed or in any way harassed. **It is also illegal to have in your possession, the whole or any part of a crocodile without special permission granted by the minister responsible for the environment. The penalty for disobeying this law is \$100,000.00 or 1 year imprisonment.**

**For more information on Jamaica's Protected Species and the laws protecting them contact:**

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Managing & protecting  
Jamaica's Land, Wood & Water

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## THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING AGENCY

### Jamaica's Protected Species

Learn more  
About Our Reptiles



**Jamaican Iguana**  
(*Cyclura collei*)



**American Crocodile**  
(*Crocodylus acutus*)



**Jamaican Boa/ Yellow Snake**  
(*Epicrates subflavus*)

## Jamaica's protected land animals

When an animal is protected it means that the state has legislated that these animals are to be kept safe at all times and they should not be harmed. Jamaica's land animals that are protected are; the Jamaican Iguana (*Cyclura collei*), the American Crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*) and the Jamaican Boa (*Epicrates subflavus*). These three land animals are protected under the Wild Life Protection Act of Jamaica and should not be killed.

### The Jamaican Iguana



Once thought to be extinct by many, the endemic Jamaican Iguana (*Cyclura collei*) was rediscovered in the virgin tropical dry forest of the Hellshire Hills, St. Catherine in 1990. The iguana is one of the island's largest land animals, reaching a length of 150cm and maybe more. The Jamaican Iguana has scales and spiny ridges with a muscular tapered body. It has a predominant rock gray colour. It is found only in the dry limestone forest of Hellshire Hills of St. Catherine where it shelters in the rock crevices. The Iguana feeds on plants, flowers, fruits and berries. It occasionally eats insects and snails.

The Jamaican Iguana is threatened by extinction due to:

1. Introduced predators and competitors such as mongooses, dogs, cats and pigs
2. Charcoal burning and other activities that destroy the forest



Iguana digging nest

### The American Crocodile

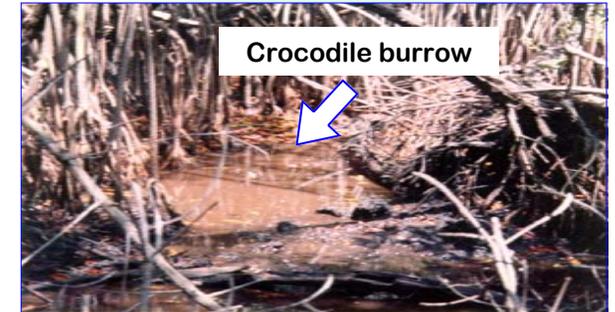


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Crocodiles are one of Jamaica's largest wild animals and grow up to 5 meters. They are shy animals that are active at nights and prefer to be left alone. In the wild, they retreat or submerge at the slightest disturbance. However, if cornered or attacked they will adopt a "threatened posture" and even attack in defense, particularly during the breeding season (March–August) when the females become very aggressive.

**Crocodiles have historical, cultural, biological and economical importance:**

- The crocodile is on Jamaica's Coat of Arms, which is a badge of great, importance and historical significance to the nation.
- Crocodiles eat dead and dying animals, thus keeping our waters free of disease. Their holes and burrows provide refuge and water for other wild animals during times of drought. They fertilise the swamps.
- Currently they help to earn foreign exchange as attractions for ecotourism.



Crocodile burrow

### Don't ...

- Go fishing, swimming or bathing in rivers where there are crocodiles.
- Tie small animals such as goats or pigs close to rivers or swamps with crocodiles.
- Dump garbage or dead animals in rivers, swamps or on beaches. This will attract crocodiles.
- Approach or try to catch the animal
- Harass, hurt or kill the animal
- Build in swamps

### Do...

- Call your local police station, NEPA or the Hope Zoo if you see a crocodile near homes
- Learn about Crocodiles
- Be wary when entering swamps