

Sobering update on Jamaica's largest vertebrate

April 1 2014

In 1990, the Jamaican iguana was removed from the list of extinct species when a small population was re-discovered on the island. Unfortunately, the species continues to be critically endangered, with only a single location left for the recovering population, now greater than 200 individuals, in a protected area called the Hellshire Hills, part of the Portland Bight Protected Area. A recent proposal by Jamaican government officials to allow extensive development in this area is causing concern among conservationists who have been working to save this species and the wealth of biodiversity in the area.

"We have been working for more than 20 years to save this species and have been delighted as each new generation is 'headstarted' and released into the wild," said Tandora Grant, research scientist with the San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation Research. "It is heartbreaking to think that all of this effort and the support of our donors will have been for nothing if this area is opened for substantial development."

The species update, including information about the move by foreign investors to develop within the protected area, is the subject of a science note in the April 2014 edition of "*Oryx*," an international conservation journal.

Bringing [species](#) back from the brink of extinction is the goal of San Diego Zoo Global. As a leader in conservation, the work of San Diego Zoo Global includes onsite wildlife conservation efforts (representing both plants and animals) at the San Diego Zoo, San Diego Zoo Safari

Park, and San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation Research, as well as international field programs on six continents. The important conservation and science work of these entities is made possible by the San Diego Zoo Global Wildlife Conservancy and is supported in part by the Foundation of San Diego Zoo Global.

Provided by Zoological Society of San Diego

Citation: Sobering update on Jamaica's largest vertebrate (2014, April 1) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-04-sobering-jamaica-largest-vertebrate.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
