



# The Weekly News

Department of Environmental and Coastal Resources



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## NEW TCI ARRIVAL: CUBAN NIGHT ANOLE

The **Knight Anole** (*Anolis equestris*) is a species of lizard in the Polychrotidae family, and the largest species of anole. Other common names include **Cuban Night Anole** or just **Cuban Anole**. It is native to Cuba, but has been introduced into Miami-Dade (including Miami Beach), Broward, and Palm Beach Counties of Florida.

It grows to a length of 13 to 20 inches (33 to 51 cm) including the tail. It is fiercely territorial. The Knight Anole has a bony ridge on its head and large scales. In addition, they have a small dorsal crest. They have special cushions or pads on their five clawed toes that allow them to stick to some surfaces. They have interesting dark markings on their bodies. On their shoulders, they have lighter markings, and their stomachs and under parts are typically white. The eyes of the Knight Anole can move independently. Males and females are easily distinguished, as males have very large dewlaps (also called gular fans). Males are usually larger than females, but a very old female could just as easily reach a maximum length. The Knight Anole does not change colors as dramatically as some of the smaller anoles, but they can be seen to change from green to a light brown with yellow markings.

Aggressive to anything that enters its territory, the Knight Anole will face almost any intruder it perceives to be a threat (from a distance). During its display, a lizard will sit high on all fours, gape menacingly, turn green, and perhaps bob its head. Males will extend their dewlap (a reddish-white flap underneath their chin), and both females

and males will "puff themselves up" with air.

The Knight Anole is a diurnal predator, though by warming itself on asphalt, rocks, or sidewalks at the end of the day it may be able to remain active for a while into the night. Its diet as a young anole consists mainly of insects. As an adult it eats larger prey like tarantulas, other anoles, geckos, even baby birds and baby mice. The Knight Anole lives an average 10 years.

The Knight Anole was found on the compound of the Beaches resort last week. It has been indicated that they may have arrived here either as eggs in soil or as adults in plants. It should be reported to the DECR if this species or any other alien species is found.

### Special points of interest:

- [Cuban Knight Anole](#)
- [Invasive Species Meeting](#)
- [Brussels Workshop](#)



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**We're on the Web!**  
**[www.environment.tc](http://www.environment.tc)**

The Department of Environment and Coastal Resources (DECR) is the government agency charged with the conservation, protection and management of the Natural Resources of the Turks and Caicos Islands. The Department is divided into two divisions: the Protected Areas Division oversees the management of our National Parks, Nature Reserves, Sanctuaries and Historic Areas. The Fisheries Division, is directly responsible for the management and conservation of our fish populations and habitats.

## Staff News

Deputy Director, Ms. Jewel Batchasingh, will be on leave for this week.

## Brussels Workshop

The Director, Mr. Wesley Clerveaux attended two workshops in Brussels, Belgium. The first, a training workshop on Environmental Impacts Assessments sought to share experiences among EU Overseas Entities in using EIAs as a decision making tool rather than a remedial tool.

Mr. Clerveaux then met with European officials in furtherance of government policy to export seafood to the European market. Consultants will be sent to seafood plants to help improve plant layout, sanitary conditions etc. in order to comply with European standards.



## Maranatha High School: Career Day

The DECR will have a display/presentation at the Maranatha High School on Tuesday, May 12 as part of their Careers Day Expo.

## Invasive Species Meeting

A public consultation meeting was held last Friday, 01 May regarding the "Importation of Plants and Animal Products into the TCI." The topics covered were:

1. What are invasive alien species and the status of invasive species in the TCI.
2. The Caicos Pine Scale infestation and other invasive plant species.
3. The Phyto-sanitary requirements of the TCI and the status of the Swine Flu epidemic.

